Cambridge Assessment International Education

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LITERATURE IN ENGLISH **0475/11**

Paper 1 Poetry and Prose **May/June 2022**

1 hour 30 minutes

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You must answer on the enclosed answer booklet.

You will need: Answer booklet (enclosed)

INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer **two** questions in total:
  - Section A: answer **one** question.
  - Section B: answer **one** question.
- Follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper, ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.

INFORMATION

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

This document has **28** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

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SECTION A: POETRY

Answer **one** question from this section.

SONGS OF OURSELVES VOLUME 1: from Part 3

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either **1** Read this poem, and then answer the question that follows it:

The Three Fates

At the instant of drowning he invoked the three sisters.
It was a mistake, an aberration, to cry out for
Life everlasting.

He came up like a cork and back to the river-bank,
Put on his clothes in reverse order,
Returned to the house.

He suffered the enormous agonies of passion
Writing poems from the end backwards,
Brushing away tears that had not yet fallen.

Loving her wildly as the day regressed towards morning
He watched her swinging in the garden, growing younger,
Bare-foot, straw-hatted.

And when she was gone and the house and the swing and daylight
There was an instant's pause before it began all over,
The reel unrolling towards the river.

(Rosemary Dobson)

In what ways does Dobson use words and images to memorable effect in *The Three Fates*?

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Or **2** Explore how Morris vividly portrays strong emotions in *Little Boy Crying.*

Little Boy Crying

Your mouth contorting in brief spite and
Hurt, your laughter metamorphosed into howls,
Your frame so recently relaxed now tight
With three-year-old frustration, your bright eyes
Swimming tears, splashing your bare feet,
You stand there angling for a moment's hint
Of guilt or sorrow for the quick slap struck.

The ogre towers above you, that grim giant,
Empty of feeling, a colossal cruel,
Soon victim of the tale's conclusion, dead
At last. You hate him, you imagine
Chopping clean the tree he's scrambling down
Or plotting deeper pits to trap him in.

You cannot understand, not yet,
The hurt your easy tears can scald him with,
Nor guess the wavering hidden behind that mask.
This fierce man longs to lift you, curb your sadness
With piggy-back or bull-fight, anything,
But dare not ruin the lessons you should learn.

You must not make a plaything of the rain.

(Mervyn Morris)

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SONGS OF OURSELVES VOLUME 2: from Part 4

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either **3** Read this poem, and then answer the question that follows it:

Love in a Life

I

Room after room,
I hunt the house through
We inhabit together.
Heart, fear nothing, for, heart, thou shalt find her –
Next time, herself! – not the trouble behind her
Left in the curtain, the couch's perfume!
As she brushed it, the cornice-wreath blossomed anew:
Yon looking-glass gleamed at the wave of her feather.

II

Yet the day wears,
And door succeeds door;
I try the fresh fortune –
Range the wide house from the wing to the centre.
Still the same chance! she goes out as I enter.
Spend my whole day in the quest, – who cares?
But 'tis twilight, you see, – with such suites to explore,
Such closets to search, such alcoves to importune!

(Robert Browning)

How does Browning create vivid impressions of the relationship between the man and woman in this poem?

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Or **4** How does Pope memorably convey that 'a little learning is a dangerous thing' in this extract from *An Essay on Criticism*?

from *An Essay on Criticism*

A little learning is a dangerous thing;
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring:
There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,
And drinking largely sobers us again.
Fired at first sight with what the Muse imparts,
In fearless youth we tempt the heights of Arts;
While from the bounded level of our mind
Short views we take, nor see the lengths behind,
But, more advanced, behold with strange surprise
New distant scenes of endless science rise!
So pleased at first the towering Alps we try,
Mount o'er the vales, and seem to tread the sky;
The eternal snows appear already past,
And the first clouds and mountains seem the last:
But those attained, we tremble to survey
The growing labours of the lengthened way;
The increasing prospect tires our wandering eyes,
Hills peep o'er hills, and Alps on Alps arise!

(Alexander Pope)

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CAROL ANN DUFFY: from *New Selected Poems*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either **5** Read this poem, and then answer the question that follows it:

In Mrs Tilscher's Class

You could travel up the Blue Nile
with your finger, tracing the route
while Mrs Tilscher chanted the scenery.
Tana. Ethiopia. Khartoum. Aswan.
That for an hour, then a skittle of milk
and the chalky Pyramids rubbed into dust.
A window opened with a long pole.
The laugh of a bell swung by a running child.

This was better than home. Enthralling books.
The classroom glowed like a sweet shop.
Sugar paper. Coloured shapes. Brady and Hindley
faded, like the faint, uneasy smudge of a mistake.
Mrs Tilscher loved you. Some mornings, you found
she'd left a good gold star by your name.
The scent of a pencil slowly, carefully, shaved.
A xylophone's nonsense heard from another form.

Over the Easter term, the inky tadpoles changed
from commas into exclamation marks. Three frogs
hopped in the playground, freed by a dunce,
followed by a line of kids, jumping and croaking
away from the lunch queue. A rough boy
told you how you were born. You kicked him, but stared
at your parents, appalled, when you got back home.

That feverish July, the air tasted of electricity.
A tangible alarm made you always untidy, hot,
fractious under the heavy, sexy sky. You asked her
how you were born and Mrs Tilscher smiled,
then turned away. Reports were handed out.
You ran through the gates, impatient to be grown,
as the sky split open into a thunderstorm.

Explore the ways in which Duffy uses vivid words and images in this poem.

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Or **6** How does Duffy create powerful impressions of the speaker in *Stealing*?

Stealing

The most unusual thing I ever stole? A snowman.
Midnight. He looked magnificent; a tall, white mute
beneath the winter moon. I wanted him, a mate
with a mind as cold as the slice of ice
within my own brain. I started with the head.

Better off dead than giving in, not taking
what you want. He weighed a ton; his torso,
frozen stiff, hugged to my chest, a fierce chill
piercing my gut. Part of the thrill was knowing
that children would cry in the morning. Life's tough.

Sometimes I steal things I don't need. I joyride cars
to nowhere, break into houses just to have a look.
I'm a mucky ghost, leave a mess, maybe pinch a camera.
I watch my gloved hand twisting the doorknob.
A stranger's bedroom. Mirrors. I sigh like this – *Aah.*

It took some time. Reassembled in the yard,
he didn't look the same. I took a run
and booted him. Again. Again. My breath ripped out
in rags. It seems daft now. Then I was standing
alone amongst lumps of snow, sick of the world.

Boredom. Mostly I'm so bored I could eat myself.
One time, I stole a guitar and thought I might
learn to play. I nicked a bust of Shakespeare once,
flogged it, but the snowman was strangest.
You don't understand a word I'm saying, do you?

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SECTION B: PROSE

Answer **one** question from this section.

CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE: *Purple Hibiscus*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either **7** Read this passage, and then answer the question that follows it:

‘I’m sure you think Nsukka is uncivilized compared to Enugu,’ she said, still looking in the mirror.

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I wished that she would not keep looking at me as if I were a strange laboratory animal to be explained and catalogued.

Explore the ways in which Adichie vividly portrays Amaka and Kambili at this moment in the novel.

Or **8** How far does Adichie make you feel sorry for Mama?

CHARLOTTE BRONTË: *Jane Eyre*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either **9** Read this passage, and then answer the question that follows it:

John Reed was a schoolboy of fourteen years old; four years older than I, for I was but ten; large and stout for his age, with a dingy and unwholesome skin; thick lineaments in a spacious visage, heavy limbs and large extremities. He gorged himself habitually at table, which made him bilious, and gave him a dim and bleared eye and flabby cheeks. He ought now to have been at school; but his mamma had taken him home for a month or two, 'on account of his delicate health.' Mr Miles, the master, affirmed that he would do very well if he had fewer cakes and sweetmeats sent him from home; but the mother's heart turned from an opinion so harsh, and inclined rather to the more refined idea that John's sallowness was owing to over-application, and, perhaps, to pining after home.

John had not much affection for his mother and sisters, and an antipathy to me. He bullied and punished me; not two or three times in the week, nor once or twice in a day, but continually: every nerve I had feared him, and every morsel of flesh on my bones shrank when he came near. There were moments when I was bewildered by the terror he inspired, because I had no appeal whatever against either his menaces or his inflictions; the servants did not like to offend their young master by taking my part against him, and Mrs Reed was blind and deaf on the subject: she never saw him strike or heard him abuse me, though he did both now and then in her very presence; more frequently, however, behind her back.

Habitually obedient to John, I came up to his chair: he spent some three minutes in thrusting out his tongue at me as far as he could without damaging the roots: I knew he would soon strike, and while dreading the blow, I mused on the disgusting and ugly appearance of him who would presently deal it. I wonder if he read that notion in my face; for, all at once, without speaking, he struck suddenly and strongly. I tottered, and on regaining my equilibrium retired back a step or two from his chair.

'That is for your impudence in answering mamma a while since,' said he, 'and for your sneaking way of getting behind curtains, and for the look you had in your eyes two minutes since, you rat!'

Accustomed to John Reed's abuse, I never had an idea of replying to it: my care was how to endure the blow which would certainly follow the insult.

'What were you doing behind the curtain?' he asked.

'I was reading.'

'Show the book.'

I returned to the window and fetched it thence.

'You have no business to take our books; you are a dependent, mamma says; you have no money; your father left you none; you ought to beg, and not to live here with gentlemen's children like us, and eat the same meals we do, and wear clothes at our mamma's expense. Now, I'll teach you to rummage my bookshelves: for they *are* mine; all the house belongs to me, or will do in a few years. Go and stand by the door, out of the way of the mirror and the windows.'

I did so, not at first aware what was his intention; but when I saw him lift and poise the book and stand in act to hurl it, I instinctively started aside with a cry of alarm: not soon enough, however; the volume was flung, it hit me, and I fell, striking my head against the door and cutting it. The cut bled, the pain was sharp: my terror had passed its climax; other feelings succeeded.

'Wicked and cruel boy!' I said. 'You are like a murderer – you are like a slave-driver – you are like the Roman emperors!'

(*from* Chapter 1)

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How does Brontë make this such a shocking introduction to John Reed?

Or **10** To what extent does Brontë make Rochester a likeable character?

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ZORA NEALE HURSTON: *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either **11** Read this passage, and then answer the question that follows it:

So one day Steve Mixon wanted some chewing tobacco and Janie cut it wrong.

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So he struck Janie with all his might and drove her from the store.

(*from* Chapter 7)

Explore how Hurston makes this such a powerfully dramatic moment in the novel.

Or **12** What striking impressions of Nanny does Hurston create for you?

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HENRY JAMES: *Washington Square*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either **13** Read this passage, and then answer the question that follows it:

'Catherine,' said Mrs. Penniman at last, 'I am going to say something that will surprise you.'

