

402 Why were Mr & Mrs Jordan visiting the Slaters after so many years?

Ans. Since Mr Abel Merryweather was considered to be dead, Mrs Jordan, the daughter, was visiting her sister's family, to look after the arrangements to be made for the father's death.

52 Henry says, "I suppose it's in the family." What does Henry mean by this & why he says so?

Ans. Henry knows well that both the sisters are very clever & calculative, so they will not lose any chance to pinch things belonging to their family. When his wife brings the new slippers of her father & gives to Henry, he makes this humorous comment.

62 What are the three things that grandfather plans to do on next Monday?

Ans. The grandfather was a meticulous planner so he planned to alter his will, pay his premium of the insurance policy & get married to John Shorrocks widow.

72 Why didn't the Slaters call for the doctor?

Ans. The Slaters had called for the doctor named Bringle who attended grandpa whenever he was sick. Because he was out of the town, they did not make any effort to get him checked.

from any other doctor. This indicates their lack of concern for grandpa. As the Jordans had suggested, they should have consulted the doctor before declaring him dead.

↳ Mrs Jordan, "we want a verse that says how much we loved him." Point out the irony in this remark.

Mrs Jordan, the daughters, wishes to show the world how much they all loved their father, by choosing such words for his obituary. But the irony is that in reality, they do not love him nor do they respect his good qualities.

↳ What does Mrs Jordan describe as 'a fatal mistake'? What is the irony on the comment she makes on Mrs Slater's defence?

Mrs Jordan believes that not sending for the doctor at her father's death was a 'fatal mistake'. Mrs Slater clarifies immediately that since it was Mr Bringle who had always attended on her father, it would be against professional etiquette to call someone else. Mr Bringle was out of town so they didn't call anyone else.

↳ How does the spat between the two daughters lead to the grandfather discovering the truth?

Abel Merryweather recognizes his bureau

and wants to know the reason for its shifting.
Mrs Slater had already told her sister that the bureau belonged to them. This lie is enough to set tongues wagging and tempers escalating. Mrs Jordan censures her sister of stealing her father's things, thinking him to be dead. That is when Abel discovers that they had gathered there for the official mourning of his death.

112 Bring out the irony in the title of the play, "The Dear Departed".

The play is packed with great irony that makes a mockery of all relations that are most intense and sanctimonious. Both the sisters consider their father Abel Merryweather, a burden & his death is no less to them. Immediately after Abel's supposed death, the elder daughter pilfers his slippers, clock & his durney. The father's death is a kind of competition to outshine each other as both the daughters vie with each other to wear the best morning dress. They hurl accusations at each other but no one spares a thought for the father. The lesson ends on a humorous note but outlines a very tragic & pathetic concern of the elderly that is a glaring & ugly reality of today's world.

122 How is the hypocrisy of the two sisters brought out in the play, "The Dear Departed"?

A The two sisters lived by double standards. Each of them tried to outshine the other. Amelia tried to punch the bureau before Elizabeth's arrival whereas Elizabeth was late because she wanted to reach there in new mourning dress. She was in no hurry to reach her father's house even after hearing the news of his death. Both of them laid more stress on getting materialistic gains from Abel's death as Amelia wanted to pilfer the clock whereas Elizabeth wanted grandfather's watch. Their hypocrisy reached its height when at tea, they discussed about newspaper announcement even before confirming his death. But when Abel came down, both of them were shocked. Further they got a terrible blow when their father announced his marriage to Mrs Shorrocks & the change of his will.

132 Mrs Slater represents a great materialistic character in the play, "The Dear Departed". Give two evidences in support of the statement.

Ans Mrs Slater believes in show & pomp as this is evident in the description of her dress at the beginning of the play. Mrs Slater is a greedy woman who wants to gobble up everything after the death

of her father. The way she always gives orders to Henry & Victoria shows that she is a dominating woman. She always tells Henry about lack of finances & the stress she feels while managing with meager resources. She does not show even an iota of respect for her father. She is more interested in outperforming her sister in every way. She can bend down to any level to satisfy her greed.

142: Who is Jimmy? Why is his reference made in the play?

Ans Jimmy is presumably the son of Mr & Mrs Jordan. His reference is made twice in the play when Mrs Jordan states that the grandpa had promised to give his gold watch to him that shocks Mrs Slater. Again, when the same matter is repeated & this time in front of the grandpa, his name is repeated to ascertain whether the old man had really promised so. But when Mrs Jordan makes excuses, then it becomes clear that was a concocted lie to get hold of the only valuable present with grandpa.

152: Who is Ben? What is he most worried about?

Ans Ben is the husband of Mrs Jordan, a slightly humorous man by nature. He is more money minded than Henry.

throughout the play what keeps him worried is to find the receipt of the premium that the grandfather had paid at the insurance office. And when he does not get it, he calls the grandpa 'drunken old beggar'. He is always by the side of his wife in her extremes. He also tries to warn the grandpa that he cannot manage without living with one of his daughters to which the old man pays no heed.

Q How does the father come to know that he was premmed to be dead?

Both the sisters try their best to hide the tale of the morning when they had premmed the father to be dead due to their own personal reasons. However, this could not be hidden for long as the two sisters flared up when one blamed the other of robbing furniture from the room of their father, imagining him to be dead. This leads the grandpa to conclude the reason why Elizabeth visited them & why everyone was in black clothes of mourning.

Q What change does grandfather make in his new will? what effect does it have on his daughter?

→ feeling that he should not be hard on anyone of his daughters, the grandfather decides to make a new will. Acc.

to the new will, he would leave all the bits of things with any one with whom would be living until his death. The effect came like a blessing to Mrs Hater & like an explosion to Mrs Jordan that led to another fierce argument between the sisters. The result is that the grandfather finally disowns both his daughters from his will.

Q 182 What is the theme of the play?

A In this pungent satire on the moral degradation of the British middle class society, that criticizes peripheral relations & spectacular love of self parents, siblings & children. It highlights the increasing trend of leaving the elderly in old age homes or throwing them out in the twilight of their lives.

Q 190 Justify the title of the play?

A The title is appropriate & an emotive one as it talks about the demise of someone close. But soon it becomes clear that the 'dear departed' is Mr Abel - father of Amelia & Elizabeth. What departed then dearly were their father's assets & belongings.

Q 202 What is the message given to the readers through the play?

Through this drama the writer wants to convey the message to the reader that some people show love & respect to their relatives or friends only with an intention to gain something from them. In the drama both the sisters showed too much love & respect to their father, but no sooner had he come to know that their father died, then they took away his slippers, clock & bureau. Actually they were very happy to know it as they soon waited to grab his property.