GCSE
ENGLISH LITERATURE

Paper 1 Shakespeare and the 19th-century novel

Monday 12 May 2025 Morning Time allowed: 1 hour 45 minutes

Materials
For this paper you must have:
- an AQA 16-page answer book.

Instructions
- Use black ink or black ball-point pen. Do **not** use pencil.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The **Paper Reference** is 8702/1.
- Answer **one** question from **Section A** and **one** question from **Section B**.
- You must **not** use a dictionary.

Information
- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 64.
- AO4 will be assessed in **Section A**. There are 4 marks available for AO4 in **Section A** in addition to 30 marks for answering the question. AO4 assesses the following skills: use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation.
- There are 30 marks for **Section B**.

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There are no questions printed on this page

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Turn over for Section A

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Section A: Shakespeare

Answer **one** question from this section on your chosen text.

Either

0 1 ***Macbeth***

Read the following extract from Act 1 Scene 7 of *Macbeth* and then answer the question that follows.

At this point in the play, Macbeth is alone. He is thinking about the plan to murder King Duncan.

MACBETH If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well
It were done quickly. If th'assassination
Could trammel up the consequence and catch
With his surcease, success, that but this blow
Might be the be-all and the end-all – here,
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,
We'd jump the life to come. But in these cases,
We still have judgement here that we but teach
Bloody instructions, which being taught, return
To plague th'inventor. This even-handed justice
Commends th'ingredience of our poisoned chalice
To our own lips. He's here in double trust:
First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,
Strong both against the deed; then, as his host,
Who should against his murderer shut the door,
Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan
Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been
So clear in his great office, that his virtues
Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued against
The deep damnation of his taking-off.
And pity, like a naked newborn babe
Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubin horsed
Upon the sightless couriers of the air,
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,
That tears shall drown the wind. I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition which o'erleaps itself
And falls on th'other –

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0 1 Starting with this speech, explore how far Shakespeare presents Macbeth as an ambitious character.

Write about:

- how far Shakespeare presents Macbeth as an ambitious character in this speech
- how far Shakespeare presents Macbeth as an ambitious character in the play as a whole.

[30 marks]
AO4 [4 marks]

Turn over for the next question

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or

0 2 ***Romeo and Juliet***

Read the following extract from Act 3 Scene 5 of *Romeo and Juliet* and then answer the question that follows.

At this point in the play, Capulet is very angry that Juliet has refused to marry Paris.

CAPULET God's bread, it makes me mad! Day, night, work, play,
Alone, in company, still my care hath been
To have her matched; and having now provided
A gentleman of noble parentage,
Of fair demesnes, youthful, and nobly ligned,
Stuffed, as they say, with honourable parts,
Proportioned as one's thought would wish a man,
And then to have a wretched puling fool,
A whining mammet, in her fortune's tender,
To answer 'I'll not wed, I cannot love;
I am too young, I pray you pardon me.'
But and you will not wed, I'll pardon you:
Graze where you will, you shall not house with me.
Look to't, think on't, I do not use to jest.
Thursday is near, lay hand on heart, advise:
And you be mine, I'll give you to my friend;
And you be not, hang, beg, starve, die in the streets,
For by my soul, I'll ne'er acknowledge thee,
Nor what is mine shall never do thee good.
Trust to't, bethink you, I'll not be forsworn. *Exit*

JULIET Is there no pity sitting in the clouds
That sees into the bottom of my grief?
O sweet my mother, cast me not away!

0 2 Starting with this moment in the play, explore how Shakespeare presents relationships between parents and children in *Romeo and Juliet*.

Write about:

- how Shakespeare presents the relationship between Capulet and Juliet at this moment in the play
- how Shakespeare presents relationships between parents and children in the play as a whole.

[30 marks]
AO4 [4 marks]

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or

0 3 ***The Tempest***

Read the following extract from Act 2 Scene 2 of *The Tempest* and then answer the question that follows.

At this point in the play, Caliban is cursing Prospero. This is just before he meets Trinculo and Stephano.

Enter CALIBAN, with a burden of wood. A noise of thunder heard

CALIBAN All the infections that the sun sucks up
From bogs, fens, flats, on Prosper fall, and make him
By inch-meal a disease. His spirits hear me,
And yet I needs must curse. But they'll nor pinch,
Fright me with urchin-shows, pitch me i'th'mire,
Nor lead me like a firebrand in the dark
Out of my way, unless he bid 'em; but
For every trifle are they set upon me,
Sometime like apes, that mow and chatter at me
And after bite me; then like hedgehogs, which
Lie tumbling in my barefoot way and mount
Their pricks at my footfall; sometime am I
All wound with adders, who with cloven tongues
Do hiss me into madness.
Enter TRINCULO
Lo, now lo!
Here comes a spirit of his, and to torment me
For bringing wood in slowly. I'll fall flat,
Perchance he will not mind me.
[*He lies down, and covers himself with a cloak*]

0 3 Starting with this speech, explore how far Shakespeare presents Caliban as a victim in *The Tempest*.

Write about:

- how Shakespeare presents Caliban in this speech
- how far Shakespeare presents Caliban as a victim in the play as a whole.

[30 marks]
AO4 [4 marks]

Turn over ►

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or

0 4 ***The Merchant of Venice***

Read the following extract from Act 3 Scene 1 of *The Merchant of Venice* and then answer the question that follows.

At this point in the play, Shylock hears from Tubal that Jessica has not been found and he receives news about Antonio's ships.

SHYLOCK How now, Tubal, what news from Genoa? Hast thou found my daughter?
TUBAL I often came where I did hear of her, but cannot find her.
SHYLOCK Why there, there, there, there! A diamond gone cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfurt! The curse never fell upon our nation till now, I never felt it till now. Two thousand ducats in that, and other precious, precious jewels! I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear: would she were hearsed at my foot, and the ducats in her coffin. No news of them, why so? And I know not what's spent in the search. Why thou loss upon loss – the thief gone with so much, and so much to find the thief, and no satisfaction, no revenge, nor no ill luck stirring but what lights o'my shoulders, no sighs but o'my breathing, no tears but o'my shedding!
TUBAL Yes, other men have ill luck too. Antonio as I heard in Genoa –
SHYLOCK What, what, what? Ill luck, ill luck?
TUBAL – hath an argosy cast away coming from Tripolis.
SHYLOCK I thank God, I thank God. Is it true, is it true?

0 4 Starting with this conversation, explore how Shakespeare presents attitudes to wealth in *The Merchant of Venice*.

Write about:

- how Shakespeare presents attitudes to wealth in this conversation
- how Shakespeare presents attitudes to wealth in the play as a whole.

[30 marks]
AO4 [4 marks]

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or

0 5 ***Much Ado About Nothing***

Read the following extract from Act 4 Scene 1 of *Much Ado About Nothing* and then answer the question that follows.

At this point in the play, Hero is about to be married to Claudio.

CLAUDIO Stand thee by, friar: father, by your leave,
Will you with free and unconstrainèd soul
Give me this maid your daughter?
LEONATO As freely, son, as God did give her me.
CLAUDIO And what have I to give you back, whose worth
May counterpoise this rich and precious gift?
DON PEDRO Nothing, unless you render her again.
CLAUDIO Sweet prince, you learn me noble thankfulness:
There, Leonato, take her back again,
Give not this rotten orange to your friend,
She's but the sign and semblance of her honour:
Behold how like a maid she blushes here!
Oh what authority and show of truth
Can cunning sin cover itself withal!
Comes not that blood, as modest evidence,
To witness simple virtue? Would you not swear
All you that see her, that she were a maid,
By these exterior shows? But she is none:
She knows the heat of a luxurious bed:
Her blush is guiltiness, not modesty.
LEONATO What do you mean, my lord?
CLAUDIO Not to be married,
Not to knit my soul to an approvèd wanton.

0 5 Starting with this conversation, explore how far Shakespeare presents women as powerless in *Much Ado About Nothing*.

Write about:

- how far Shakespeare presents Hero as powerless in this conversation
- how far Shakespeare presents women as powerless in the play as a whole.

[30 marks]
AO4 [4 marks]

Turn over ►

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or

0 6 ***Julius Caesar***

Read the following extract from Act 3 Scene 1 of *Julius Caesar* and then answer the question that follows.

At this point in the play, after the assassination, Antony responds to seeing Caesar's body.

ANTONY O mighty Caesar! Dost thou lie so low?
Are all thy conquests, glories, triumphs, spoils
Shrunk to this little measure? Fare thee well!
I know not, gentlemen, what you intend,
Who else must be let blood, who else is rank.
If I myself, there is no hour so fit
As Caesar's death's hour, nor no instrument
Of half that worth as those your swords made rich
With the most noble blood of all this world.
I do beseech ye, if you bear me hard,
Now, whilst your purpled hands do reek and smoke,
Fulfil your pleasure. Live a thousand years,
I shall not find myself so apt to die:
No place will please me so, no mean of death,
As here by Caesar, and by you cut off,
The choice and master spirits of this age.

0 6 Starting with this speech, explore how Shakespeare presents ideas about loyalty in *Julius Caesar*.

Write about:

- how Shakespeare presents Antony's loyalty to Caesar in this speech
- how Shakespeare presents ideas about loyalty in the play as a whole.

[30 marks]
AO4 [4 marks]

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Turn over for Section B

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Section B: The 19th-century novel

Answer **one** question from this section on your chosen text.

Either

0 7 **Robert Louis Stevenson: *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde***

Read the following extract from Chapter 6 (Remarkable Incident of Dr Lanyon) of *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and then answer the question that follows.

In this extract, Utterson receives a letter from Dr Jekyll and news of Dr Lanyon's death.