'Pray do,' Catherine answered; 'I like surprises. And it is so quiet now.'

'Well, then, I have seen Morris Townsend.'

If Catherine was surprised, she checked the expression of it; she gave neither a start nor an exclamation. She remained, indeed, for some moments intensely still, and this may very well have been a symptom of emotion. 'I hope he was well,' she said at last.

'I don't know; he is a great deal changed. He would like very much to see you.'

'I would rather not see him,' said Catherine, quickly.

'I was afraid you would say that. But you don't seem surprised!'

'I am – very much.'

'I met him at Marian's,' said Mrs. Penniman. 'He goes to Marian's, and they are so afraid you will meet him there. It's my belief that that's why he goes. He wants so much to see you.' Catherine made no response to this, and Mrs. Penniman went on. 'I didn't know him at first; he is so remarkably changed. But he knew me in a minute. He says I am not in the least changed. You know how polite he always was. He was coming away when I came, and we walked a little distance together. He is still very handsome, only, of course, he looks older, and he is not so – so animated as he used to be. There was a touch of sadness about him; but there was a touch of sadness about him before – especially when he went away. I am afraid he has not been very successful – that he has never got thoroughly established. I don't suppose he is sufficiently plodding, and that, after all, is what succeeds in this world.' Mrs. Penniman had not mentioned Morris Townsend's name to her niece for upwards of the fifth of a century; but now that she had broken the spell, she seemed to wish to make up for lost time, as if there had been a sort of exhilaration in hearing herself talk of him. She proceeded, however, with considerable caution, pausing occasionally to let Catherine give some sign. Catherine gave no other sign than to stop the rocking of her chair and the swaying of her fan; she sat motionless and silent. 'It was on Tuesday last,' said Mrs. Penniman, 'and I have been hesitating ever since about telling you. I didn't know how you might like it. At last I thought that it was so long ago that you would probably not have any particular feeling. I saw him again, after meeting him at Marian's. I met him in the street, and he went a few steps with me. The first thing he said was about you; he asked ever so many questions. Marian didn't want me to speak to you; she didn't want you to know that they receive him. I told him I was sure that after all these years you couldn't have any feeling about that; you couldn't grudge him the hospitality of his own cousin's house. I said you would be bitter indeed if you did that. Marian has the most extraordinary ideas about what happened between you; she seems to think he behaved in some very unusual manner. I took the liberty of reminding her of the real facts, and placing the story in its true light. *He* has no bitterness, Catherine, I can assure you; and he might be excused for it, for things have not gone well with him. He has been all over the world, and tried to establish himself everywhere; but his evil star was against him. It is most interesting to hear him talk of his evil star. Everything failed; everything but his – you know, you remember – his proud, high spirit. I believe he married some lady somewhere in Europe. You know they marry in such a peculiar matter-of-course way in Europe; a marriage of reason they call it. She died soon afterwards; as he said to me, she only flitted across his life. He has

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not been in New York for ten years; he came back a few days ago. The first thing he did was to ask me about you. He had heard you had never married; he seemed very much interested about that. He said you had been the real romance of his life.' *50*

(*from* Chapter 34)

In what ways does James make this such a revealing moment in the novel?

Or **14** Dr Sloper describes Catherine as 'stubborn'.

To what extent does James persuade you that this is a fair description of her?

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JHUMPA LAHIRI: *The Namesake*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either **15** Read this passage, and then answer the question that follows it:

On the morning of their first anniversary, Moushumi's parents call, waking them, wishing them a happy anniversary before they've had the chance to say it to each other.

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She'd liked

that he'd changed his name from Gogol to Nikhil; though she'd known him all those years, it was a thing that made him somehow new, not the person her mother had mentioned.

(*from* Chapter 10)

In what ways does Lahiri make this such a disturbing moment in the novel?

Or **16** Explore how Lahiri conveys striking impressions of the Bengali community in America.

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YANN MARTEL: *Life of Pi*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either **17** Read this passage, and then answer the question that follows it:

We left Manila and entered the Pacific. On our fourth day out, midway to Midway, we sank. The ship vanished into a pinprick hole on my map. A mountain collapsed before my eyes and disappeared beneath my feet. All around me was the vomit of a dyspeptic ship. I felt sick to my stomach. I felt shock. I felt a great emptiness within me, which then filled with silence. My chest hurt with pain and fear for days afterwards.

I think there was an explosion. But I can't be sure. It happened while I was sleeping. It woke me up. The ship was no luxury liner. It was a grimy, hardworking cargo ship not designed for paying passengers or for their comfort. There were all kinds of noises all the time. It was precisely because the level of noise was so uniform that we slept like babies. It was a form of silence that nothing disturbed, not Ravi's snoring nor my talking in my sleep. So the explosion, if there was one, was not a new noise. It was an irregular noise. I woke up with a start, as if Ravi had burst a balloon in my ears. I looked at my watch. It was just after four-thirty in the morning. I leaned over and looked down at the bunk below. Ravi was still sleeping.

I dressed and climbed down. Normally I'm a sound sleeper. Normally I would have gone back to sleep. I don't know why I got up that night. It was more the sort of thing Ravi would do. He liked the word *beckon*; he would have said, 'Adventure beckons,' and would have gone off to prowl around the ship. The level of noise was back to normal again, but with a different quality perhaps, muffled maybe.

I shook Ravi. I said, 'Ravi! There was a funny noise. Let's go exploring.'

He looked at me sleepily. He shook his head and turned over, pulling the sheet up to his cheek. Oh, Ravi!

I opened the cabin door.

I remember walking down the corridor. Day or night it looked the same. But I felt the night in me. I stopped at Father and Mother's door and considered knocking on it. I remember looking at my watch and deciding against it. Father liked his sleep. I decided I would climb to the main deck and catch the dawn. Maybe I would see a shooting star. I was thinking about that, about shooting stars, as I climbed the stairs. We were two levels below the main deck. I had already forgotten about the funny noise.

It was only when I had pushed open the heavy door leading onto the main deck that I realized what the weather was like. Did it qualify as a storm? It's true there was rain, but it wasn't so very hard. It certainly wasn't a driving rain, like you see during the monsoons. And there was wind. I suppose some of the gusts would have upset umbrellas. But I walked through it without much difficulty. As for the sea, it looked rough, but to a landlubber the sea is always impressive and forbidding, beautiful and dangerous. Waves were reaching up, and their white foam, caught by the wind, was being whipped against the side of the ship. But I'd seen that on other days and the ship hadn't sunk. A cargo ship is a huge and stable structure, a feat of engineering. It's designed to stay afloat under the most adverse conditions. Weather like this surely wouldn't sink a ship? Why, I only had to close a door and the storm was gone. I advanced onto the deck. I gripped the railing and faced the elements. This was adventure.

'Canada, here I come!' I shouted as I was soaked and chilled. I felt very brave. It was dark still, but there was enough light to see by. Light on pandemonium it was. Nature can put on a thrilling show. The stage is vast, the lighting is dramatic, the extras are innumerable, and the budget for special effects is absolutely unlimited. What I had before me was a spectacle of wind and water, an earthquake of the

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senses, that even Hollywood couldn't orchestrate. But the earthquake stopped at the ground beneath my feet. The ground beneath my feet was solid. I was a spectator safely ensconced in his seat.

It was when I looked up at a lifeboat on the bridge castle that I started to worry. The lifeboat wasn't hanging straight down. It was leaning in from its davits. I turned and looked at my hands. My knuckles were white. The thing was, I wasn't holding on so tightly because of the weather, but because otherwise I would fall in towards the ship. The ship was listing to port, to the other side. It wasn't a severe list, but enough to surprise me. When I looked overboard the drop wasn't sheer any more. I could see the ship's great black side.

A shiver of cold went through me. I decided it was a storm after all. Time to return to safety. I let go, hotfooted it to the wall, moved over and pulled open the door.

(*from* Chapter 38)

In what ways does Martel memorably portray Pi's thoughts and feelings at this moment in the novel?

Or **18** Explore **two** moments in the novel which Martel makes particularly shocking.

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GEORGE ORWELL: *1984*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either **19** Read this passage, and then answer the question that follows it:

The Hate rose to its climax. The voice of Goldstein had become an actual sheep's bleat, and for an instant the face changed into that of a sheep. Then the sheep-face melted into the figure of a Eurasian soldier who seemed to be advancing, huge and terrible, his sub-machine-gun roaring, and seeming to spring out of the surface of the screen, so that some of the people in the front row actually flinched backwards in their seats. But in the same moment, drawing a deep sigh of relief from everybody, the hostile figure melted into the face of Big Brother, black-haired, black-moustachio'd, full of power and mysterious calm, and so vast that it almost filled up the screen. Nobody heard what Big Brother was saying. It was merely a few words of encouragement, the sort of words that are uttered in the din of battle, not distinguishable individually but restoring confidence by the fact of being spoken. Then the face of Big Brother faded away again and instead the three slogans of the Party stood out in bold capitals:

WAR IS PEACE
FREEDOM IS SLAVERY
IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH.

But the face of Big Brother seemed to persist for several seconds on the screen, as though the impact that it had made on everyone's eyeballs was too vivid to wear off immediately. The little sandy-haired woman had flung herself forward over the back of the chair in front of her. With a tremulous murmur that sounded like 'My Saviour!' she extended her arms towards the screen. Then she buried her face in her hands. It was apparent that she was uttering a prayer.

At this moment the entire group of people broke into a deep, slow, rhythmical chant of 'B-B! … B-B! … B-B!' – over and over again, very slowly, with a long pause between the first 'B' and the second – a heavy, murmurous sound, somehow curiously savage, in the background of which one seemed to hear the stamp of naked feet and the throbbing of tom-toms. For perhaps as much as thirty seconds they kept it up. It was a refrain that was often heard in moments of overwhelming emotion. Partly it was a sort of hymn to the wisdom and majesty of Big Brother, but still more it was an act of self-hypnosis, a deliberate drowning of consciousness by means of rhythmic noise. Winston's entrails seemed to grow cold. In the Two Minutes Hate he could not help sharing in the general delirium, but this subhuman chanting of 'B-B! … B-B!' always filled him with horror. Of course he chanted with the rest: it was impossible to do otherwise. To dissemble your feelings, to control your face, to do what everyone else was doing, was an instinctive reaction. But there was a space of a couple of seconds during which the expression in his eyes might conceivably have betrayed him. And it was exactly at this moment that the significant thing happened – if, indeed, it did happen.

Momentarily he caught O'Brien's eye. O'Brien had stood up. He had taken off his spectacles and was in the act of re-settling them on his nose with his characteristic gesture. But there was a fraction of a second when their eyes met, and for as long as it took to happen Winston knew – yes, he *knew*! – that O'Brien was thinking the same thing as himself. An unmistakable message had passed.

(*from* Part 1, Chapter 1)

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How does Orwell make this such a powerful moment in the novel?

