

THE IRISH VOICE:
A GUIDE TO SLANG TERMS
IN THE WORKS OF FRANK O'CONNOR

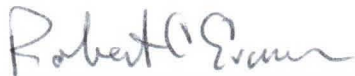
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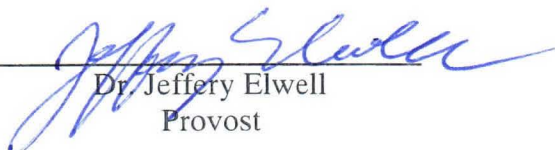
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Although the final decades of the twentieth century passed with relatively little critical attention paid to the writings of Frank O'Connor, there has recently been a renewed interest in his work. Attesting to this fact are short story festivals and contests which only recently came into existence and are held as ways of paying tribute to O'Connor's writings. The Frank O'Connor International Short Story Festival was launched by the Munster Literature Centre in 2000 and was soon followed by the highly lucrative Frank O'Connor International Short Story Award in 2006. However, while O'Connor is best known for his many short stories, he also produced works in virtually every written medium available to him, including poetry, novels, and biographical texts. In view of the broad scope of his writings, it is pleasing to find an element of cohesiveness within the texts: O'Connor's skillful use of the informal language of his native country.

O'Connor's View of Language

In the latter years of his life, O'Connor famously made the observation that the whole of his work could be summarized as a prolonged attempt to record "the tone of a man's voice speaking" (qtd. in Delaney 58). Evident during a prolific career that spanned over forty years, O'Connor's keen ear for the speech patterns of the working and often impoverished people of Ireland is evident in his writings. In fact, as James Kilroy

points out, while relatively few sensory details are included in O'Connor's stories, his uses of "speech patterns are widely varied" (106). O'Connor was even once recorded as having stated that "he himself primarily noticed cadences, distinctive phrases and figures of speech rather than visual detail" (106). Critics of O'Connor have been quick to recognize the ease with which he is effectively able to weave such colorful language into the dialogue and narration of his works, and because O'Connor was "a master of words, both written and spoken, his concern was above all with the speech of people..." (Greene 137). Indeed, Thomas Flanagan records O'Connor as having commented, "I prefer to write about Ireland because I know to a syllable how everything in Ireland can be said" (*Michael/Frank* 150). Though this statement gives the impression that O'Connor was a bold and self-confident writer, in reality, he was notorious for continuously editing his work, even after its publication. Always in search of a better way to phrase this sentence or that paragraph, he would ceaselessly replace one word with another until he was completely satisfied with the outcome. O'Connor's perpetual editing of his texts revealed an important aspect of what he felt was his purpose in writing. According to A.C. Partridge, "[O'Connor] was determined in his humanity and breadth of outlook to become a sensitive mirror of Ireland in his time" (332). O'Connor achieves this goal in his writing by making painstaking efforts to accurately portray the people of Ireland.

"Submerged Populations"

The people who populate the world of O'Connor's *Collected Stories* represent the "submerged populations" that O'Connor discusses in his widely read work on the short story, *The Lonely Voice*. Although the term "submerged population" was referred to by

O'Connor as "a bad phrase which I have had to use for want of a better," the term can be defined as referring to individuals who, for whatever reason, occupy the outskirts and margins of society (*The Lonely Voice* 18). Even though, as Deborah Averill notes, "O'Connor's characters' identities are largely determined by their circumstances [and] by the necessities of their lives" (*Michael/Frank* 30), O'Connor explains that "the submerged population is not submerged entirely by material considerations; it can be submerged by the absence of spiritual ones" (*The Lonely Voice* 18). Therefore, the rural poor, the urban poor, Ireland's older generations, orphaned children, and even members of the clergy all represent submerged populations in O'Connor's works, and much like any other group of people from similar backgrounds, regions, or situations, these populations have specific dialects that O'Connor was determined to represent accurately in his works by utilizing his knowledge of the informal spoken language. As a result, his texts are rich with slang terms and phrases that were common in his day.

By using slang so freely in his writing, O'Connor makes an effort to acquaint the reader with the Ireland he knew. Slang is, after all, a language of familiarity. This familiarity invites the reader to become acquainted with the subjects and characters so that rather than merely reading the story, the reader is invited to participate emotionally in the world of the story, and the audience is invited to understand and to actually "hear" the characters. Slang is used for many different reasons, but Partridge, in his work *Slang Today and Yesterday*, points out fifteen specific reasons for its use, of which a few follow: Slang is used in high spirits, to encourage deep friendship, to show that a person belongs to a certain profession or social group, or to show that a person does not belong to a particular profession or social group (6). Furthermore, Richard Spears asserts that

slang often allows the people within a group to “show identification with one another by using one another’s vocabulary” (xii). This idea is illustrated in most groups in society, from high school cliques to the people within a specific geographic region, and certain slang is used by the people O’Connor portrays in his works.

Just as Spears asserts that “a culture’s vocabulary contains a record of the culture’s values, fears, hostilities and mistakes,” O’Connor’s use of slang serves to give the reader a more complete understanding of the mental world of characters and their situations and values (vii). This idea does not, however, indicate that the lack of slang in some stories results in characters that are not fully developed. On the contrary, the lack of slang is equally revealing of the characters when one takes their situations into account. To a large degree, the amount of slang that O’Connor uses in a story depends on the socioeconomic status of the characters involved, albeit indirectly. In the stories that feature members of Ireland’s middle class, for example, there is very little slang because the characters are in a position of public authority, and the pressure of this authority can result in the characters being inflexible in their ideas, actions and, in turn, their language. For example, in “The Cheapjack,” a story that contains relatively little slang, school teacher Sam Higgins finds himself at odds with the new teacher, Carmody, who courts away Nancy, who is Sam’s love interest. At the beginning of the story, Sam is characterized as being “too honest” and free with his opinions, but unfortunately, this honesty does not seem to carry over into his relationship with Nancy (*Collected Stories* 56). Though Sam truly cares for Nancy, his own inhibitions and refusal to tell Nancy of his true feelings for her cause him to lose her to Carmody, whose pursuit of Nancy is much more assertive. The same inhibitions that prevent Sam from bravely pursuing

Nancy are reflected in Sam's speech patterns, which consequently are more formal and contain little slang.

Likewise, the story titled "The Lucey's" features feuding members of a middle class Irish family. Tom Lucey, an opinionated, serious man, and his brother Ben, who is much more easygoing, live in the same town and have a friendly relationship despite their different personalities. After Tom's son Peter is caught stealing from the townspeople, Tom expects his son to face the consequences of his actions but wants Ben to influence the city council to be lenient with Peter. Ben, however, refuses to help Peter in this situation, igniting a lifelong feud between the two brothers. Maurice Harmon observes that because Tom is "trapped within the rigidity he has framed for himself, he is unable to do anything practical to help his son" (93). This rigidity that Harmon points out in Tom's personality is a key to understanding why there is less slang in O'Connor's stories involving the middle class people of Ireland. In both "The Cheapjack" and "The Luceys," the main characters exhibit an inflexibility that is likely brought on by their degrees of public authority. In "The Cheapjack," Sam Higgins is too stubborn to consider that changing his intolerant ways could make his life much easier and perhaps even result in him getting the girl. This idea is implied in the story when the narrator comments on Sam's cold greeting to Nancy after her first date with Carmody: "Even then, if [Sam] could have welcomed [Nancy] as he longed to do, things might have been all right, but no more than Delia was he able to conceal his feelings" (*Collected Stories* 62). In this situation, Sam's conflicting emotions are ultimately overcome by his pride and fear of losing face both publicly (among his friends, colleagues, and students) and privately in front of his sister. Likewise, Tom Lucey is too inflexible in his principles to

extend friendship to his dying brother. In fact, in the opening lines of the story, the narrator comments, "I suppose living more or less in the public as we do, we are either killed or cured by [bitterness], and the same communal sense that will make a man be battered into a reconciliation he doesn't feel gives added importance to whatever quarrel he thinks must not be composed" (*Collected Stories* 68). The idea of living a public life magnifies the potential shame one might face as the result of forgiving too quickly, especially if one has vowed never to forgive. Tom confirms that this idea extends even to a private vow made to oneself at the end of "The Luceys" when he tells Charlie,

I forgave [Ben] long years ago for what he said about—one that was very dear to me. But I swore on that day, Charliss, that never the longest day I lived would I take your father's hand in friendship, and if God was to strike me dead at this very moment for my presumption, I'd say the same. You know me Charliss... I never broke my word yet to God or man, and I won't do it now. (*Collected Stories* 81)

In both "The Cheapjack" and "The Luceys," as in other of O'Connor's stories involving the middle-class, the inflexibility of the main characters is not only illustrated in their actions but is also reflected in their speech patterns, resulting in speech patterns that are restrained and, at times, more formal than those found in stories that focus on members of a lower socioeconomic class.

In much the same way, most of O'Connor's stories involving the clergy show a noticeable lack of slang terms. "The Old Faith," for example, is populated almost entirely by members of the clergy, and therefore the story contains very little slang in spite of the fair amount of dialogue present—which is where most of the slang in

O'Connor's stories occurs. Even the subject-matter of the story presents abundant occasion for the use of slang as the priests drink illegal, home-made whiskey and share fairy-tales remembered from their childhoods. Ultimately, however, very little slang appears. Likewise, in "An Act of Charity," very little slang is used even though the emotional subject-matter of the story—the suicide of a young priest—presents ample opportunity for the dialogue to be rich in slang. When considering the idea that the amount of slang in a given story depends heavily on the socioeconomic status of the characters involved, it is important to keep in mind that throughout O'Connor's stories involving the clergy, one theme that consistently appears is that of the isolation that comes with the profession. These clergymen, regardless of their backgrounds, represent a group of people who are set apart, who are well-educated in seminary and are then expected to live lives that are above reproach as examples to their parishioners. Unfortunately, living above reproach also means that the priest must live separately from the parishioners in action and in speech, so naturally priests might feel the need to use a more formal language in order to set themselves apart as mentors and authority figures. The lack of slang illustrates the idea that the clergymen lead isolated lives in which intimacy and, ironically, honesty with other people is practically impossible, and just as their lives are stifled by the mandates of the Church, so is their speech. The fact that such characters tend not to use slang is just as revealing about their personalities as is the fact that other characters use slang in abundance.

In regards to O'Connor's liberal use of slang, Kilroy states that "In [O'Connor's] early stories, speakers are typically distinguished by speech patterns so suggestive as to uncover subtle aspects of character (106). Certainly in O'Connor's short works,

characters who use a great wealth of slang terms and phrases are more common than those who do not, and often this slang is used as a tool to place emphasis on the relationships between characters and groups of characters. Because, as Eble asserts, “slang identifies members of a group,” it is logical to assume that characters who share similar speech patterns belong to the same group and ultimately share some type of bond (116). For instance, in “First Confession,” the priest uses slang in an attempt to create a sense of camaraderie with Jackie. Having been frightened in regards to what becomes of naughty little boys at confession, Jackie is terrified of having to confess all of his evil thoughts and deeds involving his grandmother. Jackie’s actions upon arriving at the church make clear his dread, and upon observing his fear, the priest takes pity on Jackie. As Jackie confesses his sins, the priest reacts in a sympathetic manner while still expressing shock over Jackie’s actions, and upon hearing of Jackie’s plan to chop his grandmother into bits and cart her away, the priest responds with “Begor, Jackie...” (*Collected Stories* 181). This mild oath—a euphemism for “by God!”—might seem out of place when used by a priest, but here, the priest’s motives are pure (Wall 18). In using a term that, as Mrs. Ryan points out earlier in the story, takes the Lord’s name in vain, the priest attempts to put Jackie at ease by using a mild expletive to create a bond between himself and the boy (*Collected Stories* 177). Jackie’s use of a similar exclamation earlier in the story further supports the idea that the use of slang in “First Confession” highlights the priest’s effort to create a bond between himself and Jackie.

Perhaps in no other story, though, is the idea of a bond among people from different backgrounds more poignant than in “Guests of the Nation,” for as Thomas Flanagan notes, this story “does not contain a wasted word, and yet there is a deceptive

tone of anecdote that is maintained almost to its shattering conclusion” (*There You Are* 298). Part of the reason that the conclusion of this story is so powerful is because the focus of the story is the bond of friendship that has developed between the English prisoners and their Irish captors. “Guests” takes place during the Irish War of Independence and follows the actions of three Irish soldiers who are placed in charge of two English prisoners of war. At times in the story, different characters (including Bonaparte, who is both the narrator and one of the Irish soldiers) refer to the strong sense of nationalism felt among members of the Irish Army. In one instance, as Bonaparte recalls the first time he met his prisoners Belcher and Hawkins, he describes their positive experiences with the Second Battalion, which included learning a few traditional Irish dances. However, Bonaparte notes that Hawkins was unable to teach his captors any English dances because the Irish “at that time did not dance foreign dances on principle” (*Collected Stories* 4). Bonaparte’s narration itself is filled with slang and the occasional Irish diminutive, both of which indicate at least a passive form of nationalism in that his speech patterns contribute to his identity as an Irish man. Despite this nationalism though, the friendship between the opposing soldiers is evident.

In fact, within the first few lines of the story, Bonaparte refers to one of the prisoners by using the slang term “chum” and explains that he and his comrades had “picked up some of [Hawkins’ and Belcher’s] curious expressions” (*Collected Stories* 3). As harmless as Bonaparte’s use of this term might seem, it also represents a symbolic betrayal of his country in two senses. The very action of Bonaparte speaking this word learned from his English prisoners goes against the national sentiment that was present during this time. As previously noted, throughout the story Bonaparte uses a very

conversational tone that is rich in slang; therefore, his implied unfamiliarity with the term “chum” leads the reader to believe that the word is indeed primarily a British term, and if Irish soldiers would not participate in foreign dances, it is logical to assume that they would also oppose the use of terms learned from representatives of a foreign culture. Thus, Bonaparte betrays his country simply by referring to his prisoner and supposed enemy by using a term that means “friend” (E. Partridge 218). At the climax of “Guests,” the term gains more significance as Hawkins, pleading for his life, uses the term repeatedly in reference to Noble and Bonaparte (*Collected Stories* 9). The occurrence of this term so early in the story and the liberal use of slang throughout the story illustrate the surprisingly deep relationship between the men and make the tragic conclusion (in which the Irishmen must kill the Englishmen) all the more powerful.

Often, the speech patterns of the characters in O’Connor’s short stories reveal not only the personalities, positions, and relationships of the characters but also O’Connor’s own values. Of particular importance to O’Connor is the preservation of the traditions and customs of Ireland. James Matthews quotes O’Connor as having lamented that “No nation in the world is more divorced from its own past as Ireland.” O’Connor believed that the nineteenth century had demolished “every mark of cultural identity” in Ireland, and he also believed that “without [the past], we have nothing, and we are nothing” (30-31). It is perhaps because of these beliefs about the idea of a newly emerging Ireland and the difficulties that can arise from the divide between new and old that O’Connor is so concerned in his short stories with different kinds of speech. Often, O’Connor implies this distinction between new and old Ireland by varying the speech patterns of his characters, so that generally the characters who use the most slang are portrayed in a

positive light and often have a high regard for (or in some cases, symbolize) tradition. In many of O'Connor's short works, he uses slang to illustrate the growing divide between the more traditional Ireland of his youth and an emerging, more modern Ireland in which the old social code is replaced by an adherence to modern values and less emphasis is placed on tradition.

One story in which the characters' speech patterns highlight this divide is "The Majesty of the Law." The focus of this story is the gradual shift from an older social code, which is, as Kilroy puts it, "a primitive law that recognizes the integrity of the individual," to a more modern law enforced by the government and represented in the story by the character of the young sergeant (109). The sergeant is painfully polite toward the older Dan and shows a genuine respect for old traditions that the modern law has either made difficult to uphold or eradicated altogether, but the sergeant reveals the true motives behind his visit when he asks Dan whether he plans to pay the fine he incurred by committing assault on another man. Dan, who represents an older social code, refuses to pay the fine because he sees nothing wrong with his actions, and he suffers the consequences of this decision. Because old and new are represented in this story by Dan and the sergeant respectively, one might expect that the sergeant's speech, unlike Dan's speech, would show a comparative lack of slang. On the contrary, though, the sergeant's dialogue includes a similar amount of slang to Dan's. Furthermore, Dan and the sergeant share many common beliefs regarding to the shortcomings of modern law, as indicated in their conversation throughout the story. Based on O'Connor's consistently masterful use of dialogue and language, it is reasonable to assert that he had

a specific purpose in mind when making these two characters so similar even though each represents a different social system.

