

Navn: [REDACTED]	Fag: Engelsk A
Skole: Frederiksborg gymnasium og HF	Dato: 10/03/2020
Eksamensnummer:	side 4 af 5

Assignment 4A- Fiction

A. "Tom Corridan"

The relationship between parents and their children is a topic that many authors have depicted, whether the theme is parental love, coming of age or even animosity, as we see it in Arhondia's short story "Tom Corridan" from 2018. This story is set in Dublin, where a young boy, Tom Corridan, lives with his family on Cherryfield Road. He narrates that his father is a plumper, who enjoys to visit the local pub after work. Tom is asked by his mother to get his father home, so he won't stay there all night. After waiting for him to finish his beers, he takes his father home and it is "*business as usual*" (Line 40). This involves a beating from his father, which Tom is expecting to receive again, as he lets us know: "*And then there will be a time in the future when it starts again, like it always does.*" (Line 87). This contributes to our understanding of the social setting, which is very rough. This is also implied, when Tom gets called a "*fucking fairy*" (Line 56) by his own father, when speaking positively of the job as a professor at a university. After this, his father lets him know what he thinks of the more educated people in Dublin: "*Are you going to be one of those Trinity College heads? The cream of Dublin, thick and rich? Well, son, you're missing one of the criteria there. You're fucking thick but you sure as hell ain't rich*" (Line 56). It is made clear that he distances himself from the richer class of Dublin, but he also sees it as an impossible task for his son to become one of these people. This shows us that the lack of social mobility in the setting is seen as a barrier for Tom, which is impossible to cross. Several times during the short story it is informed that Tom has an interest in getting an education unlike his father, but this is dismissed and even joked about every time it is brought up. An exception of this is his teacher, Father Flanagan, who supports and encourages Tom to continue his education. The setting is rough, but we also get to know exactly what Tom thinks of Cherryfield Road, as he describes hearing his neighbor's music: "*Without Trevor's music, Cherryfield Road is the most miserable, greyest fucking hole in Dublin*" (Line 12). This shows us once again that Tom has no wish to stay and live like his parents. A passage where the social setting is made very clear to us, is in lines 16-35, where Tom arrives at the pub to walk his father home. The

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language is highly informal, when it comes to the dialog, but also Tom's inner monolog, where curse words, slang and indicators of an Irish accent are present. This informal language, where we see words like "jaysus", "noisy little fecker" and "fucking eejits", are all part of establishing the social setting as the working class in Ireland, which Tom is a part of. Also in this passage we see Tom being belittled because of his aspirations, as his father jokes about his sons knowledge about Greek mythology, which is followed by laughter from his father and his friend. But Tom himself has faith that he can do better than his father, as we see it in the following quotation, where Tom confronts him: *"Maybe I can get a better job. Maybe I don't have to have muck under my fingernails and a filthy stained collar. Any savage can fix a toilet, drink himself stupid, then come home and shout at his wife and children to make himself feel important!"* (Line 70)

This quote shows us that unlike his father, Tom sees it as possible for him to do better. However this quote also shows us the view he has on his father. Not only is he angry with his father, but he actually seems to have hatred towards him. This is seen furthermore as he confesses to Father Flanagan, that he wishes that his father was dead. Tom tells Father Flanagan that he is aware that these thoughts are bad, but when Tom gets home, we see this wish become more plausible as his father has forgotten to take his blood-pressure tablets, and Tom is ordered to run to the chemist to get some, and thereby save his father's life. Tom walks towards the chemist, but not before asking his mother, if she is sure, which she is. As he walks out the door to the house, in which his father is dying, he describes the setting a lot more positively than he has done throughout the story. In the beginning of the text, the weather is described as grey and cold, but now the situation is very different: *"The air feels different. Everything has a different light on it, a brighter light."* (Line 134). This could represent a new beginning for Tom, where his father won't be around to torment him anymore. Tom walks past a bike, but decides to walk instead, and as he passes a laneway he decides to have a break and smoke a cigarette. After he has smoked, the story ends in an open ending with him lighting another cigarette in the laneway. This shows us that Tom is so fed up with his father's way of being, that he meant what he wished for, and is willing to be the reason for his father's death. This relationship between father and son is filled with such hatred that the theme in the short story could be animosity in the relationship between parents and their children. This relationship is filled with despise on both sides and this despise is what leads to an outcome, that could be fatal.