



Cambridge International AS & A Level

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH**9695/04**

Paper 4 Pre- and Post-1900 Poetry and Prose

For examination from 2021

SPECIMEN PAPER

2 hours

* 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 *

You must answer on the enclosed answer booklet.

You will need: Answer booklet (enclosed)

INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer **two** questions in total. You must answer **one** poetry question and **one** prose question.
Section A: answer **one** question.
Section B: answer **one** question.
- Follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper, ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.
- Dictionaries are **not** allowed.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is 50.
- All questions are worth equal marks.

The specimen questions provided here illustrate the style of questions that will be asked in the examination. However, the set texts to be used in examinations from 2021–2023 do not appear in this specimen question paper.

Please refer to the syllabus and the specific year of the examination for details of the relevant set texts for that examination.

This document has **22** pages. Blank pages are indicated.

Section A: Pre-1900 Poetry and Prose

Answer **one** question from this section.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER: *The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale*

Question 1

EITHER

- (a) In what ways, and with what effects, does Chaucer present women's treatment of men in *The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale*? [25]

OR

- (b) Analyse the following extract, showing what it reveals about Chaucer's methods and concerns here and elsewhere in *The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale*. [25]

In th'olde dayes of the Kyng Arthour,
 Of which that Britons speken greet honour,
 Al was this land fulfild of fayerye.
 The elf-queene, with hir joly compaignye,
 Daunced ful ofte in many a grene mede. 5
 This was the olde opinion, as I rede;
 I speke of manye hundred yeres ago.
 But now kan no man se none elves mo,
 For now the grete charitee and prayeres
 Of lymytours and othere hooly freres, 10
 That serchen every lond and every stream,
 As thikke as motes in the sonne-beem,
 Blessynge halles, chambres, kichenes, boures,
 Citees, burghes, castels, hye toures,
 Thropes, bernes, shipnes, dayeryes – 15
 This maketh that ther ben no fayeryes.
 For ther as wont to walken was an elf,
 Ther walketh now the lymytour himself
 In undermeles and in morwenynges,
 And seyth his matyns and his hooly thynges 20
 As he gooth in his lymytacioun.
 Wommen may go saufly up and down.
 In every bussh or under every tree
 Ther is noon oother incubus but he,
 And he ne wol doon hem but dishonour. 25
 And so bifel that this kyng Arthour
 Hadde in his hous a lusty bacheler,
 That on a day cam ridynge fro ryver,
 And happed that, allone as he was born,
 He saugh a mayde walkynge hym biforn, 30
 Of which mayde anon, maugree hir heed,
 By verray force, he rafte hire maydenhed;
 For which oppressioun was swich clamour
 And swich pursute unto the kyng Arthour
 That dampned was this knyght for to be deed, 35
 By cours of lawe, and sholde han lost his heed —

3

Paraventure swich was the statut tho —
But that the queene and othere ladyes mo
So longe preyeden the kyng of grace
Til he his lyf hym graunted in the place, 40
And yaf hym to the queene, al at hir wille,
To chese wheither she wolde hym save or spille.

from *The Wife of Bath's Tale*

JOHN KEATS: Selected Poems

Question 2

EITHER

- (a) Discuss some of the effects created by Keats's presentation of time and the passing of time. You should refer to **three** poems in your answer. [25]

OR

- (b) Analyse the following poem, showing what it contributes to your understanding of Keats's poetic methods and concerns here and elsewhere in the selection. [25]

To Autumn

I

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
 Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun,
 Conspiring with him how to load and bless
 With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eves run;
 To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees, 5
 And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
 To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
 With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
 And still more, later flowers for the bees,
 Until they think warm days will never cease, 10
 For Summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells.

II

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
 Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
 Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
 Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind; 15
 Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,
 Drows'd with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
 Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers:
 And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
 Steady thy laden head across a brook; 20
 Or by a cider-press, with patient look,
 Thou watchest the last ooziings hours by hours.

III

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
 Think not of them, thou hast thy music too –
 While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day, 25
 And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
 Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
 Among the river shallows, borne aloft
 Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
 And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn; 30
 Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft
 The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft;
 And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS: Selected Poems

Question 3

EITHER

- (a) 'Hopkins uses his poetry to explore self-doubt and despair.'