Had the sergeant been the polar opposite of Dan in action and in speech, the reader would see the divide between old and new in a more obvious, unrealistic way—as a definite social change that has already taken place rather than the more realistic, gradual change that is portrayed in this story. In making the sergeant and Dan so similar (especially in their speech patterns), O'Connor attempts to illustrate the idea that the dying out of customs is a slow process rather than an immediate event. Indeed, in regards to cultural changes, new values are first introduced into the society, and then the language of that society changes to accommodate these new values. "The Majesty of the Law" illustrates this idea by depicting the main characters, who represent a gradual shift in social values from traditional to modern yet still share common speech patterns. This idea is further illustrated by other details in the story. When the sergeant reaches Dan's home, Dan is described as standing "half in sunlight, half in shadow" in the "twilight of the kitchen" (*Collected Stories* 321). The lack of strong light in Dan's house is no coincidence; just as the older social code to which Dan adheres is being overtaken by modern laws, so does this description of Dan invoke the image of a fading day. Even the fact that the sergeant's visit drags on for hours (when he could have been direct about the reason for his visit) reflects the nature of this social shift: what seemingly begins as two men engaging in a pleasant conversation eventually becomes one officer of the law enforcing a punishment upon a citizen. These details, in addition to the slang used by Dan and the sergeant, work together to illustrate the idea that a more modern Ireland with modern values is slowly replacing the social code of the past. However, while in

“Majesty” the symbolic figures of new and old Ireland still use similar language, in many of O’Connor’s stories this is not the case.

Thus in “The Long Road to Ummera,” the growing divide between old and new Ireland is illustrated clearly through the different speech patterns of the elderly Abby Driscoll and her son Pat. Abby uses slang frequently in her dialogue, while Pat uses very little. This distinction emphasizes the divide between the generations by heightening the contrast between the attitudes of Pat and Abby’s toward Irish traditions. Pat represents modernity in speech and values, and for most of the story, his dialogue toward his mother is lacking any slang and seems full of harsh resentment. This resentment stems, in part, from his being unable to understand his mother’s values. Abby requests that, after her death, her body should be returned to her distant home town of Ummera. Pat coldly refuses to comply because he does not understand his mother’s traditional view of death: “[Pat] sat moodily between [Abby and Johnny]... wondering why they talked so much about death in the old-fashioned way, as if it was something that made no difference at all” (*Collected Stories* 49). To Pat, death is the end of any form of existence, so it does not matter where one is buried because there is nothing in death. His beliefs regarding death reinforce his opinion that the other traditions that his mother values are useless. He as much as states this belief when Abby tries to convince him of her fear of unrest should she be buried among strangers and he replies dismissively, “Ah, foolishness, woman! That sort of thing is out of fashion.” The details of Pat’s more modern belief system help to portray him as Abby’s opposite, and Pat’s lack of slang sharpens the contrast between the two characters.

Abby's speech, on the other hand, is warm and full of slang—an aspect of her character that strengthens the idea that she represents traditional Ireland. Unlike her son, Abby views death as an extension of life. As Abby attempts to explain to her son why she speaks so often of the “old times in the country and long-dead neighbors,” she asks, “Isn't there more of us there than here?” (*Collected Stories* 49). The “us” that Abby mentions in this line refers to her old friends and neighbors, and she pleads with Pat to take her to Ummera when she dies because she will “never rest among strangers” (*Collected Stories* 50). Abby's desire to be buried in Ummera is driven by her desire to return home to be among her loved ones in the afterlife. Deborah Averill notes that “In this story the longing for home . . . is treated as an instinct deeply imbedded in the racial memory, and is related to the importance of a proper burial in Irish tradition” (*The Irish Short Story* 263). Abby's focus on traditional customs makes her a symbol of traditional Irish beliefs, and Pat's treatment of Abby throughout most of the story symbolizes the younger generation's dismissive attitude toward tradition.

Just as Pat initially has no patience for his mother's traditions, the younger generation in general tends to believe that these traditions are a waste of time, resulting in these traditions becoming more and more neglected and as a result dying out. The descriptions of Abby throughout the story strengthen this idea, as she is often described in terms of death and decay. During an exchange with her son, Abby is described as, “plastering down the two locks of yellowing hair, [her] half-dead eyes twitching and blinking in the candlelight, and [her] swollen crumpled face with the cheeks like cracked enamel” (*Collected Stories* 50). Additionally, in the story Abby is often acknowledged by others, but for the most part, her requests are largely ignored, much in the same way

that the younger generation in Ireland at this time is still aware of the older traditions and customs but do not follow them.

These details associate Abby with the dying out of the older Irish culture, and this association is emphasized through Abby's frequent use of slang and Pat's almost total neglect of slang. The conclusion of this story, however, is triumphant and hopeful, not only because Abby's wishes are ultimately fulfilled, but because of the emotional reaction of her son, who seems to have finally come to respect his mother's beliefs. In depicting Pat's reaction to his mother's death, O'Connor anticipates hopefully that modern Ireland may return to her traditional ways. Ultimately, the slang in this story, much like that in other works by O'Connor, conveys a particular idea to the reader, ensuring that the reader leaves the story having understood more clearly its significance.

However, while the inclusion of slang certainly makes for an engaging reading experience, it can also pose problems for the reader. The abundance of the slang terms and phrases often prevents readers who are unfamiliar with Irish slang from grasping the full or correct meaning of a statement or event in a work. As a result, readers are often unable to gather much meaning from the context, and ultimately they may be unable to appreciate the text fully. Resources are available to aid in defining the often obscure slang terms found in O'Connor's writings, but the terms occur with such frequency that it is inconvenient to leave the text so often to consult a number of dictionaries. What is needed, then, is a reference guide that is specific to the work being studied and that clearly defines the terms in question. Toward this end, in this thesis I have identified slang terms in the book *Collected Stories* by Frank O'Connor and have defined those terms according to the contexts in which they are found. The main purpose of this thesis

is to provide a reference guide to O'Connor's use of slang terms – a guide that will enrich the experience of reading his stories by presenting a clear definition of each term in question.

In attempting to create this slang reference guide, I had to address a crucial question: What criteria must a word or phrase meet to be considered an example of “slang”? Definitions of the word “slang” vary from the extremely vague to the very specific, and in fact “it is widely observed that while most people can recognize slang, they cannot define it” (Dumas and Lighter 10). Connie Eble takes a broad view and defines slang as “an ever changing set of colloquial words and phrases that speakers use to establish or reinforce social identity or cohesiveness within a group or with a trend or fashion in society at large” (11). While this definition is suitable for a person well acquainted with the culture from which the slang being studied is derived, the objective of this thesis called for a slightly more specific definition. Thus, for the purpose of this thesis, slang is defined in accordance with the meaning cited in *Webster's New World College Dictionary*, where “slang” is called “highly informal speech that is outside conventional or standard usage and consists both of coined words and phrases and of new or extended meanings attached to established terms” (“Slang,” def. 3). This definition allows for a broad interpretation of “slang”—both the word and the concept—but this definition is more focused on the language itself as opposed to other definitions, which rely on recognizing users' attempts to conform to a certain social identity.

Focusing on O'Connor's *Collected Stories* (1981), this thesis is arranged to ensure convenience of use. The terms are listed first by the title of the work in which they appear. Within this category, the terms are then identified by page number and position

on the page (T - top, M - middle, or B - bottom) on which they appear. The defined terms are listed in bold face and are followed by the definition of the term. Bracketed below the definition are my own brief comments and insights concerning the term and its meaning within the context of the work in which it appears. Thus, a sample entry appears as follows:

[3T] **chum** – often a chamber fellow or a constant companion; a close friend and a partner in crime (E. Partridge 218)

[Though technically the relationship between these men is that of captors and captives, the audience is first introduced to the Englishmen in the title as “guests,” and then in the first sentence, all the men are referred to as “chums,” or close friends.]

It is the purpose of this thesis to explore and examine the slang terms used in Frank O’Connor’s short stories, which were (and remain) his most famous and most highly praised works. The objective of this exploration is to provide readers with a reference guide to the slang used in his works. The accomplishment of this objective, in turn, ideally will provide readers with a greater understanding of Frank O’Connor’s writings, and, ultimately, with a greater understanding of his world.

“Guests of the Nation”

Almost certainly O’Connor’s most well known and widely read story, “Guests of the Nation” explores the formation of an unexpected bond between soldiers on opposing sides of a war. Though it is relatively short in length, “Guests” is a truly dense text. Touching on themes of friendship, disillusionment, and the conflicting questions surrounding the notion of good versus evil, this most famous story by O’Connor is still relevant today.

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[3T] **divil** – here, an alternate spelling of “devil” (Share 75)

[3T] **tray** – three, as in a number or a set (E. Partridge 1261)

[In this sentence, the “tray” is a set of three cards.]

[3B] **hot** – uncomfortable, well known to the authorities (E. Partridge 573)

[3B] **bloke** – occasionally contemptuous; a man, a fellow (E. Partridge 96)

[The use of the term “bloke” in this flashback is in direct contrast with the use of the term “chum,” which is used earlier in the present tense. The fact that the English prisoner initially refers to his captors by using a term that indicates

contempt but later refers to his captors as friends reveals that the relationship between these men grew from one of dislike to a bond of companionship.]

[4T] **hail-fellow-well-met** – to be on very easy or overly familiar terms (E. Partridge 519)

[This term reiterates the fact that Hawkins and Belcher are so well liked.]

[4M] **great warrant** – a good hand, a safe bet (Share 303)

[In describing the old woman as a “great warrant to scold,” Bonaparte is stating that she is quick-tempered—that it is a safe bet that she will scold someone.]

[4M] **lick of her tongue** – to attack a person with words (E. Partridge 1248)

[This term is again referring to the old woman’s tendency to scold the men.]

[4M] **queer** – strange, odd, peculiar, memorable (Wall 282)

[In light of future events in the story, it is significant that the term “queer” carries the connotation of being “memorable.” Furthermore, referring to Belcher in this way lends to his specter-like presence in the story.]

[4M] **parlatic** – alternate spelling for “paralytic” (Wall 266)

[Bonaparte is commenting that the old woman is so taken by surprise that she is dumb-struck.]

[4B] **fleeced** – to hit, beat, or strike (Shaw 94)

[In this context, it is most likely that Bonaparte is referring to the idea that Belcher could have bested them at cards.]

[5T] **fright**– any person of a ridiculous or grotesque appearance (E. Partridge 420)

[By describing Hawkins as a “fright to argue,” the narrator is simply emphasizing how much Hawkins enjoys arguing and how vicious and determined he becomes upon entering an argument.]

[5T] **comedown** – a descent in rank or dignity (*OED*)

[In this context, to give a “great comedown” means to put one in his or her place.]

[6B] **all and sundry** – each and every one (*OED*)

[6B] **saucy** – impudent or rude (E. Partridge 728)

[7T] **sweet damn-all** – nothing (E. Partridge 206)

[7M] **put the wind up them** – to make one feel anxious about the current situation (E. Partridge 960)

[This short exchange between the narrator and Noble reinforces the idea of the friendship that has been formed among the men and the guilt that the Irishmen feel. It is probable that Noble’s desire to spare the prisoners any worry could be a way of putting their possible executions out of his own mind as well.]

[8B] **cushy** – safe (E. Partridge 200)

[It is ironic that Hawkins uses a word that means safe to refer to a situation in which he is a prisoner of war. Furthermore, he happens to use this word on what turns out to be his death march.]

[8B] **shunts you off** - to be removed; to be dismissed (E. Partridge 766)

[8B] **bumped off** – to be killed (E. Partridge 108)

[The fact that Donovan uses such a casual term to tell his prisoners of their fate reveals the high degree of contempt that Donovan feels for them.]

[9M] **hot words** – inflammatory or abusive speech (E. Partridge 406)

[10M] **bob** – in British currency, a shilling or five-pence (E. Partridge 72)

[11M] **blighter** – a chap, fellow (E. Partridge 63)

[The word “blighter” can also refer to a contemptible person, but considering that Belcher refers to Hawkins by using this term after having just watched Hawkins die, it is more likely that it is used in a positive sense.]

[12M] **beads** – rosary (Spears 22)

[In this context, the woman is praying with her rosary. Considering that the old woman is particularly fond of Belcher, it is possible that not only is she praying for the souls of the executed Englishmen, but for the souls of her own countrymen as well.]

“The Late Henry Conran”

In the humorous tale entitled “The Late Henry Conran,” O’Connor deals with the complications of alcoholism and family life in Ireland. Upon discovering that his family has pronounced him dead after a twenty-five year absence, Henry Conran must return to his beloved home and clear his name by proving that he is, indeed, alive.

[13T] **divil a better** - there is nothing the matter with it (Share 71)

[Here, the old man is simply stating that he will tell an interesting story.]

[13M] **divilment** - mischief (Share 71)

[13M] **pelt** – completely naked (Share 212)

[14M] **go through** – to rob (E. Partridge 336)

[Here, Nellie is emphasizing the powerful emotions that are stirred up in her when seeing Henry in such a forlorn state.]

[14M] **tender** - a small ship used to carry passengers, luggage, mail, goods, stores, etc., to or from a larger vessel (*OED*)

[The fact that even as Henry and Nellie stand on the deck of the ship they are still discussing the state of their relationship allows the reader to see that although they quarrel incessantly, Henry and Nellie do seem to genuinely care for each other.]

[14M] **bad head** – a familiar term for either gender but more frequently for a male (Share 131)

[In this instance, Nellie is accusing Henry of being a bad husband.]

[14B] **main chance** – the best chance for personal or financial gain (E. Partridge 139)

[14B] **hobbled** – to acquire possession of (Share 136)

[The context of this term implies the possibility of Aloysius having stolen the car.]

[14B] **sops** – simpletons (E. Partridge 801)

[Ironically, this description of the girls' husbands seems quite similar to the description of their father even though the narrator believes Henry to be far superior.]

[14B] **row** – to react unfavorably; to raise a commotion (Share 157)

[Until this point in the story, it is likely that most readers feel only sympathy for Nellie. However, upon seeing Nellie cause such a commotion over her daughter-in-law's choice of nightgown, the audience receives a more complete picture regarding Nellie's personality and begins to understand the complexity of Nellie's and Henry's relationship.]

[15T] **begod** – a euphemism for “by God!” (Share 18)

[15B] **jamb** – either of the vertical sides of a doorway, arch, or window (*OED*)

[18M] **jade of hell** – a rough and contemptible woman (R. Spears 209)

[As Henry insults Nellie in this final exchange between the two, one cannot help but notice that it is in this situation—with Henry drunk and Nellie both scolding and caring for him—that the two seem to be happiest.]

[19T] **pate** – the crown of the skull (*OED*)

“The Bridal Night”

In “The Bridal Night,” O’Connor attempts to give the reader a glimpse into the life of Ireland’s country folk while exploring themes of isolation and repression. With a setting that could match that of any sweeping, epic novel, this short story is composed equally of Romanticism, mysticism, and realism.

[20T] **saluted** – to greet with some gesture or visible action (*OED*)

[20B] **take a peg out** – to ruin someone (E. Partridge 422)

[By saying that “it never seemed to take a peg out of her,” Denis’ mother is making an observation regarding Winnie’s strength of character and possibly her fondness for the solitary life.]

[21M] **stirabout** – a type of porridge (Share 273)

[21M] **praties** – potatoes (Share 222)

[21B] **cnuceen** – a small hill (Wall 114)

[21B] **forninst-** opposite to; against (Share 97)

[In light of this word’s definition, one might notice the peculiarity of the word choice. Here, the old woman could just as easily have stated that the nighttime

hours were ahead or approaching, but to state that the night was actually against Denis suggests that she is referring to something more than merely the time of day. It is likely that she is referring to the darkened mental state that takes hold of Denis during these nighttime hours.]

[22T] **stile** – a step or set of steps meant to aid in passing over a fence or a wall (*OED*)

[22M] **mayen** – very (Wall 240)

[The old woman is simply stating that she is very strong.]

[23B] **boreen** – a narrow road or path (Wall 78)

[23B] **asthore** – a term of endearment meaning “treasure” (Share 7)

[24T] **played out** – drained of energy or effectiveness (*OED*)

[One might note the irony in this statement in that while Sean insists that Winnie is too tired to stay with Denis, it is actually during this night that she will be of the most help to him.]

[24M] **oye whisht** – an exclamation ordering one to be silent (Share 309)

“The Grand Vizier’s Daughters”

The complexities of domestic relationships are often explored in O’Connor’s works, but what makes “The Grand Vizier’s Daughters” different from O’Connor’s other short stories is the portrayal of the storyteller father. Though the father is described as an alcoholic and “the world’s worst town clerk,” O’Connor is able to depict this character in such a way that in spite of his negative characteristics, he is still admirable and worthy of his children’s respect.

[26M] **on the skite** – engaged in serious drinking (Share 260)

[Based on the context of this statement, it seems to be a common occurrence for the narrator’s uncle to be intoxicated.]

[26B] **wishing** – desirable (*OED*)

[27T] **a drop taken** – slightly inebriated (Share 78)

[At this point in the story, it has already been established that the narrator’s uncle is heavily intoxicated. Therefore, the mention of Josie being frightened of her father when he is only slightly intoxicated allows the reader to assume that Josie must be terrified of her father in his current state. It is important to remember this fact in order to fully understand the significance of Josie’s actions at the end of the story.]

[28T] **yobs** – a “yob” is a a boy, lout, or hooligan (*OED*)

[As it can be assumed that the Grand Vizier is meant to represent the father himself, it is interesting that the father would make it a point that the Grand Vizier is in no way similar to a lout or a hooligan; however, based on the narrator’s description, that is exactly how the father is seen. The father, then, is indirectly asking his children to see him in a different light.]