Or **20** Explore **two** moments in the novel where Orwell strikingly creates a sense of fear.

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from *STORIES OF OURSELVES Volume 2*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either **21** Read this passage from *The Tower* (by Marghanita Laski), and then answer the question that follows it:

She was in an empty room with a low arched ceiling. A narrow stone staircase clung to the wall and circled round the room to disappear through a hole in the ceiling.

'There ought to be a wonderful view at the top,' said Caroline firmly to herself, and she laid her hand on the rusty rail and started to climb, and as she climbed, she counted.

'– thirty-nine, forty, forty-one,' she said, and with the forty-first step she came through the ceiling and saw over her head, far far above, the deep blue evening sky, a small circle of blue framed in a narrowing shaft round which the narrow staircase spiralled. There was no inner wall; only the rusty railing protected the climber on the inside.

'– eighty-three, eighty-four –' counted Caroline. The sky above her was losing its colour and she wondered why the narrow slit windows in the wall had all been so placed that they spiralled round the staircase too high for anyone climbing it to see through them.

'It's getting dark very quickly,' said Caroline at the hundred-and-fiftieth step. 'I know what the tower is like now. It would be much more sensible to give up and go home.'

At the two-hundred-and-sixty-ninth step, her hand, moving forward on the railing, met only empty space. For an interminable second she shivered, pressing back to the hard brick on the other side. Then hesitantly she groped forwards, upwards, and at last her fingers met the rusty rail again, and again she climbed.

But now the breaks in the rail became more and more frequent. Sometimes she had to climb several steps with her left shoulder pressed tightly to the brick wall before her searching hand could find the tenuous rusty comfort again.

At the three-hundred-and-seventy-fifth step, the rail, as her moving hand clutched it, crumpled away under her fingers, 'I'd better just go by the wall,' she told herself, and now her left hand traced the rough brick as she climbed up and up.

'Four-hundred-and-twenty-two, four-hundred-and-twenty-three,' counted Caroline with part of her brain. 'I really ought to go down now,' said another part, 'I wish – oh, I want to go down now –' but she could not. 'It would be so silly to give up,' she told herself, desperately trying to rationalize what drove her on. 'Just because one's afraid –' and then she had to stifle that thought too, and there was nothing left in her brain but the steadily mounting tally of the steps.

'– four-hundred-and-seventy!' said Caroline aloud with explosive relief, and then she stopped abruptly because the steps had stopped too. There was nothing ahead but a piece of broken railing barring her way, and the sky drained now of all its colour, was still some twenty feet above her head.

'But how idiotic,' she said to the air. 'The whole thing's absolutely pointless,' and then the fingers of her left hand, exploring the wall beside her, met not brick but wood.

She turned to see what it was, and there in the wall, level with the top step, was a small wooden door. 'So it does go somewhere after all,' she said, and she fumbled with the rusty handle. The door pushed open and she stepped through.

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In what ways does Laski build up tension at this moment in the story?

Or **22** How does Afolabi vividly portray the narrator in *Mrs Mahmood*?

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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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1

Dobson's poem is memorable because it takes a single wish, the drowning man's cry for "Life everlasting", and grants it in the most unsettling way imaginable: not as eternal life going forward, but as the same life replayed backwards, again and again, for ever. Through a series of strange reversed images, Dobson turns what sounds like a blessing into something closer to a curse, and leaves the reader with a haunting sense of how precious, and how unrepeatable, a human life ought to be.

The opening line is startling in its compression. "At the instant of drowning" places us at the very last moment of a life, and the word "instant" will return at the end, so that the whole poem is framed by a fraction of time. The man "invoked the three sisters", the Fates of myth who spin, measure and cut the thread of life, and the formal verb "invoked" makes his cry sound like a prayer. Yet Dobson immediately judges it: "It was a mistake, an aberration". The blunt monosyllables of "a mistake" followed by the more clinical "aberration" suggest that wanting to escape death is a kind of error against nature. The line break which isolates "Life everlasting" on its own gives the phrase a solemn, almost religious weight, which makes the irony of what follows sharper.

The central images are memorable because they are both comic and eerie. "He came up like a cork" is a buoyant, almost cartoonish simile, as though the river spits him out like a film run in reverse. Dobson then lists ordinary actions undone: he "Put on his clothes in reverse order" and "Returned to the house". The flat, matter-of-fact syntax makes the impossible seem routine, which is precisely what is disturbing. Life has become a mechanism rather than an experience.

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The poem grows more poignant as it moves into his emotional life. "He suffered the enormous agonies of passion" is deliberately grand, yet the passion is being lived backwards, so he is "Writing poems from the end backwards" and "Brushing away tears that had not yet fallen". I find this last image the most memorable in the poem. Tears that have "not yet fallen" are wiped away before the grief that causes them has happened, so emotion is cut off from meaning. Dobson seems to suggest that our feelings matter only because life moves forward towards consequences, and without that direction even love and sorrow become hollow gestures.

The woman he loves is presented through a lovely, fading image: "He watched her swinging in the garden, growing younger, / Bare-foot, straw-hatted." The present participles "swinging" and "growing" create a gentle, rocking rhythm, and the details "Bare-foot, straw-hatted" are tender and specific, like an old photograph. Yet "growing younger" is quietly heartbreaking, because she is moving away from him into a past where they have not yet met. "As the day regressed towards morning" reverses the natural movement of time, and the verb "regressed" has a clinical coldness that undercuts the romance.

The final stanza delivers the poem's most chilling idea through structure. The long line "And when she was gone and the house and the swing and daylight" piles up nouns with repeated "and", so that everything is erased one item after another, as if a film is being wound back to its blank beginning. Then comes "an instant's pause", echoing the "instant of drowning", before "it began all over". The closing image, "The reel unrolling towards the river", is a brilliant metaphor: his life has become a cinema reel, endlessly rewinding and replaying, always ending where it began, at the drowning. The river is both origin and destination, and the cycle has

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no exit.

Dobson's title, then, carries a dark irony. The Fates have granted exactly what was asked, but "everlasting" turns out to mean a closed loop rather than freedom. Through her precise, cinematic images and her quietly ironic tone, she makes the reader feel that a finite life, lived once and forward, is far more valuable than an endless one, and that is why the poem lingers so powerfully after reading.

2 Morris vividly portrays two sets of strong emotions in this poem: the raw, theatrical fury of a three-year-old who has just been slapped, and the hidden, aching tenderness of the father who slapped him. What makes the poem so powerful is the gap between them. The child's feelings are loud and visible, while the father's are concealed behind a "mask", and Morris makes us understand both, so that by the end our sympathy lies as much with the adult as with the crying boy.

The opening stanza bursts with physical detail. Morris addresses the boy directly, and the repeated "Your mouth", "your laughter", "Your frame" builds a close-up portrait in which every part of the child's body expresses emotion. "Contorting in brief spite and / Hurt" is precise: the line break isolates "Hurt", suggesting that beneath the anger lies genuine pain. The verb "metamorphosed" is a grand, almost scientific word for a sudden change, and it captures how quickly a small child's mood can switch from "laughter" into "howls". The contrast between a body "so recently relaxed" and "now tight" reinforces this abruptness. The image of "bright eyes / Swimming tears, splashing your bare feet" is affectionate and slightly exaggerated, and the watery verbs suggest a flood of emotion. Yet Morris also notices that the boy is "angling for a moment's hint / Of guilt or sorrow". The

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fishing metaphor is gently humorous: even in distress, the child is shrewdly trying to hook his father's remorse.

In the second stanza Morris shifts into the child's imagination, and the emotion becomes fantasy. The father is transformed into "The ogre", "that grim giant", "a colossal cruel", and the harsh alliteration of "grim giant" and "colossal cruel" makes him monstrous. Using "cruel" as a noun is unusual and turns cruelty into his entire identity. The references to "Chopping clean the tree he's scrambling down" recall Jack and the Beanstalk, while "plotting deeper pits" suggests the child's revenge is creative and violent. The blunt "You hate him" is placed starkly in the line, and the enjambment of "dead / At last" lets us feel the boy's satisfaction. Morris presents this fury with understanding, even humour, because we know it is the passionate but temporary hatred of a small child.

The third stanza turns the poem, and it is here that the strongest emotion appears. "You cannot understand, not yet," introduces the father's perspective, and the pause before "not yet" suggests patience and hope that the boy will grow to understand. The image "The hurt your easy tears can scald him with" reverses the situation: it is the father who is truly wounded. "Easy" suggests that the child's tears come readily, while "scald" makes them burning and painful to the man. "Nor guess the wavering hidden behind that mask" reveals that the stern face is a performance, and "wavering" shows how close the father is to giving in.

Morris then shows how intensely the father longs to comfort his son. "This fierce man longs to lift you, curb your sadness / With piggy-back or bull-fight, anything," is full of warmth. The playful nouns "piggy-back" and "bull-fight" are childlike games, and the desperate "anything" breaks the rhythm, as though his self-control is slipping. Yet he "dare not ruin the lessons you should learn". The verb "dare"

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shows that holding back requires courage, and his love is expressed through restraint rather than affection.

The final line stands alone and is memorable for its quiet authority: "You must not make a plaything of the rain." It is a metaphor, perhaps for whatever the boy did wrong, and perhaps for something larger, a warning not to play with forces that can harm. Its calm, measured rhythm contrasts with the child's noisy emotion and the father's hidden turmoil, giving the poem a resolved, loving close. Through this balance of perspectives, Morris portrays how intense emotions are felt on both sides of a single slap, and how parental love can hide its own pain in order to teach.

3 Browning creates a vivid and rather mysterious impression of a relationship defined by pursuit and absence. The man shares a house with the woman, yet he spends the whole poem hunting for her, always arriving too late. The result is a relationship that feels intensely passionate on his side but strangely elusive on hers, and Browning leaves us wondering whether she can ever truly be possessed, or whether the endless search is itself what keeps his love alive.

The opening lines establish the paradox. "Room after room, / I hunt the house through / We inhabit together." The short, clipped lines and the repetition of "Room after room" mimic his restless movement, while the verb "hunt" is striking: it makes him a hunter and her the quarry, suggesting desire, even a kind of obsession. The irony lies in "We inhabit together". They live in the same space, yet he cannot find her, which hints at an emotional distance concealed within physical closeness.

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Browning then gives us the man's inner voice in an exclamatory, breathless line: "Heart, fear nothing, for, heart, thou shalt find her". The apostrophe to his own "heart", repeated twice, shows him reassuring himself, and the commas break up the rhythm as though he is panting. The archaic "thou shalt" sounds like a prophecy or vow, conveying his certainty. The dashes and exclamation in "Next time, herself!" capture his eagerness, but they also reveal that so far he has found only traces of her.