How far, and in what ways, do you agree with this comment? You should refer to **three** poems in your answer. [25]

OR

- (b) Discuss Hopkins's presentation of nature in the following poem here and elsewhere in the selection. You should pay close attention to language, form and structure in your answer. [25]

The Caged Skylark

As a dare-gale skylark scanted in a dull cage,
 Man's mounting spirit in his bone-house, mean house, dwells—
 That bird beyond the remembering his free fells,
 This in drudgery, day-labouring-out life's age.

Though aloft on turf or perch or poor low stage 5
 Both sing sometimes the sweetest, sweetest spells,
 Yet both droop deadly sometimes in their cells
 Or wring their barriers in bursts of fear or rage.

Not that the sweet-fowl, song-fowl, needs no rest— 10
 Why, hear him, hear him babble and drop down to his nest,
 But his own nest, wild nest, no prison.

Man's spirit will be flesh-bound, when found at best,
 But uncumbered: meadow-down is not distressed
 For a rainbow footing it nor hé for his bones risen.

JANE AUSTEN: *Sense and Sensibility*

Question 4

EITHER

- (a) Discuss some of the effects of Austen's use of secrets and secrecy in *Sense and Sensibility*. [25]

OR

- (b) Discuss the following passage, showing how Austen develops the role and characterisation of Elinor here and elsewhere in the novel. You should pay close attention to language, tone and narrative methods in your answer. [25]

Elinor could not be cheerful. Her joy was of a different kind, and led to anything rather than to gaiety. Marianne restored to life, health, friends, and to her doating mother, was an idea to fill her heart with sensations of exquisite comfort, and expand it in fervent gratitude; – but it led to no outward demonstrations of joy, no words, no smiles. All within Elinor's breast was satisfaction, silent and strong. 5

She continued by the side of her sister with little intermission the whole afternoon, calming every fear, satisfying every inquiry of her enfeebled spirits, supplying every succour, and watching almost every look and every breath. The possibility of a relapse would of course, in some moments, occur to remind her of what anxiety was – but when she saw, on her frequent and minute examination, that every symptom of recovery continued, and saw Marianne at six o'clock sink into a quiet, steady, and to all appearance comfortable, sleep, she silenced every doubt. 10

The time was now drawing on, when Colonel Brandon might be expected back. At ten o'clock, she trusted, or at least not much later her mother would be relieved from the dreadful suspense in which she must now be travelling towards them. The Colonel too! – perhaps scarcely less an object of pity! – Oh! – how slow was the progress of time which yet kept them in ignorance! 15

At seven o'clock, leaving Marianne still sweetly asleep, she joined Mrs Jennings in the drawing-room to tea. Of breakfast she had been kept by her fears, and of dinner by their sudden reverse, from eating much; – and the present refreshment, therefore, with such feelings of content as she brought to it, was particularly welcome. Mrs Jennings would have persuaded her at its conclusion to take some rest before her mother's arrival, and allow *her* to take her place by Marianne; but Elinor had no sense of fatigue, no capability of sleep at that moment about her, and she was not to be kept away from her sister an unnecessary instant. Mrs Jennings therefore attending her up stairs into the sick chamber, to satisfy herself that all continued right, left her there again to her charge and her thoughts, and retired to her own room to write letters and sleep. 20 25

The night was cold and stormy. The wind roared round the house, and the rain beat against the windows; but Elinor, all happiness within, regarded it not. Marianne slept through every blast, and the travellers – they had a rich reward in store, for every present inconvenience. 30

The clock struck eight. Had it been ten, Elinor would have been convinced that at that moment she heard a carriage driving up to the house; and so strong was the persuasion that she *did*, in spite of the *almost* impossibility of their being already come, that she moved into the adjoining dressing-closet and opened a 35

window shutter, to be satisfied of the truth. She instantly saw that her ears had not deceived her. The flaring lamps of a carriage were immediately in view. By their uncertain light she thought she could discern it to be drawn by four horses; and this, while it told the excess of her poor mother's alarm, gave some explanation to such unexpected rapidity. 40

Never in her life had Elinor found it so difficult to be calm, as at that moment.

