

Chapter 2: The Address

NCERT · Class 11 · English · Snapshots

Textbook exercises

Question 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?

Solution

Ans: The statement suggests that the two families knew each other, probably stayed nearby, and were acquaintances. The writer was not well received by Mrs Dorling, who lived in Marconi Street, Number 46. When the war was going on, some people left their homes to take refuge in distant lands. And the few who stayed there thought those who had left their land would never return. Most of the author's family possessions were given to Mrs. Dorling since the author's family had to leave because of war. Mrs. Dorling, a non-Jew, thought that the entire family of Mrs. S, a Jew, was killed during the war. So, instead of taking care of the goods, she started using them. When the daughter of Mrs Dorling visited to take back the possessions, she was sent off from the door with the excuse of her visit being inconvenient.

Question 2

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

Solution

Ans: During World War, individuals across the world had to undergo extreme mental and physical difficulties. In Europe, Jews had to face extreme torture, and many left their homes to escape to another land to save their lives. The story "The Address" is divided into pre-war and post-war times. The author's family had to leave their precious belongings behind to save them from being destroyed during the war. Mrs Dorling was an old acquaintance of the author's mother and promised her to take care of everything till they returned. They had to leave their home behind and flee to an unknown land where

survival was difficult. She lost all her family members because of the war and was forced to live alone in a small, rented room with shreds of black-out papers still hung along the window. After the liberation, she was not interested in collecting back all her possessions and memories as the connections they belonged to no longer existed. Eventually, after the war, the conditions became better. Food was available, and people were no longer forced to move from place to place to save their lives. This positive change motivated her to go and collect back her memories and goods that belonged to her family from Mrs. Dorling, who assumed that they all would have died in the war.

Question 3

Why did the narrator of the story want to forget the address?

Solution

Ans: After going through everything and losing her loved ones, the author did not intend to travel back and collect everything since the collections they belonged to no longer existed. Looking at everything would freshen the wounds that the war gave her. While the war was on, Mrs. Dorling had promised her mother to take diligent care of the belongings and return them when they were back. But on the first encounter, she refused to identify the author or her mother and the next time the author entered her home because she was out for some errands, she saw all the items that belonged to her family decorated in the home, and being used by the family. She was served in the items linked to her memory but in strange surroundings. The things lost their value at that point. This agitated her and she consoled herself, thinking that the items would be better used by them than being kept in crumpled furniture and a small rented room with the black-out paper still hanging on.

Question 4

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

Solution

Ans: War not only causes lots of physical and economic damage to the country but also shatters the emotional aspect of an individual. During the World War, people had to travel away from their homes to protect their lives. Many innocents, along with the soldiers were killed, and the atrocities of the war are still there. Incidents of bombing and shelling scared everyone. Many people faced post-war depression

and trauma along with the wounds of losing their loved ones. The author too had to leave her home and keep on shifting with her family and mere belongings to protect themselves. They had to leave all their belongings at their acquaintance's place and live in a small, rented home with black-out sheets. She lost all her family members, and it was disturbing for her. She did not want to go back and collect her belongings as it would cause the pain of realizing everything she lost. Mrs Dorling's cold behaviour and the assumption that everyone would have died because of the war would have shattered her. Wars leave the world desolate not only on the physical level but also on the emotional and spiritual level.