Those traces are the poem's most vivid images. He finds "the trouble behind her / Left in the curtain, the couch's perfume!" The word "trouble" is lovely and ambiguous: it suggests the disturbance she leaves as she passes, a rumpled curtain, but also perhaps the emotional disturbance she causes him. "The couch's perfume" is sensuous, and her presence lingers in scent while her body is gone. Browning then makes her almost magical: "As she brushed it, the cornice-wreath blossomed anew" and "Yon looking-glass gleamed at the wave of her feather." The verbs "blossomed" and "gleamed" suggest that she brings the house to life with the slightest touch, so the man sees her as a kind of goddess or spirit who animates everything. Yet the delicate image of "her feather" also makes her light, fleeting and hard to catch, like a bird.

The second stanza begins with "Yet", and the tone darkens. "The day wears, / And door succeeds door" conveys the passing of time and the endlessness of the search. "Wears" suggests tiredness and erosion, and the monotonous structure of "door succeeds door" makes the house seem like a labyrinth. "I try the fresh fortune" presents the search as a gamble, while "Range the wide house from the wing to the centre" makes the house enormous, as if the relationship itself is too large and complex to master.

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The line "Still the same chance! she goes out as I enter" is the heart of the poem. The perfect timing of her exit and his entrance is almost comic, but also poignant, and we may wonder whether it is accident or deliberate avoidance. Browning never tells us, and the woman never speaks. This silence makes the relationship feel one-sided: we know only his longing, never her feelings.

The man's response, "Spend my whole day in the quest", followed by the shrug of "who cares?", is defiant, and "quest" elevates the search to a romantic, chivalric mission. Yet "But 'tis twilight, you see" introduces melancholy. Twilight suggests the day, and perhaps life itself, drawing to an end. The closing line, "Such closets to search, such alcoves to importune!", ends on restless excitement rather than resolution. "Importune" means to beg persistently, so he is reduced to pleading with the very rooms. The exclamation mark suggests he will go on searching for ever.

Browning therefore creates a vivid impression of a relationship of devoted pursuit and perpetual near-miss. The woman's power over him is enormous, but she remains elusive, and the poem leaves us with the bittersweet sense that his love is sustained by longing rather than fulfilment.

4 Pope conveys that "a little learning is a dangerous thing" by turning his argument into a series of memorable images, first of drinking and then of mountain climbing, which make the reader feel the progression from arrogant ignorance to humbled wisdom. His tightly controlled rhyming couplets give the ideas the snap of proverbs, so that the warning becomes impossible to forget.

The extract opens with the famous statement itself, set as a self-contained line

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that sounds like a universal truth. The paradox is immediately arresting: we normally think of learning as good, yet Pope insists that a "little" of it is "dangerous". The second line develops this through an imperative: "Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring". The Pierian spring was sacred to the Muses, so knowledge is imagined as a magical drink. The balanced choice between "Drink deep" and "taste not" allows no middle ground, and the stressed monosyllables give the command force.

The next couplet explains the danger through a vivid metaphor of drunkenness: "There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain, / And drinking largely sobers us again." The antithesis between "shallow" and "largely", and between "intoxicate" and "sobers", is neatly matched across the two lines. Pope's point is witty: a small sip of knowledge makes us giddy and overconfident, like a drunk who thinks he is brilliant, while deep study brings clarity and modesty. The rhyme of "brain" and "again" ties the idea together with satisfying finality.

Pope then shifts to the young learner's enthusiasm. "Fired at first sight with what the Muse imparts" suggests passionate, impulsive excitement, and "Fired" conveys burning eagerness. "In fearless youth we tempt the heights of Arts" introduces the image of climbing, and "fearless" is ironic, because the young are fearless only because they do not understand the challenge. The verb "tempt" suggests recklessness. The use of "we" is important throughout: Pope includes himself and his reader, which makes the satire gentler and more persuasive.

The limitation of the beginner is captured in "While from the bounded level of our mind / Short views we take, nor see the lengths behind". "Bounded level" presents the inexperienced mind as low, flat ground, and the inverted word order of "Short views we take" places emphasis on the narrowness of the outlook. But "more

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advanced" we "behold with strange surprise / New distant scenes of endless science rise!" The exclamation and the word "endless" express astonishment: the more we learn, the more we realise how much there is to know.

The extended simile of the Alps is the most memorable part of the extract. "So pleased at first the towering Alps we try, / Mount o'er the vales, and seem to tread the sky". The verb "seem" is crucial, because the climber only feels he has reached the summit. "The eternal snows appear already past, / And the first clouds and mountains seem the last" continues the illusion with "appear" and "seem", showing how the beginner mistakes the foothills for the peak. Then the turn comes with "But those attained, we tremble to survey / The growing labours of the lengthened way". Confidence collapses into fear with "tremble", and the alliteration of "labours" and "lengthened" slows the line down, mirroring the weary effort ahead.

The closing couplet is brilliantly structured. "The increasing prospect tires our wandering eyes" conveys exhaustion, before the final line, "Hills peep o'er hills, and Alps on Alps arise!" The repetition of "hills" and "Alps" creates the visual effect of peaks stacked endlessly behind one another. "Peep" is almost playful, as if the mountains are teasing the climber, while "arise" gives them a vast, solemn power. The exclamation leaves us with a sense of awe.

Through this progression from drink to mountain, from intoxication to trembling humility, Pope memorably persuades us that a little knowledge breeds false confidence, and that true learning teaches us how much we do not know. The wit and balance of the couplets make the lesson both entertaining and lasting.

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5

Duffy uses vivid words and images to recreate the magical safety of a primary classroom and then to show that safety dissolving as the child moves towards adolescence. The poem travels from bright, sensory delight to a hot, charged unease, and its imagery charts the loss of innocence with remarkable precision.

The poem opens with an image of imaginative freedom: "You could travel up the Blue Nile / with your finger". The second person "You" draws the reader into the child's experience, and the idea of travelling with a finger captures how a child's imagination turns a map into a real journey. Mrs Tilscher "chanted the scenery", and "chanted" makes her lesson sound like a spell or incantation. The list of minor sentences, "Tana. Ethiopia. Khartoum. Aswan.", imitates that chant, its full stops giving each exotic name a magical weight. Even everyday objects are made playful: "a skittle of milk" is a delightful metaphor which compares the small milk bottle to a toy, while "the chalky Pyramids rubbed into dust" quietly hints that wonders do not last.

Duffy's sensory details make the classroom feel alive. "The laugh of a bell swung by a running child" personifies the bell so that the school itself seems joyful. The blunt statement "This was better than home" tells us much about the child's life in very few words. The simile "The classroom glowed like a sweet shop" is one of the poem's most vivid images: "glowed" suggests warmth and light, and the sweet shop represents treats, colour and pleasure from a child's point of view. The list of "Sugar paper. Coloured shapes." continues this sweetness.

Yet Duffy immediately introduces darkness: "Brady and Hindley / faded, like the faint, uneasy smudge of a mistake." The names of the Moors murderers intrude shockingly, and the enjambment leaves them hanging threateningly at the end of the line. The simile reduces this horror to a "smudge" that can be rubbed out,

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suggesting that the classroom protects the child from the evil of the outside world, at least for now. The adjective "uneasy" hints that the protection is fragile.

The stanza then celebrates Mrs Tilscher's love in simple, emphatic language: "Mrs Tilscher loved you." The "good gold star" is a small reward which, in the child's world, means everything, and the alliteration makes it shine. The line "The scent of a pencil slowly, carefully, shaved" is beautifully slowed down by commas, creating a calm, careful rhythm, while "A xylophone's nonsense" adds a playful sound.

The third stanza marks change through the brilliant image of tadpoles: they "changed / from commas into exclamation marks." The metaphor uses the language of the classroom itself and shows growth as a transformation from something small and pausing to something sudden and startling, just as the children themselves are about to change. The frogs "freed by a dunce" and followed by kids "jumping and croaking" are comic, yet freedom here also suggests escape from the classroom. Then "A rough boy / told you how you were born." The adjective "rough" contrasts with the gentle world of the classroom, and the child's reaction, staring "at your parents, appalled", captures the shock of losing innocence.

The final stanza is charged with tension. "That feverish July, the air tasted of electricity" is synaesthesia, mixing taste and touch, and "feverish" suggests restlessness and even illness. "A tangible alarm" makes anxiety something physical, and the list "untidy, hot, / fractious" conveys the irritability of puberty. "The heavy, sexy sky" is startling, especially the adult word "sexy", which shows new and confusing awareness. When the child asks about birth, Mrs Tilscher "smiled, / then turned away", and that small gesture signals that her role is over.

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	The ending is explosive. The child runs "impatient to be grown, / as the sky split open into a thunderstorm." The thunderstorm releases the built-up tension of the stanza, and "split open" suggests both a violent break with childhood and a kind of birth into a new stage of life. Through such vivid, carefully chosen images, Duffy makes the reader feel both the sweetness of childhood and the excitement and fear of leaving it behind.
6	Duffy creates a powerful and disturbing impression of a speaker who is cold, destructive and proud of it, yet who is also profoundly lonely and bored. The dramatic monologue lets us hear this voice directly, and the more the speaker boasts, the more we glimpse the emptiness underneath. By the end, the impression is not simply of a thief but of someone desperately alienated from the world.
	The opening line immediately establishes a conversational, almost boastful tone: "The most unusual thing I ever stole? A snowman." The rhetorical question suggests the speaker is responding to an interviewer or listener, and the answer is absurd and memorable. The minor sentence "Midnight." sets a secretive, slightly sinister scene. The speaker admires the snowman as "magnificent; a tall, white mute", and "mute" hints at the silence and isolation the speaker seems drawn to. "I wanted him, a mate" reveals a craving for companionship, but the companion the speaker desires is one "with a mind as cold as the slice of ice / within my own brain." This metaphor is chilling: the speaker sees their own mind as frozen and hard, and the sharp sounds of "slice of ice" make that coldness feel cutting.
	The speaker's philosophy is stated bluntly: "Better off dead than giving in, not taking / what you want." The aggressive, clichéd motto suggests a tough persona, a

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refusal to be denied. The physical effort of the theft is vividly described, as the torso, "frozen stiff", is "hugged to my chest", and the verb "hugged" is poignant, because it is the only embrace in the poem and it is with a lump of snow. "A fierce chill / piercing my gut" suggests pain, perhaps a physical expression of inner emptiness. Most disturbing is the admission that "Part of the thrill was knowing / that children would cry in the morning." The pleasure the speaker takes in others' unhappiness is cruel, and the dismissive "Life's tough." sounds like a phrase the speaker has heard and now repeats to justify themselves.