The knowledge of what her mother must be feeling as the carriage stopt at the door, – of her doubt – her dread – perhaps her despair! – and of what *she* had to tell! – with such knowledge it was impossible to be calm. All that remained to be done, was to be speedy; and therefore staying only till she could leave Mrs Jennings's maid with her sister, she hurried down stairs. 45

The bustle in the vestibule, as she passed along an inner lobby, assured her that they were already in the house. She rushed forwards towards the drawingroom, – she entered it, – and saw only Willoughby. 50

Chapter 43

GEORGE ELIOT: *Silas Marner*

Question 5

EITHER

- (a) Discuss Eliot's use of different settings and locations, showing what they contribute to the novel's meaning and effects. [25]

OR

- (b) Write a critical appreciation of the following passage, showing what it adds to Eliot's presentation of Nancy Lammeter here and elsewhere in the novel. You should pay close attention to language, tone and narrative methods in your answer. [25]

Three of the ladies quickly retired, but the Miss Gunns were quite content that Mrs Osgood's inclination to remain with her niece gave them also a reason for staying to see the rustic beauty's toilette. And it was really a pleasure – from the first opening of the bandbox, where everything smelt of lavender and rose-leaves, to the clasping of the small coral necklace that fitted closely round her little white neck. Everything belonging to Miss Nancy was of delicate purity and nattiness: not a crease was where it had no business to be, not a bit of her linen professed whiteness without fulfilling its profession; the very pins on her pincushion were stuck in after a pattern from which she was careful to allow no aberration; and as for her own person, it gave the same idea of perfect unvarying neatness as the body of a little bird. It is true that her light-brown hair was cropped behind like a boy's, and was dressed in front in a number of flat rings, that lay quite away from her face; but there was no sort of coiffure that could make Miss Nancy's cheek and neck look otherwise than pretty; and when at last she stood complete in her silvery twilled silk, her lace tucker, her coral necklace, and coral ear-drops, the Miss Gunns could see nothing to criticise except her hands, which bore the traces of butter-making, cheese-crushing, and even still coarser work. But Miss Nancy was not ashamed of that, for while she was dressing she narrated to her aunt how she and Priscilla had packed their boxes yesterday, because this morning was baking morning, and since they were leaving home, it was desirable to make a good supply of meat-pies for the kitchen; and as she concluded this judicious remark, she turned to the Miss Gunns that she might not commit the rudeness of not including them in the conversation. The Miss Gunns smiled stiffly, and thought what a pity it was that these rich country people, who could afford to buy such good clothes (really Miss Nancy's lace and silk were very costly), should be brought up in utter ignorance and vulgarity. She actually said 'mate' for 'meat,' 'appen' for 'perhaps,' and 'oss' for 'horse,' which, to young ladies living in good Lytherly society, who habitually said 'orse, even in domestic privacy, and only said 'appen on the right occasions, was necessarily shocking. Miss Nancy, indeed, had never been to any school higher than Dame Tedman's: her acquaintance with profane literature hardly went beyond the rhymes she had worked in her large sampler under the lamb and the shepherdess; and in order to balance an account, she was obliged to effect her subtraction by removing visible metallic shillings and sixpences from a visible metallic total. There is hardly a servant-maid in these days who is not better informed than Miss Nancy; yet she had the essential attributes of a lady – high veracity, delicate honour in her dealings, deference to others, and refined personal habits, – and lest these should not suffice to convince grammatical fair ones that her feelings can at all resemble theirs, I will add that she was slightly proud and

exacting, and as constant in her affection towards a baseless opinion as towards an erring lover.

40

The anxiety about sister Priscilla, which had grown rather active by the time the coral necklace was clasped, was happily ended by the entrance of that cheerfullooking lady herself, with a face made blowsy by cold and damp. After the first questions and greetings, she turned to Nancy, and surveyed her from head to foot – then wheeled her round, to ascertain that the back view was equally faultless.

45

Part 1, Chapter 11

CHARLES DICKENS: *Great Expectations*

Question 6

EITHER

- (a) In what ways, and with what effects, does Dickens present different attitudes to childhood in *Great Expectations*? [25]

OR

- (b) Analyse the following passage, showing its significance to the development of the novel's concerns. You should pay close attention to language, tone and narrative methods in your answer. [25]

I went circuitously to Miss Havisham's by all the back ways, and rang at the bell constrainedly, on account of the stiff long fingers of my gloves. Sarah Pocket came to the gate, and positively reeled back when she saw me so changed; her walnut-shell countenance likewise, turned from brown to green and yellow.