As soon as he got home, Utterson sat down and wrote to Jekyll, complaining of his exclusion from the house, and asking the cause of this unhappy break with Lanyon; and the next day brought him a long answer, often very pathetically worded, and sometimes darkly mysterious in drift. The quarrel with Lanyon was incurable. "I do not blame our old friend," Jekyll wrote, "but I share his view that we must never meet. I mean from henceforth to lead a life of extreme seclusion; you must not be surprised, nor must you doubt my friendship, if my door is often shut even to you. You must suffer me to go my own dark way. I have brought on myself a punishment and a danger that I cannot name. If I am the chief of sinners, I am the chief of sufferers also. I could not think that this earth contained a place for sufferings and terrors so unmanning; and you can but do one thing, Utterson, to lighten this destiny, and that is to respect my silence." Utterson was amazed; the dark influence of Hyde had been withdrawn, the doctor had returned to his old tasks and amities; a week ago, the prospect had smiled with every promise of a cheerful and an honoured age; and now in a moment, friendship and peace of mind and the whole tenor of his life were wrecked. So great and unprepared a change pointed to madness; but in view of Lanyon's manner and words, there must lie for it some deeper ground.

A week afterwards Dr. Lanyon took to his bed, and in something less than a fortnight he was dead. The night after the funeral, at which he had been sadly affected, Utterson locked the door of his business-room, and sitting there by the light of a melancholy candle, drew out and set before him an envelope addressed by the hand and sealed with the seal of his dead friend. "PRIVATE: for the hands of G. J. Utterson ALONE, and in case of his predecease *to be destroyed unread*," so it was emphatically superscribed; and the lawyer dreaded to behold the contents. "I have buried one friend to-day," he thought: "what if this should cost me another?" And then he condemned the fear as a disloyalty, and broke the seal. Within there was another enclosure, likewise sealed, and marked upon the cover as "not to be opened till the death or disappearance of Dr. Henry Jekyll." Utterson could not trust his eyes. Yes, it was disappearance; here again, as in the mad will which he had long ago restored to its author, here again were the idea of a disappearance and the name of Henry Jekyll bracketed. But in the will that idea had sprung from the sinister suggestion of the man Hyde; it was set there with a purpose all too plain and horrible. Written by the hand of Lanyon, what should it mean? A great curiosity came on the trustee, to disregard the prohibition and dive at once to the bottom of these mysteries; but professional honour and faith to his dead friend were stringent obligations; and the packet slept in the inmost corner of his private safe.

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0 7 Starting with this extract, explore how Stevenson presents ideas about hidden lives and secrets.

Write about:

- how Stevenson presents ideas about hidden lives and secrets in this extract
- how Stevenson presents ideas about hidden lives and secrets in the novel as a whole.

[30 marks]

Turn over for the next question

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or

0 8 **Charles Dickens: *A Christmas Carol***

Read the following extract from Chapter 3 of *A Christmas Carol* and then answer the question that follows.

In this extract, the Ghost of Christmas Present shows Scrooge the Cratchit family at Christmas.

At last the dinner was all done, the cloth was cleared, the hearth swept, and the fire made up. The compound in the jug being tasted, and considered perfect, apples and oranges were put upon the table, and a shovel-full of chestnuts on the fire. Then all the Cratchit family drew round the hearth, in what Bob Cratchit called a circle, meaning half a one; and at Bob Cratchit's elbow stood the family display of glass. Two tumblers, and a custard-cup without a handle.

These held the hot stuff from the jug, however, as well as golden goblets would have done; and Bob served it out with beaming looks, while the chestnuts on the fire sputtered and cracked noisily. Then Bob proposed:

"A Merry Christmas to us all, my dears. God bless us!"

Which all the family re-echoed.

"God bless us every one!" said Tiny Tim, the last of all.

He sat very close to his father's side upon his little stool. Bob held his withered little hand in his, as if he loved the child, and wished to keep him by his side, and dreaded that he might be taken from him.

"Spirit," said Scrooge, with an interest he had never felt before, "tell me if Tiny Tim will live."

"I see a vacant seat," replied the Ghost, "in the poor chimney-corner, and a crutch without an owner, carefully preserved. If these shadows remain unaltered by the Future, the child will die."

"No, no," said Scrooge. "Oh, no, kind Spirit! say he will be spared."

"If these shadows remain unaltered by the Future, none other of my race," returned the Ghost, "will find him here. What then? If he be like to die, he had better do it, and decrease the surplus population."

Scrooge hung his head to hear his own words quoted by the Spirit, and was overcome with penitence and grief.

"Man," said the Ghost, "if man you be in heart, not adamant, forbear that wicked cant until you have discovered What the surplus is, and Where it is. Will you decide what men shall live, what men shall die? It may be, that in the sight of Heaven, you are more worthless and less fit to live than millions like this poor man's child. Oh God! to hear the insect on the leaf pronouncing on the too much life among his hungry brothers in the dust!"

Scrooge bent before the Ghost's rebuke, and trembling cast his eyes upon the ground. But he raised them speedily, on hearing his own name.

"Mr. Scrooge!" said Bob; "I'll give you Mr. Scrooge, the Founder of the Feast!"

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0 8 Starting with this extract, explore how Dickens presents the importance of kindness in *A Christmas Carol*.

Write about:

- how Dickens presents kindness in this extract
- how Dickens presents the importance of kindness in the novel as a whole.

[30 marks]

Turn over for the next question

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or

0 9 **Charles Dickens: *Great Expectations***

Read the following extract from Chapter 49 of *Great Expectations* and then answer the question that follows.

In this extract, Pip returns to visit Miss Havisham after many years.

She turned her face to me for the first time since she had averted it, and to my amazement, I may even add to my terror, dropped on her knees at my feet; with her folded hands raised to me in the manner in which, when her poor heart was young and fresh and whole, they must often have been raised to Heaven from her mother's side.

To see her with her white hair and her worn face, kneeling at my feet, gave me a shock through all my frame. I entreated her to rise, and got my arms about her to help her up; but she only pressed that hand of mine which was nearest to her grasp, and hung her head over it and wept. I had never seen her shed a tear before, and in the hope that the relief might do her good, I bent over her without speaking. She was not kneeling now, but was down upon the ground.

'O!' she cried, despairingly. 'What have I done! What have I done!'

'If you mean, Miss Havisham, what have you done to injure me, let me answer. Very little. I should have loved her under any circumstances.—Is she married?'

'Yes!'

It was a needless question, for a new desolation in the desolate house had told me so.

'What have I done! What have I done!' She wrung her hands, and crushed her white hair, and returned to this cry over and over again. 'What have I done!'

I knew not how to answer or how to comfort her. That she had done a grievous thing in taking an impressionable child to mould into the form that her wild resentment, spurned affection, and wounded pride found vengeance in, I knew full well. But that, in shutting out the light of day, she had secluded herself from a thousand natural and healing influences; that her mind, brooding solitary, had grown diseased, as all minds do and must and will that reverse the appointed order of their Maker, I knew equally well. And could I look upon her without compassion, seeing her punishment in the ruin she was, in her profound unfitness for this earth on which she was placed, in the vanity of sorrow which had become a master mania, like the vanity of penitence, the vanity of remorse, the vanity of unworthiness, and other monstrous vanities that have been curses in this world?

'Until you spoke to her the other day, and until I saw in you a looking-glass that showed me what I once felt myself, I did not know what I had done. What have I done! What have I done!" And so again, twenty, fifty times over, What had she done!

'Miss Havisham,' I said, when her cry had died away, 'you may dismiss me from your mind and conscience. But Estella is a different case, and if you can ever undo any scrap of what you have done amiss in keeping a part of her right nature away from her, it will be better to do that, than to bemoan the past through a hundred years.'

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0 9 Starting with this extract, explore how far Dickens presents Miss Havisham as a victim.

Write about:

- how Dickens presents Miss Havisham in this extract
- how far Dickens presents Miss Havisham as a victim in the novel as a whole.

[30 marks]

Turn over for the next question

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or

1 0 **Charlotte Brontë: *Jane Eyre***

Read the following extract from Chapter 2 of *Jane Eyre* and then answer the question that follows.

In this extract, Jane has just been taken to the red-room as punishment for her behaviour.

The red-room was a square chamber, very seldom slept in, I might say never, indeed, unless when a chance influx of visitors at Gateshead Hall rendered it necessary to turn to account all the accommodation it contained: yet it was one of the largest and stateliest chambers in the mansion. A bed supported on massive pillars of mahogany, hung with curtains of deep red damask, stood out like a tabernacle in the centre; the two large windows, with their blinds always drawn down, were half shrouded in festoons and falls of similar drapery; the carpet was red; the table at the foot of the bed was covered with a crimson cloth; the walls were a soft fawn colour with a blush of pink in it; the wardrobe, the toilet-table, the chairs were of darkly polished old mahogany. Out of these deep surrounding shades rose high, and glared white, the piled-up mattresses and pillows of the bed, spread with a snowy Marseilles counterpane. Scarcely less prominent was an ample cushioned easy-chair near the head of the bed, also white, with a footstool before it; and looking, as I thought, like a pale throne.

This room was chill, because it seldom had a fire; it was silent, because remote from the nursery and kitchen; solemn, because it was known to be so seldom entered. The housemaid alone came here on Saturdays, to wipe from the mirrors and the furniture a week's quiet dust: and Mrs Reed herself, at far intervals, visited it to review the contents of a certain secret drawer in the wardrobe, where were stored divers parchments, her jewel-casket, and a miniature of her deceased husband; and in those last words lies the secret of the red-room – the spell which kept it so lonely in spite of its grandeur.