The third stanza widens the portrait. "Sometimes I steal things I don't need" reveals that the stealing is not about poverty but about something emotional. The speaker joyrides "cars / to nowhere", and "nowhere" suggests aimlessness and a life without direction. "I'm a mucky ghost" is a striking metaphor: a ghost is invisible and lonely, haunting other people's lives, while "mucky" adds a sense of mess and dirtiness. The image "I watch my gloved hand twisting the doorknob" is strangely detached, as though the speaker is observing themselves from outside. In "A stranger's bedroom. Mirrors." the minor sentences create a snapshot, and the mirrors suggest the speaker is searching for some reflection of identity. The sigh "Aah" makes the reader uncomfortable, as it is unclear whether it is satisfaction or longing.

In the fourth stanza the speaker's violence emerges. The snowman, "Reassembled in the yard, / he didn't look the same", and the speaker "booted him. Again. Again." The repetition and short sentences convey frenzied anger, and the image "My breath ripped out / in rags" is violent and exhausting. Then comes a rare moment of reflection: "It seems daft now." The speaker ends "alone amongst lumps of snow, sick of the world." The snowman, once "magnificent", is reduced to "lumps", and the word "alone" isolates the speaker's true condition.

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The final stanza reveals the root of the behaviour: "Boredom. Mostly I'm so bored I could eat myself." The hyperbole is darkly comic but also suggests self-destruction. The speaker stole a guitar and "thought I might / learn to play", which hints at a buried wish for something better, never fulfilled. Even the bust of Shakespeare was simply "flogged", reducing culture to cash.

The last line is the poem's most powerful: "You don't understand a word I'm saying, do you?" The direct address turns on the reader, and the tone is both defiant and despairing. Duffy leaves us with the impression of a speaker who cannot connect with anyone, who expects to be misunderstood, and whose crimes are a desperate response to emptiness. We are disturbed by the speaker, but we may also feel uneasy pity.

8 Adichie makes me feel deeply sorry for Mama for most of the novel. Seen through Kambili's quiet, loving narration, she is a woman trapped by violence, by religion and by a society that offers her no escape. Yet Adichie complicates that sympathy. Mama's passivity costs her children dearly, and her final act of poisoning Papa, which leads to Jaja's imprisonment, makes her a more troubling figure. I am left pitying her, but also uneasy about the price others pay for her survival.

From the opening chapter, Adichie presents Mama through small, telling details that invite pity. After Papa throws his missal and breaks the figurines on the étagère, Mama does not rage; she quietly clears up the pieces. Kambili later reveals that Mama used to polish those ballet-dancing figurines after each beating, and this ritual is one of the most moving details in the novel. The fragile figurines

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suggest Mama herself, delicate and easily broken, and polishing them seems to be the only way she can process pain she is not allowed to speak about. Adichie's method of letting the reader infer the violence through Kambili's understated narration makes the suffering more affecting, because even her children have learnt not to name it.

Adichie also makes us pity Mama's lack of voice. She speaks softly, often in fragments, and she almost never contradicts Papa in public. The episode in which she feels unwell after Mass and asks to stay in the car is especially painful. Papa insists that the family visit Father Benedict, and Mama obeys. Later, Kambili and Jaja hear the sounds of a beating, and Mama loses her baby. The image of the children cleaning a trail of blood from the floor is horrifying, and it shows how normalised her suffering has become. Her calm announcement afterwards, that the pregnancy is over, is delivered with a terrible flatness that makes the reader's horror sharper.

The contrast with Aunty Ifeoma intensifies our sympathy. In Nsukka, Ifeoma speaks freely, laughs loudly and raises her children alone. When she urges Mama to leave, Mama explains that she has nowhere to go, and she reveals that Papa's kinsmen had urged him to take another wife because she had borne him only two children, and that he refused. Her gratitude for this is heartbreaking, because it shows how completely she has absorbed the idea that a woman's worth lies in marriage and sons. Adichie makes us see Mama not as weak, but as conditioned by fear and dependence. Even after she is beaten again, and Papa breaks a small table on her body, she returns to Enugu.

However, Adichie does not allow pure pity. Mama's silence also means that her children are left unprotected. When Papa pours boiling water on Kambili's feet, or

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beats Kambili almost to death over the painting of Papa-Nnukwu, Mama cannot save her. A reader may feel frustrated that she endures so long, and that her survival seems to come at the expense of her children.

The ending complicates sympathy further. Mama reveals that she has been putting poison in Papa's tea, obtained through Sisi's uncle. On one hand, this is the desperate act of a woman who has finally reached her limit, and it can be read as reclaiming power after years of abuse. On the other hand, it is a calculated murder, and it is Jaja who takes the blame and goes to prison. In the final section Mama is hollowed out, distracted and neglectful of her appearance, and Kambili describes her as if she has faded. Adichie seems to suggest that violence destroys even those who escape it.

Overall, I feel profoundly sorry for Mama, because Adichie shows how fear, faith and patriarchy shape every choice she makes. Yet my sympathy is not complete. Her passivity and her final act both harm the children she loves, and Adichie leaves us with a tragic, morally complex portrait rather than a simple victim, which is what makes Mama so memorable.

9 Brontë makes this a shocking introduction to John Reed by presenting him through the eyes of a ten-year-old girl who is completely at his mercy. He is physically repulsive, casually cruel and protected by everyone around him, and the mature, controlled voice of the adult narrator recalling these events makes his violence all the more disturbing. By the end of the passage, the shock comes not only from John's brutality but from Jane's sudden, explosive refusal to accept it.

The opening description is deliberately grotesque. Brontë immediately establishes

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the imbalance of power: he is "fourteen years old" while Jane is "but ten", and he is "large and stout for his age". The list of physical details, "a dingy and unwholesome skin", "thick lineaments in a spacious visage, heavy limbs and large extremities", builds an image of bulk and ugliness. The adjectives "dingy" and "unwholesome" suggest something dirty and almost diseased, as though his outer appearance reflects inner corruption. The verb "gorged" presents him as greedy and animal-like, and the effects of his greed, a "dim and bleared eye and flabby cheeks", are described with clinical distaste.

Brontë adds sharp irony through his mother's indulgence. He is at home "'on account of his delicate health'", and the quotation marks mock this excuse. Mr Miles's sensible view that he needs "fewer cakes and sweetmeats" is rejected by "the mother's heart", which prefers "the more refined idea" that his sallowness comes from "over-application" and "pining after home". The gently sarcastic tone exposes Mrs Reed's blindness, and it prepares us for the shocking fact that John's cruelty will go unchecked.

The second paragraph reveals the scale of his bullying. Brontë uses a carefully built sentence: "not two or three times in the week, nor once or twice in a day, but continually". The structure escalates through increasing frequency until it reaches "continually", which is devastating in its finality. Jane's fear is conveyed physically: "every nerve I had feared him, and every morsel of flesh on my bones shrank when he came near." The repetition of "every" and the image of her flesh shrinking show that terror has become bodily and instinctive. Most shocking is her isolation. The servants will not "offend their young master", and Mrs Reed is "blind and deaf on the subject". This paired metaphor shows that Jane has "no appeal whatever", so John's tyranny is supported by the whole household.

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The incident itself is narrated with chilling precision. Jane is "Habitually obedient", a phrase that shows how thoroughly she has been trained to submit. John spends "some three minutes" thrusting out his tongue "as far as he could without damaging the roots", a grotesque and childish gesture described with ironic exactness. Jane knows "he would soon strike", and the waiting makes the moment more horrible. When the blow comes, it is "without speaking", "suddenly and strongly", and the adverbs emphasise both surprise and force.

John's speech is shocking in its arrogance. He punishes her for "impudence", for "sneaking" and even for "the look you had in your eyes", so she is punished simply for existing, and the insult "you rat!" dehumanises her. His later speech reveals the root of his cruelty: class and money. Jane is "a dependent", she has "no money", and she "ought to beg". The repeated "mamma says" shows he has learnt this contempt from his mother. His claim that "all the house belongs to me, or will do in a few years" exposes his sense of ownership over everything, including Jane.

The climax is physically violent. Jane is ordered to stand by the door, and the slow description of him lifting and poising the book makes us dread the throw. The short clauses "The cut bled, the pain was sharp" are stark and immediate. Then comes the turn: "my terror had passed its climax; other feelings succeeded." Jane's outburst, "Wicked and cruel boy!", followed by comparisons to a "murderer" and "the Roman emperors", is shocking because it is the first time she resists. Brontë thus makes John a monstrous tyrant, and in doing so reveals the fierce spirit within the girl he cannot crush.

10 Brontë makes Rochester likeable to a surprising extent, but never comfortably so. He is rude, moody, manipulative and, at the centre of the novel, prepared to

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deceive Jane into a bigamous marriage. Yet because we see him entirely through Jane's eyes, and Jane finds him fascinating, Brontë invites us to forgive a great deal. I would argue that he becomes likeable only gradually, and only fully once he has been humbled.

Our first meeting with him is deliberately unromantic. In Hay Lane he falls from his horse on the ice, swears, and has to lean on Jane's shoulder to reach the saddle. Brontë strips him of heroic dignity at once, and his gruffness is almost comic. Jane notes that she would not have dared to approach a handsome, gallant young gentleman, but that his frown and roughness set her at ease. This is a clever move: by making him plain and ill tempered, Brontë makes him real, and his lack of polish becomes part of his appeal for the reader as well as for Jane.

In the early conversations at Thornfield his bluntness is both offensive and attractive. When he asks, "Do you think me handsome?" and Jane answers "No, sir", he is amused rather than insulted. He treats a governess as an intellectual equal, demanding that she talk to him, and Brontë makes their dialogue sharp and lively, full of challenge. We like him because he values Jane's honesty and her mind at a time when nobody else in the novel does. His confession of a wild youth in Europe and his care for Adèle, whom he does not believe to be his child but will not abandon, suggest a man with a conscience beneath the cynicism.

However, Brontë also makes him cruel. The courtship of Blanche Ingram is a calculated performance designed to make Jane jealous, and his disguise as the gypsy fortune teller is a trick to probe her feelings without exposing his own. These games reveal a man who enjoys power over others, and a reader may well find him manipulative. Even his proposal comes only after he has tormented Jane by talking of sending her to a post in Ireland.

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The great test comes with the interrupted wedding. The revelation that he has a living wife, Bertha, locked in the attic, forces the reader to reconsider everything. He meant to marry Jane under false pretences, and his description of Bertha is harsh and contemptuous. Yet Brontë allows him a passionate defence: he tells the story of being tricked into the marriage and of his years of misery, and his grief when Jane leaves is raw. His image of a string under his ribs knotted to a similar string in Jane suggests a love that is genuine and almost physical. We understand him even as we condemn him, and Jane's own decision to leave, though she loves him, guides our judgement: he is worthy of sympathy, but not of trust.

It is in the final chapters that Brontë makes him truly likeable. At Ferndean, blinded and with one hand lost after trying to save Bertha from the fire, he is described like a caged eagle, and his pride has gone. He has tried to rescue the wife he resented, which redeems him, and he now speaks with humility and even religious gratitude. Brontë reverses the power between them: Jane is independent and wealthy, and he needs her. The famous "Reader, I married him" places Jane firmly as the active partner, and Rochester's dependence makes him gentle in a way he never was before.