"You?" said she. "You, good gracious! What do you want?"

5

"I am going to London, Miss Pocket," said I, "and want to say good-by to Miss Havisham."

I was not expected, for she left me locked in the yard, while she went to ask if I were to be admitted. After a very short delay, she returned and took me up, staring at me all the way.

10

Miss Havisham was taking exercise in the room with the long spread table, leaning on her crutch stick. The room was lighted as of yore, and at the sound of our entrance, she stopped and turned. She was then just abreast of the rotted bride-cake.

"Don't go, Sarah," she said. "Well, Pip?"

15

"I start for London, Miss Havisham, to-morrow," I was exceedingly careful what I said, "and I thought you would kindly not mind my taking leave of you."

"This is a gay figure, Pip," said she, making her crutch stick play round me, as if she, the fairy godmother who had changed me, were bestowing the finishing gift.

"I have come into such good fortune since I saw you last, Miss Havisham," I murmured. "And I am so grateful for it, Miss Havisham!"

20

"Ay, ay!" said she, looking at the discomfited and envious Sarah, with delight. "I have seen Mr. Jaggers. I have heard about it, Pip. So you go to-morrow?"

"Yes, Miss Havisham."

"And you are adopted by a rich person?"

25

"Yes, Miss Havisham."

"Not named?"

"No, Miss Havisham."

"And Mr. Jaggers is made your guardian?"

"Yes, Miss Havisham."

30

She quite gloated on these questions and answers, so keen was her enjoyment of Sarah Pocket's jealous dismay. "Well!" she went on; "you have a promising career before you. Be good – deserve it – abide by Mr. Jaggers's instructions." She looked at me, and looked at Sarah, and Sarah's countenance wrung out of her watchful face a cruel smile. "Good-by, Pip! – you will always keep the name of Pip, you know."

35

"Yes, Miss Havisham."

"Good-by, Pip!"

She stretched out her hand, and I went down on my knee and put it to my lips.

I had not considered how I should take leave of her; it came naturally to me at the moment, to do this. She looked at Sarah Pocket with triumph in her weird eyes, and so I left my fairy godmother, with both her hands on her crutch stick, standing in the midst of the dimly lighted room beside the rotten bride-cake that was hidden in cobwebs. 40

Volume 1, Chapter 19

Section B: Post-1900 Poetry and Prose

Answer **one** question from this section.

FLEUR ADCOCK: Poems 1960–2000

Question 7

EITHER

- (a) 'The creation of a sense of a specific time and place is central to Adcock's poetic methods and effects.'

How far, and in what ways, do you agree with this statement? In your answer, you should refer to **three** poems from the selection. [25]

OR

- (b) Write a critical appreciation of the following poem and consider how far it is characteristic of Adcock's work in the selection. You should pay close attention to language, form and structure in your answer. [25]

The Pangolin

There have been all those tigers, of course,
 and a leopard, and a six-legged giraffe,
 and a young deer that ran up to my window
 before it was killed, and once a blue horse,
 and somewhere an impression of massive dogs. 5
 Why do I dream of such large, hot-blooded beasts
 covered with sweating fur and full of passions
 when there could be dry lizards and cool frogs,
 or slow, modest creatures, as a rest
 from all those panting, people-sized animals? 10
 Hedgehogs or perhaps tortoises would do,
 but I think the pangolin would suit me best:
 a vegetable animal, who goes
 disguised as an artichoke or asparagus-tip 15
 in a green coat of close-fitting leaves,
 with his flat shovel-tail and his pencil-nose:
 the scaly anteater. Yes, he would fit
 more aptly into a dream than into his cage
 in the Small Mammal House; so I invite him
 to be dreamt about, if he would care for it. 20

Question 8

EITHER

- (a) With reference to **three** poems, discuss some of the ways in which Auden presents the individual in society. [25]

OR

- (b) Discuss the following poem, considering Auden's presentation of time here and elsewhere in the selection. You should pay close attention to language, form and structure in your answer. [25]

But I Can't

Time will say nothing but I told you so,
Time only knows the price we have to pay;
If I could tell you I would let you know.

If we should weep when clowns put on their show,
If we should stumble when musicians play, 5
Time will say nothing but I told you so.