Mr Reed had been dead nine years: it was in this chamber he breathed his last; here he lay in state; hence his coffin was borne by the undertaker's men; and, since that day, a sense of dreary consecration had guarded it from frequent intrusion.

My seat, to which Bessie and the bitter Miss Abbot had left me riveted, was a low ottoman near the marble chimney-piece; the bed rose before me; to my right hand there was the high, dark wardrobe, with subdued, broken reflections varying the gloss of its panels; to my left were the muffled windows; a great looking-glass between them repeated the vacant majesty of the bed and room. I was not quite sure whether they had locked the door; and when I dared move, I got up and went to see. Alas! yes: no jail was ever more secure. Returning, I had to cross before the looking-glass; my fascinated glance involuntarily explored the depth it revealed. All looked colder and darker in that visionary hollow than in reality: and the strange little figure there gazing at me, with a white face and arms specking the gloom, and glittering eyes of fear moving where all else was still, had the effect of a real spirit: I thought it like one of the tiny phantoms, half fairy, half imp, Bessie's evening stories represented as coming out of lone, ferny dells in moors, and appearing before the eyes of belated travellers. I returned to my stool.

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1 0 Starting with this extract, explore how far Brontë presents Jane Eyre as a vulnerable character.

Write about:

- how Brontë presents Jane in this extract
- how far Brontë presents Jane as a vulnerable character in the novel as a whole.

[30 marks]

Turn over for the next question

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or

1 1 **Mary Shelley: *Frankenstein***

Read the following extract from Chapter 1 of *Frankenstein* and then answer the question that follows.

In this extract, Frankenstein describes his family background and his own childhood.

There was a considerable difference between the ages of my parents, but this circumstance seemed to unite them only closer in bonds of devoted affection. There was a sense of justice in my father's upright mind, which rendered it necessary that he should approve highly to love strongly. Perhaps during former years he had suffered from the late-discovered unworthiness of one beloved, and so was disposed to set a greater value on tried worth. There was a show of gratitude and worship in his attachment to my mother, differing wholly from the doating fondness of age, for it was inspired by reverence for her virtues, and a desire to be the means of, in some degree, recompensing her for the sorrows she had endured, but which gave inexpressible grace to his behaviour to her. Everything was made to yield to her wishes and her convenience. He strove to shelter her, as a fair exotic is sheltered by the gardener, from every rougher wind, and to surround her with all that could tend to excite pleasurable emotion in her soft and benevolent mind. Her health, and even the tranquillity of her hitherto constant spirit, had been shaken by what she had gone through. During the two years that had elapsed previous to their marriage my father had gradually relinquished all his public functions; and immediately after their union they sought the pleasant climate of Italy, and the change of scene and interest attendant on a tour through that land of wonders, as a restorative for her weakened frame.

From Italy they visited Germany and France. I, their eldest child, was born in Naples, and as an infant accompanied them in their rambles. I remained for several years their only child. Much as they were attached to each other, they seemed to draw inexhaustible stores of affection from a very mine of love to bestow them upon me. My mother's tender caresses and my father's smile of benevolent pleasure while regarding me, are my first recollections. I was their plaything and their idol, and something better – their child, the innocent and helpless creature bestowed on them by Heaven, whom to bring up to good, and whose future lot it was in their hands to direct to happiness or misery, according as they fulfilled their duties towards me. With this deep consciousness of what they owed towards the being to which they had given life, added to the active spirit of tenderness that animated both, it may be imagined that while during every hour of my infant life I received a lesson of patience, of charity, and of self-control, I was so guided by a silken cord that all seemed but one train of enjoyment to me.

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1 1 Starting with this extract, explore how Shelley presents the importance of family in *Frankenstein*.

Write about:

- how Shelley presents the importance of family in this extract
- how Shelley presents the importance of family in the novel as a whole.

[30 marks]

Turn over for the next question

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or

1 2 **Jane Austen: *Pride and Prejudice***

Read the following extract from Chapter 58 of *Pride and Prejudice* and then answer the question that follows.

In this extract, Elizabeth and Mr Darcy talk openly about their feelings for each other.

"If you *will* thank me," he replied, "let it be for yourself alone. That the wish of giving happiness to you might add force to the other inducements which led me on, I shall not attempt to deny. But your *family* owe me nothing. Much as I respect them, I believe I thought only of *you*."

Elizabeth was too much embarrassed to say a word. After a short pause, her companion added, "You are too generous to trifle with me. If your feelings are still what they were last April, tell me so at once. *My* affections and wishes are unchanged, but one word from you will silence me on this subject for ever."

Elizabeth, feeling all the more than common awkwardness and anxiety of his situation, now forced herself to speak; and immediately, though not very fluently, gave him to understand that her sentiments had undergone so material a change, since the period to which he alluded, as to make her receive with gratitude and pleasure his present assurances. The happiness which this reply produced, was such as he had probably never felt before; and he expressed himself on the occasion as sensibly and as warmly as a man violently in love can be supposed to do. Had Elizabeth been able to encounter his eye, she might have seen how well the expression of heartfelt delight, diffused over his face, became him; but, though she could not look, she could listen, and he told her of feelings, which, in proving of what importance she was to him, made his affection every moment more valuable.

They walked on, without knowing in what direction. There was too much to be thought, and felt, and said, for attention to any other objects. She soon learnt that they were indebted for their present good understanding to the efforts of his aunt, who *did* call on him in her return through London, and there relate her journey to Longbourn, its motive, and the substance of her conversation with Elizabeth; dwelling emphatically on every expression of the latter which, in her ladyship's apprehension, peculiarly denoted her perverseness and assurance; in the belief that such a relation must assist her endeavours to obtain that promise from her nephew which *she* had refused to give. But, unluckily for her ladyship, its effect had been exactly contrariwise.

"It taught me to hope," said he, "as I had scarcely ever allowed myself to hope before. I knew enough of your disposition to be certain that, had you been absolutely, irrevocably decided against me, you would have acknowledged it to Lady Catherine, frankly and openly."

Elizabeth coloured and laughed as she replied, "Yes, you know enough of my *frankness* to believe me capable of *that*. After abusing you so abominably to your face, I could have no scruple in abusing you to all your relations."

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1 2 Starting with this extract, explore how far Austen presents Elizabeth as a character who changes her views of others.

Write about:

- how Austen presents Elizabeth in this extract
- how far Austen presents Elizabeth as a character who changes her views of others in the novel as a whole.

[30 marks]

Turn over for the next question

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or

1 3 **Arthur Conan Doyle: *The Sign of Four***

Read the following extract from Chapter 4 (The Story of the Bald-headed Man) of *The Sign of Four* and then answer the question that follows.

In this extract, Thaddeus Sholto is giving his account of events surrounding the death of his father.

"You will see from what I say that I can hardly be blamed in the matter. My fault lies in the fact that we concealed not only the body but also the treasure and that I have clung to Morstan's share as well as to my own. I wish you, therefore, to make restitution. Put your ears down to my mouth. The treasure is hidden in –"

'At this instant a horrible change came over his expression; his eyes stared wildly, his jaw dropped, and he yelled in a voice which I can never forget, "Keep him out! For Christ's sake keep him out!" We both stared round at the window behind us upon which his gaze was fixed. A face was looking in at us out of the darkness. We could see the whitening of the nose where it was pressed against the glass. It was a bearded, hairy face, with wild cruel eyes and an expression of concentrated malevolence. My brother and I rushed towards the window, but the man was gone. When we returned to my father his head had dropped and his pulse had ceased to beat.

'We searched the garden that night but found no sign of the intruder save that just under the window a single foot-mark was visible in the flower-bed. But for that one trace, we might have thought that our imaginations had conjured up that wild, fierce face. We soon, however, had another and a more striking proof that there were secret agencies at work all round us. The window of my father's room was found open in the morning, his cupboards and boxes had been rifled, and upon his chest was fixed a torn piece of paper with the words "The sign of the four" scrawled across it. What the phrase meant or who our secret visitor may have been, we never knew. As far as we can judge, none of my father's property had been actually stolen, though everything had been turned out. My brother and I naturally associated this peculiar incident with the fear which haunted my father during his life, but it is still a complete mystery to us.'

The little man stopped to relight his hookah and puffed thoughtfully for a few moments. We had all sat absorbed, listening to his extraordinary narrative. At the short account of her father's death Miss Morstan had turned deadly white, and for a moment I feared that she was about to faint.

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1 3 Starting with this extract, explore how Conan Doyle creates an atmosphere of mystery and suspense in *The Sign of Four*.

Write about:

- how Conan Doyle creates an atmosphere of mystery and suspense in this extract
- how Conan Doyle creates an atmosphere of mystery and suspense in the novel as a whole.

[30 marks]

END OF QUESTIONS

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Surname	StemUp Model Solution
Answer booklet	Write the question number in the left-hand margin at the start of each answer.

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01

Shakespeare presents Macbeth as deeply ambitious, but never simply so. His ambition is real and, in the end, all-consuming, yet in this soliloquy it is the one thing he can find in favour of murder, set against conscience, loyalty and fear of damnation. Shakespeare seems less interested in a man who is ambitious than in a man who knows exactly why ambition is wrong and pursues it anyway, which makes Macbeth's fall a warning to a Jacobean audience about what happens when desire overrides the natural order.