[28T] **plus-fours** – short, loose trousers that are fastened just below the knee, worn generally for field sports (*OED*)

[28M] **butties** – friends or workmates (Wall 93)

[28B] **begor** – a euphemism for “by God!” (Share 18)

[28B] **ould guff** – meaningless talk (Share 120)

[The fact that Nora calls her husband's story meaningless talk is ironic in light of the uncle's intentions.]

[29T] **root** – to drag, tear, or remove by force (*OED*)

[29B] **gilt** – covered with gold (*OED*)

[It is worth noting that the father uses words such as “barbaric” and “gilt” while describing the Muftis' palace, especially when considering the idea that the Muftis could represent Hennessy and his family.]

[29B] **pate** – the crown of the skull (*OED*)

[30B] **back-chat** – impertinent replies, especially to a superior (*OED*)

[31M] **wisha** – an exclamation meaning “well” or “indeed”; placed at the beginning of a sentence to express surprise (Wall 251)

[31M] **bad cess** – invocation of misfortune (Share 9)

[31B] **raking galoot** – uncouth, awkward man (Share 104)

[This description of Josie's father is in direct contrast to the description of him after he finishes his story. This difference suggests that it took the father's revelation of the truth about the family's situation to the daughter for the children to be able to fully appreciate him and no longer be ashamed of him.]

[33T] **quays** – man-made wharfs (*OED*)

“Song Without Words”

In one of O'Connor's many works exploring the world of the clergy, “Song Without Words” introduces Brothers Arnold and Michael. Having taken a vow of silence, both

men struggle not only with the loneliness of their new positions but also with leaving behind the worldly pleasures that bring them such happiness.

[33B] **great name** – a fine reputation (Webster 956)

[34B] **jamb** - either of the vertical sides of a doorway, arch, or window (*OED*)

[35T] **horse box** – a stall (*OED*)

[36B] **running another man** – to contend with another person in a race; to pit against each other (*OED*)

[In context, when Brother Arnold reveals that the girl he had been in love with was “running another man,” it is most likely that he is stating that the girl was romantically involved with another man.]

[36B] **tick tack man** – having to do with telegraphy (*OED*)

[In this instance, a “tick tack man’s signal” is just a movement of the face so minor that it is likened to the tick of a telegraph.]

[36B] **horsy** – addicted to horses, horse racing, and matters of the stable (*OED*)

[The abundance of horse and racing imagery used in this story serves to strengthen the idea that these two men formed a bond over a shared interest.]

[37B] **bob** – in British currency, a shilling or five-pence (E. Partridge 72)

[38T] **cadging** – to go about begging (E. Partridge 119)

[38M] **stout** – strong beer (E. Partridge 836)

[38B] **turn** – a momentary shock caused by a sudden fright (*OED*)

[The momentary fright that the playing cards gave Brother Michael provides insight into the inner struggle that he is facing. He is not simply longing for his old pastimes out of boredom; rather, these worldly delights represent a life that he

left behind, perhaps regrettably. This revelation brings a sense of sadness to what until this point has been a humorous story.]

“The Shepherds”

Throughout his works, O’Connor deals with the church and members of the clergy in various ways, sometimes implying contempt and sometimes implying compassion. In “The Shepherds,” the latter is evident. Here, Fathers Whelan and Devine are intent upon bringing a lost lamb back into the fold but encounter some obstacles in doing so. Ultimately, this story portrays both priests in a sympathetic manner as they deal with the frustration that their positions can involve.

[41M] **give them the hunt** – to dismiss from employment or drive away (Wall 207)

[42T] **quays** – man-made wharfs (*OED*)

“The Long Road to Ummera”

Nearing the end of her life, an old woman who is lonely for her people and her past longs to return to the place of her youth. This longing is so strong that she is willing to defy her son’s wishes and travel the long road herself. O’Connor reveals his high regard for traditions and the past in this hauntingly sad tale filled with passion and grief.

[48M] **porter** – an ale or beer (Share 221)

[49M] **wisha** – an exclamation meaning “well” or “indeed”; placed at the beginning of a sentence to express surprise (Wall 251)

[49M] **arrah** – an exclamation meaning “But now!” or “Truly!” (Share 6)

[49B] **och** – an exclamation expressing sorrow, regret, weariness, or impatience (Share 201)

[In this context, Abby is probably expressing impatience with her son as he is repeatedly questioning her and making negative comments regarding her beliefs and wishes.]

[49B] **musha** – an exclamation meaning “Well!”(Share 4)

[50T] **amossa** – an exclamation meaning “Well!” (Share 4)

[50M] **pot-stick** – a stick used for stirring porridge (*OED*)

[Abby’s description is almost completely comprised of harsh images that repeatedly refer to her mental and physical decay. Because the narrator describes her in this way, the reader is likely to picture her from the very beginning of the story as though she is already dying rather than as a living, functioning person. This description also suggests that because her physical decay is so obvious, Abby knows that her life will soon end, which is why she begins to make arrangements with her son.]

[50B] **gorsoon** – a boy; the term is often used in a derogatory sense (Share 106)

[Because Abby uses this particular word rather than the more common “boy,” which she uses in many other instances in the story, she is likely using this term in a derogatory sense. The use of this term could refer to Pat’s lack of life experience and, in turn, his lack of wisdom in comparison to Abby’s .]

[51M] **boreen** - a narrow road or path (Wall 78)

[51M] **overright** – opposite; in front of (Share 206)

[Abby's desire for her son to address her old neighbors shows the value that she places on keeping her word, especially when it is likely that many of her neighbors have already passed away.]

[52M] **jarvey** – a person who drives a car (*OED*)

[52M] **gob** – mouth (Wall 77)

[53T] **jamb** - either of the vertical sides of a doorway, arch, or window (*OED*)

[53T] **beads** - rosary (Spears 22)

[Here, Abby prays with her rosary beads in hand.]

[53M] **oinseach** – foolish woman (Share 201)

[Throughout the story, Abby is often treated as and called foolish or crazy based on her reverence for the dead and her belief in a spirit world. However, by the end of the story, her belief seems to make an impact on her son.]

[54M] **wishing** – desirable (*OED*)

[54B] **whisht** – an exclamation ordering one to be silent (Share 309)

[73M] **midges** – small insects resembling gnats (*OED*)

“The Cheapjack”

Although O'Connor shows compassion for the institution of the clergy in previous stories, in “The Cheapjack” this is not the case. The story concerns Sam Higgins, the loud and opinionated headmaster of the local school. Upon finding out that the corrupt local parish priest has placed a new teacher in the school, Sam finds it difficult to keep his opinions to himself and ultimately is punished.

[56T] **good skin** – a term of affection, usually referring to males (Share 259)

[The narrator initially suggests to the reader that Sam is well liked “but too honest.” Traditionally, honesty is a virtue that is highly valued in the Catholic church, but ironically, this very virtue puts Sam at odds with the local priest.]

[56M] **on a skite** – a drinking session (Beecher)

[57B] **go-as-you-please** – unconfined by rules (E. Partridge 335)

[In light of later events, it is ironic that the context of this term implies that Sam admires Mrs. MacCann’s free-spirited nature.]

[57B] **begod** – a euphemism for “By God!” (Share 18)

[58T] **off his rocker** – mad or extremely eccentric (E. Partridge 702)

[The context of this statement shows that not only is it possible that Jerry is mentally ill, but also that he could possibly be a pedophile. Although Jerry is not a clergyman, it cannot be a coincidence that the plot of this story is driven by the actions of the corrupt Father Ring and Jerry—a parishioner of questionable character who wills his entire estate to the church, leaving his wife and children penniless. By portraying these two characters associated with organized religion in a negative light, O’Connor indirectly implies his distaste for those people who are involved in the church yet are morally corrupt.]

[58M] **rare gas** – a lot of fun (Share 106)

[62T] **gom** – a foolish person (Beecher 43)

[Although Nancy refers to Carmody as a foolish person, it is safe to assume that she is at least intrigued by him based on the frequency of their interactions.]

[63M] **guff** – referring to mist, fog, smoke; empty talk (Share 121)

[63B] **cheapjack** – a peddler of inferior goods (*OED*)

[One might note that Sam, who is known for his honesty, likens Carmody to a peddler of cheap or shoddy goods, a characterization which also indirectly implies that Carmody is inferior and possibly a dishonest person.]

“The Luceys”

Often, the strained relationships within a single family seem to grow worse rather than better over time. In the case of the Lucey family, Tom Lucey refuses to reconcile with his brother in an attempt to somehow show loyalty to his dead son which was not evident during his son’s life. Delving into themes of guilt and pride, “The Luceys” is a tragic tale that gives the reader a glimpse into middle-class Irish life.

[68T] **gilt** – covered with gold (*OED*)

[72T] **begod** – a euphemism for “By God!” (Share 18)

[72M] **taking it to the fair** – to exaggerate or overreact (Share 282)

[At this point in the story, Charlie, initially an agreeable boy, has now become the primary voice of reason in his family.]

[76B] **wisha** – an exclamation meaning “well” or “indeed”; placed at the beginning of a sentence to express surprise (Wall 251)

[76B] **row** – a disturbance; a quarrel (E. Partridge 709)

[78T] **blackness** – the quality or state of being black (*OED*)

[Here, Ben simply comments on the unwavering contempt that Tom has shown over the years.]

“Uprooted”

A common theme in O'Connor's works is that of the clash between the cultures of the city and the country. In "Uprooted," the reader is invited into the world of two brothers who have left the country home of their youth for the more sophisticated world found in the city. Both brothers, however, become not only disillusioned with the city life they have chosen, but lonely, frustrated, and ultimately trapped between the two worlds.

[82B] **rows** – disturbances; quarrels (E. Partridge 709)

[Ned's stubborn determination to move to the city has caused many quarrels between him and his father. Unfortunately, this very life for which he fought so hard has left him feeling disconnected and confused.]

[82B] **quay** – a man-made wharf (*OED*)

[83B] **claret** – a reddish purple color (*OED*)

[84T] **bonhomie** – good nature (*OED*)

[The passage in which this term appears gives key insight into Tom's position as a clergyman. In trying to overcome the alienation that he feels toward his family since joining the clergy, he can, at times, overcompensate.]

[84B] **wet the tea** – make tea (Share 306)

[84B] **frieze** – a coarse, woolen cloth (*OED*)

[85T] **wisha** – an exclamation meaning "well" or "indeed"; placed at the beginning of a sentence to express surprise (Wall 251)

[85B] **blowing** – to fume, storm, or speak angrily (E. Partridge 67)

[86T] **jamb** - either of the vertical sides of a doorway, arch, or window (*OED*)

[86M] **musha** – exclamation meaning "Well!" (Share 4)

[87B] **a pet day** – a fine day (Share 213)

[88M] **tarred** – covered with tar (*OED*)

[90T] **gob** – mouth (Wall 77)

[Since Tom and Ned take their shoes off so quickly, it is likely that the special treatment that their father gives them is unwanted. They are trying to bridge the growing gap between themselves and the rest of the family, and because Tom responds to his father so harshly, he reveals that it is likely that he and Ned both feel like outsiders.]

[90B] **pert** – open, outspoken, lively (*OED*)

[90B] **skyed** – (of a picture) hung on the upper line at the Exhibition of the Royal Academy (E. Partridge 1077)

[Obviously, the photos to which the narrator refers to are not displayed at an exhibition. It is more likely that the narrator is being facetious and commenting on the simple state of the home.]

[91T] **old coot** – a simpleton (E. Partridge 179)

[91T] **tea-cosy** – a quilted covering placed over a tea kettle to retain warmth (*OED*)

[91T] **hooshed** – cry to drive fowl (Share 144)

[92T] **boreen** – a country lane or a minor road (Wall 44)

[92B] **bad cess** – an invocation of misfortune (Share 9)

[The girls have been waiting all day for Tom and Ned to arrive, and now they are pretending not to hear them. Sean, wishing a “bad cess” on the girls, is simply taking part in a playful exchange between the girls and himself, Tom, and Ned.]

[92B] **aru** – a term of endearment (Share 6)

[92B] **cimeens** – pranks (Share 51)

[93T] **puss** – pouting (Beecher 76)

[Here, Tom is remarking on Norah’s unpleasant features.]

[95B] **glauming** – grab, clutch (Share 111)

[96T] **poteen** – illicit whiskey (Share 221)

[97T] **ramaishing** – nonsense, senseless talk (Share 230)

[Based on the context in which this term appears, one might infer that Tom’s nightmare has to do with the desperation and helplessness that he feels in his current situation.]

“The Mad Lomasneys”

Often in his works, O’Connor paints a vivid picture of social traditions and customs that shape the thoughts and actions of his characters. The characters of “The Mad Lomasneys” are no different. Rita Lomasney is one particular character who makes most of her decisions based on impulse or whim in an attempt to defeat the conformity that is expected of her. However, her method of thwarting the social system ultimately leaves her trapped in an unfortunate situation.

[99T] **quay** – a man-made wharf (*OED*)

[99B] **pucking** – to strike (Beecher 76)

[100T] **cripes** – exclamation meaning “Christ!” (E. Partridge 191)

[100M] **dotty** – weak or dizzy (E. Partridge 237)

[Here, Rita is likely implying that Ned’s uncle is weak.]

[101M] **gob** – mouth (Wall 77)

[102T] **soppy** – foolishly sentimental (E. Partridge 801)

[It is important to bear in mind that Rita often protests any form of sentimentality even though her actions, at times, reveal the opposite. Because she is neither consistently sentimental nor showing a lack thereof, it is possible that this aspect of her personality is forced in an attempt to rebel against what she believes is expected of her as a young lady.]

[102B] **how's tricks** – a friendly greeting (E. Partridge 578)

[103T] **sack** – a dismissal from employment (E. Partridge 1004)

[103T] **tin** – money or cash (E. Partridge 1235)

[105B] **mawkish** – of unpleasant or indeterminate appearance; sentimental (Beecher 65)

[Until this point in the story, the structure of Rita's face has always been described in masculine terms, but now she is described as "soft." Therefore, based on the context in which the term "mawkish" appears, it is unlikely that Ned is describing Rita's appearance as "unpleasant"; rather, he is simply commenting that Rita now has a sentimental look about her.]

[105B] **floosther** – confuse or fluster (Share 95)

[106T] **wax** – a rage (E. Partridge 1312)

[106T] **begor** – a euphemism for "by God!" (Share 18)

[106B] **old one** – slightly derogatory term for an old woman; more specifically, mother or wife (Share 205)

[The casual nature of Rita's description of this event, including this term she uses in reference to Tony's mother, seems to directly contradict the overwhelming feelings she has for Tony. Therefore, it is likely that Rita is using this exchange as another attempt to shock Ned and her family.]

[106B] **ructions** – uproar (Beecher 79)

[106B] **chucked** – to toss or throw with little arm action (E. Partridge 216)

[107M] **jade** – a rough and contemptible woman (R. Spears 209)

[108T] **wisha** - an exclamation meaning “well” or “indeed”; placed at the beginning of a sentence to express surprise (Wall 251)

[109M] **chancer** – a liar; one too confident of his ability (Share 48)

[Rita’s admission that she is often overconfident in her own abilities is an important point to keep in mind in order to fully grasp the significance of her actions at the end of the story.]

[109B] **kip** – a brothel (Share 159)

[Here, Rita is referring to the convent school as a brothel.]

[109B] **keen** – fond of, greatly interested in (E. Partridge 636)

[110T] **look-out** – responsibility, concern, business (E. Partridge 699)

[Throughout the story, Ned is very guarded when it comes to Rita—especially regarding his feelings for her. However, after Rita states that she and Ned cannot marry because it would be unfair to him, his response reveals that he likely cares for Rita a great deal.]

[110T] **cod** – to deceive, joke, or commit fraud (Beecher 18)

[110T] **skite** – a drinking session (Beecher 86)

[In light of Rita’s future actions, it is ironic when she states that in an effort to avoid disappointing Ned, she would always consider what he might think of a particular action before going through with it.]

[110M] **scut** – a contemptible individual (Share 249)

[110B] **scalping** – to buy very cheap so as to sell at a less than ruling price (E. Partridge 1016)

[111B] **sticker** – a lingering guest (E. Partridge 1153)

[Ironically, the term “sticker” can also refer to a commodity that is difficult to sell; this description could also fit Justin, for in spite of being a nice, successful lawyer, he is not greatly cared for by any of the Lomasney girls.]

[112M] **soft** – easy, idle, or lazy (E. Partridge 1110)

[112B] **Janey Mack** – a common expletive (Share 149)

[114T] **thickest** – stupid or obtuse (Share 286)

[115T] **stout** – a reliable, courageous, and likeable fellow (E. Partridge 1162)

[116B] **give me the push** – a dismissal, especially from employment (E. Partridge 936)

[118B] **devil’s own neck** – to show impudence or great assurance (E. Partridge 783)

[119T] **codding** – to deceive, joke, or fraud (Beecher 18)

[Here, Nellie accuses Rita of treating Ned poorly and leading him to believe that she is in love with him, only to then marry someone else.]