There are no fortunes to be told, although,
Because I love you more than I can say,
If I could tell you I would let you know.

The winds must come from somewhere when they blow, 10
There must be reasons why the leaves decay;
Time will say nothing but I told you so.

Perhaps the roses really want to grow,
The vision seriously intends to stay;
If I could tell you I would let you know. 15

Suppose the lions all get up and go,
And all the brooks and soldiers run away;
Will Time say nothing but I told you so?
If I could tell you I would let you know.

LIZ LOCHHEAD: Selected Poems

Question 9

EITHER

- (a) In what ways, and with what effects, does Lochhead present memories in her poetry? You should refer to **three** poems from the selection in your answer. [25]

OR

- (b) Write a critical appreciation of the following poem and consider how far it is characteristic of Lochhead's poetic methods and concerns. [25]

Rapunzstiltskin

& just when our maiden had got
 good & used to her isolation,
 stopped daily expecting to be rescued,
 had come to almost love her tower,
 along comes This Prince 5
 with absolutely
 all the wrong answers.
 Of course she had not been brought up to look for
 originality or gingerbread
 so at first she was quite undaunted 10
 by his tendency to talk in strung-together cliché.
 'Just hang on and we'll get you out of there'
 he hollered like a fireman in some soap opera
 when she confided her plight (the old
 hag inside etc. & how trapped she was); 15
 well, it was corny but
 he did look sort of gorgeous
 axe and all.
 So there she was, humming & pulling
 all the pins out of her chignon, 20
 throwing him all the usual lifelines
 till, soon, he was shimmying in & out
 every other day as though
 he owned the place, bringing her
 the sex manuals & skeins of silk 25
 from which she was meant, eventually,
 to weave the means of her own escape.
 'All very well & good,' she prompted,
 'but when exactly?'
 She gave him till 30
 well past the bell on the timeclock.
 She mouthed at him, hinted,
 she was keener than a TV quizmaster
 that he should get it right.
 'I'll do everything in my power', 35
 he intoned, 'but
 the impossible (she groaned) might

take a little longer. He grinned.
She pulled her glasses off.
'All the better 40
to see you with my dear?' he hazarded.
She screamed, cut off her hair.
'Why, you're beautiful?' he guessed tentatively.
'No, No, No!' she
shrieked & stamped her foot so 45
hard it sank six cubits through the floorboards.
'I love you?' he came up with
as finally she tore herself in two.

Question 10

EITHER

- (a) 'The "Epilogue" shows that the characters carry their own versions of the past with them.'

In the light of this statement, discuss the significance of Leo's final meeting with Marian to the novel as a whole. [25]

OR

- (b) Analyse the following passage, showing in what ways it is characteristic of Hartley's presentation of Leo in the novel. You should refer to language, tone and narrative methods in your answer. [25]

The thermometer stood at eighty-four: that was satisfactory but I was confident it could do better.

Not a drop of rain had fallen since I came to Brandham Hall. I was in love with the heat, I felt for it what the convert feels for his new religion. I was in league with it and half believed that for my sake it might perform a miracle. 5

Only a year ago I had devoutly echoed my mother's plaintive cry: 'I don't think this heat can last *much* longer, do you?' Now the sick self that had set so much store by the temperate was inconceivable to me.

And without my being aware of it, the climate of my emotions had undergone a change. I was no longer satisfied with the small change of experience which had hitherto contented me. I wanted to deal in larger sums. I wanted to enjoy continuously the afflatus of spirit that I had when I was talking to Lord Trimingham and he admitted to being a Viscount. To be in tune with all that Brandham Hall meant, I must increase my stature, I must act on a grander scale. 10

Perhaps all these desires had been dormant in me for years, and the Zodiac had been their latest manifestation. But the difference was this. In those days, I had known where I stood: I had never confused the reality of my private school life with the dreams with which I beguiled my imagination. That they were unattainable was almost their point. I was a schoolboy, assiduously but unambitiously subscribing to the realities of a schoolboy's life. The schoolboy's standards were my standards: in my daily life I did not look beyond them. Then came the diary and the persecution; and the success of my appeal for supernatural aid slightly shook my very earthbound sense of reality. Like other dabblers in the Black Arts, I was willing to believe I had been taken in. But I was not *sure*; and now, superimposed on the grandeur of the Maudsleys, was the glory of the Triminghams militant here in earth: and the two together had upset the balance of my realistic-idealistic system. Without knowing it, I was crossing the rainbow bridge from reality to dream. 15

