

The Address – Important Questions

Q. Why did the narrator go to number 46, Marconi Street?

Ans. This was the address of the woman who carried their valuables from her home for safety during war time. So, the narrator went there to claim the belongings of her mother.

Q. How does Mrs. Dorling react when the narrator said, “I am Mrs. S daughter”?

Ans. Mrs. Dorling held her hand on the door as if she wanted to prevent it opening any further. Her face showed no sign of recognition. She kept staring at the narrator without uttering a word.

Q. ‘Her face gave absolutely no sign of recognition.’ Do you think the woman didn’t recognize the narrator, or she was merely pretending? Give reasons for your answer.

Ans. Obviously, the woman was pretending that she didn’t recognize the narrator. As soon as she realized that she has been found out she said, “Have you come back? I thought that no one had come back.”

Q. How did the woman try to avoid the narrator?

Ans. First, the woman refused to recognize the narrator. When she realized that she had been found out, she regretted that she couldn’t do anything for the narrator. Then she asked the narrator to come another time. She gave the impression that there was someone in the house whom she didn’t want to disturb.

Q. What are the two reasons did the narrator give to explain that she was mistaken?

Ans. She thought that perhaps the woman was not Mrs. Dorling, she had seen her only once, for a brief interval and that many years ago. Secondly, it was probable that she had rung the wrong bell.

Q. How was the narrator convinced that she had made no mistake and had reached the right address?

Ans. When the woman who opened the door give no sign of recognition, the narrator thought she was perhaps mistaken and had rung the wrong bell. When she saw the woman wearing her mother’s green knitted cardigan, she was convinced that she had made no mistake and reached the right address.

Q. Who had given the narrator the address? When and under what circumstance?

Ans. The narrator's mother had given her the address, years ago during the first half of the war. The narrator came home for a few days and missed various things in the rooms. Then, her mother told her about Mrs. Dorling and gave her the address.

Q. How do you know that there was someone in the house? What did she ask? How did the woman respond?

Ans. When the narrator was still on the steps, someone stared at her from the bay window. He/She asked what the visitor wanted. The woman replied that it was nothing.

Q. What did the narrator learn about Mrs. Dorling from her mother?

Ans. Mrs. Dorling was an old acquaintance of the narrator's mother. The latter had not seen her for several years. Then she suddenly turned up and renewed their contact. Whenever she would leave that place she took something from her table silver, antique plates etc.

Q. What reason did Mrs. Dorling give for taking away the precious belongings of narrator's mother?

Ans. Mrs. Dorling suggested to the narrator's mother that she should store her belonging at a safer place. She wanted to save all her nice things. She explained that they would lose everything if they have to leave the place.

Q. What did the narrator notice when she came back home for a few days during war? What was her immediate reaction?

Ans. When the narrator came back home for a few days during war, she noticed that something or the other about the rooms had changed. She was surprised to see that various things were missing.

Q. Who was Mrs. Dorling? What did the narrator's mother tell her about the woman?

Ans. Mrs. Dorling was an old acquaintance of the narrator's mother whom she had not seen for years. She had recently renewed their contact. Since then she has been visiting their house regularly. Every time she left their house she took something home with her.

Q. Did the narrator feel convinced about the views of her mother regarding Mrs. Dorling? How do you know?

Ans. The narrator did not feel convinced about her mother's concern for Mrs. Dorling. The latter was keen on removing the precious possessions of the narrator's mother to her own house. It seems that the narrator did not like Mrs. Dorling's excessive interest in her mother's belongings. It is evident from the questions she puts to her mother.

Q. Why didn't the narrator pay much attention to things around while walking to the station?

Ans. While walking to the station the narrator didn't pay attention to things around because she did not want to upset herself with the sight of streets and houses which were full of memories from her former life.

Q. Why did the narrator feel the urge to see her mother's belongings?

Ans. The war was over. Gradually, things became normal again. One day, the narrator felt an urge to see her mother's belongings which, she thought, must still be at House Number 46 in Marconi Street. She wanted to see those things and feel them.