[119B] **broolly** – an umbrella (E. Partridge 138)

“News for the Church”

In “News for the Church,” O’Connor humorously presents the downside to the fact that a priest is responsible for hearing the sins of his parishioners. Father Cassidy, in the middle of taking a young girl’s confession, realizes that the parishioner has not come with a desire to confess her sins, but rather to relive them. As the pair then determine to

outdo each other, Father Cassidy takes drastic measures to ensure that the girl leaves the confessional a changed person.

[122M] **tight** – tipsy (E. Partridge 1233)

[122M] **devilment** – mischief (Share 72)

[123T] **jossers** – simpletons (E. Partridge 628)

[123B] **cranks** – odd or eccentric person[s] (E. Partridge 265)

“Judas”

A recurring character in many of O’Connor’s short stories is the Irish mother. At her best, she is often the savior of the family, but at her worst, she can be jealous, overbearing, or willfully absent. “Judas” deals with a jealous mother’s relationship with her son. While O’Connor makes no attempt to depict Jerry’s mother as a villain, this story explores the negative effect that a jealous mother can have on her son.

[128B] **doll** – a lady (E. Partridge 326)

[131B] **cripes** – exclamation meaning “Christ!” (E. Partridge 191)

[132T] **hell for leather** – desperately and vigorously (E. Partridge 546)

[The definition of this term indicates that Jerry escapes this conversation by running away as fast as he possibly can. Jerry’s desperate escape is prompted by the possible embarrassment he will face if Paddy discovers Jerry’s true intentions. Additionally, Jerry is motivated by the guilt he feels for leaving his mother alone, even for a short while.]

[133B] **doing a tangle** – get[ting] into trouble with another person (E. Partridge 1202)

[Based on the context in which this term appears, Kitty's mother seems to believe that Kitty and Jerry are engaging in some sort of physical relationship.]

[133B] **spooned** – to flirt, court, or make love to (E. Partridge 1130)

[Here, Kitty openly admits to her experiences with other men, and Jerry slowly realizes that the fantasy that he has constructed is utterly and absolutely wrong. While usually the idea of a person's fantasy being destroyed by reality is a negative occurrence, it seems to be a positive occurrence for Jerry. For the first time, his neuroticism seems to be quelled, and he actually lives in the moment rather than being preoccupied with his own thoughts.]

[134M] **guttersnipe** – a gatherer of refuse from the gutter (E. Partridge 516)

[134M] **featherpated** – empty-headed or silly (*OED*)

[134M] **keen** – fond of; greatly interested in (E. Partridge 636)

[134B] **jade** – a rough and contemptible woman (R. Spears 209)

[135M] **blackguarding** – to abuse or vilify (Share 24)

[Jerry is implying that he has been behaving badly. In reality, Jerry has been doing nothing of the sort, but it is better for his mother to think that he is behaving badly than for her to know that Jerry has been out with a girl.]

[136M] **nipper** – a thief, a cheat, or a child (E. Partridge 794)

[136M] **storeen** – treasure, my darling (Wall 34)

[136M] **bawn** – fair haired, pretty, beloved (Wall 38)

[Here, we see Jerry so overcome with guilt at having betrayed his mother that he reverts to a childlike state in which he cries on his mother's shoulder as she calls him these pet names that are usually reserved for male children.]

“The Babes in the Wood”

In this story, we are presented with three mother figures, and none of them represents the ideal. Terry, an illegitimate child, is left in the care of the harsh, elderly Mrs. Early. His primary sources of comfort are his jealous, nine-year-old friend Florrie and his aunt, whose visits are infrequent at best. Written from Terry’s perspective, “The Babes in the Woods” explores the feelings of abandonment, frustration, and confusion that Terry is forced to deal with at such a young age.

[136B] **gansey** – a wool pull-over, formerly used by fishermen (Share 105)

[136B] **gas** – a lot of fun (Share 106)

[136B] **clout** – a heavy blow with the hand or object (Beecher 17)

[Although Mrs. Early is described as a harsh woman, later in the story she proves to be somewhat protective of Terry; this implies that despite her harsh nature, she does care about him.]

[137M] **fag** – a cigarette (E. Partridge 373)

[138T] **Jay** – an abbreviation for the exclamation, “Jesus!” (Share 150)

[138B] **wallop** – fast movement with much fluttering of the arms, legs, and clothes (Share 303)

[Based on the context, it is likely that Terry is expressing fear of his aunt hitting or beating him as Mrs. Early does whenever he mutters a profanity. The fact that

his aunt only laughs at this utterance reveals the stark differences between herself and Mrs. Early.]

[139B] **pennorth** – an abbreviation for “penny-worth” (E. Partridge 868)

[141B] **codding** – to deceive, joke, or fraud (Beecher 18)

[As cruel as Florrie’s taunts are, they reveal not only that she is jealous of Terry’s visits with his aunt, but also that she fears losing Terry to someone else. Florrie wants Terry to view her as a mother figure because she wants someone who loves her and will not leave her.]

[142M] **botheration** – the act of bothering; a petty annoyance (E. Partridge 122)

[Here, we see that though Mrs. Early may be harsh with Terry, she does genuinely seem to care about him.]

[142M] **cut** – appearance (Share 66)

[143M] **blooming** – a mild intensive adjective (E. Partridge 98)

[In this scene, even though Terry remains unaware, Mr. Walker is trying to gain favor with him by commenting on Terry’s strength and intelligence.]

[143B] **wisha** – an exclamation meaning “well” or “indeed”; placed at the beginning of a sentence to express surprise (Wall 251)

[The occurrence of this term marks the first time in the story that Terry’s aunt speaks harshly to him. It is likely that she wants Terry to make a good impression on Mr. Walker and that she wants Mr. Walker to view her as a good mother who is capable of rearing well-behaved children.]

“The Frying Pan”

The plot of “The Frying Pan” concerns a lonely priest and an unhappily married couple. Father Fogarty and Jerry attended seminary together, but ultimately, Jerry was unable to commit to the life of a priest. Years later, both the friendship between the men and Jerry’s marriage are under an incredible strain that brings about some unexpected confessions regarding a love that cannot be fulfilled.

[149B] **on my ear** – in disgrace (E. Partridge 357)

[150T] **bob** – in British currency, a shilling or five-pence (E. Partridge 72)

[150T] **go on** – an exclamation of surprise, incredulity, or derision (E. Partridge 476)

“The Miracle”

Science and religion go head to head in this clever tale by O’Connor. The local canon, who is not impressed with Dr. Bobby Healy’s abilities as the local physician, has done his best to discredit Dr. Healy. Having had enough of this, Dr. Healy decides to team up with a Jesuit priest in order to perform a truly impressive miracle.

[160T] **brook** – to enjoy the use of; to make profit by (*OED*)

[160B] **wisha** – an exclamation meaning “well” or “indeed”; placed at the beginning of a sentence to express surprise (Wall 251)

[161B] **keen** – fond of, greatly interested in (E. Partridge 636)

[163T] **Old Nick** – the devil (E. Partridge 790)

[While the suggestion that the priest’s hatred of a Jesuit is second only to his hatred of the devil is extreme, this comparison reveals the contempt that Bobby also feels for the priest as Bobby is fully aware of this hatred.]

[163T] **skirt** – a woman (E. Partridge 1080)

[164B] **bloke** – occasionally contemptuous; a man, a fellow (E. Partridge 96)

[166T] **screech** – usually referring to whiskey or whiskey’s effect on females (E. Partridge 1025)

[Here, the term is likely showing contempt or at least disrespect towards Nellie.

The term could also imply that Nellie has a drinking problem.]

[166T] **moony** – a silly fool (E. Partridge 752)

[166M] **begor** – a euphemism for “by God!” (Share 18)

“Don Juan’s Temptation”

Once a romantic, Gussie Leonard now considers himself to be a sophisticated cynic when it comes to love. After meeting Helen, however, Gussie is tempted to revert to his old romantic ways and to believe in the possibility of finding, as Helen puts it, “the real thing.” Ultimately, “Don Juan’s Temptation” is an exploration of the strains between idealism and reality, and also between trust and betrayal.

[167M] **whore** – referring to a prostitute or a semi-affectionate term for a man (E. Partridge 1336)

[Based on the context in which this term appears, it is likely that the narrator is referring to men rather than prostitutes.]

[170T] **brassy** – shameless or impudent (E. Partridge 130)

[170M] **spoon** – to flirt, court, or make love to (E. Partridge 1130)

[It is most likely that Gussie uses this term in reference to Helen flirting with other men rather than having any sort of physical relationship with other men.]

[171T] **scarifying** – to scare or frighten (*OED*)

[172B] **heart out** – to work extremely hard with anxiety (E. Partridge 1085)

[One might note that while Gussie does not seem particularly attached to any woman, he vehemently defends Francie’s character in the face of Helen’s criticism. This action implies that while Gussie is not in love with Francie, he respects Francie’s openness and willingness to love him.]

[173T] **cripes** – exclamation meaning “Christ!” (E. Partridge 191)

[173T] **gobs** – mouths (Wall 77)

“First Confession”

Young Jackie is petrified of having to make his first confession to the local priest since he thereby will have to choose between either revealing his plans to kill his grandmother or risking eternal damnation. Jackie finds no comfort at home with only his antagonizing mother and sister to turn to, but to his surprise, Jackie eventually meets an unlikely ally. Told from Jackie’s perspective, “First Confession” gives the reader a humorous and sympathetic glimpse into the anxiety a young boy experiences when participating in the ritual of confession for the first time.

[175B] **porter** - an ale or beer (Share 221)

[176M] **flaking** – a beating or a thrashing (Share 94)

[176M] **heart-scalded** – mortification or vexation (Share 132)

[It is likely that Jackie feels mortified because his grandmother caused him to receive a beating rather than because of any feeling of guilt or remorse.]

[178M] **caffler** – a contemptible little fellow who gives saucy, cheeky, or foolish talk (Share 42)

[While Nora puts on a show of being sweet and good in front of most people, she is consistently mean and spiteful in her dealings with Jackie. This could be the result of jealousy that she feels towards Jackie since Jackie makes no effort to be particularly good.]

[180T] **clip** – a smart blow (Share 54)

[180M] **old one** – slightly derogatory term for an old woman; more specifically, mother or wife (Share 205)

[The fact that the priest uses a mildly disrespectful term for the old women waiting in the church suggests that the priest will be a friend to Jackie.]

[180B] **cackle** – idle talk (E. Partridge 172)

[Based on the context, it is likely that Jackie is making an observation regarding the old women based either on what he often sees large groups of women do, or based on what he sees this particular group of women doing. Either way, the connotation is that these women, much like Nora, may present themselves in a pious way even when their words are useless.]

[181M] **begor** – a euphemism for “by God!” (Share 18)

[While Nora and the old women certainly would not approve of the priest’s methods, it becomes clear that the priest feels sympathy for Jackie. By using exclamations such as this, the priest puts himself and Jackie on the same level and quells Jackie’s fears regarding confession.]

[181B] **keen** – fond of, greatly interested in (E. Partridge 636)

[181B] **Jay** – an abbreviation for the exclamation “Jesus!” (Share 150)

[182T] **puss** – pouting face (Beecher 76)

“The Man of the House”

In the absence of his father, young Gus must assume the role of caretaker of his sick mother until she is well again. Entrusted with a large task for a boy of his age, Gus must retrieve medicine for his mother. Along the way, however, he faces a great temptation he must overcome in order to ensure his mother’s well being.

[183B] **sup** – a supplement (E. Partridge 1177)

[As Gus’s mother asks for more water for the tea, Gus’s response is that of an equal, agreeing that the tea is too strong. This exchange between mother and son reveals that Gus is readily accepting his role as caretaker to his mother.]

[184B] **pate** – the crown of the skull (*OED*)

[185T] **wisha** – an exclamation meaning “well” or “indeed”; placed at the beginning of a sentence to express surprise (Wall 251)

[186T] **old flower** – an expression of sentimental affection, usually between two males (Share 204)

[As the bartender greets Gus in the familiar way that he might greet any regular patron, Gus’s discomfort heightens the contrast between Gus’s youth and the maturity that his responsibility requires.]

[188B] **lob** – a large quantity of money (Share 171)

[189T] **treacle** – a thick, inferior port (E. Partridge 1261)

“The Drunkard”

In “The Drunkard,” O’Connor offers the reader an ironic glimpse into the life of a complicated yet loving family. Upon hearing of the death of an old acquaintance, Mick Delaney decides that he must attend the funeral in honor of his old friend. An alcoholic, Mick has periods of sobriety that are often interrupted because of occasions such as this, so in an effort to keep her husband sober, Mrs. Delaney sends their son Larry along with his father to the funeral. The events that ensue leave the reader wondering whether or not the title refers to the father or a different character.

[193M] **masher** – a good looking man (Beecher 64)

[194M] **shawly** – a lower class woman; a street vendor, from the large shawls they wear (Wall 14)

[195M] **porter** – an ale or beer (Share 221)

[196B] **begor** – a euphemism for “by God!” (Share 18)

[196B] **bobby** – a nickname for a policeman (*OED*)

[197T] **whisht** – an exclamation ordering one to be silent (Share 309)

[As Mick implores his son to be silent, one might note that the very characteristic that Mick finds so appalling is the same trait that Larry and his mother dislike in him. Thus, Larry has become a mirror for his father, and Mick reacts to this mirror in a way that is similar to the way many people act when observing their own shortcomings in other people: with disgust.]

[197B] **wisha** – an exclamation meaning “well” or “indeed”; placed at the beginning of a sentence to express surprise (Wall 251)

[198T] **jasus** – an alternative spelling for the exclamation “Jesus!” (Share 150)

[198T] **gassy** – something very funny or extraordinary (Share 106)

[Here, Larry expresses a growing fury at the idea that the entire neighborhood is laughing at him.]

[198T] **drop taken** – slightly inebriated (Share 78)

[Larry is simply commenting on the belief that a person cannot have even the smallest sip of alcohol without being discussed by the whole neighborhood.]

[199M] **corner-boy** – a loiterer without intent (Share 59)

[Larry's mother's expression of dismay over the idea that Larry might grow up to be lazy and a drunkard like his father is not entirely sincere. While she seems to be showing concern for Larry's future, she is actually attempting to shame Larry's father into changing his ways.]

[199M] **show** – any public display (E. Partridge 1063)

“Christmas Morning”

Larry Delaney, a character who appears often in O'Connor's stories, is a mischievous but good-hearted young boy. To Larry's dismay, however, his mother is convinced that he will turn out to be just like his father: a drunk. In an effort to steer Larry along the right path, Mrs. Delaney leaves a special present for Larry in his Christmas stocking, and, as a result, both mother and son make unfortunate discoveries one Christmas morning.

[200T] **pet** – a favorite (E. Partridge 872)

[Although Larry views Sonny as his mother's favorite, Mrs. Delaney does care for Larry, as is evident in her actions throughout the story.]

[200M] **cripes** – exclamation meaning “Christ!” (E. Partridge 191)

[200B] **dear** – euphemism for “the dear Lord” (Share 74)

[201T] **rooting** – to drag, tear, or remove by force (*OED*)

[201T] **hand** – an expert (E. Partridge 525)

[Ironically, although Larry can barely be made to sit in class and do his school work, he readily considers the idea of writing a letter to Santa if doing so will ensure that he will receive presents.]

[201T] **chance** – to risk or take one’s chances in (E. Partridge 196)

[201M] **lang** – playing truant (Share 163)

[Here, Larry shows a typical reaction for a child his age by laying the blame for his skipping class at the feet of his instructor.]

[201M] **mitching** – playing truant (Share 187)

[201M] **quays** – man-made wharfs (*OED*)

[201B] **stuffed up** – to hoax, humbug, befool (E. Partridge 1171)

[Here, Larry implies that his actions give Sonny a false sense of pride.]

[201B] **jamb** – either of the vertical sides of a doorway, arch, or window (*OED*)

[202M] **old man** – a father (E. Partridge 825)

[This term indicates that Larry responds to Sonny in the same way that his father would respond.]

[204M] **drop** – a half measure of whiskey (Beecher 33)

[Here, Larry implies that his father is more inclined to sing when he has been drinking rather than referring to an actual portion of whiskey.]

[205M] **keen** – fond of, greatly interested in (E. Partridge 636)

“My First Protestant”

Though O'Connor's short stories often deal with the topic of religion, "My First Protestant" focuses more on the cultural effects of religion. Here, Dan Hogan recounts his past relationships with a Catholic family, the Dalys, and a Protestant girl, Winifred. Although all parties involved were at one time very close, their religious differences ultimately put a tremendous strain on their relationships, which suffer as a result.

[206B] **doing a line** – a romantic association (Share 170)

[207M] **saluted** – to greet with some gesture or visible action (*OED*)

[207B] **gibes** – a taunting speech; a jeer (*OED*)

[207B] **puck** – to strike (Beecher 76)

[207B] **gob** – mouth (Wall 77)

[208M] **dug with the wrong foot** – a characterization of an individual of another religious persuasion (Share 73)

[The appearance of this phrase is the first indication that religion might be a factor that comes between Winifred and the Dalys. Previously, Winifred's and the Daly's religious views were mentioned, but they were mentioned in a way that did not imply that the opposing religious views might cause trouble.]

