Cambridge Assessment International Education

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LITERATURE IN ENGLISH **0475/11**

Paper 1 Poetry and Prose **October/November 2023**

1 hour 30 minutes

0258047487

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 4

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

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

From *Long Distance*

Though my mother was already two years dead
Dad kept her slippers warming by the gas,
put hot water bottles her side of the bed
and still went to renew her transport pass.

You couldn't just drop in. You had to phone.
He'd put you off an hour to give him time
to clear away her things and look alone
as though his still raw love were such a crime.

He couldn't risk my blight of disbelief
though sure that very soon he'd hear her key
scrape in the rusted lock and end his grief.
He *knew* she'd just popped out to get the tea.

I believe life ends with death, and that is all.
You haven't both gone shopping; just the same,
in my new black leather phone book there's your name
and the disconnected number I still call.

(Tony Harrison)

Explore the ways in which Harrison powerfully depicts his father's reaction to his mother's death.

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Or **2** How does Lowell strikingly convey his feelings in *Night Sweat*?

Night Sweat

Work-table, litter, books and standing lamp,

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this world's dead weight and cycle on your back.

(Robert Lowell)

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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:

A Leave-Taking

Let us go hence, my songs; she will not hear.
Let us go hence together without fear;
Keep silence now, for singing-time is over,
And over all old things and all things dear.
She loves not you nor me as all we love her.
Yea, though we sang as angels in her ear,
She would not hear.

Let us rise up and part; she will not know.
Let us go seaward as the great winds go,
Full of blown sand and foam; what help is here?
There is no help, for all these things are so,
And all the world is bitter as a tear.
And how these things are, though ye strove to show,
She would not know.

Let us go home and hence; she will not weep.
We gave love many dreams and days to keep,
Flowers without scent, and fruits that would not grow,
Saying 'If thou wilt, thrust in thy sickle and reap.'
All is reaped now; no grass is left to mow;
And we that sowed, though all we fell on sleep,
She would not weep.

Let us go hence and rest; she will not love.
She shall not hear us if we sing hereof,
Nor see love's ways, how sore they are and steep.
Come hence, let be, lie still; it is enough.
Love is a barren sea, bitter and deep;
And though she saw all heaven in flower above,
She would not love.

Let us give up, go down; she will not care.
Though all the stars made gold of all the air,
And the sea moving saw before it move
One moon-flower making all the foam-flowers fair;
Though all those waves went over us, and drove
Deep down the stifling lips and drowning hair,
She would not care.

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Let us go hence, go hence; she will not see.
Sing all once more together; surely she,
She too, remembering days and words that were,
Will turn a little toward us, sighing; but we,
We are hence, we are gone, as though we had not been there.
Nay, and though all men seeing had pity on me,
She would not see.

(Algernon Charles Swinburne)

Explore how Swinburne memorably conveys the speaker's feelings in this poem.

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Or **4** How does Walcott make *Nearing Forty* such a moving poem?

Nearing Forty

(*for John Figueroa*)

The irregular combination of fanciful invention may delight awhile by that novelty of which the common satiety of life sends us all in quest.

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even when it seems to weep.

(Derek Walcott)

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TURN OVER FOR QUESTION 5.

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TED HUGHES: 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:

A Memory

Your bony white bowed back, in a singlet,

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Lit another at it

Explore how Hughes vividly conveys this memory of sheep-shearing.

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Or **6** How does Hughes make telegraph wires so intriguing in *Telegraph Wires*?

Telegraph Wires

Take telegraph wires, a lonely moor,

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That empty human bones.

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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:

Father Amadi's face was looking down at me when I opened my eyes.

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It was hard to turn my head, but I did it and looked away.

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Explore the ways in which Adichie makes this moment in the novel so powerful.

Or **8** In what ways does Adichie vividly convey Aunty Ifeoma's importance to Kambili?

Do **not** use the extract printed for **Question 7** in answering this question.

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CHARLES DICKENS: *Great Expectations*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

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

The time so melted away, that our early dinner-hour drew close at hand, and Estella left us to prepare herself. We had stopped near the centre of the long table, and Miss Havisham, with one of her withered arms stretched out of the chair, rested that clenched hand upon the yellow cloth. As Estella looked back over her shoulder before going out at the door, Miss Havisham kissed that hand to her, with a ravenous intensity that was of its kind quite dreadful.

Then, Estella being gone and we two left alone, she turned to me, and said in a whisper:

'Is she beautiful, graceful, well-grown? Do you admire her?'

'Everybody must who sees her, Miss Havisham.'

She drew an arm round my neck, and drew my head close down to hers as she sat in the chair. 'Love her, love her, love her! How does she use you?'

Before I could answer (if I could have answered so difficult a question at all), she repeated, 'Love her, love her, love her! If she favours you, love her. If she wounds you, love her. If she tears your heart to pieces – and as it gets older and stronger, it will tear deeper – love her, love her, love her!'

Never had I seen such passionate eagerness as was joined to her utterance of these words. I could feel the muscles of the thin arm round my neck, swell with the vehemence that possessed her.

'Hear me, Pip! I adopted her to be loved. I bred her and educated her, to be loved. I developed her into what she is, that she might be loved. Love her!'

She said the word often enough, and there could be no doubt that she meant to say it; but if the often repeated word had been hate instead of love – despair – revenge – dire death – it could not have sounded from her lips more like a curse.