At first the speech barely mentions ambition at all. Macbeth opens with a desperate wish that the deed could be over: "If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well / It were done quickly." The tangled repetition of "done" suggests a mind trying to talk itself into something it does not want to look at directly. Even the word "assassination" is cold and Latinate, as though he is distancing himself from the act. His fantasy that one "blow / Might be the be-all and the end-all" shows that he wants the reward without the consequences, and the phrase "We'd jump the life to come" is revealing: he would gamble his soul, which for a Christian audience was a terrifying admission. Yet he immediately recognises that "even-handed justice" will return the "poisoned chalice" to "our own lips". The image of the chalice, with its echo of the communion cup, suggests that regicide is a kind of sacrilege, and Macbeth knows it.

The middle of the speech is, in fact, an argument against ambition. Macbeth lists his duties with almost legal precision: he is Duncan's "kinsman", his "subject" and his "host", and the triple bond makes the murder a betrayal of family, state and hospitality at once. Duncan's "virtues / Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued", an

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image of the Last Judgement, and the vision of "pity, like a naked newborn babe / Striding the blast" is extraordinary because it makes the most fragile thing imaginable more powerful than a storm. Under the Divine Right of Kings, killing an anointed monarch was an offence against God himself, and Macbeth's imagination is full of heaven precisely because he understands this.

Only at the very end does ambition appear, and it appears as something inadequate. "I have no spur / To prick the sides of my intent, but only / Vaulting ambition" reduces his motive to a single word, and the riding metaphor imagines a horseman who leaps so eagerly that he "o'erleaps itself / And falls on th'other". The sentence itself breaks off, mirroring the collapse it predicts. So in this speech Shakespeare presents Macbeth as ambitious, but self-aware and resistant: he is about to tell his wife "We will proceed no further in this business".

Across the play, however, Shakespeare suggests that this ambition was there before the witches spoke. When they hail him as one who "shalt be king hereafter", Banquo asks why he seems to "start", as if the prophecy has touched a desire already present. By Act 1 Scene 4 he is asking the stars to hide their fires so that light cannot see his "black and deep desires", and the contrast of light and darkness shows ambition as something shameful that must be concealed. The contrast with Banquo, who hears equally flattering prophecies but does nothing to fulfil them, implies that the witches tempt rather than control.

Lady Macbeth's role complicates how far the ambition is his own. When he wavers, she attacks his masculinity, insisting that when he dared to do it "then you were a man". Perhaps, as some critics suggest, a man without children feels he must prove his manhood in other ways, and her taunts work because they strike at that insecurity. Even so, Macbeth chooses, and once crowned his ambition becomes

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insatiable. He realises that "To be thus is nothing, / But to be safely thus", and he resents the "fruitless crown" that will pass to Banquo's line. The murders of Banquo and of Macduff's family show ambition turned into a compulsion to protect what it has gained, and his admission that he is "in blood / Stepped in so far" that turning back would be as hard as going on suggests he can no longer stop.

By the end, ambition has emptied the crown of meaning. Life becomes "a tale / Told by an idiot", and the title he killed for brings no joy. Shakespeare therefore presents Macbeth as profoundly ambitious, but the soliloquy reminds us that he knew the cost before he paid it. That knowledge is what makes him tragic rather than merely villainous, and what makes his fall such a powerful affirmation of the order King James believed God had ordained.

02 Shakespeare presents relationships between parents and children in Romeo and Juliet as relationships of ownership rather than understanding. Parents in Verona love their children, but they love them as heirs, investments and extensions of family honour, so when children make choices of their own the bond breaks down. By showing Romeo and Juliet turning to substitute parents, and by letting reconciliation come only over their bodies, Shakespeare suggests that a rigidly patriarchal family can destroy the very children it claims to protect.

In this moment Capulet's anger erupts in a torrent of language. The oath "God's bread, it makes me mad!" and the restless list "Day, night, work, play, / Alone, in company" stress how much effort he believes he has invested in finding a match, as though Juliet's refusal is an insult to his labour. He describes Paris almost like goods at market: "noble parentage", "fair demesnes", "nobly ligned" and "Proportioned as one's thought would wish a man". The emphasis on land and

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lineage suggests that, for Capulet, marriage is a transaction that strengthens the family's status, and Juliet's feelings are irrelevant to it.

His contempt for his daughter is shocking. He calls her a "wretched puling fool" and a "whining mammet", reducing her to a crying child or a doll, something without a will. He even mimics her voice, "I'll not wed, I cannot love", turning her protest into a pathetic whine. The cruellest moment is the bitter pun on "pardon": she asks him to pardon her, and he will "pardon" her by throwing her out, so that she can "Graze where you will" like an animal. The phrase "I'll give you to my friend" shows that she is his to give, and the brutal asyndetic list "hang, beg, starve, die in the streets" makes the threat of poverty and death explicit. In Elizabethan England a daughter depended entirely on her father's provision, so the audience would understand that this is not an idle threat. Juliet's response, "Is there no pity sitting in the clouds", suggests that she has nowhere on earth to appeal to, and her plea "O sweet my mother, cast me not away!" is met with Lady Capulet's cold dismissal that she has "done with" her.

The scene is especially painful because it reverses Capulet's earlier tenderness. In Act I Scene 2 he tells Paris that Juliet "hath not seen the change of fourteen years" and that his consent depends on her choice, presenting himself as a protective father. Shakespeare's structure exposes how conditional this love is. Once the feud has claimed Tybalt and Capulet has promised Juliet to Paris, his authority matters more than her consent, perhaps because his own honour is now at stake.

Lady Capulet is distant throughout. When she raises the subject of marriage in Act I Scene 3, she needs the Nurse to stay, and it is the Nurse who remembers Juliet's childhood in affectionate, rambling detail. This suggests that, as was common among wealthy families, Juliet has been raised by a servant rather than

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by her mother. The Nurse becomes a substitute mother, carrying messages to Romeo and helping arrange the secret marriage. Yet even she fails Juliet, advising her to marry Paris and dismissing Romeo, which prompts Juliet's private outburst "Ancient damnation!" At that point Juliet is truly alone, cut off from every adult who should care for her.

Romeo's relationship with his parents is presented differently but is no closer. In the opening scene Montague is clearly worried about his son's melancholy, describing how he has been seen weeping at dawn, yet he admits he cannot discover the cause and asks Benvolio to find out. The father loves the son but cannot reach him. Romeo instead confides in Friar Laurence, who acts as his spiritual father, offering advice such as "Wisely and slow, they stumble that run fast". However, the Friar's plans also fail, which suggests that substitute parents cannot repair what real parents have broken.

The ending makes Shakespeare's criticism of the parents clear. Lady Montague dies of grief at her son's exile, and Capulet's gesture of peace, "O brother Montague, give me thy hand", comes too late. The Prologue has already told the audience that only the lovers' deaths will "bury their parents' strife". The promise to raise golden statues is a final irony: once again the parents express love through wealth and status, honouring their children in death in a way they never did in life. Shakespeare leaves his audience questioning the absolute obedience expected of children and the cost of families who value honour above love.

03 Shakespeare presents Caliban as a victim to a considerable extent: he is dispossessed of his island, enslaved, tormented and judged by his appearance. Yet Shakespeare refuses to make him a simple innocent, since his attempted assault

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on Miranda and his plot to murder Prospero show real menace. Caliban is perhaps best understood as both victim and product of Prospero's power, a figure through whom Shakespeare invites his audience, living at the start of English colonial expansion, to question who has the right to rule.

In this speech Caliban is presented as someone who has only words left to fight with. His curse, "All the infections that the sun sucks up / From bogs, fens, flats, on Prosper fall", is vivid and physical, drawing on the very landscape he knows intimately. The alliteration of "bogs, fens, flats" piles up the marshy, diseased places of the island, and the wish that Prospero might become "By inch-meal a disease" imagines slow, gradual suffering, perhaps mirroring the slow suffering Caliban himself endures. Shakespeare gives this supposedly savage creature powerful blank verse, which complicates any audience assumption that he is merely a beast.

The speech then shifts from aggression to helplessness. "His spirits hear me, / And yet I needs must curse" shows that Caliban knows his curses are useless and will be punished, but he cannot stop himself, which makes cursing seem a compulsion born of misery. The catalogue of torments is detailed and disturbing: spirits that "mow and chatter" like apes "And after bite me", hedgehogs that "mount / Their pricks at my footfall", and adders whose "cloven tongues / Do hiss me into madness". The word "barefoot" emphasises his vulnerability, while "cloven" carries a demonic association, suggesting that Prospero's magic, not Caliban, is the true source of devilry here. Most tellingly, these punishments fall upon him "For every trifle", so the suffering is out of all proportion to his faults.

The ending of the extract adds pathos and comedy at once. Seeing Trinculo, Caliban assumes he is another spirit sent to punish him "For bringing wood in

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slowly", and he falls flat under his cloak, hoping not to be noticed. His instinct to hide reveals how conditioned he is to fear, and the burden of wood he carries is a visual reminder of his enslavement.

Across the play, Caliban's claim to be a victim of injustice is strongest in Act 1 Scene 2. He insists "This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother, / Which thou tak'st from me", and he remembers that when Prospero first arrived he "strok'st me and made much of me", and in return Caliban "loved" him and showed him the island's resources. Shakespeare presents a relationship that has turned from kindness to exploitation, a pattern that echoes accounts of early European contact with native peoples, such as the reports of the 1609 shipwreck in Bermuda that are thought to have influenced the play. Caliban's bitter line "You taught me language, and my profit on't / Is I know how to curse" suggests that the gift of civilisation has only given him the means to express his oppression.

However, Shakespeare also presents Caliban as dangerous. Prospero reminds him that he tried to "violate / The honour of my child", and Caliban's response is unrepentant: he wishes it had been done, so that he might have peopled the isle with Calibans. A Jacobean audience would have found this horrifying, and it gives Prospero's harshness some justification. Later, Caliban urges Stephano to "Batter his skull" and to seize Prospero's books, showing that he is capable of violent revenge.

