Cambridge Assessment International Education

Cambridge IGCSE™

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH **0475/42**

Paper 4 Unseen **February/March 2023**

1 hour 15 minutes

You must answer on the enclosed answer booklet.

You will need: Answer booklet (enclosed)

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INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer **one** question: **either** Question 1 **or** Question 2.
- 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 25.
- All questions are worth equal marks.

This document has **8** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

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You are advised to spend about 20 minutes reading the question paper and planning your answer.

Answer **either** Question 1 **or** Question 2.

Either

1 Read carefully the poem on page 3, which is an extract from a longer text. The speaker is about to begin work on planting his crop for the coming year. Before he does this, he prays to Asase Yaa, an African Earth goddess of fertility.

How does the speaker memorably convey his thoughts and feelings at this moment?

To help you answer this question, you might consider:

- his close relationship with the land
- how the speaker conveys his feelings of hope
- how the writing vividly portrays the things which might threaten his crop.

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from *Masks*

Asase Yaa,
You, Mother of Earth,
on whose soil
I have placed my tools
on whose soil
I will hoe
I will work
the year has come round
again;
thirsty mouth of the dust
is ready for water
for seed;
drink
and be happy
eat
may you rest
for the year has come round
again.
And may the year
this year of all years
be fruitful
beyond the fruit of your labour:
shoots faithful to tip
juice to stem
leaves to green;
and may the knife
or the cut-
lass not cut
me; roots blunt,
shoots break,
green wither,
winds shatter,
damp rot,
hot harm-
attan[1] come
drifting in harm
to the crops;
the tunnelling
termites not
raise their red
monuments, graves,
above the blades
of our labour.

[1]*harmattan*: a dry and dusty wind

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OR

2 Read carefully the following extract from a novel which explores the narrator's relationship with her mother, Katherine O'Dell, who is a famous actress. In this extract, the narrator gives a sequence of memories of growing up with her mother in the family home. Kitty is their housekeeper.

How does the narrator memorably portray her mother?

To help you answer this question, you might consider:

- how she portrays her mother's personality and behaviour
- the effect that her mother has on the people at the birthday party
- how she conveys her own feelings towards her mother.

My mother picks up the phone receiver and dials. Everything was 'marvellous!' when she was on this phone; a beige thing on the kitchen wall with a long clapped-out curly cord that you had to duck under as she paced and smoked, saying 'marvellous!' while giving me the wink, indicating her coffee, or a glass of wine that was out of reach, with a pointed finger and a rolling hand.

'Just marvellous,' she might say.

Or she talks to me, a girl of eight or nine sitting at the table in a pink cotton dress brought back from America. She involves the dog who waits under the table, like a dog in the movies, for scraps and crumbs. Mostly she speaks to the ceiling, at the place where it meets the wall. Her eyes rove along this line as though looking for ideas up there, or for justice. Yes, that is what she wants. She tucks her face down quickly to light another cigarette. She exhales.

The toast is now fully ignored. The toast is dead to her now. The chair is pushed back, the cigarette stubbed out on the actual plate. After which she gets up and walks away. Someone else will dispose of all that. Because I think I mentioned that my mother was a star. Not just on screen or on the stage, but at the breakfast table also, my mother Katherine O'Dell was a star.

An hour or so later she is back in the kitchen banging dishes around. She might throw the toast out through the open window or crack the plate on the edge of the sink. Because Kitty is not around. Kitty is shopping for dinner, she is on a day off, nursing her cancerous sister. Kitty is never there when you want her, though she was there all the time. And when she arrives, laden or sad, the plate was an accident and Kitty is a treasure who must be courted and spoiled. Our housekeeper, Kitty, had a daily[1] in to clean, she had a fancy carpet sweeper and one of the first dishwashers in the country. It came in time for my twenty-first birthday, there was even a photograph: my mother opening the door in a shock of steam while Kitty, in the background, sticks to her own thoughts and to the big Belfast sink.

My mother put me into a dress for the occasion. We have moved on from the pink American cottons, through three-button pinafores and drop-waisted short dresses over skinny, raw knees. I am twenty-one. My arms are soft and mottled white: I am too tall. For my birthday, I sport a swamp-green and sickish pink thing with tulle[2] pompoms on a long tulle skirt. My mother – there she is, holding the birthday cake high – wears black. In front of her is a crowd of people, and also me. There is something overdetermined[3] about the faces in this second photograph. I look at them, over the years, their cheeks blotched, their eyes fixed, and I wonder what they feel.

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Star struck.

You could look at those people for quite a while.

Their eyes watch her from behind a mask of delight, and it is not about attraction, this look, it is more about disaster. There is a painful stretch to some of the smiles that is envy about to happen. Especially the women. There is no denying this – my mother made women, especially, difficult to themselves.

In the middle of it all, is my own face at twenty-one, dreading the limelight and sweetened, at the same time, by her attention. The flames on the cake burn small and straight. I am held in my mother's gaze, while all around us are the fervent[4] and the savage. Or maybe it is just the drink made them look that way. All around us are the faces of the crowd.

[1]*daily*: contract cleaner
[2]*tulle*: type of lacy fabric
[3]*overdetermined*: strained
[4]*fervent*: passionate

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