

Chapter 2

The Address

READING WITH INSIGHT

Q. 1 ‘Have you come back?’ said the woman. ‘I thought that no one had come back.’ Does this statement give some clue about the story? If yes, what is it?

Answer:

The story revolves around a girl trying to find her mother’s antique possessions which are with an old woman. The girl’s mother Mrs. S knew about the forthcoming war and so had slowly shifted all her expensive belongings to the house of her acquaintance Mrs. Dorling. Since Mrs. S had died during the war, the woman Mrs. Dorling did not expect anyone to come back and claim the costly belongings. She is shocked to see the girl. The statement shows that the woman is greedy and does not want to part with the antiques. She doesn’t even recognize the daughter of her former acquaintance and refuses to let her inside the house.

Q. 2 The story is divided into pre-War and post-War times. What hardships do you think the girl underwent during these times?

Answer:

During the pre-war times, the girl lived in some other city away from her mother and visited her only a few times. During this time Mrs. S was anxious that her valuable belongings would be lost in the war. They were always afraid that they would have to leave the place. The girl lived in a small rented room with its windows covered with blackout paper. She could not see anything outside and the threat of death was also always there. However, post the war, things turned to normalcy. The girl could open the windows of her room and glance outside without fearing anything. She had a strong urge to look at her mother’s possessions and so also visited Mrs. Dorling’s.

Q. 3 Why did the narrator of the story want to forget the address?

Answer:

The narrator remembered an address her mother had given her once before the war started. She was told by her mother that the valuables were transferred to this place. Her mother's acquaintance Mrs. Dorling lived there. Post-war, the narrator wanted to see her mother's belongings and so visited Mrs. Dorling's place, however, she was shocked to see the way in which they were stored in her house. She felt very bad in the atmosphere even when she was surrounded by the things she wanted to see so desperately. The ugly furniture and the muggy smell that hung there seemed unpleasant. The antiques, it seemed, had lost their value in an unfamiliar surrounding away from her mother. She, therefore, resolved to forget the address and move on.

Q. 4 'The Address' is a story of human predicament that follows the war. Comment.

Answer:

The war created many problems for the narrator both emotionally and physically. She lost her mother and the house that she lived in. Her belongings were taken away by a stranger who did not want to return them. Many post-war feelings can be seen in the story. Starting from the loss of life to the greedy and callous nature of a woman, so many feelings are portrayed through this short story. The human predicament that follows war is described very subtly through the experience of the narrator.