[209M] **pshaw** – an exclamation used to dismiss an idea or notion (*OED*)

[209M] **spooning** – to flirt, court, or make love to (E. Partridge 1130)

[No indication is given that Winifred and Joe are engaging in a physical relationship; therefore, the term is most likely used in reference to flirting or courting.]

[210B] **termagant** – name of an imaginary deity held in medieval Christendom to be worshipped by Muslims, represented as violent and overbearing (*OED*)

[As the story progresses, Dan, who is Catholic, grows more and more resentful of and confused by the constraints imposed on society by religion. Therefore, this instance of Dan comparing Winifred to an imaginary deity could symbolize Dan's confusion and disillusionment regarding religion.]

[212T] **blazes** – the flames of hell (E. Partridge 92)

[To pitch another person to the blazes can also mean to toss that person aside carelessly; therefore, it is useful to note the double meaning that this term carries in context. If Winifred had actually forsaken her family, married Joe, and converted to Catholicism, then she would figuratively have forsaken her family to hell also, based on her religious beliefs.]

[212B] **quays** – man-made wharfs (*OED*)

“Legal Aid”

When faced with a situation that requires legal counsel, two lawyers must ultimately forgo their traditional roles and, instead, become matchmakers. In “Legal Aid,” O'Connor uses humor to illustrate both the socio-economic strain between a farmer and a laborer, and the predicament in which a young couple finds themselves.

[215T] **touched** – slightly insane (E. Partridge 1256)

[215T] **plastered round** – drunk (Share 217)

[By stating that the daughter was “plastered round” a young man, the narrator is simply stating that the daughter was drunk and had passed out with a young man on the sofa.]

[215M] **galoot** – uncouth, awkward man (Share 104)

[215B] **begod** – a euphemism for “By God!” (Share 18)

[216B] **wisha** – an exclamation meaning “well” or “indeed”; placed at the beginning of a sentence to express surprise (Wall 251)

[217T] **pinch** – an arrest (E. Partridge 885)

[Here, the narrator compares married life to being legally arrested.]

[217T] **nature** – natural feeling, kindness (Share 195)

[217B] **bosthoon** – a fool or a blockhead (Share 32)

[218T] **jenny-ass** – an effeminate man (Share 151)

[218B] **chit** – applied, more or less contemptuously, to a child; a brat (*OED*)

[219T] **row** – a disturbance; a quarrel (E. Partridge 709)

[219M] **comedown** – a social or financial fall or humiliation (E. Partridge 242)

[219B] **getting their own back** – revenge, retribution (Beecher 5)

[220M] **musha** - an exclamation meaning “Well!” (Share 4)

[222T] **patch on** – not to be compared with (E. Partridge 859)

[It is most likely that here Cooper is trying to convince Ned that Delia is just as attractive, if not more so, than most other women. At this point, Ned is still against a marriage between Tom and Delia, so Cooper is indirectly encouraging Ned to allow the marriage so that he will not have to pay the financial settlement.]

“The Masculine Principle”

In “The Masculine Principle,” the reader is presented with two tenacious main characters.

In fact, it is the stubbornness of both Jim and Evelyn that causes most of the conflict in the story. The turbulent romance between Jim and Evelyn is strained, tested, and almost

lost on more than one occasion, but ultimately both characters seem to find exactly what they are seeking.

[223B] **shambling** – characterized by an irregular gait or motion (*OED*)

[This description of Myles portrays him as spineless, awkward, and emotional.

These characteristics are not traditionally associated with masculinity.]

[224T] **fast** – impudent (E. Partridge 380)

[224T] **flighty** – guided by whim or fancy rather than judgment (*OED*)

[224T] **matey** – a companion or comrade (E. Partridge 727)

[Based on the context in which this term appears, the narrator is suggesting that Evelyn's actions project an air of masculinity, which is uncommon among most young ladies.]

[225T] **wishing** – desirable (*OED*)

[226M] **knocked around** – to wander or roam aimlessly (E. Partridge 654)

[227M] **turn** – entertainment (Share 296)

[227M] **card** – a character; an odd fellow (E. Partridge 182)

[In this passage, Evelyn displays traditionally masculine characteristics. Because Evelyn is described at different points in the story as having both masculine and feminine traits, it would seem that O'Connor is deliberately attributing this duality to Evelyn.]

[227M] **half tight** – tipsy (E. Partridge 1233)

[227M] **lit up** – slightly drunk (E. Partridge 688)

[228B] **chewing** – talking (E. Partridge 206)

[At first, Jim's reaction to the fact that Evelyn steals his money and leaves for England may seem to be characteristic of his relaxed attitude. However, in light of future events, what at first seems like a relaxed attitude is revealed to be a stubborn determination to have his way.]

[229B] **tearing line** – a romantic association (Share 170)

[230T] **cutting** – blood curdling (E. Partridge 284)

[230B] **boreen** – a narrow road or path (Wall 78)

[230B] **heart-scalded** – mortification or vexation (Share 132)

[Though she claims to be mortified at her current state, it is most likely that Evelyn is referring to her uncomfortable living situation rather than to any guilt about how she previously treated Jim.]

[231T] **kip** - a brothel (Share 159)

[231T] **cadging** – to go about begging (E. Partridge 172)

[232M] **coddled** – to deceive, joke, or commit fraud (Beecher 18)

[232M] **get your own back** – revenge or retribution (Beecher 5)

[Despite her harsh words, it is likely that Evelyn knows very well that Jim is not trying to exact revenge on her for stealing his money. Instead, she is trying to manipulate him into marrying her sooner rather than later.]

[235T] **sack** – a dismissal from employment (E. Partridge 1004)

[235M] **begod** – a euphemism for “By God!” (Share 18)

[236B] **row** - a disturbance; a quarrel (E. Partridge 709)

[238M] **overright** – opposite, in front of (Share 206)

[238B] **toper** – a street; a tramp (E. Partridge 1252)

[239T] **doll** – a lady (E. Partridge 326)

“The Sentry”

Stationed in England, Father Michael MacEnerney is lonely and has few joys in his current situation other than frequent conversations with the three Irish nuns at the convent and keeping his vegetable garden. Upon catching a British sentry raiding his beloved garden, Father Michael flies into a rage that ultimately leaves the sentry in an unfortunate situation. In “The Sentry,” O’Connor continues an exploration of the proper decorum that is expected from members of the clergy and how difficult it is to live up to those ideals.

[241M] **nature** – natural feeling, kindness (Share 195)

[This comment from Sister Margaret is the first of many concerning her opinion of the British. However, one might note how these comments change over the course of the story.]

[242M] **lickspittles** – servile flatterers (*OED*)

[244T] **turn** – a favor (*OED*)

[Whether or not the sentry is telling the truth is never made explicitly clear in the story. However, one can safely assume that the sentry is telling the truth based on the low probability that he would leave his post and risk the punishment of death for a few onions.]

[244T] **sprat** – a small, herring-like fish (*OED*)

[Here, Father Michael is insulting the sentry by implying that he is insignificant.]

[245T] **clout** – a heavy blow with the hand or an object (Beecher 17)

[Attacking a man for stealing a few onions does not seem to be an appropriate way for a priest to behave, although it might seem more understandable if a farmer behaved in that way. This scene reveals a theme that is consistently found in O'Connor's works regarding the clergy: that the standard to which they are held is at best difficult and, at worst, impossible.]

[246T] **drop of Irish** – slightly inebriated (Share 78)

[248T] **cheeky** – impudent (E. Partridge 203)

[250T] **round** – to go around or detour (Share 240)

“The Lady of the Sagas”

Hopeless romantic Deirdre is convinced that in her town, romance is a thing of the past, and she longs for the days when men and women were more daring. She keeps company with handsome Tommy, who she believes is too boring for her to ever love. However, after Tommy reveals scandalous secrets regarding his past, Deirdre begins to see him in a different light.

[250M] **great shakes** – very fast pace (E. Partridge 1040)

[251T] **Law** – euphemism for “Lord!” (E. Partridge 668)

[251B] **begor** – a euphemism for “by God!” (Share 18)

[252B] **begod** – a euphemism for “by God!” (Share 18)

[254M] **child of Mary** – a girl or woman (E. Partridge 724)

[255T] **divil a much** – not at all; in no way (Share 71)

[Joan is stating that Mr. Dodd is only kind in situations that offer him some benefit.]

[255T] **nature** – natural feeling, kindness (Share 195)

[255M] **row** – a disturbance; a quarrel (E. Partridge 709)

[257T] **clatther** – chastisement, usually of children by parents (Share 52)

[The use of this particular term indicates that Joan is implying that she believes Deirdre needs instruction from Tommy, for Tommy is the more mature and responsible person in the situation.]

[257M] **digs** – red light district (Share 73)

[Here, Deirdre uses this term to indicate that Tommy and the woman he lived with were not married, indirectly likening the woman to a prostitute.]

[257B] **divil a stir** – not at all; in no way (Share 71)

[Joan is stating that the candy is still in Tommy's room.]

[258T] **cocksure** – to feel quite certain (E. Partridge 233)

[One might note that it is only after Tommy reveals his sordid past that Dierdre shows any interest in him. His actions in the present have not changed in the least. Tommy is still as conventional and disciplined as ever, but Deirdre's perception of him is now different.]

[258B] **bobbies** – a nickname for policemen (*OED*)

“Darcy in the Land of Youth”

As one of O'Connor's better-known stories, “Darcy in the Land of Youth” illustrates a common theme found in O'Connor's works: exile. Mick Darcy leaves his home of Cork, Ireland to work in England. At first lonely, Darcy soon meets Janet, a modern girl who, at least to Darcy, has shockingly modern views regarding relationships. A visit home

leaves Darcy feeling that he is now a man of the world and should therefore forget his own romantic inhibitions, but this new outlook ultimately has an unexpected effect.

[262M] **mug** – a foolish person (Beecher 68)

[The fact that the story of Oisin ultimately mirrors Darcy's own story reveals Darcy's description of Oisin to be quite ironic.]

[262B] **wallop** – fast movement with much fluttering of the arms, legs, and clothes (Share 303)

[263T] **the works** – a convict establishment (E. Partridge 1352)

[Obviously, Darcy is not a prisoner. It is likely that the narrator refers to Darcy's place of employment by likening it to a jail in the same way that many people refer to their jobs by using negative terms.]

[265T] **keen** – fond of, greatly interested in (E. Partridge 636)

[266T] **john** – a privy (E. Partridge 624)

[266T] **holy terror** – an undisciplined, misbehaving individual (Share 138)

[267T] **grouching** – to grumble (E. Partridge 508)

[Darcy's lack of understanding regarding what Janet means by "inhibitions" intensifies the shock that he feels once the meaning is clarified.]

[267M] **roll in the hay** – a little love-making (E. Partridge 984)

[268M] **wet** – refers to an alcoholic drink (Share 306)

[By stating that the wife never wet her husband's lips, the narrator means that the wife never offered her husband an alcoholic drink.]

[269B] **line** – course of conduct, action, explanation (*OED*)

[273M] **fug** – a stuffy atmosphere (E. Partridge 433)

[274T] **caubogues** – a fool, clown (Share 46)

[274M] **a curtain line** – the final line for a scene or act that cues the curtain to come down (*OED*)

[This term implies that Mick knows already that his relationship with Ina will not last.]

[276T] **hand** – an expert (E. Partridge 525)

[277M] **doll** – a lady (E. Partridge 326)

[278M] **up to much** – capable of (Share 300)

[Here, Chris is stating that the beer is weak.]

[278M] **hole** – a small, dingy abode or lodging (E. Partridge 561)

[278M] **begor** – a euphemism for “by God!” (Share 18)

[281M] **take it to the fair** – exaggerate or overreact (Share 282)

[At this point, Darcy seems to have switched places with Janet as he tells her that she is overreacting. Later in the passage, though, Darcy reveals his relief in not having to uphold these new beliefs.]

“My Oedipus Complex”

Young Larry Delaney makes another appearance in this humorous story. While his father has been away at war, Larry has grown increasingly attached to his mother. Upon Mr. Delaney’s return home, Larry struggles to understand this man, who is practically a stranger, and is forced to adjust to this new situation.

[285T] **wax** – a rage (E. Partridge 1312)

[286M] **gush** – to talk too effusively and sentimentally (E. Partridge 514)

[289M] **puppy** – a blind man (E. Partridge 935)

[In this instance, Mr. Delaney is not stating that Larry is literally a blind man.

More than likely, Mr. Delaney is commenting on Larry's persistent misbehavior.]

[289M] **codded** – to deceive, joke, or commit fraud (Beecher 18)

[289B] **let fly** – to hit out (E. Partridge 677)

[289B] **dotty** – weak or dizzy (E. Partridge 237)

[Larry is struggling to understand and accept his new place in the family.]

[291M] **flaking** – a beating or a thrashing (Share 94)

“The Pretender”

Susie and Michael Murphy have come to resent the young Denis Corby, whom their mother invites into their home on occasion. Denis, an illegitimate child, enjoys visiting the Murphy family, but rather than playing with Susie and Michael, he prefers to spend his time with Mrs. Murphy. The jealousy that Michael feels as a result of Denis's affections ultimately leads to unfortunate consequences.

[293T] **pinched** – to steal (E. Partridge 885)

[The fact that Michael refers to his mother giving his clothing to less fortunate children as stealing is a tribute to O'Connor's talent for writing stories from a child's perspective. It is likely that many children might see this action as thievery.]

[293T] **gansey** – a wool pull-over, formerly used by fishermen (Share 105)

[293T] **mugs** – foolish people (Beecher 68)

[293T] **cripes** – exclamation meaning “Christ!” (E. Partridge 191)

[293T] **suck-in** – to deceive or cheat; a disappointing or deceptive incident (E. Partridge 1174)

[In this passage, Michael repeatedly states that his mother is trying to trick him into believing that Denis is only at their house to play with Michael and Susie; this implies that Michael does not trust his mother.]

[296T] **stumped** – to challenge (E. Partridge 1172)

[Here, the use of this term implies that Susie is confused.]

[296M] **dear** – euphemism for “the dear Lord” (Share 74)

[296B] **wax** – a rage (E. Partridge 1312)

[296B] **cool** – impertinent or audacious, especially in a calm way (E. Partridge 251)

[296B] **toff** – a well-to-do person (E. Partridge 1243)

[One might note that even at this young age, the characters in the story are very aware of class distinctions and make no effort to hide their opinions regarding these distinctions.]

[299B] **heart-scalded** – mortification or vexation (Share 132)

[Although Michael states that he does not know the cause of his bad behavior, it is safe to assume that he is acting out because of his frustration over his mother’s continuous praise of Denis. Again, one might note the believable way in which O’Connor is able to write this story from a child’s point of view since a child would not be able to identify the true cause of his or her bad behavior.]

[300T] **pickie** – a street game played by children (Beecher 71)

[301M] **clouts** – a heavy blow with the hand or an object (Beecher 17)

[301M] **corner-boy** – a loiterer without intent (Share 59)

[302T] **hole** – a small, dingy abode or lodging (E. Partridge 561)

[302T] **cheek** – insolence to an elder or superior (E. Partridge 203)

[The use of this term reveals that rather than being thankful for what he has, Michael still focuses on the idea that he is superior to Denis.]

“Freedom”

In a British internment camp, Mick and Matt rebel against the current order. At first, their rebellion seems to be petty, but in the end, this rebellion leaves those involved questioning what freedom is and whether or not freedom even exists.

[302B] **hillock** – a small hill (*OED*)

[303T] **gawk** – a look or a glance (Beecher 41)

[Based on the context, the narrator is describing Matt as a person who frequently stares.]

[303T] **moony** – a silly fool (E. Partridge 752)

[303M] **tony** – stylish (E. Partridge 1248)

[It is likely that O’Connor is not only comparing the two huts, but that he is also contrasting the ideas of anarchy and tyranny.]

[304B] **pinching** – stealing (E. Partridge 885)

[305T] **galumphing** – to move around heavily and clumsily (*OED*)

[305B] **dip** – work; to be occupied (Share 74)

[This term is used in reference to a punishment; thus, a “five-year dip” indicates a prolonged sentence.]

[306T] **row** – a disturbance; a quarrel (E. Partridge 709)

[306B] **dotty** – weak or dizzy (E. Partridge 237)

[Here, the narrator implies that the ideals that Mick acts on are foolish.]

[307M] **matey** – a companion or comrade (E. Partridge 727)

[308T] **cripes** – exclamation meaning “Christ!” (E. Partridge 191)

[309T] **pup** – a pupil (E. Partridge 935)

[309T] **cur** – to turn informer (E. Partridge 1273)

[The fact that Matt is called a traitor for stating his opinion of the people in charge begs the question of whether or not freedom actually exists. By immediately rebuffing Matt as a traitor, Clancy unwittingly proves Matt’s assertion that the people in charge are acting like tyrants.]

[311T] **go on** – an exclamation of surprise, incredulity, or derision (E. Partridge 476)

“Peasants”

In another text that deals with a clergyman, O’Connor’s story “Peasants” illustrates the values of a particular facet of the Irish population. After Michael John Cronin steals money from the local football club, Father Crowley turns him over to the law despite the wishes of the people, who do not want to be thought of badly by the rest of the country. Father Crowley persists in his actions and suffers the consequences.