'I'll tell you,' said she, in the same hurried passionate whisper, 'what real love is. It is blind devotion, unquestioning self-humiliation, utter submission, trust and belief against yourself and against the whole world, giving up your whole heart and soul to the smiter – as I did!'

When she came to that, and to a wild cry that followed that, I caught her round the waist. For she rose up in the chair, in her shroud of a dress, and struck at the air as if she would as soon have struck herself against the wall and fallen dead.

All this passed in a few seconds. As I drew her down into her chair, I was conscious of a scent that I knew, and turning, saw my guardian in the room.

He always carried (I have not yet mentioned it, I think) a pocket-handkerchief of rich silk and of imposing proportions, which was of great value to him in his profession. I have seen him so terrify a client or a witness by ceremoniously unfolding this pocket-handkerchief as if he were immediately going to blow his nose, and then pausing, as if he knew he should not have time to do it before such client or witness committed himself, that the self-committal has followed directly, quite as a matter of course. When I saw him in the room, he had this expressive pocket-handkerchief in both hands, and was looking at us. On meeting my eye,

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he said plainly, by a momentary and silent pause in that attitude, 'Indeed? Singular!' and then put the handkerchief to its right use with wonderful effect.

Miss Havisham had seen him as soon as I, and was (like everybody else) afraid of him. She made a strong attempt to compose herself, and stammered that he was as punctual as ever.

(*from* Chapter 29)

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

Or **10** How does Dickens make Biddy such a likeable character?

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DAPHNE DU MAURIER: *Rebecca*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

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

On a sudden impulse I moved away from the bed and went back to the little ante-room where I had seen the wardrobes.

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I put it out like this, and the dressing-gown and slippers, just as I put them out for her the night she never came back, the night she was drowned.'

(*from* Chapter 14)

How does du Maurier make this moment in the novel so frightening?

Or **12** In what ways does du Maurier make Beatrice a likeable character?

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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:

The Doctor gave a laugh. 'I shall request him very kindly, then, to leave Catherine alone.'

'Ah!' said Mrs Penniman, shaking her forefinger at her brother, with her little finger turned out, 'Catherine has probably said something to him kinder than that!'

'Said that she loved him? Do you mean that?'

Mrs Penniman fixed her eyes on the floor. 'As I tell you, Austin, she doesn't confide in me.'

'You have an opinion, I suppose, all the same. It is that I ask you for; though I don't conceal from you that I shall not regard it as conclusive.'

Mrs Penniman's gaze continued to rest on the carpet; but at last she lifted it, and then her brother thought it very expressive. 'I think Catherine is very happy; that is all I can say.'

'Townsend is trying to marry her – is that what you mean?'

'He is greatly interested in her.'

'He finds her such an attractive girl?'

'Catherine has a lovely nature, Austin,' said Mrs Penniman, 'and Mr Townsend has had the intelligence to discover that.'

'With a little help from you, I suppose. My dear Lavinia,' cried the Doctor, 'you are an admirable aunt!'

'So Mr Townsend says,' observed Lavinia, smiling.

'Do you think he is sincere?' asked her brother.

'In saying that?'

'No; that's of course. But in his admiration for Catherine?'

'Deeply sincere. He has said to me the most appreciative, the most charming things about her. He would say them to you, if he were sure you would listen to him – gently.'

'I doubt whether I can undertake it. He appears to require a great deal of gentleness.'

'He is a sympathetic, sensitive nature,' said Mrs Penniman.

Her brother puffed his cigar again in silence. 'These delicate qualities have survived his vicissitudes, eh? All this while you haven't told me about his misfortunes.'

'It is a long story,' said Mrs Penniman, 'and I regard it as a sacred trust. But I suppose there is no objection to my saying that he has been wild – he frankly confesses that. But he has paid for it.'

'That's what has impoverished him, eh?'

'I don't mean simply in money. He is very much alone in the world.'

'Do you mean that he has behaved so badly that his friends have given him up?'

'He has had false friends, who have deceived and betrayed him.'

'He seems to have some good ones too. He has a devoted sister, and half a dozen nephews and nieces.'

Mrs Penniman was silent a minute. 'The nephews and nieces are children, and the sister is not a very attractive person.'

'I hope he doesn't abuse her to you,' said the Doctor; 'for I am told he lives upon her.'

'Lives upon her?'

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'Lives with her, and does nothing for himself; it is about the same thing.'

'He is looking for a position – most earnestly,' said Mrs Penniman. 'He hopes every day to find one.'

'Precisely. He is looking for it here – over there in the front parlour. The position of husband of a weak-minded woman with a large fortune would suit him to perfection!'

Mrs Penniman was truly amiable, but she now gave signs of temper. She rose with much animation, and stood for a moment looking at her brother. 'My dear Austin,' she remarked, 'if you regard Catherine as a weak-minded woman, you are particularly mistaken!' And with this she moved majestically away.

(*from* Chapter 8)

Explore the ways in which James makes this such a memorable and revealing moment in the novel.

Or **14** 'Catherine is stronger than she seems.'

In what ways does James persuade you that this is true?

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:

Now she is alone, cut off by curtains from the three other women in the room.