I now felt that I belonged to the Zodiac, not to Southdown Hill School; and that my emotions and my behaviour must illustrate this change. My dream had become my reality: my old life was a discarded husk. 20

And the heat was a medium which made this change of outlook possible. As a liberating power with its own laws it was outside my experience. In the heat, the commonest objects changes their nature. Walls, trees, the very ground one trod on, instead of being cool were warm to the touch: and the sense of touch is the most transfiguring of all the senses. Many things to eat and drink, which one had enjoyed because they were hot, one now shunned for the same reason. Unless 25

restrained by ice, the butter melted. Besides altering or intensifying all smells the heat had a smell of its own – a garden smell, I called it to myself, compounded of the scents of many flowers, and odours loosed from the earth, but with something peculiar to itself which defied analysis. Sounds were fewer and seemed to come from far away, as if Nature grudged the effort. In the heat the senses, the mind, the heart, the body, all told a different tale. One felt another person, one was another person. 40

Chapter 7

KATHERINE MANSFIELD: Selected Stories

Question 11

EITHER

- (a) By what means and with what effects does Mansfield present women's experience of marriage? You should refer in detail to at least **two** stories from your selection. [25]

OR

- (b) Discuss the effects of the writing in the following passage and consider ways in which it is characteristic of Mansfield's methods and concerns. [25]

Carefully she cut the cake into thick little wads and he reached across for a piece.

'Do realize how good it is,' she implored. 'Eat it imaginatively. Roll your eyes if you can and taste it on the breath. It's not a sandwich from the hatter's bag—it's the kind of cake that might have been mentioned in the Book of Genesis And God said: "Let there be cake. And there was cake. And God saw that it was good."' 5

'You needn't entreat me,' said he. 'Really you needn't. It's a queer thing but I always do notice what I eat here and never anywhere else. I suppose it comes of living alone so long and always reading while I feed ... my habit of looking upon food as just food ... something that's there, at certain times ... to be devoured ... to be ... not there.' He laughed. 'That shocks you. Doesn't it?' 10

'To the bone,' said she.

'But—look here—' He pushed away his cup and began to speak very fast. 'I simply haven't got any external life at all. I don't know the names of things a bit—trees and so on—and I never notice places or furniture or what people look like. One room is just like another to me—a place to sit and read or talk in—except,' and here he paused, smiled in a strange naive way, and said, 'except this studio.' He looked round him and then at her; he laughed in his astonishment and pleasure. He was like a man who wakes up in a train to find that he has arrived, already, at the journey's end. 15 20

'Here's another queer thing. If I shut my eyes I can see this place down to every detail—every detail.... Now I come to think of it—I've never realized this consciously before. Often when I am away from here I revisit it in spirit—wander about among your red chairs, stare at the bowl of fruit on the black table—and just touch, very lightly, that marvel of a sleeping boy's head.' 25

He looked at it as he spoke. It stood on the corner of the mantelpiece; the head to one side down-drooping, the lips parted, as though in his sleep the little boy listened to some sweet sound....

'I love that little boy,' he murmured. And then they both were silent.

A new silence came between them. Nothing in the least like the satisfactory pause that had followed their greetings—the 'Well, here we are together again, and there's no reason why we shouldn't go on from just where we left off last time.' That silence could be contained in the circle of warm, delightful fire and lamplight. How many times hadn't they flung something into it just for the fun of watching the ripples break on the easy shores. But into this unfamiliar pool the head of the little boy sleeping his timeless sleep dropped—and the ripples flowed away, away—boundlessly far—into deep glittering darkness. 30 35

And then both of them broke it. She said: 'I must make up the fire,' and he said:

'I have been trying a new...'. Both of them escaped. She made up the fire and put the table back, the blue chair was wheeled forward, she curled up and he lay back among the cushions. Quickly! Quickly! They must stop it from happening again. 40

'Well, I read the book you left last time.'

'Oh, what do you think of it?'

