Elephant

*Plot summary*

The story revolves around one man’s quest towards bankruptcy by bankrolling his greedy-needy relatives. The story can be read in two ways. It can be read that the family take advantage of his generosity in order to fund their lifestyles. This can be suggested by the fact that their excuses & use of guilt slowly rises as the story continues. However, it could also be read as a story of one man supporting his needy family and taking on the metaphorical ‘elephant’ role of carer that his father was to him.

*Themes*

Greed –

* The family’s constant need for more & more money is an expression of this.

Dependence & Family –

* The family are able to depend on him and he becomes the figure of help and support for them.
* His father gives him support – physically – when he is young. Then he supports his dependant relatives when he’s the ‘bread-winner’

*Tone*

The tone of the piece can be described pessimistic or optimistic depending on how the story is read. This is examined above.

*Characters*

**Man –**

He is kind-hearted & trusting possibly to the point of his own destruction due to his family’s taking-advantage.

**Brother –**

He is unreliable & possibly a liar (the argument between him and mother). He also manipulates his brother when he needs to.

**Mother** –

She is either a very desperate elderly woman – dependant on her son for the income she needs – or she is a master of guilt and manipulation for getting what she wants.

**Son** –

He is living the student life style far away from the family. He is very quick to bring guilt to hyperbolic levels in order to gain what he wants.

**Daughter –**

She – like the son – manipulates father in order to get what she wants from him.