

Me and the Babbie

And in the mornins, we walked about, sometimes intae toon if it wis rainin, but maistly tae the park, me tellin him about the daffodils comin oot and the leaves on the trees. Ah'd have tellt him mair about the flooers and the trees but ah never knew their names. Ah 'd take pieces wi me and eat them in the park, sittin on a bench. Ah fed him as well, wrapped up in a shawl wi ma jaicket roon me so naebdy could see whit ah wis daein. We stayed oot as long as we could so's no tae run up the heatin bills - the flat's all eletric and it's dear. At night we wrapped up warm thegither in bed and ah watched TV and fed him and he dozed and fed till ah pit oot the light, then he fed and slept till the morn.

And wan day wis much like another. Sometimes ah wis bored or tired or desperate for a cuppa tea and ah could of wept. Sometimes ah did have a wee greet, on ma ain, at night. But ah'd decided tae dae whatever it wis that would keep him happy, however strange it seemed tae other folk. For whit else wis there but me and the babbie. And he wis happy, hardly grat. But they couldnae leave me alane.

Ma mammy said *it's no natural, the way thon wean gets treated.*

Ma daddy said *he should be sleepin in his ain cot.*

Ma sister said *you need a night oot, ah'll babysit fur ye.*

A night oot - daein whit? Gaun tae the dancin wi a pack a daft lassies?

Section 1: Focus on Scots

1. What are 'pieces'?

slices of cake

salty snacks

sandwiches

pastries

2. What is the meaning of the word 'greet'?

shout

complain

wake up

cry



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3. Which word does Donovan use that means, 'together'?

thegither

taegether

aw

roon

4. Donovan uses the word 'wean', which is Scots for 'child'. Wean is a compound word, made up of which two words?

weegie angel

weel angel

when anent

wee ane

Section 2: Focus on understanding and analysis

5. Which quotation demonstrates the lives of the mother and child are affected by poverty?

ah never knew their names

Ah'd take pieces wi me

so's no tae run up the heatin bills

6. Select the quotation that demonstrates the mother's love for her child.

ah did have a wee greet

whatever it wis that would keep him happy

A night oot – daein whit?

7. Within this excerpt, the narrator gives examples of the things her family say to her to show:

that they only ever speak on the phone

their lack of empathy for her

that there is always more than one side to a story

that the narrator needs a break



8. The narrator considers 'gaun tae the dancing wi a pack a daft lassies'. Within this context, what are the connotations of the word 'daft'?

immature, silly, insignificant

conceited, arrogant, snobbish

enthusiastic, motivated, energetic

9. Offline task: By referring to this and at least one other story by Donovan, show how the theme of isolation is explored.