Even so, Caliban is victimised by those who claim to be civilised. Trinculo and Stephano treat him as a "monster", and Trinculo's first thought is of exhibiting him for money in England. Caliban swaps one master for another, worshipping a drunk butler for his "celestial liquor", which suggests that his enslavement has left him unable to imagine freedom except as service. Prospero calls him "hag-seed"

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and a "demi-devil", names that define him by his mother and his looks rather than his actions. Yet it is Caliban who speaks the play's most beautiful lines about the island, telling his companions "Be not afeard, the isle is full of noises", which suggests a sensitivity that his oppressors never see.

The ending leaves the question open. Prospero's admission "this thing of darkness I / Acknowledge mine" can be read as an acceptance of responsibility, and Caliban resolves to "seek for grace". Shakespeare therefore presents Caliban as largely a victim, though not a blameless one, and invites the audience to see that the cruelty of colonial power shapes the very "monster" it claims to control.

04 Shakespeare presents wealth in The Merchant of Venice as something that tests the value of human relationships. In a play set in Venice, the great trading city of Europe, almost every bond is shaped by money: friendship, love, marriage and justice all come with a price. Shylock's obsession with his ducats is the most extreme example, but Shakespeare suggests that the Christians are far from free of the same values, and the play asks its audience whether love and mercy can ever be separated from wealth.

In this conversation Shylock's grief is grotesquely tangled with money. His first question, "Hast thou found my daughter?", seems paternal, but the moment Tubal says she cannot be found, his thoughts leap to "A diamond gone cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfurt!" The precise sum and the place of purchase suggest a mind that thinks in values and accounts. The repetition of "precious, precious jewels" lingers on wealth with an almost loving tenderness that is never given to Jessica. His most shocking wish, "I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear", places his daughter's corpse beside the jewels, and the

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parallel "hearsed at my foot, and the ducats in her coffin" suggests that he would rather have his money back than his child alive. For an Elizabethan audience, who were encouraged to see Jews as greedy usurers, this would seem to confirm a stereotype.

Yet Shakespeare complicates the moment. The breathless prose and the self-pitying tricolon "no sighs but o'my breathing, no tears but o'my shedding!" reveal a man who feels utterly isolated, betrayed by his daughter and mocked by Venice. His line that "The curse never fell upon our nation till now" connects his loss to the suffering of his people, so perhaps the jewels represent more than money: they are the security of a man denied any other kind. The exclamation "What, what, what? Ill luck, ill luck?" and the double "I thank God, I thank God" show how quickly grief turns to vengeful joy at Antonio's losses. Wealth here becomes a weapon, since Antonio's ruin will let Shylock claim his bond.

Elsewhere, Shakespeare shows that wealth drives the Christian characters too. Bassanio's first description of Portia begins "In Belmont is a lady richly left", mentioning her money before her beauty or virtue, and he needs Antonio's credit to woo her. Antonio's generosity is real, but his willingness to borrow because "all my fortunes are at sea" shows him gambling on trade. Shylock's aside that he hates Antonio partly because "He lends out money gratis" reveals the economic rivalry beneath their religious hatred. In Elizabethan England, Christians were forbidden to lend at interest while Jews in many parts of Europe were excluded from most other trades, so Shakespeare shows wealth and religion as inseparable sources of conflict.

The casket test in Belmont offers a moral counterpoint. Morocco chooses gold because it promises "what many men desire" and finds a skull with the warning

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"All that glisters is not gold". Arragon chooses silver, believing he deserves wealth, and is mocked. Bassanio rejects "gaudy gold" and chooses lead, which demands that he "give and hazard all he hath". The test suggests that true love requires risk and sacrifice rather than desire for riches. However, there is an irony here: Bassanio's reward is, after all, a wealthy heiress, so the play never fully escapes the link between love and money.

The trial scene brings these attitudes into collision. When Bassanio offers repayment, Shylock refuses, declaring that even if every ducat were divided into six parts he would not draw them, but would have his bond. Here, surprisingly, Shylock values revenge above wealth, a reversal that shows how deeply he has been wounded. Portia's speech on "The quality of mercy" sets Christian values against the language of contract, yet she defeats Shylock using the letter of the law, and his punishment is financial. His protest that they take his life when they "take the means whereby I live" shows that, for a Jew in Venice, wealth was survival itself.

The final act returns to Belmont, where Antonio's ships are miraculously restored and the ring plot turns love tokens into tests of loyalty. Shakespeare ends with harmony, but the audience may remember that this happiness rests on Shylock's ruin. The play therefore presents wealth as morally ambiguous: it can be a sign of love and generosity, but it more often reveals greed, prejudice and the uncomfortable truth that Venice values what it can count.

05 Shakespeare presents women in Much Ado About Nothing as largely powerless within a patriarchal society that measures their worth by chastity and passes them between fathers and husbands like property. Hero in this scene is the

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clearest victim of that system. Yet through Beatrice, and through the women's quieter influence elsewhere, Shakespeare suggests that women can find power in wit, loyalty and cunning, even if that power remains limited and depends, in the end, on men.

In this conversation Hero is powerless in the most literal sense: she does not speak. The exchange takes place entirely between men, and Claudio addresses Leonato rather than his bride: "Give me this maid your daughter". Leonato's reply, "As freely, son, as God did give her me", presents Hero as a gift that passes from God to father to husband, with no will of her own. Claudio continues the language of exchange, asking what he can give "back" to "counterpoise this rich and precious gift". The financial vocabulary suggests that marriage is a transaction, and Don Pedro's sly answer, "Nothing, unless you render her again", prepares the public humiliation.

The brutality of Claudio's accusation depends on this idea of women as goods. "There, Leonato, take her back again" treats her like faulty merchandise, and the metaphor "Give not this rotten orange to your friend" is especially cruel: the fruit is attractive on the outside but corrupt within, implying that Hero's beauty conceals moral decay. The phrase "the sign and semblance of her honour" reduces her to appearance, and Claudio even turns her blush against her. He sarcastically invites everyone to "Behold how like a maid she blushes here!", reading her innocent distress as proof that "cunning sin" can "cover itself". Hero is trapped: whatever her body does will be interpreted as guilt. The final phrase "approvèd wanton" brands her publicly, and in Elizabethan society, where a woman's honour was her chastity, such an accusation could destroy her marriage prospects and her family's reputation. Shakespeare stages this in a church, before witnesses, which makes the shaming a public spectacle.

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Hero's powerlessness becomes even clearer in what follows. She faints, and her father's response is not to defend her but to wish her dead, urging her not to open her eyes, since he believes death would be the fairest cover for her shame. Leonato trusts the word of princes over his own daughter, revealing how fragile a woman's position is when men decide her worth. Even her rescue, the Friar's plan to pretend she has died, depends on her disappearing, so her reputation can only be restored through absence.

Earlier in the play Hero is equally passive. Leonato instructs her how to answer if the Prince proposes, and she obeys, while Beatrice mocks the idea that a cousin's duty is to curtsy and say "Father, as it please you". Yet Beatrice adds that the husband had better be handsome, "or else make another curtsy and say 'Father, as it please me'". Beatrice's wit gives her a voice that Hero lacks, and her declaration that she would rather "hear my dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me" shows a woman who refuses to be defined by marriage.

However, even Beatrice's power has limits. After the wedding, her fury at Claudio produces the cry "O God, that I were a man! I would eat his heart in the market-place." The violent image shows the strength of her loyalty, but the conditional "that I were a man" admits that, as a woman, she cannot act. She must ask Benedick to "Kill Claudio", relying on a man to fight for her. Shakespeare presents her as eloquent but ultimately dependent.

Nevertheless, the women are not entirely powerless. In the orchard scene, Hero and Ursula deliberately deceive Beatrice into believing Benedick loves her, and Hero shows real wit and control of language, suggesting that women can shape events when men are absent. At the end, Hero's return, declaring that one Hero "died

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defiled" but "I do live", gives her a moment of dignity. Yet she is still handed to Claudio, who has done little to deserve her, and Benedick silences Beatrice with "Peace! I will stop your mouth" and a kiss.

Shakespeare therefore presents women as powerless in law and custom, but not entirely in spirit. Hero's humiliation exposes the injustice of a society that judges women by appearances, while Beatrice reveals the frustration of an intelligent woman confined by her sex. Writing under a female monarch, Shakespeare perhaps invites his audience to question a world in which a woman's honour, and her future, can be destroyed by a man's word.

06 Shakespeare presents loyalty in Julius Caesar as a powerful but dangerously divided virtue. Characters are loyal to different things, to a friend, to Rome, to a cause, to a lover or to their own interests, and these loyalties collide with catastrophic results. Antony's devotion to Caesar is the most passionate example, yet even it is entangled with political cunning, and the play suggests to an Elizabethan audience, anxious about the succession of an ageing queen, that loyalty without judgement can tear a state apart.

In this speech Antony's loyalty is expressed through grief and astonishing courage. He addresses the corpse directly, "O mighty Caesar! Dost thou lie so low?", and the apostrophe makes it seem as though Caesar is still present and still deserves to be spoken to as a ruler. The list "conquests, glories, triumphs, spoils" builds up Caesar's greatness only to collapse it into "this little measure", the small space of his body on the floor. This contrast between vast achievement and physical smallness suggests that Antony feels the murder as a desecration of something immense. His farewell, "Fare thee well!", is simple and intimate, as if spoken to a

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friend rather than a general.

