

The Demon Lover by Elizabeth Bowen

Journal Question: *Do you believe there are supernatural elements at work in our world? Explain. Have you ever felt the presence of a spirit, a presence of evil, or a presence of good that you could not see or touch? Have you ever known anyone who has?*

Journal Question: *Have you ever felt fear that you could not explain? Have you ever been in a situation where there was no apparent danger, but you felt a premonition that something bad was going to happen? Explain.*

Journal Question: *Have you ever been startled by something? Has anyone ever done anything or given you something that startled you? When was the last time you were surprised and a little afraid by something someone did or said?*

Journal Question: *What kinds of places do you think are the most likely to be haunted? Have you ever been in a haunted place? Do you think places can be haunted?*

Journal Question: *Do you think there is such a thing as a demon? Do you think a demon can harm you? Explain.*

Story Questions

1. List several details from the first paragraph that help to create a mood of mystery.
2. List two of the “traces” of her old way of life that Mrs. Drover sees in the house and finds puzzling.
3. Why are there cracks in the interior of the house?
4. What does Mrs. Drover find on the hall table?
5. Why is it strange that she should find it there?
6. Where does Mrs. Drover decide to take the letter?
7. Who do you think the letter is from?
8. When Mrs. Drover looks in the mirror, what does she see?
9. What did the young Kathleen, now Mrs. Drover, have as a memento of her relationship with her soldier?
10. Describe Kathleen’s fiancé?
11. What does he tell her she need only do?
12. In what way has Kathleen “plighted a ... sinister troth”?
13. When her fiancé does not return, does Kathleen have other beaux?
14. What metaphor is used to describe Mrs. Drover’s London home as it is now?
15. Mrs. Drover cannot determine how the letter got into her locked house. She locks the door to her room and begins putting parcels together. What does she plan to do when the parcels are wrapped?

16. What lapse in Mrs. Drover's memory of her fiancé scares her above all else?
17. When Mrs. Drover leaves the house, where does she go?
18. What does she see at the corner of the square?
19. What does Mrs. Dover do when the taxi driver turns and faces her?
20. Who is driving the taxi, and where do you think he is taking his passenger?

Vocabulary Test
Demon Lover

Name _____
Date _____ Period _____

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| ___ 1. An injury to flesh or other material | a. steamy |
| ___ 2. To emit or give off vapor | b. batch |
| ___ 3. Lacking imagination or excitement | c. parcel |
| ___ 4. A writing desk or table | d. prosaic |
| ___ 5. A group of things | e. perplexed |
| ___ 6. Circulation of air | f. bruise |
| ___ 7. Wrapped package, bundle | g. ventilation |
| ___ 8. Filled with uncertainty | h. chimney |
| ___ 9. Bent out of shape, | i. escritoire |
| ___ 10. A passage for smoke made out of bricks | j. warped |
11. She had to push the _____ door with her knee.
12. It was a _____, showery day.
13. The smoke from the fireplace went up the _____.
14. There was a _____ on the wallpaper where the door knob hit the wall.
15. Mrs. Drover was a _____ woman.

Book Questions

1. Why is Mrs. Drover reluctant to really examine the letter?

2. How many years have passed since Mrs. Drover parted from the young soldier?

3. What idea occurs to Mrs. Drover that gives her courage?

4. What is her first clue that there is something strange about the taxi?

5. What details of the setting make it understandable that Mrs. Drover might develop an uncomfortable or stressful frame of mind?

6. How do Mrs. Drover's first reactions to the letter reveal her character?

7. What details in the flashback to 1916 suggest she was uncomfortable in her relationship with the young soldier?

Demon Lover Test

1. Why is Mrs. Drover in London?
 - a. to check on the house and make sure the caretaker is doing his job
 - b. to meet her husband and sister
 - c. to fulfill a promise she had made twenty-five years ago
 - d. to do some shopping and get some things from the house
2. Which line best expresses Mrs. Drover's sense of isolation and fear on this particular day?
 - a. "Though not much dust had seeped in, each object wore a film of another kind..."
 - b. Indeed, the silence was so intense...that no tread could have gained on hers unheard."
 - c. "No other way of having given herself could have made her feel so apart, lost and foresworn."
 - d. "She remembered... the complete suspension of her existence during that August week."
3. What significance do the stained mantelpiece and bruised wallpaper have?
 - a. They are familiar details that seem somehow strange.
 - b. They tell of further damage from bombings.
 - c. They put further burden on Mrs. Drover's need for repairs.
 - d. They indicate the destructiveness of the Drover children.
4. Which detail from the story helps emphasize the abnormality and ghostliness of the city?
 - a. Mrs. Drover's use-and mistrust-of a caretaker
 - b. The shortness of the taxi line
 - c. The fact that "no human eye" watched Mrs. Drover
 - d. The lack of telephone service
5. Why does a war setting make a ghost story believable?
 - a. Amid violent fighting, innocent people often get hurt.
 - b. So many people die that having ghosts as characters seems reasonable.
 - c. Once the expectation of normality is gone, anything can happen.
 - d. Deserted houses are appropriate settings for ghosts.
6. Why else might Mrs. Drover have gone to the mirror? Read between the lines and choose the most logical reason.

