

The swearing-in ceremony

The light sat on the myriad cobbles of the parade ground as if there were a bright penny balanced on each one.

I was standing with my sisters and brother in a shock of vaguely made-up dresses and a slight stab at male grandeur. Our mother was dead my whole life and there was only my father's hand and eye to manage these dark matters. It was I think the day my father was made chief superintendent, and we had moved that morning into our new quarters in Dublin Castle, because we were to be denizens of that place. It was a lovely square flower-pink house and I was still so young that I had spent the morning showing my dolls the rooms. But I don't quite know what age I was. My brother Willie seems young enough too in my mind's eye, so it was certainly before the Great War. But all that, whenever it was, before and after, was nothing to the emotion that filled me at the sight of my father in his new dress uniform. There was no guesswork in that. The commissioner, dressed as my father said 'in a London suit of the finest sort', had come over from said London and was formally bestowing on my father, my own father, the signs and formulas of his new condition. I know now he was to lead the B division of the Dublin Metropolitan Police, and had risen now as high as he could ever expect, after thirty years in the

police. No Wicklow sunrise over Keadeen Mountain, where our cousins and aunts and uncles still lived, could have matched the brightness, the shavenness and the utmost delight in his face. It was the same look I saw every evening I came home from school, and I ran into his arms, and he kissed me, and said, 'If I didn't have your kiss I might never come home', but magnified a thousand times. His large frame that would have thrown any tug-of-war team into despair at the sight of it, if it were coming to oppose them, was bound up in a black uniform with rushing darts of what looked like silver to me on the cuffs, but may only have been glistening white braid. His hat had a white feather that streamed in the solemn castle wind. His height made the commissioner, splendid enough but in his mere civilian suit, look sketchy and oddly fearful, as if my father might somehow engulf him on a whim of strength. The commissioner spoke for a few moments, and all the ranked constables and sergeants, themselves as black as burnt sticks, every one of them six foot tall and more, made a strange murmur of approval, as sweet to my father as the rush of the salt sea on the Shelly Banks was to me. The small delicate tide of friendship, shoaling against my father's bursting face, bursting with pride and certainty.

37. What is the writer referring to in the phrase 'these dark matters'?
- (A) sibling rivalry
 - (B) a death in the family
 - (C) dressing for the ceremony
 - (D) the importance of good behaviour
38. The word 'denizens', as it is used in the text, means
- (A) visitors.
 - (B) owners.
 - (C) occupants.
 - (D) guardians.
39. 'My brother Willie seems young enough too in my mind's eye'
- While the narrative is written in the past tense, the narrator uses the present tense here. What is the effect of this?
- (A) to reveal a shift in perspective from personal to objective that will better engage the reader
 - (B) to show that she is clarifying her uncertainty about the year the ceremony occurred
 - (C) to refer to her disrupted relationship with her brother so the reader feels sympathetic towards her
 - (D) to mention her brother's experience at the ceremony because he has a better memory than her
40. Which statement best describes the father's promotion?
- (A) It was a continuation of a family tradition.
 - (B) It was an attempt to reward people in Dublin.
 - (C) It was an unexpected outcome for an Irishman.
 - (D) It was the culmination of a long successful career.
41. In the description 'but in his mere civilian suit', the narrator uses the word 'mere' to make the point that
- (A) nothing can outshine her father on this occasion.
 - (B) nobody would now dare cause trouble for the family.
 - (C) the Commissioner was improperly dressed for the occasion.
 - (D) the Commissioner's pride could not compare with her own feelings.
42. Which word best describes the bearing of the father at the swearing-in ceremony?
- (A) sombre
 - (B) arrogant
 - (C) imposing
 - (D) threatening