Antony then turns to the conspirators with a startling offer. He invites them to kill him too, saying there is no hour so fit as "Caesar's death's hour" and no weapon of "half that worth" as their swords, made "rich / With the most noble blood of all this world". The metaphor of swords made rich by Caesar's blood turns the murder weapons into something almost sacred, implying that to die by them would be an honour because it would unite him with his friend. The vivid image of the conspirators' "purpled hands" which "reek and smoke" is deeply unsettling: the colour purple, associated with emperors, now stains murderers, and the steam rising from the blood makes the violence immediate. His declaration that "Live a thousand years, / I shall not find myself so apt to die" shows a loyalty so complete that he would rather share Caesar's fate than survive him.

Yet there is perhaps another layer. Antony calls the conspirators "The choice and master spirits of this age", which sounds respectful, even flattering. An audience might wonder whether this is genuine submission or careful diplomacy, since he is alone among armed men. Shakespeare soon resolves the ambiguity: in his soliloquy over the body, Antony asks Caesar to pardon him for being "meek and gentle with these butchers", revealing that his courtesy was strategic. His loyalty is real, but it is expressed through manipulation, which becomes clear in the funeral oration that turns the crowd against Brutus.

The play's most complex loyalty belongs to Brutus. His justification to the plebeians, "Not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more", sets personal friendship against duty to the state, and the balanced antithesis suggests a man who believes he has weighed his loyalties rationally. Caesar's dying words, "Et tu, Brute?", show how deeply this betrayal wounds, since the Latin phrase

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isolates Brutus as the one friend whose disloyalty matters most. Shakespeare leaves the audience uncertain whether Brutus is a principled patriot or a man manipulated by Cassius, who forged letters to persuade him that Rome demanded action.

Cassius's own loyalty is questionable. He fears Antony's "ingrafted love" for Caesar, a gardening metaphor suggesting that this loyalty has grown into Antony's very nature, and he is proved right. Cassius also shows contempt for ordinary Romans, describing them as "sheep" and Rome as "trash" and "offal". The plebeians themselves embody the most unreliable loyalty of all. In the opening scene Marullus scolds them for celebrating Caesar when they once cheered Pompey, and after the assassination they cheer Brutus, crying that he should be Caesar, only to riot within minutes after Antony's speech. Their killing of Cinna the poet simply for his name shows how mob loyalty can become mindless violence.

Shakespeare also presents loyalty in personal relationships. Portia wounds herself in the thigh to prove she can be trusted with her husband's secrets, and Calpurnia pleads with Caesar not to go to the Senate. Yet Antony's loyalty is undermined later when, in the proscription scene, he coldly condemns men to death and plans to cut Caesar's legacies to the people, suggesting that self-interest has entered his devotion.

The ending offers a final reflection. Titinius kills himself out of loyalty to Cassius, and Antony praises Brutus as "the noblest Roman of them all", recognising that he alone acted for the common good. Shakespeare therefore presents loyalty as admirable but fragile, capable of nobility and destruction alike, and warns his audience that when loyalties to friends and to the state divide, the result is chaos and civil war.

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07

Stevenson presents secrecy as the very fabric of respectable Victorian life. In this extract, as throughout the novella, almost every gentleman is guarding something: a vice, a confession, a friend's reputation or a truth too terrible to name. Stevenson suggests that a society obsessed with outward respectability forces men to lead hidden lives, and that the silence they keep to protect themselves is ultimately what destroys them.

The extract opens with Jekyll's letter, which is itself an act of concealment. He tells Utterson "you must not be surprised, nor must you doubt my friendship, if my door is often shut even to you". The image of the shut door is central to the novel, and here it becomes a symbol of Jekyll's withdrawal from society; even his oldest friend is locked out. His plea "You must suffer me to go my own dark way" is striking because "dark" links his secret to sin and to the night-time London where Hyde roams, while "my own" suggests a private path that no one else may follow. Perhaps most revealing is "I have brought on myself a punishment and a danger that I cannot name". The refusal to name is significant: the truth is so shameful that language itself must be avoided, and Stevenson keeps the reader in the same position as Utterson, forced to guess.

The paradox "If I am the chief of sinners, I am the chief of sufferers also" echoes the language of the Bible, where Saint Paul calls himself the chief of sinners. Jekyll presents himself almost as a penitent, yet he still will not confess. His final request, "respect my silence", turns secrecy into a moral duty, and Utterson, the loyal gentleman, will obey it. Stevenson implies that the gentlemanly code of discretion protects wrongdoers as much as it protects friends.

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The second half of the extract makes secrecy physical. Utterson "locked the door of his business-room" and reads "by the light of a melancholy candle", and the small flame against the dark suggests that he can illuminate only a fragment of the truth. The envelope is sealed, "emphatically superscribed" and marked "for the hands of G. J. Utterson ALONE", and within it lies "another enclosure, likewise sealed". This layering of seals works like a set of Russian dolls: each secret hides another, mirroring the novella's structure, in which the truth is only revealed through Lanyon's and Jekyll's documents at the very end. The reference to the "mad will" reminds us that the words "disappearance" and "Henry Jekyll" have been "bracketed" before, which builds suspense. Utterson feels "A great curiosity", yet "professional honour and faith to his dead friend" win, and the packet "slept in the inmost corner of his private safe". The personification of the packet as sleeping suggests the secret is dormant but alive, waiting to wake.

Across the novel, Stevenson shows that hidden lives are not limited to Jekyll. Utterson himself is "austere with himself" and drinks gin when alone "to mortify a taste for vintages", which hints at desires he must discipline. Enfield refuses to ask questions, explaining that "the more it looks like Queer Street, the less I ask". For these men, not knowing is safer than knowing, because knowledge might lead to scandal. The building through which Hyde enters has no window and a door that is "blistered and distained", a neglected back entrance to Jekyll's respectable house. Stevenson uses architecture as a metaphor for the divided self: an elegant front for the public and a sinister back door for private appetites. Even Hyde's name is a pun on "hide", which Utterson recognises when he declares "If he be Mr. Hyde... I shall be Mr. Seek."

Lanyon's fate shows that secrets can kill. After witnessing the transformation, he says he has "had a shock" from which he will "never recover", and his decline in

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this extract proves it. Finally, Jekyll's Full Statement reveals that he lived with "a profound duplicity of life" long before Hyde existed, concealing his "pleasures" out of a "morbid sense of shame". Critics have suggested that Stevenson's reticence about Hyde's crimes might gesture towards forbidden desires, including homosexuality, which was criminalised further in 1885. Whatever the pleasures were, the point is that society required them to be hidden.

Ultimately, Stevenson suggests that Victorian respectability does not remove sin, it simply drives it behind locked doors. Jekyll's claim that "man is not truly one, but truly two" applies to the whole society of the novel, a world of gentlemen whose silence enables the evil they fear.

08 Dickens presents kindness as the true measure of wealth and the only cure for the coldness of Victorian society. In this extract the Cratchits, who have almost nothing, are rich in love and generosity, while Scrooge, who has everything, is confronted with the cruelty of his own words. Through Scrooge's transformation, Dickens urges his middle-class readers to see that compassion towards the poor is not an optional virtue but a moral and Christian duty.

The extract begins with a scene of domestic warmth. The list of small actions, "the cloth was cleared, the hearth swept, and the fire made up", creates a gentle, unhurried rhythm, and the fire, a recurring symbol of warmth in the novella, contrasts sharply with Scrooge's counting-house, where Bob's fire is so small it "looked like one coal". The family draws "round the hearth, in what Bob Cratchit called a circle, meaning half a one", and Dickens's affectionate humour shows that the Cratchits' kindness lies in making the best of what they have. Their glassware is only "Two tumblers, and a custard-cup without a handle", yet these hold the

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drink "as well as golden goblets would have done". The comparison suggests that love transforms poverty, and Bob serves it "with beaming looks", the light imagery presenting him as a source of warmth.

Tiny Tim embodies selfless kindness. Bob's toast, "God bless us!", is "re-echoed" by the family, but it is Tim who extends the blessing: "God bless us every one!" The inclusive "every one" suggests a love that excludes nobody, perhaps even Scrooge. Dickens makes Tim's vulnerability deeply emotive: he sits "very close to his father's side upon his little stool", and Bob holds "his withered little hand" as if he "dreaded that he might be taken from him". The repetition of "little" and the adjective "withered" stir the reader's pity, and the tenderness of the father reminds us that the poor love their children as deeply as the rich.

Crucially, this kindness begins to work on Scrooge. He asks "with an interest he had never felt before" whether Tim will live, and the Ghost answers with the haunting image of "a vacant seat" and "a crutch without an owner, carefully preserved". The adverb "carefully" shows that even in grief the family's love would endure. The Ghost then throws Scrooge's own words back at him: "decrease the surplus population". Dickens is attacking the Malthusian idea, popular among some political economists, that the poor were a burden on society, and hearing it applied to a real child exposes its cruelty. The metaphor of "the insect on the leaf pronouncing on the too much life among his hungry brothers in the dust" belittles Scrooge, showing that wealth does not make him superior, while "brothers" insists on a shared humanity. Scrooge is "overcome with penitence and grief", which suggests that kindness is awakened through empathy. Finally, Bob's toast to "the Founder of the Feast" shows remarkable generosity: he blesses the man who underpays him.

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Earlier in the novella, Dickens establishes Scrooge as the opposite of kindness. He is "solitary as an oyster", the simile suggesting a man sealed off from others, and when asked to donate to the poor he replies "Are there no prisons?" and "And the Union workhouses?" These rhetorical questions reflect the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act, which forced the destitute into harsh workhouses, and Dickens shows how such attitudes allowed the wealthy to avoid personal responsibility. In contrast, Fred describes Christmas as "a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time", and keeps inviting his uncle despite rejection. In Stave Two, Fezziwig shows that kindness from employers costs little but means a great deal; Scrooge himself admits that "The happiness he gives, is quite as great as if it cost a fortune."