[313T] **devil’s cure** – a mild oath (Share 72)

[313T] **price of him** – all that one is good for (Share 223)

[These initial reactions in the form of oaths and negative words regarding Cronin contrast with the actions of the people later in the story.]

[313M] **shaking up** – an unnerving experience (E. Partridge 1041)

[314M] **true for you** – phrase meaning “you are right” (Share 295)

[314B] **Adam** – an accomplice, especially to a pickpocket (E. Partridge 5)

[Ironically, the priest sarcastically states that the people are likening him to a criminal, and by the end of the story, he is treated as if he is a criminal.]

[314B] **wisha** – an exclamation meaning “well” or “indeed”; placed at the beginning of a sentence to express surprise (Wall 251)

[314B] **show** – any public display (E. Partridge 1063)

[314B] **begor** – a euphemism for “by God!” (Share 18)

[315B] **long-tailed** – applied to one of the riff-raff (E. Partridge 697)

[316M] **soft** – foolishly benevolent or kind (E. Partridge 1110)

[Here, the priest states that Con’s ideas regarding the treatment of Cronin are foolish. One might note that while clergymen traditionally tend to show mercy towards their parishioners, Father Crowley does the opposite.]

[316M] **show us up** – to make an exhibition (E. Partridge 1064)

[Con’s concern that he and his neighbors might be thought of badly by the rest of the country seems to be the primary reason why he and his friends persist in their requests for mercy on Cronin’s behalf.]

[317M] **angashores** – peevish persons (Share 5)

[318T] **deuce** – the devil (E. Partridge 301)

[Here, the priest reveals the level of his frustration by cursing at a member of his parish.]

[318B] **go to pot** – to be ruined or destroyed; go to the devil (E. Partridge 479)

“The Majesty of the Law”

Dan Bride, an old man who lives apart from the neighboring town, has broken the law by injuring another man. Because Dan refuses to pay the fine, he is confronted by the local law officer, and a very long, very polite exchange ensues. In “The Majesty of the Law,” O’Connor reveals his admiration for Dan’s stubborn refusal to submit to the law as well as the character’s high regard for the traditions of the past.

[320M] **brosna** – decaying twigs; kindling (Share 36)

[321M] **begor** – a euphemism for “by God!” (Share 18)

[321M] **middling** – fairly well regarding health or success (E. Partridge 736)

[322T] **wisha** – an exclamation meaning “well” or “indeed”; placed at the beginning of a sentence to express surprise (Wall 251)

[322T] **arraah** – an exclamation meaning “But now!” or “Truly!” (Share 6)

[322M] **whisht** – an exclamation ordering one to be silent (Share 309)

[One might note the generous use of slang exclamations throughout this story.

These exclamations are most consistently used by older people who live in the country and can serve to illustrate the generation gap between the traditional society and the more modern Irish culture.]

[323M] **power** – a large number or quantity (Share 222)

[323M] **musha** - an exclamation meaning “Well!” (Share 4)

[324B] **four bones** – human body (Share 98)

[325B] **shambled** – characterized by an irregular gait or motion (*OED*)

[327M] **butt** – a cart (Beecher 12)

“Eternal Triangle”

“Eternal Triangle” explores the factors that can often prevent meaningful change from taking place in society. In this story, a watchman is ordered to guard an abandoned tram that happens to be in the midst of heavy gunfire from revolutionaries. Soon accompanied by a prostitute and a drunkard, the watchman dutifully stays at his post, though the entire experience leaves him disillusioned with the idea of revolution.

[328T] **jackeens** – a person from Dublin (Share 148)

[328B] **taking it** – to accept or endure punishment courageously (E. Partridge 1198)

[The significance of the watchman referring to his task as a punishment is revealed at the end of the story.]

[329T] **free** – self-assured or impudent (E. Partridge 425)

[Here, the narrator is commenting on the disrespectful manner of the revolutionaries.]

[329T] **bobby** – a nickname for a policeman (*OED*)

[329M] **light-fingered** – having nimble fingers, literally or figuratively, especially for picking pockets (*OED*)

[329B] **hot** – uncomfortable; well known to the authorities (E. Partridge 573)

[330T] **piece** – person (Share 214)

[330T] **capers** – a performance (E. Partridge 181)

[The fact that Cummins refers to this skirmish as a performance reflects an aspect of her own character. She seems to perceive this event as being a production displayed for her entertainment, and her attitude towards the event wavers back and forth between patriotism and distaste.]

[330B] **blackguarding** – to abuse or vilify (Share 24)

[331T] **article** – a small female person; general term of affection or derogatory to both sexes (Share 6)

[In this instance, the watchman uses the term in a derogatory sense.]

[331T] **begor** – a euphemism for “by God!” (Share 18)

[332T] **blaze** – rapid firing of rifles (E. Partridge 92)

[332M] **suck-in** – to deceive or cheat; a disappointing or deceptive incident (E. Partridge 1174)

[Here, Cummins is commenting on the judgment from society that she often faces.]

[332B] **heel of the hunt** – eventually (Share 133)

[334M] **cockshot** – anything set up as a target (E. Partridge 233)

[334M] **scuts** – contemptible individuals (Share 149)

[Because it is dark, there is no way that Cummins can know for sure that the English are shooting at the man. Her actions here reinforce the watchman’s negative opinion of her. One might also note that the watchman does not seem to judge her based on her profession, but based on her dishonesty.]

[335B] **boozer** – a drunkard (E. Partridge 119)

“Masculine Protest”

Frequently in O’Connor’s stories involving families, the father is portrayed as a distant figure who is often feared. However, in “Masculine Protest,” young Denis Halligan’s father is absent for a large part of the story, leaving Denis to cling to his mother, who is

also often absent. After an argument with his mother, twelve-year-old Denis determines that he must prove his masculinity in an escapade that serves to bond father and son.

[338T] **licking** - to attack a person with words (E. Partridge 1248)

[339M] **clout** – a heavy blow with the hand or object (Beecher 17)

[The cold nature of Denis’s mother’s response illustrates why Denis is compelled to go through with his plan to prove his masculinity.]

[339M] **sucker** – a parasite or sponger (E. Partridge 1175)

[340T] **smashing** – excellent (E. Partridge 1095)

[342M] **begor** – a euphemism for “by God!” (Share 18)

[343B] **row** – a disturbance; a quarrel (E. Partridge 709)

[344T] **blazes** - the flames of hell (E. Partridge 92)

[Mr. Halligan’s response to Denis’s plight implies that he had not anticipated that the bank would be closed either. Thus Mr. Halligan puts himself on the same level as his son and, for the first time, forges a bond with him.]

[344B] **gouger** – a lout (Share 117)

[Though Mr. Halligan calls his son a lout, the context in which the term appears implies that he uses this term affectionately.]

“The Sorcerer’s Apprentice”

“The Sorcerer’s Apprentice” explores the peculiarities regarding romantic attachments.

The only obstacle standing in the way of Una and Jimmy marrying is the fact that they habitually argue. After one such argument, Una leaves for Dublin, where her experience

with another man leads her to believe that she now knows enough to return and marry Jimmy.

[345B] **row** – a disturbance; a quarrel (E. Partridge 709)

[346T] **flapper** – a very immoral young girl (E. Partridge 401)

[346B] **grouse** – to grumble (E. Partridge 508)

[347M] **took the line** – a verbal approach (E. Partridge 686)

[After listening to Denis’s speech regarding love, Una still refuses to take his advice, ultimately acting towards Jimmy in the very way that Denis advised her against.]

“The Little Mother”

“The Little Mother” describes the members of the Twomey family and how their relationships and positions within the family change over time. After the death of Mrs. Twomey, her eldest daughter Joan steps in to run the family, but Joan is soon confronted with new responsibilities that change her outlook on life.

[356T] **gab** – talk; idle chatter (E. Partridge 439)

[By initially introducing Joan as a girl who enjoys idle chatter, the narrator helps the audience to understand the change that Joan undergoes when she is soon faced with responsibilities for the first time.]

[356B] **knocked about** – to wander or roam aimlessly (E. Partridge 654)

[357M] **blooming** – a mild intensive adjective (E. Partridge 98)

[358M] **flighty** – guided by whim or fancy rather than judgment (*OED*)

[358M] **caught a tartar** – to unexpectedly meet one’s superior (E. Partridge 109)

[This term illustrates Joan's new position in the family.]

[358B] **swank** – showy or conceited behavior or speech (E. Partridge 1182)

[358B] **wheedling** – to influence or entice by soft words or flattery (*OED*)

[359B] **waster** – an idle person who wastes time or money (E. Partridge 1310)

[The tables have been turned on Joan, and now she is bothered by the same things that worried her mother.]

[361M] **thickness** – dull, slovenly, or slack (E. Partridge 1218)

[361B] **go on** – an exclamation of surprise, incredulity, or derision (E. Partridge 476)

[362B] **touched** - slightly insane (E. Partridge 1256)

[363M] **button** – lump of excrement (Share 41)

[Here, Joan is stating that she does not care whether or not Kitty pursues a relationship with Dick.]

[364M] **row** – a disturbance; a quarrel (E. Partridge 709)

[367M] **take things to the fair** – exaggerate or overreact (Share 282)

[367B] **long drop** – a term for a deep trench latrine (E. Partridge 696)

[367B] **cod-acting** – to deceive, joke, or fraud (Beecher 18)

[368B] **humbug** – a hoax (Share 143)

[This term illustrates that May is very serious about her ambitions, however strange they may be.]

[369T] **bake** – a fiasco; a disappointment (Beecher 6)

[Here, May is stating that nothing has happened that should upset Joan.]

[370T] **shambled** – characterized by an irregular gait or motion (*OED*)

[370M] **bearded** – to outwit or trick (E. Partridge 60)

[In this instance, the term implies that Joan blindsides Timmy by surprising him and that she tricks him into ending his relationship with May.]

[371T] **lights** – eyes (E. Partridge 682)

[This term does not refer to Eily’s eyes in a literal sense; more than likely, the term refers to Eily’s perspective.]

[371B] **blazes** – the flames of hell (E. Partridge 92)

[371B] **old molly** – an effeminate fellow (Share 188)

[372M] **pinch** – to steal (E. Partridge 885)

[377M] **putting a tooth in it** – to come directly to the point (Share 226)

[379B] **side** – conceit (E. Partridge 1067)

“A Sense of Responsibility”

“A Sense of Responsibility” presents the story of Jack Cantillion, a young man who is compelled to take responsibility for the people in his life who are facing hard times.

Though his actions come across as peculiar to many people—including his wife, Susie—Jack continues in his efforts to offer those around him at least some form of security.

[380B] **thundering** – very forcible or violent (E. Partridge 1227)

[This initial contrast between quiet, steady Jack and his loud, aggressive brother sets the tone for the rest of the relationships in Jack’s life. Most of the people in Jack’s life are much more volatile than he.]

[381T] **drop taken** - slightly inebriated (Share 78)

[381T] **head or no head** – hangover or without a hangover (E. Partridge 540)

[Judging from this statement, the reader can assume that Jack's sense of responsibility also extends to his career since he goes to work whether or not he feels well.]

[383M] **head** – a familiar term for either gender, but more frequently for a male (Share 131)

[384T] **whoors** – referring to a prostitute or a semi-affectionate term for a man (E. Partridge 1336)

[Based on the context, it is most likely that Jack is using this term in an affectionate way.]

[385M] **how soft you have it** – easy, idle, or lazy (E. Partridge 1110)

[386M] **old molly** – an effeminate fellow (Share 188)

[The basis for these arguments in which Susie slings insults at her husband exists almost entirely in Susie's own head. By portraying Susie in this light, O'Connor is contrasting the ways in which the two characters attempt to prove their moral values: Jack proves his values through his actions while Susie attempts to manipulate Jack so that he will believe that she holds high moral values.]

[390T] **nature** – natural feeling, kindness (Share 195)

[390M] **wisha** – an exclamation meaning “well” or “indeed”; placed at the beginning of a sentence to express surprise (Wall 251)

[390B] **sucker** – a parasite or sponger (E. Partridge 1175)

[390B] **wasters** – idle people who waste time or money (E. Partridge 1310)

[391B] **arrah** – an exclamation meaning “But now!” or “Truly!” (Share 6)

[393M] **row** – a disturbance; a quarrel (E. Partridge 709)

“Counsel for Oedipus”

Many times in his works, O’Connor conveys his utter distaste for hypocrisy. This point is made clear in “Counsel for Oedipus.” In this story, one woman’s pious ways, which at first garner her a considerable amount of sympathy, are ultimately revealed to be selfish and cruel.

[395B] **shamming** – to trick or hoax (E. Partridge 1042)

[The fact that Mrs. Lynam attempts to discredit her husband by portraying him as cruel and violent proves to be incredibly ironic in light of future events.]

[397T] **pupped** – brought to child bed (E. Partridge 935)

“The Old Faith”

After confiscating a bottle of homemade liquor from a parishioner, a group of clergymen share a drink that ultimately leads to an amusing incident. In this humorous tale, O’Connor investigates the link between the Catholic Church and Ireland’s Celtic past.

[405M] **poteen** – illicit whiskey (Share 221)

[406M] **stiff glass** – a half pint of stout or beer (Share 111)

[407B] **by gor** – a euphemism for “by God” (Share 18)

“Unapproved Route”

Portraying a classic love triangle, “Unapproved Route” deals with deception and betrayal in the relationships between Rosalind, her lover Jim, and her husband Frankie. After finding herself in an unfortunate situation, Rosalind feels that she must marry Frankie—a good man who genuinely loves her but is unaware of her remaining feelings for Jim.

[412B] **up and down** – rough and tumble fight (E. Partridge 1289)

[This term illustrates the idea that Rosalind has had a very tumultuous love life and could foreshadow the state of her future relationships.]

[413T] **shambling** – characterized by an irregular gait or motion (*OED*)

[413M] **row** – a disturbance; a quarrel (E. Partridge 709)

[413M] **wasters** – idle people who waste time or money (E. Partridge 1310)

[412B] **charwoman** – a female employed to do housework (*OED*)

[417T] **daisy** – an excellent or first rate person or thing (E. Partridge 288)

[The fact that Frankie refers to his wife carrying another man’s child as an excellent thing illustrates both that Frankie is a genuinely good person and that he cares deeply for Rosalind.]

[418T] **cripes** – exclamation meaning “Christ!” (E. Partridge 191)

“The Study of History”

Upon learning the facts of life, Larry Delaney begins to wonder how his life might have been different had he been born into a different family. In “The Study of History,” O’Connor again reveals his knack for illustrating a child’s efforts to make sense of an ever-widening world.

[423B] **daisies** – excellent or first rate people or things (E. Partridge 288)

[Based on the context in which this term appears, Mrs. Delaney is using this term in a sarcastic manner.]

[424B] **mop** – hair (E. Partridge 752)

[By referring to Miss Cadogan's "carrotty mop," Mrs. Delaney is commenting on Miss Cadogan's red hair.]

[426M] **old one** - slightly derogatory term for an old woman; more specifically, mother or wife (Share 205)

[427M] **old fellow** – old man; more specifically, father (Share 204)

[428T] **go on** – an exclamation of surprise, incredulity, or derision (E. Partridge 476)

[428B] **caubogue** – a fool, clown (Share 46)

[428B] **blooming** – a mild intensive adjective (E. Partridge 98)

[429T] **lop** – a penny (Beecher 62)

[429M] **wisha** – an exclamation meaning "well" or "indeed"; placed at the beginning of a sentence to express surprise (Wall 251)

[429B] **blowed** – damned (E. Partridge 100)

[429B] **jumping** – lively (E. Partridge 632)

"Expectation of Life"

As with many of the women in O'Connor's stories, Shiela Hennessey wants what she can not have. Throughout "Expectation of Life," Shiela's expectations never quite line up with reality as her affections waver back and forth between two men.

[431B] **tearing line** – a romantic association (Share 170)

[433T] **look-out** – responsibility, concern, business (E. Partridge 699)

[The fact that Shiela asks Matt to befriend her husband reiterates a previous statement made about her constant desire to have another man on the back burner.]

[433B] **vagaries** – erratic or unpredictable actions or notions (*OED*)

[434T] **whoors** – referring to a prostitute or a semi-affectionate term for a man (E. Partridge 1336)

[Based on the context in which this term appears, Jim is likely referring to other men in general.]

[435M] **begor** – a euphemism for “by God!” (Share 18)

[434M] **woollies** – woolen underwear (E. Partridge 1350)

[441M] **spotty** – lacking consistency (*OED*)

“The Ugly Duckling”

Mick Courtney was always fond of Nan Ryan and accepted her unattractiveness in the same way that her brothers did. Now after years of friendship, in a single moment Mick realizes that Nan has grown into a beautiful young woman, and Mick is completely smitten. In this hopeful story, O’Connor explores the choices that people make when they find that their expectations have exceeded reality.