Q. What did the narrator see as she followed the girl along the passage?

Ans. As the narrator followed the girl along the passage she saw an old fashioned iron candle-holder hanging next to a mirror. It belonged to her mother. They had never used it because it was more difficult to carry a single candlestick.

Q. Why was the narrator horrified when she entered the living room?

Ans. When the narrator entered the living room she was horrified because she felt as if she was in a room she knew and did not know. She found herself in the midst of things she wanted to see again but which distressed her in the strange atmosphere. She was oppressed to see them arranged in a tasteless manner.

Q. "I was in a room I knew and did not know," says the narrator in the story 'The Address'. What prompted her to make this observation?

Ans. The narrator found herself in the midst of things she was familiar with and which she did not want to see again. However, she found them in a strange atmosphere where everything was arranged in tasteless way. The ugly furniture and the muggy smell created the feeling that she didn't know the room.

Q. How was the narrator able to recognize her own familiar woollen tablecloth?

Ans. The narrator first stared at the woollen table cloth. Then she followed the lines of the pattern. She remembered that somewhere there was a burn mark which had not been repaired. At last she found the burn mark on the table cloth. This helped her to recognize her own familiar article.

Q. Why did the narrator wait a long time before going to the address number 46, Marconi Street?

Ans. Initially, after the liberation, she was not at all interested in her mother's belongings, lying stored there. She was also afraid of being confronted with things that had belonged to her mother, who was now no more.

Q. “You only notice when something is missing.” What does the speaker exactly mean? What examples does she give?

Ans. The speaker says that one gets used to touching one’s lovely things in the house. One hardly looks at them any more. It is only when something is missing that it is noticed either because it is to be repaired or it has been lent to someone.

Q. Why did the narrator suddenly decide to leave?

Ans. The narrator had visited 46, Marconi Street for a specific purpose – to see her mother’s belongings and touch them. However, these objects seemed to have lost their value in strange surroundings and on being served from the life of former times. So, she suddenly decided to leave.

Q. Why did narrator want to forget the address finally?

Ans. The narrator was eager to take back her mother’s belongings and made some efforts but at last decided to forget the same and move ahead. In fact she had found Mrs Dorling and her daughter using those things as their own. The things had also lost the beauty in a different background. So, she decided to leave the bitter past and start afresh.

Q. “Of all the things I had to forget, that would be the easiest.” What does the speaker mean by ‘that’? What is its significance in the story?

Ans. ‘That’ here stands for the address. The words no. 46, Marconi Street’ i.e., the address reoccur throughout the story. The address is important for the narrator at the beginning of the story. However, at the end of the story she resolves to forget it as she wants to break off with the past and move on with the present into the future.

Q. How did the narrator come to know about Mrs. Dorling and the address where she lived?

Ans. Years ago, during the first half of the war, the narrator went home for a few days to see her mother. After staying there a couple of days she noticed that something or other about the rooms had changed. She missed various things. Then her mother told her about Mrs. Dorling. She was an old acquaintance of her mother she had suddenly turned up after many years. Now, she came regularly and took something home with her everytime she came. She suggested that she could save her precious belongings by storing them at her place. Mother told her address, number 46, Marconi Street. The narrator asked her mother if she had agreed with her that she should keep everything. Her mother did not like that. She thought it would be an insult to do so. She was worried about the risk. Mrs. Dorling faced carrying a full suitcase or bag.