The importance of kindness is made most urgent through the children Ignorance and Want, who represent the consequences of society's neglect, and through Marley's regret that "Mankind was my business". By Stave Five, Scrooge's transformation is expressed through acts of kindness: he sends the prize turkey to the Cratchits, raises Bob's salary and becomes a "second father" to Tiny Tim. He becomes "as good a friend, as good a master, and as good a man, as the good old city knew", and the repetition of "good" shows how completely he has changed.

Ultimately, Dickens presents kindness as the heart of Christmas and of a healthy society. The Cratchits show that kindness costs nothing, while Scrooge's redemption shows that it is never too late to learn. Dickens's message to his readers is that charity must be personal and practical, not left to prisons and workhouses.

09 Dickens presents Miss Havisham as both a victim and a victimiser: a woman cruelly betrayed, who then turns her suffering into a weapon against others. In

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this extract, her collapse at Pip's feet invites compassion, yet Pip's mature judgement makes clear that she is responsible for the harm she has done. Dickens suggests that while she is wronged by Compeyson and by a society that left women powerless, her deepest wound is self-inflicted, as she chooses revenge over healing.

The extract reverses the power dynamic established at Satis House. When Pip first visited as a boy, Miss Havisham sat enthroned while he played at her command, but here she "dropped on her knees at my feet; with her folded hands raised to me". The posture of prayer suggests penitence, and Pip imagines her hands raised "to Heaven from her mother's side" when "her poor heart was young and fresh and whole". The tricolon of adjectives reminds the reader of the innocent girl she once was, and the word "whole" implies that her heart is now broken, so Dickens encourages sympathy by presenting her as damaged. Her "white hair" and "worn face" emphasise how time has caught up with a woman who once stopped all the clocks.

Her anguished cry, "What have I done! What have I done!", is repeated "twenty, fifty times over", and the exclamatory repetition conveys a mind that cannot escape its guilt. Significantly, she is lamenting what she has done, not what was done to her, so in this moment she sees herself as a perpetrator. The image of Pip as "a looking-glass that showed me what I once felt myself" is powerful: for years her dressing-table glass has reflected only her own frozen grief, but now she sees her old suffering in someone else's heartbreak, and so understands that she has passed it on.

However, Pip's narration is judicious rather than simply pitying. He recognises that she "had done a grievous thing in taking an impressionable child to mould into the

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form that her wild resentment, spurned affection, and wounded pride found vengeance in". The list of emotions explains her motives, but "vengeance" makes her cruelty deliberate. Yet he also sees that, "in shutting out the light of day", she "secluded herself from a thousand natural and healing influences" and that her mind "had grown diseased". The imagery of light and disease suggests that her isolation became a kind of illness, since minds that "reverse the appointed order of their Maker" decay. Her "vanity of sorrow", which became "a master mania", implies that her grief was self-indulgent, so she is a victim chiefly of her own refusal to move on.

Across the novel, Dickens makes clear that she was genuinely wronged. Herbert explains that she was courted by Compeyson, who conspired with her half-brother Arthur to swindle her, and who abandoned her on her wedding day. The stopped clocks at twenty minutes to nine, the decaying wedding cake and the yellowing dress are Gothic symbols of a life frozen at the moment of betrayal. In Victorian England a jilted woman suffered public humiliation, and her inherited fortune made her vulnerable to fortune-hunters. In this sense, Miss Havisham is a victim of male deceit and of a society that valued women for marriage and money.

Yet Dickens also presents her as a predator. She urges Estella to "Break their hearts my pride and hope, break their hearts and have no mercy!", and the repeated imperative shows that she is raising Estella as an instrument of revenge against all men. She allows Pip to believe she is his benefactor, toying with his hopes. Most damningly, Estella tells her "I am what you have made me", showing that the adopted child is the real victim, emotionally crippled by her upbringing. In the same chapter Miss Havisham admits "I stole her heart away and put ice in its place", the metaphor of ice capturing the coldness she has created.

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Her ending blends punishment and redemption. When her dress catches fire, Pip saves her, and the burning of the wedding dress suggests a painful purging of the past. Her plea, asking Pip to write under her name "I forgive her!", which she repeats in her delirium, shows a woman seeking the forgiveness she never gave.

Ultimately, Dickens presents Miss Havisham as a victim to a significant extent, but only at the start of her story. By choosing revenge, she becomes the author of her own misery and of Estella's. Through her, Dickens warns that bitterness poisons both the sufferer and those around her, and that only remorse and compassion can begin to heal.

10 Brontë presents Jane as profoundly vulnerable in her childhood, an orphan without money, family or protection, but she also shows that this vulnerability is the ground from which Jane's strength grows. In the red-room, Jane is a powerless child imprisoned by her elders; across the novel, Brontë charts her development into a woman who, though still poor and socially insecure, refuses to surrender her integrity. Brontë suggests that a woman's vulnerability in Victorian society is real, but that moral courage can overcome it.

The extract presents the red-room as an oppressive, almost sacred space that dwarfs the child within it. The bed "stood out like a tabernacle in the centre", and the religious simile suggests something holy and forbidding, a place Jane has no right to enter. The repetition of red, through "deep red damask", the red carpet and the "crimson cloth", creates an atmosphere of heat, anger and perhaps blood, reflecting both Jane's passionate rebellion and the danger she feels. Against this, the bed and chair "glared white", and the chair looks "like a pale throne". The throne imagery evokes the authority of the dead Mr Reed, Jane's only protector,

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whose absence is the true source of her vulnerability. The room is "chill", "silent" and "solemn", and the triple structure builds a sense of isolation, cold and fear.

Brontë makes Jane's powerlessness physical. She has been "riveted" to her seat by Bessie and "the bitter Miss Abbot", and the verb suggests that she is fixed in place like a nail. When she checks the door, the exclamation "Alas! yes: no jail was ever more secure" uses hyperbole to express a child's sense of total entrapment, and the image of the jail suggests that Jane is being punished as a criminal simply for defending herself against John Reed. The windows are "half shrouded" in drapery, their blinds "always drawn down", so she is cut off from light and the outside world.

The most striking moment is Jane's encounter with the looking-glass. She sees "the strange little figure there gazing at me, with a white face and arms specking the gloom, and glittering eyes of fear". The distancing phrase "strange little figure" suggests that Jane does not recognise herself; she has been told so often that she is wicked and unwanted that she has become alien even to herself. Comparing her reflection to "half fairy, half imp" shows her imagination, but also her uncertainty about her own nature, whether she is good or bad. Here Brontë presents vulnerability as psychological as well as physical.

Across the novel, Jane's vulnerability is rooted in her poverty and social position. John Reed reminds her "you are a dependent", and Miss Abbot tells her she is "less than a servant, for you do nothing for your keep". At Lowood, Mr Brocklehurst humiliates her by making her stand on a stool and branding her a liar, and the cold, hunger and typhus show how cheaply poor girls' lives were valued. Even as a governess at Thornfield, she occupies an uncertain position between servant and family, which was the reality for many educated but poor

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Victorian women.

However, Brontë makes clear that Jane is never simply a victim. Even in the red-room chapter, her resistance to John Reed shows defiance, and her later outburst at Mrs Reed asserts her voice. Her most famous declaration to Rochester, "Do you think, because I am poor, obscure, plain, and little, I am soulless and heartless?", turns her vulnerabilities into a list she rejects, insisting on her equal worth. When she declares "I am no bird; and no net ensnares me", the metaphor reverses the imprisonment of the red-room: now she refuses to be caged. Her decision to leave Thornfield after discovering Bertha shows extraordinary moral strength, even though it leaves her destitute and starving on the moors, the most physically vulnerable she is in the novel.

By the end, Jane's inheritance gives her financial independence, and she returns to Rochester as an equal. The famous "Reader, I married him" places Jane as the active subject of the sentence, completing her journey from the helpless child on the stool.

Ultimately, Brontë presents Jane as vulnerable to a great extent in circumstance, but not in spirit. The red-room exposes the dangers facing a dependent child, yet it also marks the beginning of a resistance that becomes the novel's moral centre, challenging Victorian assumptions about the weakness of women.

11 Shelley presents family as the foundation of identity and moral goodness: the loving, guiding parent creates a happy and virtuous child, while the absence of family creates misery and, ultimately, monstrosity. In this extract Victor describes an idealised childhood of devotion and care, but this portrait becomes deeply ironic

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when set against his own abandonment of the creature. Shelley suggests that the duties of a parent are sacred, and that failing in them has catastrophic consequences.

The extract opens by presenting Victor's parents' marriage as a model of loving duty. They are united "in bonds of devoted affection", and "bonds" suggests a tie that holds them firmly together. Alphonse's love for Caroline is described in religious terms, with "gratitude and worship" and "reverence for her virtues", elevating family love almost to the level of faith. The simile that he "strove to shelter her, as a fair exotic is sheltered by the gardener, from every rougher wind" presents him as a protector and her as precious and delicate. This is a conventional picture of the gentle, sheltered woman, perhaps reflecting nineteenth-century ideals, yet it also establishes the key idea that family means nurturing and protecting the vulnerable.

Victor's account of his own infancy develops this. His first memories are "My mother's tender caresses and my father's smile of benevolent pleasure while regarding me", and the image of being watched lovingly is significant, because the creature will later be looked at only with horror. Victor calls himself "their plaything and their idol", which perhaps hints at indulgence, but he insists he was above all "the innocent and helpless creature bestowed on them by Heaven". Shelley's word "creature" here is deliberately loaded: Victor is a "creature" given life and owed care, exactly as his own creation will be. The idea that his parents held his "future lot" in their hands, to "direct to happiness or misery, according as they fulfilled their duties towards me", is the moral heart of the novel. Shelley, influenced by Rousseau's belief that people are shaped by their upbringing, suggests that a child's character depends on parental duty.