[445B] **blooming** – a mild intensive adjective (E. Partridge 98)

[445B] **dear** – euphemism for “the dear Lord” (Share 74)

[446M] **crabbed** – annoyed and irritable (*OED*)

[447M] **pattable** – that invites patting; that is attractive to the touch (*OED*)

[The use of the term “pattable” heightens the contrast between Mrs. Ryan’s more conventional, maternal beauty and Nan’s new-found, harsh beauty. Although Mick now recognizes Nan as beautiful, she is not described in feminine terms.]

[448M] **smoothie** – a ladies’ man (E. Partridge 1098)

[Mick's description of Nan's suitors seems accurate and not based in jealousy.

However, it is likely that Nan chooses Lyons and Healy to make Mick jealous and incite him to action, as Mick's mediocrity seems to be the fault that Nan cannot overlook.]

[449M] **bluff** – a considerable assurance (E. Partridge 104)

[Here, Nan reacts to the subject of marriage in a way that most young women in her situation would not, emphasizing her more masculine sensibility.]

[452T] **thunder-struck** – struck with sudden amazement or terror (*OED*)

[452M] **ne'er-do-well** – a worthless person (*OED*)

[The passage in which this term is found indicates that Mr. Ryan is easily swayed, for even though Ned is unambitious, to describe him as worthless is incorrect.]

[453M] **kick over the traces** – to become recalcitrant (E. Partridge 642)

[456M] **jamb** – either of the vertical sides of a doorway, arch, or window (*OED*)

[456M] **wisha** – an exclamation meaning “well” or “indeed”; placed at the beginning of a sentence to express surprise (Wall 251)

[456M] **dead** – completely or very (Wall 69)

[In this instance, Mrs. Ryan is using the term “dead” to state that Nan is probably longing to talk with someone besides the other nuns.]

“Fish for Friday”

In the midst of a mid-life crisis, Ned MacCarthy is asked to go into town on an important errand for his wife. On his way to town, Ned laments the loss of his youth and freedom

with the various friends and acquaintances that cross his path until it is time for him to return home, oblivious to the situation at hand.

[459M] **slate loose** – to be mentally deficient (E. Partridge 1085)

[Although the villagers suspect that Ned is crazy after he is observed beating and yelling at his car, Ned proves himself to be mentally lacking in more ways than one as the story progresses.]

[459B] **devil** – an intensive of no precise meaning (E. Partridge 302)

[Here, Tom is using the term “devil” to describe his disgust for the fish that he must eat every Friday.]

[459B] **spin** – a brisk run or canter (E. Partridge 1125)

[The irony of the fact that Tom asks Ned if he is going for a spin lies in the idea that this particular phrase often suggests a sense of freedom—the very thing of which Ned feels deprived.]

[462M] **arrah** – an exclamation meaning “But now!” or “Truly!” (Share 6)

[462M] **batter** – a drinking spree (Beecher 7)

[462B] **true for you** – phrase meaning “you are right” (Share 295)

[463T] **firebrand** – one who kindles strife or mischief; one who inflames passions
(*OED*)

[As Ned mourns the loss of his freedom, his self-pity deepens, and he soon loses all perspective on his situation, implying that he has been made to give up everything he values in life with no hopes of having anything to show for this sacrifice. However, it is important to note that although Ned is immature, he is not deceitful or reckless in regards to his family.]

[463B] **begod** – a euphemism for “by God!” (Share 18)

[464M] **God’s truth** – the absolute truth (*OED*)

[464M] **devil** – an intensive of no precise meaning (E. Partridge 302)

[464M] **swing** – to be hanged (E. Partridge 1187)

[Ned implies here that he is willing to break the law in order to see another revolution.]

[465T] **tearing** – excessive, very great (Share 283)

[465M] **on it** – in a particular condition (*OED*)

[466M] **bit of go** – high spirits (E. Partridge 473)

[466M] **dust and ashes** – an expression used to indicate extreme disappointment or disillusionment (*OED*)

[It is interesting to note that although Jack Martin has had his own share of disappointments, he also has a considerably more positive outlook on life.]

“A Set of Variations on a Borrowed Theme”

In another of O’Connor’s stories dealing with mothers, “A Set of Variations on a Borrowed Theme” features Kate Mahoney. Old and penniless with two grown daughters, Kate takes two young boys into her home in order to provide herself with some sort of income. However, what begins as a business arrangement ultimately evolves into a close-knit family as Kate grows to love the boys as though they were her own.

[470T] **cheeky** – impudent (E. Partridge 203)

[470M] **comedown** – a social or financial fall or humiliation (E. Partridge 242)

[The context implies that in Ireland during this time, it was considered shameful for people to take an illegitimate child into their home.]

[470M] **transactions** – a physical operation or process (*OED*)

[Here, the term “transactions” refers to children.]

[471T] **stick** – to give a child a beating with a stick (E. Partridge 1151)

[471T] **flighty** – guided by whim or fancy rather than judgment (*OED*)

[472M] **bloomin’** – a mild intensive adjective (E. Partridge 98)

[472B] **holy show** – a cause or source of scandal or embarrassment (Share 138)

[Nora’s hypocritical nature is revealed in her negative reaction to the news that her mother is taking in another illegitimate child and in the revelation that her primary concern is for what the neighbors will think. By giving Nora such a negative reaction, O’Connor heightens the contrast between Nora and Kate and reveals his high regard for those who act on compassion rather than societal norms.]

[473B] **row** – a disturbance; a quarrel (E. Partridge 709)

[475T] **cripes** – exclamation meaning “Christ!” (E. Partridge 191)

[478M] **whisht** – an exclamation ordering one to be silent (Share 309)

[478B] **putog** – a pudding (O’Muirthe 156)

[Kate is using the term “putog” as a term of endearment as she comforts Jimmy.]

[479T] **price of me** – all that one is good for (Share 223)

[Although Kate momentarily expresses regret for having brought the boys into her home, she immediately feels ashamed at even having those thoughts of regret

cross her mind. Therefore, this expression of regret actually serves to reveal the deep love that Kate has for the boys.]

[481T] **well-heeled** – rich, either temporarily or permanently (E. Partridge 1316)

[Again, Kate’s reaction, while on a surface level could imply that she is happy for Jimmy, actually shows her despair and deep love for him when confronted with the idea of him leaving.]

[482M] **divil** – here, an alternate spelling of “devil” (Share 75)

[482B] **heart-scalded** – mortification or vexation (Share 132)

[482B] **gligeen** – an empty-headed individual; a person who talks too much (Beecher 42)

[483T] **brassy** – shameless or impudent (E. Partridge 130)

[483B] **begod** – a euphemism for “by God!” (Share 18)

[484T] **wisha** – an exclamation meaning “well” or “indeed”; placed at the beginning of a sentence to express surprise (Wall 251)

[485T] **sham** – a trick or a hoax (E. Partridge 1042)

[486B] **scamp** – a cheat or a swindler (E. Partridge 1016)

[487B] **cool** – impertinent or audacious, especially in a calm way (E. Partridge 251)

[As Jimmy describes the scene in which he asks his birth mother to tell him about his father, it becomes clear that Nance has very little concern for the pain that her choices have caused Jimmy. Nance’s reaction serves to heighten the contrast between herself and Kate, whose love and concern for Jimmy is constant.]

[489M] **bob** – in British currency, a shilling or five-pence (E. Partridge 72)

“The American Wife”

O’Connor’s short stories often deal with the sense of displacement that young men and women frequently feel after leaving their homes families to embark on their own lives.

“The American Wife” explores this same sense of displacement but applies it to Elsie Colleary, an American woman who marries an Irish man. While in most of O’Connor’s stories, the displaced characters often feel that they have changed too much to ever return to their previous lives, Elsie finds that, much to the detriment of her husband, she is unable to stay away from her homeland.

[494T] **setting her cap** – only applying to women, to persistently try to win a man’s heart—or hand (E. Partridge 1037)

[Ironically, it is Elsie who pursues Tom. This notion makes her constant desire to return to her home in the U.S. even more puzzling.]

[495M] **pansies** – very effeminate young men (E. Partridge 852)

[497M] **begor** – a euphemism for “by God!” (Share 18)

[497B] **taped** – to take one’s measure; to size up (Beecher 97)

[498T] **Irish** – Irish whiskey (E. Partridge 600)

[499B] **stout** – strong beer (E. Partridge 836)

[501T] **cut** – appearance (Share 66)

[As Annie observes Tom walking away, it is possible that she notices a change in his physical appearance, as the term “cut” might imply. This notion would indicate that the situation with Elsie is weighing on Tom physically as well as mentally.]

“The Impossible Marriage”

For Jim Grahame and Eileen Clery, a traditional marriage is not possible as they are both—in a sense—already married to the responsibility of caring for their respective mothers. In “The Impossible Marriage,” O’Connor once again examines the damaging effects of a selfish mother and, in contrast, the true nature of a good marriage.

[504B] **flighty** – guided by whim or fancy rather than judgment (*OED*)

[506T] **go on** – an exclamation of surprise, incredulity, or derision (E. Partridge 476)

[506B] **bad head** – a familiar term for either gender but more frequently for a male (Share 131)

[506B] **drop** – a half measure of whiskey (Beecher 33)

[507M] **humbug** – a hoax (Share 143)

[Eileen referring to her mother as a “humbug” is meant to playfully imply that Mrs. Clery is exaggerating her pain. In spite of Mrs. Clery’s selfish behavior, Eileen still treats her mother with kindness.]

[507M] **divil** – here, an alternate spelling of “devil” (Share 75)

[508T] **wisha** – an exclamation meaning “well” or “indeed”; placed at the beginning of a sentence to express surprise (Wall 251)

[511M] **bold** – naughty (Share 30)

[Mrs. Clery’s selfish nature is truly revealed when she calls Eileen naughty as she is on her way to the church to marry Jim. The source of Mrs. Clery’s self-centered behavior lies in her fear of losing her daughter to Jim.]

[511B] **lick alike** – identical (Share 168)

“The Cheat”

Dick Gordon makes another appearance in “The Cheat.” After being hurt by Joan Twomey, Dick marries Barbara Hough, whose religious views are much more in line with his own. The couple builds a pleasant life together until Dick discovers that Barbara has betrayed his trust.

[518T] **devil may care** – reckless (E. Partridge 302)

[518B] **crumbs** – an exclamation synonymous with a variation of “Christ!” (E. Partridge 275)

“The Weeping Children”

The plight of illegitimate children is a common theme in O’Connor’s short stories. “The Weeping Children,” however, differs from many other similar works in that this story focuses on the perspective of an adult observer. Here, Joe Saunders, an Englishman, and his Irish wife Brigid must make a decision regarding Brigid’s own illegitimate child.

[528M] **jenny-ass** – an effeminate man (Share 151)

[Brigid’s disdain of Jerry is almost certainly related to her guilt from lying to Joe for all of this time.]

[529T] **pinched** – to steal (E. Partridge 885)

[531T] **cracked up** – to have broken down physically or mentally (E. Partridge 264)

[532M] **quays** – man-made wharfs (*OED*)

[535T] **spit** – close likeness (Share 270)

[535T] **turn** – a momentary shock caused by a sudden fright (*OED*)

[Retrieving Marie from Mrs. Ryan’s house is obviously a nerve racking experience for Joe, as he repeatedly makes reference to fear or shock.]

[535M] **wisha** – an exclamation meaning “well” or “indeed”; placed at the beginning of a sentence to express surprise (Wall 251)

[536T] **cheek** – insolence to an elder or superior (E. Partridge 203)

“An Out-and-Out Free Gift”

Ned Callanan has always enjoyed a good relationship with his son Jimmy, so when Jimmy starts misbehaving at school and at home, his parents are unsure of how to address this conduct. As Jimmy’s behavior becomes increasingly defiant, the situation comes to a head, and Jimmy’s father is finally compelled to teach his son a lesson.

[538B] **out-and-out** – a thing perfect or thorough of its kind (E. Partridge 838)

[The idea of an out-and-out free gift indicates that a gift is absolutely and completely free of cost. This idea is important in light of future events in the story.]

[539M] **wasters** – idle people who waste time or money (E. Partridge 1310)

[540T] **cuff** – to strike with the fist or open hand (*OED*)

[Clearly, Celia hates any type of physical punishment, but it is implied throughout O’Connor’s works that some type of physical punishment is the norm in most Irish families during this time. This idea is significant considering Jimmy’s behavior in response to his father’s actions at the end of the story.]

[540B] **let fly** – to hit out (E. Partridge 677)

[542M] **blooming** – a mild intensive adjective (E. Partridge 98)

[542M] **show** – any public display (E. Partridge 1063)

[544M] **salute** – to greet with some gesture or visible action (*OED*)

[544M] **wisha** – an exclamation meaning “well” or “indeed”; placed at the beginning of a sentence to express surprise (Wall 251)

“The Corkerys”

When May MacMahon, a privileged only child, meets the Corkery family, she is instantly fascinated by them, and the Corkerys’ fascination with the Church begins to intrigue May as well. Eventually May goes against her parents’ wishes and joins the same convent that two of the Corkery girls had previously joined. However, May soon becomes disillusioned with life in the convent and is forced to come to terms with the reality of her situation.

[549T] **cripes** – exclamation meaning “Christ!” (E. Partridge 191)

[The fact that in the same breath, Rosie both takes Christ’s name in vain and speaks of joining a convent paints a vivid picture of the dynamic personalities in the Corkery family.]

[549M] **a gas time** – a lot of fun (Share 106)

[In contrast to a commonly held belief that life in a convent is dull, Rosie insists that she is having a great time living as a nun in Rome.]

[550T] **begob** – a euphemism for “by God!” (Share 18)

[550T] **cut** – appearance (Share 66)

[553M] **mean** – of poor quality or condition; of little value (*OED*)

[554B] **cool** – impertinent or audacious, especially in a calm way (E. Partridge 251)

[Mother Agatha's response to May's concerns indicates that this situation has occurred on other occasions.]

[556B] **jarred** – having taken a drink (Share 150)

[557B] **crow** – to exult loudly; to boast or swagger (*OED*)

[557B] **slate loose** – to be mentally deficient (E. Partridge 1085)

[One might note the irony of May's father referring to the Corkery family as mentally lacking when his own daughter has just returned from a nursing home after a mental breakdown.]

[559B] **heel of the hunt** – eventually (Share 133)

[559B] **pansy** – very effeminate young men (E. Partridge 852)

“A Story by Maupassant”

In another story exploring the idea of disillusionment and its resulting damage, “A Story by Maupassant” is truly a tragic tale. Childhood friends Ted Magner and Terry Coughlan have drifted apart over time. Terry, once idealistic in his notions regarding the Church and people in general, now struggles to make sense of a world that he no longer understands. As Ted attempts to reach out to his old friend, the two come to realize that they have both irrevocably changed.

[562T] **Jasus** – an alternative spelling for the exclamation, “Jesus!” (Share 150)

[562B] **thundering row** – a disturbance; a quarrel (E. Partridge 709)

[Terry confronting the other monks regarding the dishonest testing practices is the last time that Terry is shown standing up for his beliefs; therefore, it is possible that this situation is the one that shatters Terry's ideals.]

[563T] **gasbag** – a person of too many words; a boaster (E. Partridge 448)

[563T] **begor** – a euphemism for “by God!” (Share 18)

[563B] **quays** – man-made wharfs (*OED*)

[563B] **keen** – sharp (*OED*)

[Although Terry’s mind is still sharp, the indication is that now his idealism is completely gone and has been replaced with a deceptive nature.]

[566T] **pate** – the crown of the skull (*OED*)

[566T] **turn** – a momentary shock caused by a sudden fright (*OED*)

[Although Ted and Terry are not as close as they once were, Ted’s reaction to the news about Terry reveals Ted’s enduring affection for his old friend. This idea of there being a special bond between these men is introduced in the first line of the story.]

[567B] **dodge** – a shrewd and artful expedient (E. Partridge 322)

“A Great Man”

As a young man, Dermot O’Malley had the privilege of working with a great man—Jim Fitzgerald. Fitzgerald, the head doctor at a local hospital, made it his mission to ensure that the hospital would carry on after he was gone, and he took Dermot under his wing in hopes of successfully training the young doctor. However, when Jim attempted to ask Dermot for a favor, Dermot was faced with a decision that would affect the lives of everyone involved with the hospital. This decision haunts Dermot to this day, even as he tells this story.

[569M] **begor** – a euphemism for “by God!” (Share 18)

[570T] **waster** – an idle person who wastes time or money (E. Partridge 1310)

[In light of later events in the story, it is important to note that Dermot begins his description of Jim by contrasting his active personality to that of the senior Mr. O'Malley, who was lazy.]

[570T] **dotty** – weak or dizzy (E. Partridge 237)

[By describing the hospital in Dooras using the term “dotty,” Dermot indicates that the hospital is not only poor, but strange as well.]

[570B] **soupy** – sentimental (*OED*)

[571B] **cheeky** – impudent (E. Partridge 203)

[572M] **brass** – impudence (E. Partridge 129)

[574M] **whoor** – referring to a prostitute or a semi-affectionate term for a man (E. Partridge 133)

[574B] **tight** – tipsy (E. Partridge 1233)

[Most likely, Jim drinks to excess in order to combat his nerves regarding the favor that he will ask of Dermot.]