Q. Describe narrator’s first visit to Mrs. Dorling’s house in Marconi Street.

Ans. The narrator was sure that her mother’s belongings must still be preserved by Mrs. Dorling. One day, she felt an urge to see and touch those objects. So, she went to Mrs. Dorling’s house in Marconi Street. She rang the bell. A women opened the door a chink

and looked at her searchingly. The narrator came closer and introduced herself that she was Mrs. S's daughter. The woman kept staring at her in silence. There was no sign of recognition on her face. The narrator thought perhaps she had come to the wrong house. But she saw that the woman was wearing her mother's green knitted cardigan. She knew at once that she had made no mistake. She asked the woman whether she knew her mother. The woman could not deny this. She said. "Have you come back?" The narrator said that she had come there specially to talk to her for a moment. The woman regretted that she could not do anything for her. She asked the narrator to come some other time and cautiously closed the door. The narrator realized that her visit was in vain. She stood on the step for a while and then left the place.

Q. 3. Describe the narrator's second visit to Mrs. Dorling's house.

Ans. The narrator's first visit to Mrs. Dorling's house was in vain. She decided to try for a second time. This time a girl of about fifteen opened the door to her. Her mother was not at home. The narrator said that she would wait for her. Following the girl along the passage, the narrator saw their old-fashioned iron candle-holder hanging next to a mirror. The girl made her sit in the living room and went inside. The narrator was horrified to find herself in a room she knew and did not know. She found herself in the midst of familiar things which she longed to see again but which oppressed her in the strange atmosphere. She dared not look around her. The woollen table cloth, the cups, the white tea-pot, the spoons, the pewter plate, everything was full of memories of her former life. Suddenly the objects linked with her former life lost their value in strange surroundings. They too appeared strange to her. She no longer had desire to possess them. She got up, walked to the door, and came out of the house.

Q. What did the narrator learn about Mrs. Dorling from her mother?

Ans. The war was going on. The narrator was home for a few days. She immediately noticed that something about the rooms had changed. Various things were missing. She looked at her mother questioningly. Then her mother told her about Mrs. Dorling. The narrator had never heard of that woman. Obviously, she was an old acquaintance of her mother, whom she had not seen for years. Since then, she had been coming to their house regularly. Every time she left the place she took something with her. She took all the table silver cutlery set, then the antique plates and several other precious things. She herself explained that she wanted to save all their nice things because they would lose everything in case they had to leave the house. The narrator's mother never doubted her intention. She rather felt obliged to Mrs. Dorling for taking all the trouble while carrying their things.

Q. Comment on the significance of the title of the story 'The Address.'

Ans. The story has been aptly given the title, 'The Address.' This title is significant. The story moves around Mrs. Dorling's address: Number 46, Marconi Street. Mrs. Dorling was an old acquaintance of the narrator's mother. She had carried their valuables to her house

for safety during the war time. She said that she wanted to save all their nice things because they would lose everything if they had to flee from the place. The narrator's mother told her Mrs. Dorling's address. The narrator had remembered the address.

When the war was over and things became almost normal, one day the narrator had an intense longing to see and touch the objects which were linked with the memories of her former life. She knew that all the things must still be preserved by Mrs. Dorling. So, she went to number 46 in Marconi Street. She was horrified to find in a room she knew and did not know. She found herself in the midst of familiar things which she longed to see again but which oppressed her in the strange atmosphere. Suddenly, the objects lost their value in strange surroundings, they too appeared strange to her. She realized that the address lost all its significance for her and she wanted to forget it.

Q. What impression do you form of the narrator?

Ans. The narrator leaves a very favourable impression on us about her emotional and intellectual qualities. We find her an intelligent but devoted daughter. She loves and respects her mother, but does not approve of her soft behaviour towards her acquaintance, Mrs. Dorling. She puts a pointed question, which her mother thinks impolite.

The narrator has a keen power of observation. She notices during her brief stay at home that various things are missing from the rooms. She has a sharp power of judgment. She at once sizes up Mrs. Dorling of her own identity and the later's relations with her mother reveal her indomitable spirit. She visits 46, Marconi Street twice to see, touch and remember her mother's belongings. She is a realist, who doesn't like to remain tagged to the past. Her resolution to forget the address and move on shows her grit and forward looking nature. She has a progressive personality.