Mrs. Drover looked for the date: it was today's. She dropped the letter onto the bedsprings, then picked it up to see the writing again--her lips, beneath the remains of lipstick, beginning to go white. She felt so much the change in her own face that she went to the

mirror, polished a clear patch in it and looked at once urgently and stealthily in. She was confronted by a woman of forty-four, with eyes staring out under a hat brim that had been rather carelessly pulled down.

- a. She needed to see how her face had changed since her former fiancé had seen it.
 - b. She looked to see if his image would appear.
 - c. She checked to see if she needed more lipstick.
 - d. She wanted to make sure the mirror wasn't damaged.
7. In what way does Mrs. Drover's response to her reflection in the mirror provide a typical ghost story element?
- a. The whiteness of her lips hints at a ghostly element.
 - b. Her response is very normal, and ghost stories contain "normal" elements.
 - c. The fact that she has to clear a patch in the mirror suggests mystery.
 - d. Mrs. Drover reveals uncertainty about herself, which can hint at supernatural occurrences.
8. How does Mrs. Drover control her fear?
- a. She refuses to acknowledge it.
 - b. She turns it into anger.
 - c. She focuses on practical activities.
 - d. She gives herself a pep talk.
9. What hint of strangeness is there in the farewell scene between Kathleen and her fiancé?
- a. Kathleen knows she doesn't really love him.
 - b. The scene takes place in secret because Kathleen's family disapproves.
 - c. The only thing she can recall are the buttons on his uniform.
 - d. The fiancé's face is not visible and makes her feel as if she has never seen his face.
10. In the flashback, the image of "spectral glitters in the place of his eyes" indicates that Kathleen was
- a. fearless.
 - b. Imaginative.
 - c. Literary.
 - d. Romantic.
11. What conclusion can you draw about Mrs. Drover from her actions in the story?
- a. She always kept her word, no matter how inconvenient.
 - b. She was unsure about what she should take back to the country.
 - c. She is not prone to imagining things or being easily frightened.

d. She didn't want to let her sister see the effect the letter had on her.

12. Why does Mrs. Drover become comforted at the thought of the taxi?

- a. The idea of not being alone appealed to her.
- b. She knew the taxi driver
- c. The presence of taxis meant that normal activities were once again operating in London.
- d. It gave her something else to think about.

13. Which is an example of a reader's identifying with Mrs. Drover in this passage?

As a woman whose utter dependability was the keystone of her family life she was not willing to return to the country, to her husband, her little boys and her sister, without the objects that she had come up to fetch. Resuming work at the chest she set about making up a number of parcels in a rapid, fumbling-decisive way. These, with her shopping parcels, would be too much to carry; this meant a taxi—at the thought of the taxi her heart went up and her normal breathing resumed.

- a. I remember I had to call a taxi once.
- b. I understand "fumbling-decisive"; I think that's how I act when I'm nervous or upset.
- c. I don't think I'm very dependable.
- d. I have a sister, but not a husband or little boys.

14. What is the theme of this story?

- a. the disorientation caused by war
- b. the effect of fatigue
- c. the inevitability of destiny
- d. the tragedy of not knowing oneself

True or False

- 1. AT the opening of "The Demon Lover," Mrs. Drover returns to her house to retrieve a letter.
- 2. The caretaker is away on a holiday.
- 3. Mrs. Drover's first name is Marlene.
- 4. When Mrs. Drover reads the letter she turns red with anger.
- 5. The story begins shortly before 600 P.M.
- 6. The flashback is to 1916.
- 7. As a young woman, Mrs. Drover is engaged to the young soldier.
- 8. After the soldier leaves, Mrs. Drover has many suitors.

9. Mrs. Drover views the letter as a threat.
10. At the end of the story, Mrs. Drover is hysterical.

Essay:

Write a one paragraph composition in which you present one reasonable explanation for what happens in the story. This paragraph should state that the story is one of the supernatural or that it is the story of a disturbed mind.