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In the kitchen of her parents' flat on Amherst Street, at this very moment, a servant is pouring after-dinner tea into steaming glasses, arranging Marie biscuits on a tray.

(*from* Chapter 1)

How does Lahiri vividly convey Ashima's loneliness at this moment in the novel?

Or **16** Explore how Lahiri powerfully portrays the relationship between Nikhil/Gogol and Maxine.

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JOAN LINDSAY: *Picnic at Hanging Rock*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

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

Irma Leopold's visit as far as Mrs Appleyard was concerned could hardly have been worse timed.

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She was no longer afraid of the woman behind the closed door, whose hand, seized with an uncontrollable tremor, reached for the bottle of cognac under the desk.

(*from* Chapter 12)

How does Lindsay vividly depict the meeting between Irma and Mrs Appleyard at this moment in the novel?

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

Do **not** use the extract printed for **Question 17** in answering this question.

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YANN MARTEL: *Life of Pi*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

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

He shows me family memorabilia.

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He closes the book.

(*from* Chapter 33)

In what ways does Martel make this such a moving moment in the novel?

Or **20** How does Martel create striking impressions of Pi's life in India before boarding the ship?

from *STORIES OF OURSELVES Volume 2*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either **21** Read this passage from *'And Women Must Weep'* (by Henry Handel Richardson), and then answer the question that follows it:

She had several false hopes. Men, looking so splendid in their white shirt fronts, would walk across the floor and seem to be coming … and then it was always not her. Their eyes wouldn't stay on her. There she sat, with her false little smile, and her eyes fixed on them; but theirs always got away … flitted past … moved on. Once she felt quite sure. Ever such a handsome young man looked at her as if he was making straight for her. She stretched her lips, showing all her teeth (they were very good) and for an instant his eyes seemed to linger … really take her in, in her pretty blue dress and the cornflowers. And then at the last minute they ran away – and it wasn't her at all, but a girl sitting three seats further on; one who wasn't even pretty, or her dress either. But her own dress was beginning to get quite tashy, from the way she squeezed her hot hands down in her lap.

Quite the worst part of all was having to go on sitting in the front row, pretending you were enjoying yourself. It was so hard to know what to do with your eyes. There was nothing but the floor for them to look at – if you watched the other couples dancing they would think you were envying them. At first she made a show of studying her programme; but you couldn't go on staring at a programme for ever: and presently her shame at its emptiness grew till she could bear it no longer, and, seizing a moment when people were dancing, she slipped it down the front of her dress. Now she could say she'd lost it, if anyone asked to see it. But they didn't; they went on dancing with other girls. Oh, these men, who walked round and chose just who they fancied and left who they didn't … how she hated them! It wasn't fair … it wasn't fair. And when there was a 'leap-year dance' where the ladies invited the gentlemen, and Auntie Cha tried to push her up and make her go and said: 'Now then, Dolly, here's your chance!' she shook her head hard and dug herself deeper into her seat. She wasn't going to ask them when they never asked her. So she said her head ached and she'd rather not. And to this she clung, sitting the while wishing with her whole heart that her dress was black and her hair grey, like Auntie Cha's. Nobody expected Auntie Cha to dance, or thought it shameful if she didn't; she could do and be just as she liked. Yes, to-night she wished she was old … an old, old woman. Or that she was safe at home in bed … this dreadful evening, to which she had once counted the days, behind her. Even, as the night wore on, that she was dead.

At supper she sat with Auntie and the other lady, and the son and girl came too. There were lovely cakes and things, but she could not eat them. Her throat was so dry that a sandwich stuck in it and nearly choked her. Perhaps the son felt a little sorry for her (or else his mother had whispered again), for afterwards he said something to the girl, and then asked her to dance. They stood up together; but it wasn't a success. Her legs seemed to have forgotten how to jump, heavy as lead they were … as heavy as she felt inside … and she couldn't think of a thing to say. So now he would put her down as stupid as well.

Her only other partner was a boy younger than she was – almost a schoolboy – who she heard them say was 'making a positive nuisance of himself.' This was to a very pretty girl called the 'belle of the ball'. And he didn't seem to mind how badly he danced (with her), for he couldn't

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take his eyes off this other girl; but went on staring at her all the time, and very fiercely, because she was talking and laughing with somebody else. Besides, he hopped like a grasshopper, and didn't wear gloves, and his hands were hot and sticky. She hadn't come there to dance with little boys.

They left before anybody else; there was nothing to stay for. And the drive home in the wagonette, which had to be fetched, they were so early, was dreadful; Auntie Cha just sat and pressed her lips and didn't say a word. She herself kept her face turned the other way, because her mouth was jumping in and out as if it might have to cry.

How does Richardson make this such a sad moment in the story?

Or **22** Explore how the writer makes the ending of **one** of the stories in this selection particularly satisfying for you.

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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.

Question number

1

Harrison depicts his father's reaction to his mother's death as a quiet, stubborn refusal to accept that she has gone, a grief so private that it hides itself behind ordinary domestic routines. What makes the portrayal so powerful is that the poem is not simply a son's observation of a grieving father: by the final stanza Harrison reveals that he, the rational sceptic, is behaving in exactly the same way, so the father's reaction becomes a mirror for his own.