[575B] **cow** – a woman, normally used derisively (E. Partridge 260)

[Previously, there is no indication that Jim feels such affection for his daughter, but his high regard for her is revealed in this scene.]

“Androcles and the Army”

In a fit of patriotic fervor, John Cloone—a circus lion tamer—leaves his job to join the army. Months later, he returns to the circus for a visit only to find that the new lion tamer

treats the animals harshly. Appalled at the thought of the lions being treated in this way, Cloone takes immediate action, much to the dismay of his fellow soldiers.

[579T] **devil** – an intensive of no precise meaning (E. Partridge 302)

[579T] **puss** – pouting face (Beecher 76)

[580T] **lorry loads** – a truckload (*OED*)

[580M] **natty** – very neat; dainty (E. Partridge 780)

[Healy’s mocking inspection of Cloone’s uniform and statement that Cloone will never become a successful soldier seem to be prophetic in nature.]

[580B] **belt** – to travel quickly (E. Partridge 69)

[581T] **hands** – experts (E. Partridge 525)

“Public Opinion”

Dr. Ryan cannot abide people talking about him in town. In fact, he goes to great lengths to prevent his name from even being brought up in discussion. Unfortunately, in his efforts to keep his business his own, he learns a valuable lesson about life in a small Irish town.

[586T] **take me in** – to deceive, impose on, or swindle (E. Partridge 1198)

[586B] **the devil entirely** – very unpleasant (E. Partridge 302)

[587M] **begor** – a euphemism for “by God!” (Share 18)

[587B] **cripes** – exclamation meaning “Christ!” (E. Partridge 191)

[588M] **wishing** – desirable (*OED*)

[Despite the doctor’s protests, he has already fallen victim to concerning himself with public opinion. In fact, one might note the irony in the way that Dr. Ryan so

adamantly insists that the townspeople should mind their own business that he actually calls more attention to himself and incites the town's curiosity.]

[588M] **galoot** – uncouth, awkward man (Share 104)

[589M] **holy terror** – an undisciplined, misbehaving individual (Share 138)

[As Dr. Ryan confesses that he hates to hurt people's feelings, he again proves that despite his protests, he has always been concerned with public opinion.]

[591B] **holus bolus** – all together (E. Partridge 562)

[Here, the doctor states that he unwittingly yet completely gives in to Bridie's way of thinking.]

[591B] **splitting our sides** – laughing (*OED*)

[592T] **rap** – anything of little worth (Share 232)

[Even in the past passage of the story, Dr. Ryan still believes that before this incident with Bridie, he never concerned himself with what others thought of him, but upon a closer reading of the story, this idea is found to be untrue.]

“Achilles' Heel”

The perceived shortcomings of the Catholic Church and clergy appear often in O'Connor's works. In “Achilles' Heel,” the domestic life of a Bishop is examined, and the weakness in his life is found to be his housekeeper, Nellie Connolly. A true villain, Nellie finds herself in a position of power after her own behavior is called into question.

[594T] **rashers** – strips of bacon (E. Partridge 960)

[594B] **doorsha-dawrsha** – hearsay, gossip (Share 76)

[Nellie's indignant response to the accusations against her followed by her manipulation of the Bishop in convincing him not to contact Leary proves to be revealing of her true character.]

[595M] **touched** – slightly insane (E. Partridge 1256)

[600T] **angashore** – a peevish person (Share 5)

[600T] **head** – a familiar term for either gender but more frequently for a male (Share 131)

[Here, Nellie states that her brother was never a good husband to his wife.]

[600M] **begod** – a euphemism for “By God!” (Share 18)

[602B] **dear** – euphemism for “the dear Lord” (Share 74)

[As Nellie exercises her authority over the Bishop, her repetition of this familiar routine hints at the idea that although she feels guilty now, she will probably continue smuggling the contraband, and sadly, the Bishop seems aware of this likelihood.]

“The Wreath”

Father Fogarty is devastated by the news that his good friend Father Devine has passed away. This news, along with the peculiar placement of a wreath on Father Devine's coffin, compels Father Fogarty to wonder just how well he knew Father Devine. With “The Wreath,” O'Connor paints a moving picture of the loneliness felt by these members of the clergy, who in pursuing a life devoted to God, must, in a way, cut themselves off from humanity.

[603M] **nature** – natural feeling, kindness (Share 195)

[604T] **fishy** – morally or financially dubious (E. Partridge 396)

[Although Jackson's manner seems to suggest that he is unaffected by Devine's death, later in the conversation, it is important to note that once Father Fogarty shows his true feelings on the subject, Jackson quickly makes arrangements to be able to accompany him to the funeral.]

[605T] **stout** – an ale or beer (Share 221)

[606M] **gob** – mouth (Wall 77)

[608B] **cold fish** – an unfeeling individual who shows no emotion (*OED*)

[Jackson's persistent questioning slowly reveals that his cold personality is most likely some form of self protection against revealing too much of his more worldly desires. It is also likely that Fogarty and Jackson are meant to be foils for one another. Fogarty is consistently driven by his emotions and expresses his feeling freely while Jackson, at least outwardly, is unemotional.]

[608B] **go-getter** – a very active, enterprising person (E. Partridge 475)

[Indeed, Jackson reveals that he is an innovative person in the way that he convinces Ned that removing the wreath would cause more harm than good. Again, the personalities of Fogarty and Jackson are highlighted in this scene: while Father Fogarty becomes emotional and begins to panic, Jackson keeps a calm head and uses reason.]

[609B] **flighty** – guided by whim or fancy rather than judgment (*OED*)

[610B] **whisht** – an exclamation ordering one to be silent (Share 309)

“The Teacher’s Mass”

Every morning, Father Fogarty gives the early Mass assisted by Considine, an older, retired teacher. Father Fogarty finds it difficult to relate to Considine, whose personality and way of thinking often clash with Father Fogarty’s, but the priest comes to admire the old man upon witnessing Considine’s devotion and faith.

[614T] **dotty** – weak or dizzy (E. Partridge 237)

[Apparently, Father Fogarty has problems with his housekeeper that are similar to the Bishop’s problems in “Achilles’ Heel.”]

[614B] **poteen** – illicit whiskey (Share 221)

[Father Fogarty’s kind nature is shown in the way that he is willing to associate and befriend people from all walks of life—even those who break the law.]

[615T] **more power to her elbow** – an expression of approval, admiration, or encouragement (Share 222)

[Throughout O’Connor’s stories featuring Father Fogarty, the priest is portrayed as an emotional man who thoroughly appreciates the simple joys of life such as children and dancing, perhaps especially because he cannot partake in these pleasures. Expressing admiration for a girl who becomes pregnant out of wedlock is certainly uncommon behavior for a priest, but based on knowledge of Father Fogarty’s values and loving nature, it makes sense that he would appreciate people who act upon their emotions and are not expected to suppress their desires.]

[616B] **muddleheaded** – referring to a stupid person (E. Partridge 762)

[617T] **line** – course of conduct, action, explanation (*OED*)

[617M] **sup** – a supplement (E. Partridge 1177)

[617M] **saluting** – to greet with some gesture or visible action (*OED*)

[617B] **begor** – a euphemism for “by God!” (Share 18)

[618T] **divil** – here, an alternate spelling of “devil” (Share 75)

“The Martyr”

No stranger to the Troubles in Ireland, O’Connor penned many works focusing on the destructive nature of war. One such example is “The Martyr.” In this story, O’Connor examines the degenerative qualities that lead to war.

[621T] **row** – disturbance (E. Partridge 709)

[621T] **scrap** – a struggle (E. Partridge 1023)

[625M] **Peter the Painter** – referring to the type of gun Peter the Painter supposedly used in the Battle of Sydney Street (E. Partridge 872)

[625B] **bumped** – to be killed (E. Partridge 108)

[Despite the Sergeant’s obvious disdain for Morrissey, it is revealed that all of the major characters in the story have some personal vendetta in this civil war.]

[626M] **hedge** – to bet opposite (E. Partridge 544)

[627T] **hell for leather** – desperately and vigorously (E. Partridge 546)

“Requiem”

Father Fogarty, known as a kind priest, has grown accustomed to his parishioners coming to him for advice. However, when one member of his congregation has a particularly strange request, Father Fogarty must decide whether he could—or should—comply. As

such, “Requiem” humorously, and somewhat irreverently, reveals the unyielding nature required of the clergy.

[628M] **wisha** – an exclamation meaning “well” or “indeed”; placed at the beginning of a sentence to express surprise (Wall 251)

[632T] **blooming** – a mild intensive adjective (E. Partridge 98)

[632B] **craw-thumpers** – ostentatiously pious or religious individuals (Share 62)

[633T] **sup** – a supplement (E. Partridge 1177)

[633T] **drop** – a half measure of whiskey (Beecher 33)

“An Act of Charity”

The world of the clergy, in O’Connor’s works, is often an isolated one. The pressure of living above reproach and maintaining the Church’s good image often means that members of the clergy must forgo any type of intimate friendship even among themselves. In “An Act of Charity,” the church’s authority is displayed as a form of cowardice.

[636M] **drop taken** – slightly inebriated (Share 78)

[636M] **sham** – a trick or a hoax (E. Partridge 1042)

[Father Fogarty is soon proven to be right in his suspicions of Maginnis.]

“The Mass Island”

One of O’Connor’s most prominent criticisms regarding members of the clergy has to do with what O’Connor perceives as an occasional lack of humanity. In his most critical works regarding the church, priests are often portrayed as cruel, unforgiving, and corrupt.

However, Father Fogarty is consistently shown in a humane if not positive light, and in “The Mass Island,” the evidence of Father Fogarty’s kindness is made clear.

[644B] **row** – a disturbance; a quarrel (E. Partridge 709)

[646T] **broad** – very large in expanse or scope (*OED*)

[Jackson’s disapproval of Father Fogarty’s interactions with parishioners is clear, but it is also clear that Jackson does not understand the positive effect that Father Fogarty had on his friends.]

[646M] **chuck** – to toss or throw (E. Partridge 216)

[Jackson’s casual choice of words regarding burial is in direct contrast to his previous thoughts regarding his disappointment over Father Fogarty’s burial wishes not being carried out. The contrast between Jackson’s thoughts and words reinforces the idea that although Jackson purposefully projects an aloof manner in order to prevent becoming emotionally invested in situations, he is actually not as cold as he appears.]

[647M] **potteen** – illicit whiskey (Share 221)

“There is a Lone House”

In “There is a Lone House,” a remote setting takes on an other-worldly feel as two lost souls meet, seemingly by chance. The two unnamed characters, a man and a woman, come together in search of companionship but are forced to deal with secrets from the woman’s past.

[655M] **Irish (mile)** – a mile plus (E. Partridge 600)

[655M] **devil-may-care** – reckless (E. Partridge 302)

[656M] **turns** – favors (*OED*)

[656M] **stroke** – a good appetite (Beecher 95)

[Interestingly, at first the woman is portrayed as a mother figure for the man as she feeds him and offers him clothing and shelter. This initial relationship lends an element of surprise to the future events of the story.]

[657M] **doss** – cheap lodging (E. Partridge 333)

[657M] **drop** – slightly inebriated (Share 78)

[The fact that the man is not ill-tempered unless he has been drinking is significant in light of future revelations.]

[658M] **benefit** – a fine job or a fine time (E. Partridge 70)

[Here, the man is stating that the woman can trust him because he will not do anything to put his position as a guest in her house in jeopardy.]

[659T] **hunt** – to drive away (Share 143)

[660M] **itch** – an urge (E. Partridge 603)

[660M] **divil and all** – not at all, in no way (Share 71)

[The man is expressing his dislike of the monastery in winter.]

[663M] **blackguarding** – to abuse or vilify (Share 24)

[663B] **went through** – to rob (E. Partridge 336)

[Here, the narrator is commenting on the woman's reaction to the man complimenting her.]

[668M] **boreen** – a narrow road or path (Wall 78)

“The Story Teller”

As Afric and Nance's grandfather is dying, the two young girls recall the stories that their grandfather told them over the years. Afric believes there will be sign upon her grandfather's death, that perhaps a boat will appear on the horizon or that a blind man will appear stumbling up the road to take her grandfather away. As Afric awaits this sign, she must face a disheartening discovery.

[673T] **frieze** – a coarse, woolen cloth (*OED*)

[673M] **divil** – here, an alternate spelling of “devil” (Share 75)

[674M] **whisht** – an exclamation ordering one to be silent (Share 309)

[Afric's grandfather's response to being asked about the old stories he used to tell indicates that he fears her speaking of them.]

[675B] **gansey** – a wool pull-over, formerly used by fishermen (Share 105)

[676B] **poteen** – illicit whiskey (Share 221)

[This scene gives a clear picture of how closely life and death are related for this group of people. Afric and her father look down on the house in which the grandfather lies dying as they are up on the mountain making whiskey that will be drunk at the funeral.]

[676B] **traps** – a light, two-wheeled carriage (*OED*)

[679T] **keen** – a funeral lament sung with loud wailing (*OED*)

“Last Post”

As a group of old soldiers gather to mourn the passing of one of their brethren, another old comrade, Broke, joins the group. Broke is an eccentric old man who has spent too much time on the front lines during war. As Broke pays his respects to his fallen friend,

another mourner, Mrs. Dunn, realizes that Broke holds the key to the peace of mind for which she has been searching.

[679B] **stout** – strong beer (E. Partridge 836)

[680M] **heel of the hunt** – eventually (Share 133)

[682M] **touch** – slight insanity (E. Partridge 1256)

[What the narrator refers to as insanity could be modernly defined as post traumatic stress disorder. The memories of war that Broke shares with his friends are portrayed in a negative way while the other retired soldiers seem to look back fondly on the time they spent in battle. This contrast is a result of Broke being left for too long on the front lines, and the contrast expresses the destructive nature of war, not only in a physical sense, but in a mental and emotional sense as well.]

[682M] **porter** – an ale or beer (Share 221)

[682M] **whisht** – an exclamation ordering one to be silent (Share 309)

[683T] **tanner** – a six-penny piece (Beecher 96)

[683T] **sponger** – a leech (*OED*)

[683M] **begor** – a euphemism for “by God!” (Share 18)

[684M] **postman’s knock** – a lock (E. Partridge 914)

[Because Broke is hallucinating, it is difficult to fully comprehend to what he is referring. This confusion could be a deliberate method used to reinforce the idea that Broke must bear the burden of his memories alone.]

[684M] **sod** – a mildly offensive, pejorative term for a man (*OED*)

[684B] **taped** – to take one’s measure; to size up (Beecher 97)

[684B] **quay** – a man-made wharf (*OED*)

[685T] **cur** – a mixed breed dog (*OED*)

[Broke is recalling a time when he fought another man in Jackie’s defense and punched the man in the mouth.]

“The Cornet Player Who Betrayed Ireland”

Another story dealing with Ireland’s political landscape in the early twentieth century, “The Cornet Player Who Betrayed Ireland” differs in its offering of a child’s perspective. Mick Twomey, a famous cornet player, is forced to make a decision between loyalty to his political views and loyalty to his band. Narrating the story as an adult, Mick’s son struggles to understand his father’s decision and the resulting consequences.

[687B] **mean** – of poor quality or condition; of little value (*OED*)

[688T] **flakes** – strikes (Beecher 37)

[688B] **hanger-on** – someone who persistently and annoyingly follows along (*OED*)

“Ghosts”

The Sullivan family from America travel to their ancestral home in Ireland with a desire to form a connection with their past. The last work included in *Collected Stories*, “Ghosts” provides a fitting conclusion as it portrays O’Connor’s reverence for the past and for Ireland’s country people—two themes that are found consistently throughout O’Connor’s works.

[694B] **smack** – a liking or regard (Beecher 88)

[695T] **potteen** – illicit whiskey (Share 221)

[695T] **rise out of** – give up, relinquish (Share 228)

[Here, Clancy is joking with Mary in a friendly manner.]

[695T] **wisha** – an exclamation meaning “well” or “indeed”; placed at the beginning of a sentence to express surprise (Wall 251)

[695B] **devil an American** – not at all, in no way (Share 71)

[Clancy’s surprise at the wealthy state of the American Sullivan family is reinforced by the idea that at first, he does not even think to ask them if they are the Sullivans. The poor state of the Oorwan Sullivans probably leads him to assume that their American cousin would be poor as well.]

[696T] **make a fist** – to attempt to do a thing with good, bad, etc. results (E. Partridge 716)

[Nan’s education is useful in entertaining guests, but in light of future events, it becomes clear that in spite of having long been associated with the Oorwan Sullivans, she has yet to understand them.]

[697B] **law** – euphemism for “Lord!” (E. Partridge 668)

[697B] **aru** – a term of endearment (Share 6)

[Clancy’s insistence upon staying for tea at Mary’s home illustrates his high regard for her and for the traditions of country people. His actions at Mary’s home and for the remainder of the story imply that he feels very protective of this family.]

[698T] **divil a hurry** – not at all, in no way (Share 71)

[698T] **holy show** – a cause or source of scandal or embarrassment (Share 138)

[700T] **hub** – an important city (E. Partridge 579)

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