



# Class XI English Snapshots Chapter - 2

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***The Short Story 'The  
Address' By Margot  
Minco Teaches Us Not To  
Regret The Past***



*The story further brings to light that as soon as we accept something and move on in life, the better we're bound to feel. Accepting something not only makes us feel better emotionally, it also helps us to concentrate on the opportunities that might come our way in the not-so-distant future.*



## An Overview

*“The Address” by Marga Minco narrates the story of a lady (possibly the author herself), who, after losing her entire family in the Holocaust, returns to ‘the address’ in order to collect all her family’s possessions that the author’s mother had left with Mrs Dorling, a non-Jewish lady, before leaving her homeland.*

*After the war was over, the author went to Mrs Dorling’s house to collect all her past possessions, but to her surprise, Mrs Dorling refused to recognize her. In a second attempt, the author rings the doorbell of Mrs Dorling’s house, only to be welcomed by her daughter. She offered her a cup of tea and asked her to wait for Mrs Dorling. As the author observed the room, she saw the cups and other utensils her mother had left with Mrs Dorling. She also came across the tablecloth with burn marks on it. She left the house without waiting for Mrs Dorling to return.*



## *Human Emotions Portrayed*

*'The Address' by Marga Minco throws light on a multitude of human emotions. On her first visit to 46, Marconi Street (Mrs Dorling's house), the author was given a cold shoulder by Mrs Dorling. This act of Mrs Dorling is enough to tell us that the author's mother was betrayed by Mrs Dorling.*

*The author, on the other hand, was being overpowered by emotional turmoil and sadness after Mrs Dorling hadn't recognized her. After being treated unpleasantly by Mrs Dorling on her very first visit to the house, the author developed an awful impression of Mrs Dorling. To her, she was a thief who had refused to recognize her as she didn't want to return the possessions that the author's mother had left behind.*



*On her second visit, the author was welcomed by Mrs Dorling's daughter, who, unlike her mother, asked the author to come in and even offered her a cup of tea. The author, while running her eyes around the house, saw a few things her mother had left with Mrs Dorling. She also observed that Mrs Dorling's daughter loves those possessions quite dearly and is proud of possessing them. In the end, the author decided against taking her possessions along as she felt that all these possessions would remind her of her family members who had died during the course of the war.*



## *The Address About the Characters*

*The Daughter: She is the narrator, who returns to Holland to go to the address where her mother's precious belongings were kept. As normalcy had returned after the Second World War in Holland, she wanted to see all possessions that were a bond between her family and herself.*

*Mrs S - The Narrator's Mother: In the story, the narrator's mother has been called as Mrs S. She was a simpleton who could not see the manipulating and fraudulent nature of Mrs Dorling, her acquaintance. She trusted Mrs Dorling and allowed her to keep all her precious belongings for the time being.*

*Mrs Dorling: She has been described as an old acquaintance of Mrs S. After a long gap, she appeared again during the war. She possessed a cunning personality. She is most reluctant to recognise the daughter and does not allow her to enter the house.*

## *The Address Chapter Highlights*

- *The narrator decides to visit the address that was given to her by her mother, where all her family's precious possessions were kept safely by Mrs Dorling.*
- *The first time when the narrator visited the address, Mrs Dorling behaved in the most absurd manner. She refused to recognise the narrator and did not let her enter the house. So the narrator returns empty-handed.*
- *The narrator is reminded of her mother (Mrs S) who had given this address to her years ago, when in spite of war, they were living in Holland and she saw Mrs Dorling who was introduced to her as an old acquaintance of her mother.*
- *The narrator noticed many precious items missing from their places. Then Mrs S told her that Mrs Dorling was helping her by taking her table cloth, silver cutlery, antique plates, large vases and crockery to her house to keep in safe custody, in case they had to leave the house suddenly.*



- *The narrator decided to revisit the house of Mrs Dorling as she felt the urge to see all her mother's belongings. She wanted to touch them, feel them and remember them.*
- *On her second visit to 46, Marconi Street, she could get entry into the house as Mrs Dorling's 15 year-old daughter opened the door. Her mother was not at home.*
- *The girl led her to the living room where, to the narrator's dismay, things belonging to her mother were arranged in a bad manner.*
- *Mrs Dorling's daughter innocently told the narrator that they were using all the antique plates, crockery and cutlery.*
- *The narrator took an impulsive decision to leave everything behind as the precious objects owned by her mother had lost their value. Also, these objects associated with her mother were now in strange surroundings.*
- *The narrator decided to forget her past as it brought back bitter memories. Her mother was no more there to revive the pleasant memories.*
- *The narrator walked out of Mrs Dorling's house, deciding that she would never come back to this house to see or take away her family's possessions as she had no place to keep all of it.*

# *The Address Word Meanings*

## *Word - Meaning*

*poignant - arousing sadness*

*evoke - arouse*

*resolves - decides*

*chink - narrow opening*

*fleetingly - for a short time*

*cardigan - sweater with buttons*

*musty - stale*

*bay window - large window sticking out of the wall of a house*

*jamb - doorpost*

*struck - occurred to*

*apparently - evidently*

*acquaintance - known person*



*turned up - appeared*

*antique - a collectable object, old and often valuable*

*table silver - cutlery (knives, forks and spoons) made of silver*

*lugging - carrying*

*crick - strain*

*reprovingly - with disapproval*

*beckoned - called*

*stored stuff - belongings kept in a safe place*

*confronted - come face to face with*

*endured - survived*

*errand - work involving going out of the house*

*hanukkah - used in the Jewish festival of lights*

*cumbersome - unmanageable*

*oppressed - saddened*

*still life - painting of an arrangement of flowers and/or fruits*

*fancied - desired.*

*pewter - tin alloy*

*jingling - light metallic sound*

*severed - cut off*

*shreds - tiny pieces*

### ***Main message of the story***

***The story is based on the pre-War and post-War period. The family of the girl was rich before the war and they had valuable possessions in their house. When the war started, Mrs. Dorling established contact with them and started visiting them again.***

***The Address by Marga Minco revolves around the theme of crisis that we as an individual encounter in our daily life. War brings destruction, pain, and loss of lives which impact humans in various ways. However, this story speaks about the narrator and mother's life how they are disrupted due to war.***