The opening line establishes the shocking length of the father's denial. The phrase "already two years dead" is blunt and factual, and the word "already" stresses how much time has passed, yet "Dad" behaves as though no time has passed at all. Harrison then piles up small, practical acts of care: keeping "her slippers warming by the gas", putting "hot water bottles her side of the bed", and going "to renew her transport pass". These are deeply moving because they are so mundane. The father cannot express his love in grand words, so he expresses it through the habits of a long marriage. The detail of the transport pass is especially poignant, and almost painfully comic, because it is bureaucratic and forward-looking: he is planning for a future journey that she will never make. The warmth of these objects contrasts with the coldness of death, as though he could keep her alive by keeping her things warm.

In the second stanza the reaction becomes secretive. The short, clipped sentences "You couldn't just drop in. You had to phone." mimic the rules the father has set up, and their abrupt rhythm creates a sense of awkward distance between father and son. He needs "an hour" to "clear away her things and look alone", and the verb "look" is telling: he is performing being a widower for visitors while privately

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living as a husband. Harrison's simile "as though his still raw love were such a crime" is the emotional centre of the stanza. "Raw" suggests a wound that has not healed after two years, while "crime" captures the father's shame, his sense that such intense, unconcealed love is somehow embarrassing or forbidden for a man. I find this deeply sad, because the thing he hides is not wrongdoing but devotion.

The third stanza shows the father's fear of his son's judgement. He "couldn't risk my blight of disbelief", and "blight" is a harsh, destructive word, suggesting that the son's rational atheism could kill the fragile hope that keeps his father going. Harrison then moves into the father's own mind through free indirect speech: he is "sure that very soon he'd hear her key / scrape in the rusted lock". The sound of the key is imagined so precisely that it seems real, while "rusted" quietly hints that the lock, like the marriage, has not been used for a long time. The stanza closes with the colloquial line "He knew she'd just popped out to get the tea." The casual phrasing "popped out" presents death as a brief errand, and the certainty of "knew" is both heartbreaking and absurd.

The final stanza turns the poem around. The speaker's flat, monosyllabic statement "I believe life ends with death, and that is all" has the firmness of a creed, and its regular rhythm sounds like someone trying hard to convince himself. Yet the volta comes with "just the same". Now both parents are dead, and the shift to direct address, "You haven't both gone shopping", shows the son speaking to them as though they could hear. The father's reaction has been inherited. The "new black leather phone book" suggests mourning in its colour and a fresh start in "new", yet he has still written their name in it. The last line, "the disconnected number I still call", is devastating: "disconnected" acknowledges the reality of death, but "still call" shows that love outlasts reason. The title, "From Long Distance", takes on a double meaning, suggesting both a long-distance phone call

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and the impossible distance between the living and the dead.

The tight rhyme scheme throughout gives the poem a controlled, ordered feel, which mirrors the way both men try to contain grief within routine. Ultimately Harrison depicts his father's reaction not as foolishness but as a form of loyalty, and by confessing that he shares it, he makes the father's grief universal and profoundly moving.

3 Swinburne conveys the speaker's feelings of unrequited love as a slow movement from wounded pride towards utter despair, a farewell that he keeps announcing but can never quite complete. The poem is memorable above all for its hypnotic sound: the insistent refrains and rhymes make the speaker's grief feel obsessive, as though he is trapped repeating the same painful truth.

The speaker addresses his "songs" rather than the woman, which immediately reveals how isolated he is. His poetry is the only listener left to him. The opening command, "Let us go hence, my songs; she will not hear", sets the pattern for every stanza: an exhortation to leave, followed by a flat statement of her indifference. Swinburne varies the final verb in each stanza, "hear", "know", "weep", "love", "care", "see", and the effect is cumulative. Each stanza strips away a further hope, so that by the end she is shown as incapable of any response at all. The short final line of each stanza, "She would not hear", "She would not know", falls with a heavy finality, like a door closing, and its brevity after the long lines above suggests the speaker's voice breaking off.

The speaker's feelings are not simply sad but also bitter. He insists "She loves not you nor me as all we love her", and the balanced line stresses the painful

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imbalance of the relationship. Even singing "as angels in her ear" made no difference, which conveys both the speaker's sense of his own devotion and his frustration at its waste. In the second stanza his emotion becomes wilder and more elemental as he imagines going "seaward as the great winds go, / Full of blown sand and foam". The restless natural imagery mirrors his turbulent state of mind, and the rhetorical question "what help is here?" is answered at once with the bleak "There is no help".

Swinburne uses imagery of failed growth to show that the love was always doomed. "Flowers without scent, and fruits that would not grow" suggests that the speaker's dreams were beautiful but empty and sterile from the start. The harvest imagery, "thrust in thy sickle and reap" followed by "All is reaped now; no grass is left to mow", conveys a sense of exhaustion and ending, as if the season of love is over and nothing remains. This imagery of barrenness reaches its climax in the metaphor "Love is a barren sea, bitter and deep". Love, which should be fertile, is presented as vast, salty and lifeless, and the sea imagery that runs through the poem becomes increasingly threatening.

In the fifth stanza the speaker's feelings darken into something close to a wish for death. The commands grow weary: "Come hence, let be, lie still; it is enough." The monosyllables and pauses slow the rhythm, conveying resignation. Then the beautiful image of "all the stars made gold of all the air" and the "moon-flower making all the foam-flowers fair" gives way to drowning: the waves go over them and drive "Deep down the stifling lips and drowning hair". Even this splendour could not move her, and the alliteration of "drove / Deep down" creates a sense of being pulled under. "Let us give up, go down" sounds like surrender to death as well as to defeat.