So to a large extent Brontë does make Rochester likeable, through his wit, his respect for Jane's mind and his capacity for deep feeling. But she refuses to make him simply admirable. His charm is always mixed with selfishness and deceit, and only suffering purifies him. Perhaps that is Brontë's point: Rochester is most likeable when he is most human, flawed, repentant and, at last, Jane's equal.

11 Hurston makes this a powerfully dramatic moment because it is the point at

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which Janie, after years of silence, finally speaks back to Joe in public, and in doing so destroys the image of power on which his whole life is built. A trivial incident with a plug of tobacco becomes a turning point, and the drama lies in the sudden reversal of who holds the power of language.

The scene begins with deceptive ordinariness. The opening sentence, with its flat statement that Janie "cut it wrong", makes the event sound tiny, and Hurston uses this to show how out of proportion Joe's response is. His attack moves quickly from her work to her body, as he mocks her for looking old in front of the men on the porch. Hurston makes the porch an audience, almost a theatre, and the laughter of the men raises the stakes: Joe is not simply criticising his wife but performing his superiority before the town he has built.

The drama intensifies because Janie, for the first time, answers him in the same public arena. She refuses to let him mix up her "doings" with her looks, and her declaration "Ah'm uh woman every inch of me" is assertive and proud. Hurston gives her the rhythms and wit of the porch talk which Joe has always forbidden her to join, so the moment feels like a release of everything she has suppressed. Her final insult is devastating. She tells him that, for all his brag, there is nothing to him but his "big voice", and that when he pulls down his britches he looks like "the change uh life". The image turns his own weapon, mockery of an ageing body, back on him, and its sexual humiliation strikes at his manhood in front of the very men he wants to impress.

Hurston makes the audience's reaction part of the drama. The men's shocked delight, and the remark that the couple are "playin' de dozens", turns a private marriage into public spectacle, and Joe realises that he has lost not just an argument but his standing. The narrator explains that Janie has robbed him of the

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"illusion of irresistible maleness" that men cherish, and the phrase "his vanity bled like a flood" is a striking metaphor which makes his wounded pride sound like a fatal injury. Hurston suggests that Joe's authority was always partly an illusion maintained by Janie's silence, and that one sentence from her is enough to puncture it.

The narrative voice is also important. Hurston moves between the vivid dialect of the speakers and the more reflective narration, which allows us to hear the drama directly and then understand its deeper meaning. We sense Joe's thoughts racing: the men will now pity him, laugh behind his back, and see him as a man who can be mocked by his own wife.

The climax comes with the final line: "So he struck Janie with all his might and drove her from the store." The simple, almost biblical sentence, beginning with "So", presents violence as the only response Joe has left once his words have failed. The phrase "with all his might" emphasises the brutality, while "drove her from the store" suggests that he is trying to expel her from the public space where she has just triumphed. Yet the moment is dramatic precisely because his blow is a sign of weakness, not strength. Joe has been defeated by language and can only answer with his fist.

This moment is powerful because it marks the end of the marriage in all but name and the beginning of Janie's discovery of her own voice. Hurston turns a petty quarrel into a scene of public humiliation, rebellion and violence, and leaves the reader both shocked by Joe's cruelty and exhilarated by Janie's courage.

12 Hurston creates a deeply ambivalent impression of Nanny. She is a loving, heroic

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survivor whose whole life has been shaped by suffering, yet her fierce desire to protect Janie becomes a kind of imprisonment. What strikes me most is that Hurston allows us to admire and pity Nanny while also sharing Janie's resentment of her.

Our first impression is of a woman in decline, rooted in a painful past. When Nanny sees Janie kissing Johnny Taylor at the gate, she is described as though she is part of the land itself: her head and face look like the roots of an old tree torn away by a storm. The image suggests strength and endurance, but also damage, as if she has been uprooted by forces beyond her control. Hurston makes us feel that Nanny is ancient, weathered and close to death, which explains the urgency of her actions.

The most striking impression comes from her story of slavery. Nanny tells Janie that she was born a slave, that her master fathered her daughter, and that her mistress threatened to have her whipped and the baby sold. She escaped into the swamp with her new born child, hiding among snakes and dangers. Hurston lets Nanny tell this in her own voice and dialect, so that the history feels oral, personal and passed down rather than distant. Her courage is remarkable. Yet the story continues with further tragedy: her daughter Leafy, Janie's mother, was raped by a schoolteacher and later ran off, leaving Janie behind. Through this, Hurston presents Nanny as a woman who has known only how black women are used and abused.

This history explains Nanny's bleak view of the world, summed up in her famous claim that "De nigger woman is de mule uh de world so fur as Ah can see." The metaphor of the mule, a beast of burden, conveys a lifetime of carrying loads that others throw down. It is a powerful and shocking line, and it makes us understand

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why Nanny values safety above all else. She speaks of wanting to preach a great sermon about coloured women sitting on high, but says she had no pulpit; her dreams were crushed, so she transfers them to Janie.

However, Hurston also makes Nanny a figure of control. She slaps Janie when she refuses to marry Logan Killicks, and her insistence on the marriage, chosen because Logan owns land and can give protection, ignores Janie's longing for love. The pear tree, Janie's image of blossoming desire and harmony, has no place in Nanny's thinking. The contrast between the dreaming girl and the practical old woman is one of the central tensions of the opening chapters. Nanny's tears and prayers after the conversation show that she acts from love, but Hurston makes clear that love can be misguided.

The most striking judgement on Nanny comes much later, when Janie looks back after Joe's death. The narrator says that Nanny had taken the biggest thing God ever made, the horizon, and pinched it into a little bit of a thing she could tie around her granddaughter's neck tight enough to choke her. The image transforms Nanny's protection into strangulation, and we learn that Janie hated her grandmother and had hidden that hatred even from herself. Hurston thus reshapes our impression of Nanny across the novel: from victim and protector to someone whose fears have narrowed Janie's life.

Ultimately, Hurston creates impressions of Nanny that are both sympathetic and critical. She is a heroic survivor of slavery whose love is genuine, but her experience has taught her to want security rather than freedom. Her quick death soon after the marriage leaves Janie alone to discover that marriage does not bring love, and Janie's later quest for the horizon can be read as a journey both away from and in honour of the woman who could not imagine it.

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13

James makes this a revealing moment because it exposes, almost twenty years on, the characters exactly as they have become. Mrs Penniman's breathless chatter reveals her undiminished taste for romantic intrigue; Morris, through her report, is revealed as a failure still seeking his chance; and Catherine, by saying almost nothing, reveals how completely she has been changed by his betrayal.

The passage is built on a contrast between speech and silence. Mrs Penniman talks at length, while Catherine's replies are brief and controlled. When she hears the news she gives "neither a start nor an exclamation" but remains "intensely still", and James's narrator adds that this "may very well have been a symptom of emotion". The cautious "may very well" is typical of James's irony: he lets us glimpse the depth of feeling beneath the surface while reminding us that Catherine now guards herself completely. Her polite "I hope he was well" and her quick "I would rather not see him" are revealing because they are so restrained. The old Catherine was trusting and open; this Catherine has learnt to keep her heart closed.

Mrs Penniman, by contrast, reveals herself through excess. Her dashes, repetitions and digressions convey her excitement, and the narrator notes that there seemed to be "a sort of exhilaration in hearing herself talk of him". This is gently comic. She has not spoken his name for "upwards of the fifth of a century", yet she rushes to make up for lost time, enjoying the drama more than considering her niece's pain. She even claims that she reminded Marian of the "real facts" and placed the story "in its true light", which reveals her habit of rewriting events to suit her romantic imagination. The reader knows that the truth is that Morris jilted Catherine for her money, so her loyalty to him seems foolish and insensitive.

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Through Mrs Penniman's report, James also reveals what has become of Morris. Her description is full of unintended criticism. He is "still very handsome", but less animated than before, has "not been very successful" and has "never got thoroughly established". Her explanation that he is not "sufficiently plodding" is unconsciously damning: it suggests idleness, the very quality Dr Sloper saw in him from the start. His talk of his "evil star" sounds self pitying and theatrical, and Mrs Penniman's admiration for it makes it more absurd. The detail that he married a lady in Europe who "only flitted across his life" is revealing too, since it hints at another marriage of convenience and makes his romantic claims hollow.

The ending of the passage is the most revealing of all. Morris has heard that Catherine never married and seemed "very much interested about that", and he says she was "the real romance of his life". The juxtaposition is pointed. His interest in her unmarried state suggests that, now poor and middle aged, he sees her and her fortune as a second chance. James lets the reader see through the flattery even as Mrs Penniman repeats it as proof of devotion.

James also uses small physical details to reveal Catherine's inner state. She stops "the rocking of her chair and the swaying of her fan" and sits "motionless and silent". The halt of these gentle, everyday movements suggests that the news has struck her deeply, even though her words give nothing away. Her stillness is both a defence and a sign of strength, a quiet dignity that contrasts with her aunt's fluttering.

This moment therefore reveals the outcome of the novel's central conflict. Mrs Penniman remains the meddling romantic she always was, Morris remains a charming opportunist, but Catherine has grown into someone neither of them

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understands. James makes her silence eloquent, preparing us for her final refusal of Morris and showing that the shy girl has become a woman whose feelings, however strong, will no longer be exploited.

14 James persuades me that "stubborn" is accurate only in the narrowest sense. Catherine certainly holds her ground, often silently and against enormous pressure. Yet James invites us to see this quality as constancy, loyalty and, finally, dignity, and the word tells us as much about Dr Sloper, who uses it, as about his daughter. The most stubborn person in the novel may well be the doctor himself.

At the start, Catherine seems the very opposite of stubborn. James presents her as plain, shy and devoted to her father, whom she regards with a reverence close to awe. She is eager to please him, and her only extravagance is a fondness for fine clothes, such as the red satin gown she wears at her cousin's party where she meets Morris. The narrator's gently ironic tone shows us a young woman with little confidence and no talent for self assertion. Dr Sloper, who is clever and sarcastic, regards her as dull and unremarkable, and this low opinion colours everything he says about her.

Her so called stubbornness first appears when she falls in love with Morris Townsend. Dr Sloper, convinced that Morris is a mercenary, forbids the match, and Catherine, for the first time in her life, does not simply obey. However, James makes her resistance strikingly gentle. She does not defy her father openly or elope; she tells him honestly that she cannot give Morris up and that she will wait. James shows her suffering in private, sitting up at night, torn between love and duty. If this is stubbornness, it is the stubbornness of a loyal heart, and James's sympathetic narration makes it seem admirable rather than wilful.