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The metaphor of being "guided by a silken cord" captures ideal parenting: firm enough to direct, but soft and loving. Victor learns "patience, of charity, and of self-control", and the irony is that as an adult he displays none of these virtues, recklessly pursuing his ambition and rejecting his responsibilities.

Victor's creation of life is presented as a perversion of family. He creates a being without a mother and, at the moment it opens its eyes, flees in disgust, calling it a "wretch". Whereas Victor's earliest memory is his father's smile, the creature's first experience is rejection. The creature later laments "No father had watched my infant days, no mother had blessed me with smiles and caresses", which directly echoes the extract and shows how deeply he feels the absence of what Victor took for granted. He tells Victor "I ought to be thy Adam, but I am rather the fallen angel", using Biblical allusion to accuse his creator of being a neglectful father.

The De Lacey family shows the creature what he is denied. Watching the cottagers, he admires their gentleness and mutual support, even in poverty, and he learns language and feeling through them. Their rejection of him when Felix attacks him confirms his isolation, and his statement "I am malicious because I am miserable" connects his violence to his lack of love. Having already murdered William and framed Justine, he asks for a female companion, which is essentially a plea for a family. When Victor destroys her, the creature retaliates by destroying what remains of Victor's loved ones: Clerval, and then Elizabeth on her wedding night. Alphonse dies of grief soon after, so the family idealised in Chapter 1 is wiped out entirely.

Shelley's own life adds poignancy: her mother, Mary Wollstonecraft, died days after her birth, and she had already lost a baby before writing the novel. The frame narrative, in which Walton writes letters to his sister Margaret, reminds us of the

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comfort of family ties, and Walton's eventual decision to turn back suggests a lesson learned.

Ultimately, Shelley presents family as essential to happiness and goodness. Victor's idealised childhood shows what family can give, while the creature's suffering shows what its absence takes away. Shelley warns that creators, like parents, must take responsibility for the lives they bring into being.

12 Austen presents Elizabeth as a character whose views of others change significantly, but only where her first impressions were based on pride and prejudice rather than evidence. Her transformed feelings for Darcy and her disillusionment with Wickham show her capacity for growth, yet her judgements of Mr Collins and Lady Catherine never alter, because they were right from the start. Austen suggests that true wisdom lies not in abandoning one's judgement, but in being willing to correct it.

In this extract, the change in Elizabeth's view of Darcy is complete. Austen reports that "her sentiments had undergone so material a change" since April that she now receives his love "with gratitude and pleasure". The formal, measured phrasing is perhaps ironic: Elizabeth, usually so witty and articulate, speaks "not very fluently" and is "too much embarrassed to say a word". Her loss of verbal confidence suggests that this change is emotional and profound, beyond the clever performances she gives elsewhere. The free indirect discourse allows Austen to describe the moment with restraint, which reflects the decorum expected of a respectable young woman in Regency society.

Austen also emphasises Elizabeth's humility. "Though she could not look, she could

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listen", and the balanced structure suggests that she now truly attends to Darcy rather than judging him by appearance, as she did at the Meryton assembly. Darcy's own change is equally important; he insists "your family owe me nothing" and "I believe I thought only of you", showing that pride has given way to love. Both characters have reformed, and their union is presented as a partnership of equals.

Yet the extract also shows what has not changed. Lady Catherine's interference has had an effect "exactly contrariwise", and Darcy explains that, had she been decided against him, she would have told Lady Catherine so "frankly and openly". Elizabeth laughs that "After abusing you so abominably to your face, I could have no scruple in abusing you to all your relations." Her humour and frankness remain intact; she changes her view of Darcy, not her essential character. The irony of Lady Catherine's visit is that her attempt to separate them brings them together, revealing that Elizabeth's independence of mind is precisely what Darcy loves.

At the start of the novel, Elizabeth's view of Darcy is formed instantly. When she overhears him call her "tolerable, but not handsome enough to tempt me", her wounded vanity shapes her opinion, and she admits "I could easily forgive his pride, if he had not mortified mine." Her prejudice makes her an easy audience for Wickham, whose charming manners and tale of mistreatment she accepts without question. When Darcy first proposes, she declares that he is "the last man in the world whom I could ever be prevailed on to marry". The novel's original title, First Impressions, points to Austen's interest in how hasty judgements mislead.

The turning point comes with Darcy's letter. Reading it, Elizabeth exclaims "How despicably have I acted!" and recognises "Till this moment I never knew myself." This moment of self-knowledge is the centre of the novel: her change of view

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about others depends first on a change of view about herself. Her visit to Pemberley, where the housekeeper praises Darcy's kindness, and Darcy's secret rescue of Lydia from disgrace after her elopement with Wickham, confirm the reassessment. By contrast, she sees Wickham as he really is, a fortune-hunter whose charm hides selfishness.

However, Austen suggests that Elizabeth does not change her mind about everybody. Her view of Mr Collins as pompous and foolish is never revised, and her refusal of his proposal is vindicated by his absurd letters later in the novel. She stands firm against Lady Catherine's snobbery, refusing to promise not to marry Darcy. With Charlotte Lucas, her view shifts in a more complex way: she is shocked when Charlotte accepts Collins, but on visiting Hunsford she begins to understand Charlotte's practical choice, which reflects the limited options of women without fortune.

Ultimately, Austen presents Elizabeth as a character who changes her views only as far as truth requires. Her growth from prejudice to understanding is the novel's central arc, yet her integrity and wit remain constant. Through her, Austen suggests that the mature mind is one that can admit its errors without losing itself.

13 Conan Doyle creates mystery and suspense by withholding knowledge: from his characters, from his narrator Watson and from the reader. In this extract, a deathbed confession is cut off at its climax by a terrifying face at the window, leaving a trail of unexplained clues. Across the novel, Conan Doyle builds an atmosphere of menace through strange settings, exotic intruders and sudden violence, so that the eventual solution showcases Holmes's brilliance and reassures

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Victorian readers that reason can bring order to a dangerous world.

The most striking method in the extract is interruption. Major Sholto is at the very point of revealing the secret: "Put your ears down to my mouth. The treasure is hidden in". The sentence breaks off mid-phrase, and the reader, like Thaddeus, is denied the one piece of information that would solve the mystery. This abrupt cut is a classic suspense device: the treasure remains hidden, and its hiding place drives the rest of the plot. The request to put "your ears down to my mouth" also creates intimacy and secrecy, only for the scene to be violently shattered.

The shift is marked by "a horrible change" in the Major's expression, and the list of physical details, "his eyes stared wildly, his jaw dropped", conveys sudden terror. His scream, "Keep him out! For Christ's sake keep him out!", uses repetition and exclamation to convey desperation, and the pronoun "him" is chilling because the reader does not yet know who is meant. The face at the window is described as "bearded, hairy" with "wild cruel eyes and an expression of concentrated malevolence". The adjectives make the intruder seem barely human, while the precise detail of "the whitening of the nose where it was pressed against the glass" makes him horribly real. The window acts as a fragile barrier between the safe domestic interior and the threatening darkness outside.

Conan Doyle then layers mystery upon mystery. The Major dies at once, and the intruder vanishes, leaving only "a single foot-mark" in the flower-bed. The next morning the room is "rifled" but nothing stolen, and a note reads "The sign of the four". Thaddeus speaks of "secret agencies at work all round us", which suggests an invisible, organised threat, and he admits the events are "a complete mystery to us". The phrase "The sign of the four", which gives the novel its title, is deliberately enigmatic. Even the narrative frame adds suspense: the story is told

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by Thaddeus, an eccentric figure who pauses "to relight his hookah", so the reader must wait, and Mary Morstan turns "deadly white", reminding us that the mystery is personal and painful.

In the novel as a whole, mystery is established from the start. Holmes complains "My mind rebels at stagnation. Give me problems, give me work", so the reader expects a puzzle worthy of his genius. Mary's case is itself mysterious: some years after her father's disappearance, she began receiving a single pearl every year from an anonymous sender, and now a letter summoning her to the Lyceum Theatre warns her not to bring police. The journey through London heightens the atmosphere: "a dense drizzly fog lay low upon the great city", and the "mud-coloured clouds" create a murky, disorienting world in which Watson loses his bearings. Because Watson narrates, the reader shares his confusion and only learns the truth when Holmes chooses to reveal it.

Suspense builds further at Pondicherry Lodge, where Bartholomew Sholto is found dead in a locked room, his face fixed in a ghastly grin, with a poisoned thorn lodged just above his ear and strangely small footprints nearby. Holmes's maxim that "when you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth" reminds us that the apparently supernatural can be explained. The climax, the steam-launch chase down the Thames after the Aurora, turns mystery into breathless suspense, ending in the death of Tonga and the discovery that the treasure chest is empty.

Context adds to this atmosphere. Published in 1890, the novel draws on Victorian fears that the violence of empire, here the Indian Rebellion and the Agra treasure, might return to haunt England. The exotic, often racist portrayal of Tonga reflects imperial anxieties about the foreign "other" invading the respectable home, just as

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the face at the window does in this extract.

Ultimately, Conan Doyle uses mystery and suspense to create excitement and fear, but also to celebrate Holmes as the detective who restores order. The unanswered questions of this extract are the hooks that draw the reader through the novel, and their resolution offers Victorian readers the comfort that even the darkest secrets can be brought to light.