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The final stanza is the most poignant because the speaker briefly allows himself to hope. The repetition "surely she, / She too" and the hesitant line break capture his longing that she will "turn a little toward us, sighing". Yet the stanza turns on "but we, / We are hence, we are gone, as though we had not been there." The repetition of "we" and the long, trailing line suggest the speaker fading into nothingness; it is too late, and he has erased himself. The last lines are perhaps the most painful of all: even if "all men" pitied him, "She would not see".

Swinburne therefore makes the speaker's feelings memorable through a musical structure that is itself a kind of lament. The way each stanza is built on only two rhyme sounds, with the short refrain always closing on the opening rhyme, enacts a mind circling endlessly around rejection. I find the poem moving because the speaker's leave-taking is never really completed: he keeps saying farewell precisely because he cannot stop loving her.

8

Adichie presents Aunty Ifeoma as the most important person in Kambili's emotional awakening: she is the adult who shows Kambili that a person can be deeply faithful and still be free, loving and loud. Because the novel is narrated by Kambili, who begins almost voiceless, Ifeoma's importance is conveyed vividly through the contrast between the silent, fearful world of Papa's house in Enugu and the noisy, warm, chaotic world of Ifeoma's flat in Nsukka.

From the very first chapter, Adichie signals that Ifeoma will change everything. Looking back, Kambili says that Nsukka "started it all", and she links her brother's defiance to Aunty Ifeoma's experimental purple hibiscus, which is "rare, fragrant with the undertones of freedom". By introducing Ifeoma through this central symbol, before we have even met her properly, Adichie makes her the source of

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the novel's hope. The hibiscus is a cultivated, unusual flower that grows only in Ifeoma's garden, just as freedom is something Kambili and Jaja can only experience in her home.

When Ifeoma first appears at Christmas in Abba, Adichie makes her vivid through her physical confidence and her voice. She is tall, laughs readily and speaks quickly, and, most strikingly for Kambili, she speaks to Papa as an equal, addressing him simply as "Eugene". Kambili is amazed and frightened by this, which shows the reader how unusual it is for anyone to challenge her father. Ifeoma's insistence that the children should spend time with their grandfather, Papa-Nnukwu, whom Papa dismisses as a heathen, also matters greatly. Through Ifeoma, Kambili gains access to her own family and heritage, and Ifeoma's respect for her father's traditional beliefs teaches Kambili that kindness is more important than rigid rules.

The visit to Nsukka is where Ifeoma's importance is most fully dramatised. Adichie emphasises the material simplicity of the flat, with its kerosene stove, rationed water and unreliable electricity, yet Kambili gradually realises that it is richer than her own home in the things that matter. At mealtimes Ifeoma's children argue, joke and offer opinions, and Ifeoma encourages this. The contrast with Papa's table, where talk is controlled and silence is safe, is very powerful. Even the prayers are different: Ifeoma's prayers give thanks for laughter as well as asking for blessings, which suggests to Kambili, and to the reader, that joy can be part of faith. I find this one of the most moving aspects of the novel, because Kambili has been taught that God and fear go together.

Ifeoma is also important because she gently pushes Kambili to speak. When Kambili is tongue-tied or apologises by reflex, Ifeoma does not punish her but

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challenges her to find her voice, and she defends Kambili when Amaka mocks her as rich and snobbish. Ifeoma's attention allows Kambili to discover small but significant firsts: her first laughter, her clumsy first attempts at household tasks such as peeling yams, and her growing feelings for Father Amadi, which Ifeoma notices and treats with warmth rather than suspicion. It is as if Kambili, like the hibiscus, is able to blossom only in Ifeoma's soil.

Ifeoma's importance extends to Kambili's understanding of her mother. When Mama arrives in Nsukka after Papa's violence, Ifeoma tells her that "sometimes life begins when marriage ends". This bold statement shocks Mama, but it plants the idea that escape and survival are possible. Kambili overhears these conversations, and through them she begins to see her family from the outside.

Adichie makes Ifeoma's importance all the more poignant by showing her struggles. She loses her post at the university and decides to leave for America, and her departure leaves a painful gap in Kambili's life. Yet her influence remains. Kambili's growing voice, and her ability at the end to imagine a hopeful future, can be traced back to her aunt's example. Through vivid contrasts, symbolism and Kambili's wondering narrative voice, Adichie presents Aunty Ifeoma as the person who teaches Kambili not just how to speak, but that she has the right to.

9

Dickens makes this moment deeply disturbing by revealing that Miss Havisham's idea of love is indistinguishable from hatred and revenge. What should be a tender exchange about a beautiful young woman becomes something sinister, almost a ritual curse, and Pip, physically held in her grip, is drawn into her obsession. The arrival of Jaggers at the end adds a further, colder unease, as though even this wild scene is being quietly observed and judged.

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The disturbance begins in the very first paragraph through Dickens's description of Miss Havisham's body. Her "withered arms" and "clenched hand" resting on the "yellow cloth" link her to the decay of the wedding feast around her: she is as faded and stale as the table itself. When she kisses her hand to Estella, it is with "a ravenous intensity that was of its kind quite dreadful". The adjective "ravenous" is shocking because it turns affection into hunger, as if Miss Havisham wants to devour Estella or feed upon her.