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Dr Sloper's response reveals his own rigidity. He treats the situation almost as a scientific experiment, curious to see whether Catherine will hold out, and he takes her to Europe for many months hoping that she will forget Morris. The scene in the Alps is chilling: alone with her in a wild landscape at dusk, he tells her coldly how angry he is and hints at his power over her. James uses the bleak setting to expose the doctor's cruelty. Catherine is frightened but does not give way, and here her firmness seems like courage. The doctor calls it obstinacy because he cannot bear to be resisted.

The turning point comes when Morris, realising that the doctor will disinherit her, abandons Catherine. Her grief is profound, yet James shows her refusing to confide in her father or admit that he was right. Some readers might see this as stubborn pride. I think it is more complicated: her silence protects her from his triumph and his irony, and it marks the moment when she stops seeking his approval. James presents a woman who has been wounded by both men and resolves to keep her feelings to herself.

The clearest example of what the doctor calls stubbornness is near the end, when he demands that she promise never to marry Morris after his death. Catherine has no intention of marrying him, yet she refuses to promise. James makes this refusal powerful because it is so quiet and so principled: she will not let her father control her even from beyond the grave, nor admit that his judgement of her was correct. The doctor punishes her by changing his will, which is surely the act of a man more stubborn than his daughter.

Finally, when Morris returns, older and still hoping for her money, Catherine rejects him calmly and firmly. Her refusal to begin again shows that her constancy has

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become strength. The closing image of her picking up her fancy work and sitting down "for life, as it were" is poignant. It suggests a life narrowed by disappointment, but also one she has chosen for herself.

So James does persuade me that Catherine is stubborn, but not in the critical sense Dr Sloper intends. Her firmness grows from innocence and love into self respect, and James reveals that it is the only form of independence available to a woman with so little power. The description is fair in fact, but unfair in spirit.

16 Lahiri conveys the Bengali community in America as a substitute family, warm, loyal and essential to survival, but also as a world that is enclosed, repetitive and at times suffocating for the American born generation. What is striking is that she shows the community through different eyes: to Ashima it is a lifeline, while to Gogol it is often something to escape.

Lahiri first presents the community as born out of loneliness. Ashima arrives in Cambridge, Massachusetts, as a young bride, homesick and isolated, and Lahiri's quiet present tense captures the strangeness of her new life. Her famous reflection that being a foreigner is "a sort of lifelong pregnancy" suggests a permanent state of waiting, discomfort and burden. In this context the Bengali acquaintances she and Ashoke gather become precious. Lahiri shows that these friendships grow simply because the families come from Calcutta; shared origin is enough to make strangers into "aunts" and "uncles". This is a striking image of a community created by need rather than choice.

The community is conveyed most vividly through its rituals and gatherings. At Gogol's rice ceremony, the guests take the place of the grandparents and relatives

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left behind in India, and Lahiri describes the event with careful attention to food, clothes and custom. The weekend parties that follow, with their crowded kitchens, plates of Bengali dishes and children watching television in another room, give a sense of a lively, noisy world that recreates Calcutta in the suburbs. Lahiri's lists of food and detail make these occasions feel abundant and warm.

At the same time, Lahiri shows the community adapting to America. The families begin to celebrate Christmas and Thanksgiving, mainly for the children, mixing traditions in ways that are both touching and slightly comic. This conveys a community that is not frozen but slowly changing, holding on to its identity while making compromises. Ashima in particular grows into a central figure, and by the end she is the confident hostess who knows everyone and keeps the network alive.

However, Lahiri also conveys the community through Gogol's growing resentment. As a teenager he finds the parties dull and the endless questions intrusive. The community represents the expectations he wants to escape: Bengali names, Bengali marriages, Bengali behaviour. When he dates Maxine and spends time with her wealthy, easy going American family, the contrast is sharp. The Ratliffs seem free and relaxed, while his parents' world seems narrow and anxious. Lahiri does not mock the community, but she allows us to see why it could feel restrictive to a young man trying to define himself.

The community's role in arranging relationships is conveyed with irony. Gogol's marriage to Moushumi, whom he met as a child at these gatherings, is encouraged by their mothers, and the lavish wedding is full of guests the couple barely know. Moushumi, like Gogol, has always resisted the community's expectations, and her later unfaithfulness suggests that a marriage built partly on shared background cannot satisfy two people who have both tried to break free of it. Lahiri seems to

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suggest that the community's hopes can impose a false familiarity.

Yet the community is at its most moving in times of grief. When Ashoke dies suddenly, the Bengali families gather around Ashima, bringing food and observing the mourning period together. Gogol, who once avoided them, now recognises their kindness and the comfort they offer. Lahiri conveys their loyalty quietly but powerfully: this is the moment when the community truly acts as family.

The novel ends with Ashima's final Christmas party before she leaves for India, where she will divide her life between two countries. Lahiri shows the community gathered one last time in the house on Pemberton Road, and Gogol, slipping away to read the book of Gogol stories his father gave him, finally begins to value what he once rejected. Through these moments, Lahiri conveys a community that is supportive, adaptable and deeply human, even as it shapes and sometimes limits the lives of those born within it.

17 Martel memorably portrays Pi's thoughts and feelings by making two voices work together: the older Pi, who already knows the ship has sunk and still feels the shock, and the younger Pi, who walks onto the deck full of innocent excitement. The gap between them gives the passage its power, as we watch a boy enjoying an adventure that we know is a catastrophe.

The opening paragraph is told by the older narrator, and its abruptness is striking. The short sentence "we sank" comes almost as a joke after the playful pun "midway to Midway", and this mix of wit and disaster captures how hard it still is for Pi to put the event into words. The images that follow are extreme and dreamlike: the ship vanishes "into a pinprick hole" on his map, and "A mountain

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collapsed before my eyes". The repetition of "I felt" in short sentences, "I felt sick to my stomach. I felt shock", conveys feelings so overwhelming that Pi can only name them flatly. The paradox of an emptiness that "filled with silence" suggests grief so deep it becomes numbness, and the detail that his chest hurt "for days afterwards" reminds us that this memory is physical as well as emotional.

Martel then switches to a hesitant, uncertain voice. "I think there was an explosion. But I can't be sure." Pi's doubt makes the account feel honest and realistic, and it shows that even the cause of the disaster remains a mystery to him. His thoughts drift into ordinary detail: the noise of the cargo ship, Ravi's snoring, his own talking in his sleep. These homely memories are poignant because they are the last moments of his family life.

Pi's feelings about Ravi are especially moving. He remembers that Ravi liked the word "beckon" and imagines him saying "Adventure beckons", and when Ravi refuses to get up, Pi's exclamation "Oh, Ravi!" breaks into the narrative. It is a cry of affection and regret, since the reader realises this is the last time he will see his brother. Similarly, Pi pauses at his parents' door and decides not to knock because "Father liked his sleep". The simple, almost childlike sentence conveys his respect for his father, but its understatement is painful: a tiny decision has become a permanent separation.

As Pi climbs to the deck, Martel conveys his innocent excitement. He hopes to "catch the dawn" and perhaps see a shooting star, and the narrator admits he had "already forgotten about the funny noise". On deck, his thoughts are a series of reassurances: the rain "wasn't so very hard", the gusts would only "have upset umbrellas", and the ship is "a feat of engineering". The rhetorical question "Weather like this surely wouldn't sink a ship?" is full of dramatic irony. His shout

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of "Canada, here I come!" and his feeling that he is "very brave" make him seem young, hopeful and heartbreakingly unaware.

Martel's extended theatrical metaphor deepens this. Nature is a show with a "vast" stage, dramatic lighting and an unlimited budget for special effects, something "even Hollywood couldn't orchestrate". Pi sees himself as "a spectator safely ensconced in his seat". The image conveys his thrill, but also his false sense of safety: he believes he is watching the drama, not part of it.

The final paragraphs turn this excitement into fear, and Martel slows the moment down through precise observations. The lifeboat leaning from its davits, his "white" knuckles, the ship "listing to port" are noticed one at a time, so we share Pi's growing realisation. His thought "I decided it was a storm after all" is almost comic in its understatement, but "A shiver of cold went through me" signals real terror. The brisk phrase "hotfooted it" shows him hurrying back towards a safety that no longer exists.

Through this contrast between the boy's excitement and the man's grief, Martel makes Pi's thoughts and feelings unforgettable. We experience both the thrill of adventure and the slow dawning of horror, knowing all the while what Pi is about to lose.

18 Martel's novel is often whimsical and full of wonder, which is precisely why its moments of violence are so shocking. The two moments I find most disturbing are the slaughter on the lifeboat, when the hyena kills the zebra and Orange Juice, and the revelation of Pi's second story near the end. The first shocks through vivid, graphic detail; the second shocks because it forces us to reconsider

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everything we have read.

The killings on the lifeboat are shocking partly because Martel has prepared us to see animals with affection. In the first part of the novel Pi describes the zoo in Pondicherry with warmth and humour, and he insists that animals behave according to understandable habits. Once the ship sinks, this comfortable view is shattered. The zebra, with its broken leg, lies helpless while the hyena circles the boat in a frenzy and then begins to eat it while it is still alive. Martel does not spare us: Pi describes the wound, the blood and the zebra's suffering in close, precise detail, and his narrative voice remains horribly calm, as though he is reporting observations. This contrast between clinical narration and appalling cruelty makes the scene hard to read.

The death of Orange Juice intensifies the shock. Pi has greeted her arrival with joy, floating on an island of bananas, and he describes her in almost human terms, comparing her to a mother. When the hyena attacks, she fights back bravely, and for a moment Pi and the reader admire her courage. Her death, and the image of her headless body, is devastating. Martel makes it personal: Pi feels as though he has lost a member of his family, and his grief connects to his fear for his own mother. The hyena, described as cowardly and repulsive, becomes a figure of pure savagery, and the moment is the climax of Pi's horror before Richard Parker finally emerges and kills it.

This scene also shocks because of what it reveals about Pi's situation. The lifeboat becomes a tiny world where the strongest survive, and Pi realises that he is trapped with predators.

The second shocking moment comes much later, when the Japanese officials

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investigating the sinking refuse to believe Pi's story about the animals. Pi then tells them a second version in plain, flat language. In this story there are no animals: the survivors are a sailor with a broken leg, a brutal cook, Pi's mother and Pi himself. The cook cuts off the sailor's leg and uses the flesh for bait and food, he kills Pi's mother, and Pi in turn kills the cook. The bareness of the telling is shocking in itself. After hundreds of pages of rich description, Martel gives us a story stripped of all beauty, and its cruelty is human rather than animal.

The greatest shock is the connection the officials draw between the two stories. The zebra becomes the sailor, Orange Juice becomes Pi's mother, the hyena becomes the cook, and Richard Parker becomes Pi. Suddenly the scenes we found so distressing are recast as something even worse: the mother we watched die was a real woman, and the fierce tiger who killed the hyena was Pi himself. Martel's structure makes us complicit, because we have enjoyed the animal story and now realise it may have been a way of making the unbearable bearable.