They were off and all was as usual. But was it? Weren't they just a little too quick, too prompt with their replies, too ready to take each other up? Was this really anything more than a wonderfully good imitation of other occasions? His heart beat; her cheek burned and the stupid thing was she could not discover where exactly they were or what exactly was happening. She hadn't time to glance back. And just as she had got so far it happened again. They faltered, wavered, broke down, were silent. Again they were conscious of the boundless, questioning dark. Again, there they were—two hunters, bending over their fire, but hearing suddenly from the jungle beyond a shake of wind and a loud, questioning cry... 45 50

She lifted her head. 'It's raining,' she murmured. And her voice was like his when he had said: 'I love that little boy.'

Well. Why didn't they just give way to it—yield—and see what will happen then? But no. Vague and troubled though they were, they knew enough to realize their precious friendship was in danger. She was the one who would be destroyed—not they—and they'd be no party to that. 55

Psychology

ARUNDHATI ROY: *The God of Small Things*

Question 12

EITHER

- (a) Compare and contrast the roles and characterisation of Ammu and Baby Kochamma. [25]

OR

- (b) Discuss the effects of the writing in the following passage and consider ways in which Roy presents a child's point of view here and elsewhere in the novel. You should refer to language, tone and narrative methods in your answer. [25]

Sophie Mol had convinced the twins that it was *essential* that she go along too. That the absence of children, *all* children, would heighten the adults' remorse. It would make them truly sorry, like the grown-ups in Hamelin after the Pied Piper took away all their children. They would search everywhere and just when they were sure that all three of them were dead, they would return home in triumph. Valued, loved, and needed more than ever. Her clinching argument was that if she were left behind she might be tortured and forced to reveal their hiding place. 5

Estha waited until Rahel got in, then took his place, sitting astride the little boat as though it were a seesaw. He used his legs to push the boat away from the shore. As they lurched into the deeper water they began to row diagonally upstream, against the current, the way Velutha had taught them to. ('If you want to end up there, you must aim *there*!') 10

In the dark they couldn't see that they were in the wrong lane on a silent highway full of muffled traffic. That branches, logs, parts of trees, were motoring towards them at some speed. 15

They were past the Really Deep, only yards from the Other Side, when they collided with a floating log and the little boat tipped over. It had happened to them often enough on previous expeditions across the river, and they would swim after the boat and, using it as a float, dog-paddle to the shore. This time, they couldn't see their boat in the dark. It was swept away in the current. They headed for the shore, surprised at how much effort it took them to cover that short distance. 20

Estha managed to grab a low branch that arched down into the water. He peered downriver through the darkness to see if he could see the boat at all.

'I can't see anything. It's gone.'

Rahel, covered in slush, clambered ashore and held a hand out to help Estha pull himself out of the water. It took them a few minutes to catch their breath and register the loss of the boat. To mourn its passing. 25

'And all our food is spoiled,' Rahel said to Sophie Mol and was met with silence. A rushing, rolling, fishswimming silence.

'Sophie Mol?' she whispered to the rushing river. 'We're here! Here! Near the Illimba tree!' 30

Nothing.

On Rahel's heart Pappachi's moth snapped open its sombre wings.

Out.

In.

And lifted its legs.

Up.

Down. 35

They ran along the bank calling out to her. But she was gone. Carried away on the muffled highway. Greengreen. With fish in it. With the sky and trees in it. And at night the broken yellow moon in it. 40

There was no storm-music. No whirlpool spun up from the inky depths of the Meenachal. No shark supervised the tragedy.

Just a quiet handing over ceremony. A boat spilling its cargo. A river accepting the offering. One small life. A brief sunbeam. With a silver thimble clenched for luck in its little fist. 45

It was four in the morning, still dark, when the twins, exhausted, distraught and covered in mud, made their way through the swamp and approached the History House. Hansel and Gretel in a ghastly fairy tale in which their dreams would be captured and redreamed. They lay down in the back verandah on a grass mat with an inflatable goose and a Qantas koala bear. A pair of damp dwarves, numb with fear, waiting for the world to end. 50

'D'you think she's dead by now?'

Estha didn't answer.

'What's going to happen?'

'We'll go to jail.'

He Jolly Well knew. Little Man. He lived in a cara-van. Dum dum. 55

They didn't see someone else lying asleep in the shadows. As lonely as a wolf. A brown leaf on his black back. That made the monsoons come on time.

Chapter 16

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