Miss Havisham's whispered questions are unsettling because they are so possessive. She asks whether Estella is "beautiful, graceful, well-grown", and the final adjective sounds as though she is describing livestock or a plant she has cultivated, rather than a person. Her physical control of Pip intensifies the menace. She draws "an arm round my neck" and pulls his head down to hers, a gesture that could be loving but here feels like capture, especially when Pip can "feel the muscles of the thin arm" swelling with "vehemence". The contrast between the thinness of the arm and the force within it makes her seem almost unnatural, a frail body possessed by violent emotion.

The most disturbing feature of the passage is the relentless repetition of "Love her, love her, love her!" The triple repetition sounds like an incantation, and it is repeated so often that the word "love" is drained of its meaning. Dickens then builds a terrible sequence: "If she favours you, love her. If she wounds you, love her. If she tears your heart to pieces". The escalating verbs, from "favours" to "wounds" to "tears", show that Miss Havisham expects and even welcomes suffering, even relishes it. Pip himself makes the point explicit when he says that had the word been "hate" or "revenge", it could not have sounded more "like a curse".

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Her account of Estella's upbringing is chilling. The tricolon "I adopted her to be loved. I bred her and educated her, to be loved. I developed her into what she is" presents Estella as a project rather than a daughter. The verb "bred", in particular, dehumanises her, and the repeated "I" reveals that Miss Havisham's love is really about herself. Her definition of "real love" is perhaps the darkest moment of all: "blind devotion, unquestioning self-humiliation, utter submission". Every noun phrase describes the destruction of the self, and the final image of "giving up your whole heart and soul to the smiter" casts love as a form of martyrdom. The exclamation "as I did!" exposes the wound at the heart of her behaviour: she is still living out her own betrayal, and she wants Pip to suffer in the same way.

Dickens then turns her words into frightening action. She rises up "in her shroud of a dress", a metaphor that reminds us that she is a kind of living corpse, and she strikes "at the air" as though she would as soon have "struck herself against the wall and fallen dead". The suggestion of self-destruction is genuinely alarming Pip has to catch her "round the waist", reversing their earlier positions.

Finally, the mood shifts with the entrance of Jaggers, announced first by "a scent that I knew". Dickens's digression about his "pocket-handkerchief of rich silk" is grimly comic, but it adds to the disturbance, because it reveals a man who manipulates and terrifies people as a matter of professional habit. The silent pause which Pip interprets as "Indeed? Singular!" is the only comment on Miss Havisham's outburst, and the fact that even she is "afraid of him" suggests that there are hidden powers at work in Pip's world that he does not yet understand. Through grotesque imagery, obsessive repetition and the cold gaze of Jaggers, Dickens makes this a moment in which love itself becomes something to fear.

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10	Biddy is likeable because she is everything the young Pip learns to undervalue: honest, patient, clear-sighted and kind. Dickens places her quietly at the edges of Pip's story, and much of her appeal comes from the gap between how the older narrator now sees her and how his younger, snobbish self treated her. We come to like Biddy partly because Pip did not like her enough, and the novel slowly teaches him, and us, to recognise her worth. From her first appearance Dickens makes her a figure of humble goodness. She is an orphan who helps run the chaotic evening school, and it is Biddy, not the school, who really teaches Pip to read and write. There is something touching in the way this neglected girl gives freely to someone who has more than she does. When Mrs Joe is struck down, Biddy comes to the forge and transforms the household: Pip notes her cleanliness and good sense, and, most strikingly, she is the one who understands the injured woman's strange chalked sign of the "T" as a hammer, which leads to Orlick. Dickens shows that her intelligence is practical and sympathetic: she reads people, even a woman who cannot speak, with patience no one else has. The scene on the marshes is where Dickens makes her most likeable, because she is wiser than the hero. Pip describes her as "pleasant and wholesome and sweet-tempered", yet he immediately measures her against Estella and finds her "common". When he confides his longing to be a gentleman, Biddy's question, "Do you want to be a gentleman, to spite her or to gain her over?", cuts straight to the emptiness of his ambition. Her calm reasoning exposes the absurdity of letting someone who calls him coarse decide his worth. When Pip clumsily wishes he could fall in love with her instead, her reply, "But you never will, you see", is gentle but unflinching. Dickens lets her keep her dignity: she neither pleads nor pretends, and the reader feels the pain beneath her composure far more than Pip does.

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Her loyalty to Joe deepens our affection. When Pip, newly rich, asks her to help improve Joe's manners, she quietly suggests that Joe may be proud and may not wish to be lifted out of a place he fills well. Pip accuses her of being envious, and the injustice of the charge makes us side with her completely. Dickens uses Pip's narration ironically here: the adult Pip records his own pomposity, so Biddy's restraint shines by contrast. At Mrs Joe's funeral the pattern returns. Pip promises grandly to visit Joe often, and Biddy's polite doubt about whether he really will is entirely justified by events. Her scepticism is not unkind; it is simply truthful, and truthfulness is rare in a novel full of pretence and false expectations.