Martel softens the shock with a final question. Pi asks the officials which story they prefer, and when they choose the one with animals, he replies, "And so it goes with God." The ending suggests that faith, like the animal story, is a choice to see meaning and beauty in a cruel world. For me, this makes the second moment the more shocking of the two, because it does not just show violence but challenges the reader's own preference for comforting stories.

Together, these two moments reveal how Martel uses shock not for sensation but for meaning. The brutality on the lifeboat shows the savage reality of survival, and the second story forces us to confront how humans cope with that savagery: by turning it into a better story.

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19	Orwell makes this such a powerful moment because it shows, in a single crowded room, the full machinery of Party control working on people's bodies and minds, and then, at the very last second, allows a tiny crack of hope to open. The passage moves from mass hysteria to private terror to a secret, wordless connection, and that shift from the collective to the individual is what makes it so gripping. The first paragraph is built like a piece of manipulative film-making. The images on the telescreen transform rapidly: Goldstein's voice becomes "an actual sheep's bleat", then the face "melted into" a Eurasian soldier, then "melted into" Big Brother. The repeated verb suggests that enemies are interchangeable and unreal, mere shapes that the Party can dissolve and reshape at will. Reducing Goldstein to a sheep makes the traitor contemptible and absurd, while the soldier "huge and terrible", his gun "roaring", seems to "spring out of the surface of the screen". Orwell lets us feel the physical effect on the audience, some of whom "actually flinched backwards", so that fear is produced on demand. The "deep sigh of relief" when Big Brother appears completes the trick: the Party creates the terror and then offers itself as the cure. Big Brother is described with a striking blend of the human and the godlike. He is "black-moustachio'd", yet "full of power and mysterious calm" and "so vast that it almost filled up the screen". It is chilling that "Nobody heard what Big Brother was saying": his words are "not distinguishable individually" and comfort simply "by the fact of being spoken". Orwell suggests that meaning no longer matters in Oceania; only sound and image do. The three slogans then appear "in bold capitals", and their paradoxes, "WAR IS PEACE", are set out on separate lines like commandments. Their contradictions are presented without comment, which makes them all the more disturbing, because the crowd accepts them completely.

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The religious language intensifies this. The image of Big Brother persists on "everyone's eyeballs", as if burned there, and the "little sandy-haired woman" stretches her arms towards the screen murmuring "My Saviour!" before burying her face in her hands, and the narrator observes that she is "uttering a prayer". Orwell shows the Party replacing God, and the woman's ordinary, almost pitiful description makes her worship seem both sad and frightening.

The chant of "B-B! ... B-B!" is perhaps the most unsettling detail. Orwell describes it as "deep, slow, rhythmical", "heavy, murmurous" and "curiously savage", and the imagined "stamp of naked feet" and "throbbing of tom-toms" suggest that civilised people have been reduced to a primitive tribe. The narrator explains that it is "an act of self-hypnosis, a deliberate drowning of consciousness", a phrase that captures the Party's aim exactly: people are not merely forced to obey, they help to switch off their own minds.

Against this collective noise, Orwell sets Winston's private horror. His "entrails seemed to grow cold", a visceral image of dread, and he finds the chanting "subhuman". Yet "Of course he chanted with the rest: it was impossible to do otherwise." This flat, matter-of-fact sentence is chilling, showing that hypocrisy has become "an instinctive reaction" for survival. The danger is precise: "a couple of seconds" in which his eyes "might conceivably have betrayed him". Orwell makes us feel how thin the line is between safety and destruction.

The final paragraph changes the pace completely. The narrator's hesitant aside, "if, indeed, it did happen", builds suspense, and O'Brien's small, civilised gesture of resettling his spectacles contrasts with the savage chanting around him. Time narrows to "a fraction of a second", and the excited interruption "yes, he knew!"

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breaks into the narrative, giving us Winston's sudden joy. "An unmistakable message had passed" ends the passage on apparent certainty.

This is powerful because it is so ironic. On a first reading we share Winston's hope that O'Brien is an ally; knowing the rest of the novel, we realise that this moment of trust leads him straight to Room 101. Orwell therefore makes the scene powerful not only as a picture of mass control, but as the beginning of Winston's tragedy.

20 Fear runs through 1984 like a constant background hum, from the poster that announces "BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU" on the first page to the telescreen that never switches off. Yet Orwell saves his most striking effects for two moments: the arrest of Winston and Julia in the room above Mr Charrington's shop, and Winston's ordeal in Room 101. In the first, fear comes from the sudden destruction of a refuge; in the second, it comes from the discovery that the Party can reach inside a man and destroy what he loves most.

The arrest is frightening because Orwell has spent so long building up the room as a sanctuary. It is old-fashioned, without a visible telescreen, and full of objects from the past, especially the glass paperweight with its piece of coral, which Winston sees as a tiny world in which he and Julia are safe. Orwell lulls the reader into sharing this illusion. Lying together and watching the singing woman in the yard below, Winston and Julia say to each other, "We are the dead." The reply comes from nowhere: "You are the dead," said "an iron voice behind them". The repetition of their own words is horrifying, as if the Party has been listening inside their most private thoughts, and the adjective "iron" makes the voice seem inhuman and unbreakable.

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Orwell then makes the fear physical and immediate. The voice issues blunt commands to stand still and make no movement, and the picture on the wall falls to reveal the telescreen hidden behind it. The sense of safety is literally torn down. Even the nursery rhyme about St Clement's, which Mr Charrington had taught Winston as a fragment of a gentler past, is completed by the voice with its final line about a "chopper" to "chop off your head", turning a memory of innocence into a threat. The paperweight is smashed on the hearthstone, and Winston's thought, "How small, always, was the coral!", is heartbreaking in its quietness: the beautiful little world he had trusted was always fragile. Most chilling of all, Mr Charrington is transformed into a younger, harder man, a member of the Thought Police. Orwell makes us realise that the one person who seemed kind was a trap all along, so fear spreads backwards over everything we have read.

Room 101 is even more terrifying because the threat is no longer arrest but the destruction of Winston's self. Orwell builds dread long before Winston enters it. Throughout his time in the Ministry of Love, prisoners beg not to be sent there, and O'Brien tells him calmly that "the thing that is in Room 101 is the worst thing in the world". The vagueness is deliberate: by withholding what it contains, Orwell lets the reader's imagination do the work.

When the cage of rats is brought in, Orwell links it to Winston's private nightmares, which we have glimpsed earlier: he has always had a horror of rats, and in his dreams there was something unbearable behind a wall of darkness. Now the Party has found it. O'Brien explains, in a cool, lecturing tone, exactly what the starving rats will do to his face. The contrast between O'Brien's reasonable voice and the savage content of his words is what makes the scene so disturbing; cruelty is presented as a scientific procedure.

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The climax comes when Winston, in blind panic, realises that the only way to save himself is to put another body between himself and the rats. He screams, "Do it to Julia! Do it to Julia! Not me!" The frantic repetition and broken exclamations show his mind collapsing into pure terror. This is the most frightening moment in the novel because it shows that fear can destroy love itself: the one loyalty Winston believed the Party could never touch is gone.

Of the two moments, I find Room 101 the more powerful. The arrest shows that there is nowhere to hide, but Room 101 shows that there is nothing inside a person that the Party cannot reach. Orwell's final image of Winston loving Big Brother is so bleak precisely because fear has done its work completely.

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Laski builds tension in this passage by trapping Caroline, and the reader, inside a structure that seems to tighten with every step. The climb is told almost entirely through counting, through touch rather than sight, and through Caroline's increasingly divided mind, so that by the time she reaches the door we feel the same mounting dread that she is trying so hard to deny.

The setting is claustrophobic from the start. The ceiling is "low arched" and the "narrow stone staircase clung to the wall" before it disappears "through a hole in the ceiling". The verb "clung" gives the staircase a desperate, almost human quality, as though it too might fall. Once Caroline climbs through, the space opens upwards but never outwards: the sky is "a small circle of blue framed in a narrowing shaft", and there is "no inner wall; only the rusty railing" between her and the drop. Laski places the reader in a vertical tunnel with a void on one side, and the word "narrowing" hints that her choices are narrowing too.

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Caroline's opening line, "There ought to be a wonderful view at the top", is spoken "firmly to herself". The adverb suggests that she is already talking herself into it, and the ordinary, sightseer's hope makes what follows more ironic. The view never comes. The slit windows are placed "too high for anyone climbing it to see through them", an odd, unexplained detail that makes the tower seem designed to blind those inside it, as though it were built for a purpose Caroline cannot guess.

The most distinctive technique is the counting. The numbers grow, "thirty-nine, forty, forty-one", then "eighty-three, eighty-four", then the long, unwieldy "two-hundred-and-sixty-ninth", and each jump marks both time passing and danger increasing. The hyphenated numbers become heavier and slower to read, so the prose itself seems to labour upwards. By the end there is "nothing left in her brain but the steadily mounting tally of the steps", and counting has become a way of not thinking.

Alongside this, Laski steadily darkens the scene. The sky is "losing its colour", Caroline notes "It's getting dark very quickly", and finally the sky is "drained now of all its colour". The fading light is like a clock running down, and because she can see less, Laski shifts the narrative to touch. At the two-hundred-and-sixty-ninth step her hand "met only empty space", and the "interminable second" in which she shivers stretches time just when the reader most wants it to move. The rail, described as her "tenuous rusty comfort", breaks more and more often until it "crumpled away under her fingers". The safety that she relies on literally disintegrates, leaving her tracing "the rough brick" with her left hand, one fragile point of contact with the world.

Tension also comes from Caroline's divided mind. Early on she reasons sensibly

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that "It would be much more sensible to give up and go home", yet she keeps climbing. Later Laski splits her consciousness: one "part of her brain" counts, while "another part" pleads, "I really ought to go down now". The broken sentences and the shift to "I want to go down now" show reason dissolving into fear, and the words "but she could not" are ominous, suggesting that something other than her own will is driving her on. She tries to "rationalize" her compulsion, but even the thought "Just because one's afraid" has to be stifled. The reader senses that her refusal to admit fear is exactly what puts her in danger.

The ending of the passage withholds release. Her "explosive relief" at "four-hundred-and-seventy!" is cut off "abruptly because the steps had stopped too", and the sky is "still some twenty feet above her head". The anticlimax seems to drain the tension, and her irritated "But how idiotic" sounds almost comic. Then Laski turns again: her fingers meet "not brick but wood". The small wooden door, "level with the top step", is both an answer and a new mystery. Caroline's cheerful "So it does go somewhere after all" is dreadfully ironic, and the short final sentence, "she stepped through", leaves the reader hanging at the threshold of the unknown, with tension at its height.