Dickens also lets Biddy grow. She becomes a schoolmistress, educates herself, and later teaches Joe to write, so that his simple letter to the sick Pip is, in a sense, her gift too. This quiet self-improvement contrasts sharply with Pip's expensive, idle attempt to become a gentleman. Hers is genuine progress, earned through work rather than money.

The ending confirms her goodness and rewards it. When Pip returns, humbled and hoping to propose, he finds that Biddy has married Joe. The reader is glad rather than disappointed, because she has chosen the novel's most loving and honest man. That they name their son Pip is a final sign of her generosity: she bears no grudge. Her gentle question to Pip about whether he still thinks of Estella shows the same tact and insight she showed as a girl on the marshes.

Ultimately Biddy is likeable because she embodies the values Pip abandons and must rediscover. Dickens never makes her glamorous; her appeal lies in steadiness, honesty and a love that asks for nothing. By the end she seems less a minor character than the novel's moral standard, the person against whom Pip's long

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journey of self-knowledge is measured.

11 This moment is frightening because du Maurier turns an empty room into something that feels inhabited. The narrator has finally entered Rebecca's bedroom in the west wing, the forbidden heart of Manderley, and what she discovers is not dust and absence but a space kept as if its owner might walk back in at any moment. The terror comes less from any supernatural event than from Mrs Danvers, whose devotion to the dead woman makes the past seem alive and the narrator seem the intruder.

The opening sentence, "On a sudden impulse I moved away from the bed", establishes the narrator's nervous, half-guilty curiosity. She acts on impulse, like a child exploring somewhere she knows she should not be, and the reader shares her sense of trespass. The wardrobes are full of Rebecca's clothes, and the narrator's sensory response to them, the softness of the materials and the lingering scent, makes Rebecca physically present. Du Maurier uses touch and smell rather than sight to suggest a woman who is gone yet still felt, which is far more unsettling than a visible ghost.

The real shock is Mrs Danvers's appearance. The narrator is caught, and the moment she is discovered the power in the scene shifts. Mrs Danvers does not scold her; instead she becomes eager, almost tender, insisting on showing her everything. This is far more frightening than anger. Her voice is intimate and coaxing, and she draws the narrator's hand to the clothes, making her feel them, as if forcing her to participate in a ritual of worship. The physical closeness is disturbing: the narrator, who already feels inferior to Rebecca, is now being made to handle her possessions under the gaze of a woman who adored her.

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Du Maurier makes Mrs Danvers's speech reveal an obsession that borders on madness. She dwells on the most private details of Rebecca's life: the brushes she used on her hair, the way she would undress, the nightdress kept in its case on the bed, never washed since Rebecca last wore it. These intimate objects are treated almost as relics, and the narrator, and the reader, begin to feel that the room is a kind of shrine. The intimacy of the details also makes the reader uncomfortable, as though we, too, are prying into something we should not see.

The final line of the extract is chilling: "I put it out like this, and the dressing-gown and slippers, just as I put them out for her the night she never came back, the night she was drowned." The repetition of "the night" gives the sentence the rhythm of a lament or incantation, and the simple, domestic actions of laying out clothes are juxtaposed with death. Mrs Danvers is still preparing for Rebecca's return, which implies that, in her mind, Rebecca has not really left. The plain phrase "never came back" sounds almost like a child's grief, yet "drowned" lands with brutal finality. The contrast between her calm routine and the horror of what she describes is what makes her so menacing.

The structure of the scene also builds fear. The narrator's long, rambling sentences of exploration give way to Mrs Danvers's controlled monologue, and the narrator becomes almost silent, frozen and unable to escape. Her lack of response shows her powerlessness; she is trapped in Rebecca's room, in Rebecca's world, and in Mrs Danvers's version of the past.

Ultimately du Maurier makes this moment frightening because it confirms the narrator's worst fear: that Rebecca is still the true mistress of Manderley. The ghost here is psychological, kept alive by memory, objects and one woman's

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obsession, and the narrator's sense of being watched and compared becomes almost unbearable for the reader too.

12 Beatrice is likeable because she is the one person at Manderley who is straightforwardly herself. In a novel full of secrets, silences and polished surfaces, du Maurier gives Maxim's sister a blunt, hearty openness that feels like fresh air. She is often tactless and sometimes says exactly the wrong thing, yet her clumsiness comes from honesty rather than malice, and beneath it lies a genuine warmth towards the narrator that almost no one else offers.

Du Maurier establishes this in Beatrice's first visit. The narrator dreads meeting Maxim's family, expecting to be judged, and Beatrice does judge, but aloud and without disguise. She comments frankly on the narrator's appearance and youth, and tells her plainly that she is very different from Rebecca. At first this seems wounding, but du Maurier lets us see that Beatrice means it partly as reassurance. Unlike Mrs Danvers, whose comparisons are calculated to hurt, Beatrice simply says what she thinks. The reader comes to trust her precisely because she has no hidden agenda; her rudeness is the rudeness of someone who has nothing to conceal.

Her energy and outdoor heartiness also make her appealing. She talks about horses and hunting, strides about in practical clothes and has a loud, cheerful manner that contrasts with the timid narrator and the hushed formality of the house. Her easy affection for her husband Giles, whom she teases without cruelty, shows a relaxed, comfortable marriage. Du Maurier uses her as a contrast to the narrator's anxious inner voice: Beatrice acts first and worries later, if at all, and there is something reassuring in her confidence.

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What makes her most likeable, however, is her kindness, which often appears in small, practical gestures. She gives the narrator honest advice about Mrs Danvers, warning her that the housekeeper was devoted to Rebecca and resents any newcomer. This is the first time anyone treats the narrator as an adult who deserves to understand her situation. Later Beatrice sends a wedding present of expensive books on painting, chosen because she remembered the narrator's interest in drawing. The narrator is deeply touched, and so is the reader, because it shows that Beatrice had listened and cared.

The visit to the grandmother is a moment where du Maurier makes us feel for Beatrice as well as with her. She takes the narrator to see the old, blind woman with obvious good intentions, but the grandmother becomes confused and asks for Rebecca. Beatrice is embarrassed and apologetic on the drive home. Du Maurier uses the scene to show that even Beatrice cannot protect the narrator from Rebecca's shadow, but her discomfort reveals her sensitivity: she understands how painful the moment must have been and wishes she could have prevented it.

At the fancy dress ball Beatrice is again on the narrator's side. When the narrator appears in the costume copied from the portrait and Maxim reacts with horror, Beatrice is the first to understand what has happened and to try to comfort her. She insists the narrator could not have known, and she tries to smooth things over with the guests. Her loyalty in this moment of public humiliation contrasts sharply with Mrs Danvers's cruel deception. Beatrice may lack subtlety, but she never lacks decency.

Du Maurier also allows Beatrice to be honest about Maxim, telling the narrator that he rarely loses his temper but is formidable when he does. This frankness

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helps the narrator, and the reader, understand the man she has married, and it suggests that Beatrice cares about both of them.

In the end Beatrice is likeable because she is human and unpretentious in a world dominated by the idealised, unreachable figure of Rebecca. Her tactlessness makes her comic, but her generosity, loyalty and plain speaking make her one of the few genuine allies the narrator has. Du Maurier uses her to remind us that goodness does not need grace or polish to be real.

13 This moment is memorable because it is a duel conducted entirely through polite conversation. James sets the Doctor's cool, ironic intelligence against Mrs Penniman's romantic evasions, and the dialogue reveals not only their opinions of Morris Townsend but their contrasting characters, and, most painfully, the way both of them think about Catherine without consulting her. The scene is comic on the surface, yet it exposes the forces that will shape Catherine's fate.

James reveals the Doctor's character through his irony. From the start his "laugh" and his promise to "request him very kindly" to leave Catherine alone show a man who is amused rather than troubled, confident that he can manage the situation. His questions are crisp and leading, like those of a lawyer or a doctor making a diagnosis: "Said that she loved him? Do you mean that?" He insists that he wants her opinion while warning that he "shall not regard it as conclusive", a sentence which reveals his intellectual arrogance. He asks for evidence only to dismiss it. His exclamation, "you are an admirable aunt!", is heavy with sarcasm, though Mrs Penniman misses it entirely.

Mrs Penniman, by contrast, is revealed as foolish, theatrical and secretly delighted

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to be involved. The tiny physical detail of her "shaking her forefinger at her brother, with her little finger turned out" makes her coquettish and affected, as if she were playing a part in a romance. She keeps her eyes "on the floor" and then on "the carpet", a gesture of mock discretion that only emphasises how much she enjoys her secret. Her language is drawn from sentimental fiction: Morris has "a sympathetic, sensitive nature", his story is a "sacred trust", he has had "false friends, who have deceived and betrayed him". James makes these clichés absurd by placing them beside the Doctor's dry, factual replies. When she says "So Mr Townsend says", smiling, she unwittingly reveals that she is simply repeating Morris's flattery, which also reveals how skilfully Morris has worked on her.

The structure of the dialogue is revealing too. The Doctor pushes steadily towards the truth, and each answer Mrs Penniman offers is punctured by a sharper fact. When she says Morris has been "wild" but "paid for it", the Doctor replies "That's what has impoverished him, eh?" When she claims he is alone in the world, the Doctor coolly mentions his "devoted sister" and her children, and then delivers the damning information: "I am told he lives upon her." The repetition of "Lives upon her?" and the Doctor's blunt redefinition, "Lives with her, and does nothing for himself", strip away Mrs Penniman's romantic picture. The reader begins to suspect, with the Doctor, that Morris is a fortune hunter.

Yet James does not let us simply admire the Doctor. His final jibe, that Morris seeks "The position of husband of a weak-minded woman with a large fortune", is witty but shockingly cruel about his own daughter. The phrase "weak-minded woman" reveals the Doctor's low opinion of Catherine, and it suggests that his concern is as much about his own judgement and pride as about her happiness. Ironically, it is Mrs Penniman, so silly elsewhere, who has the last and most truthful word: "if you regard Catherine as a weak-minded woman, you are

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particularly mistaken!" James lets her move "majestically away", a comic exit, but her protest foreshadows the strength Catherine will later show against both of them.

What makes the moment so revealing, finally, is Catherine's absence. She is "over there in the front parlour" with Morris while her father and aunt discuss her future. Both adults are sure they understand her: one sees her as an object of romance, the other as a dull girl who could only be loved for her money. Neither truly sees her. James makes us laugh at the exchange, but he also makes us uneasy, because the conversation shows how little Catherine is valued as a person by the people closest to her.

14 James persuades me that Catherine is stronger than she seems by building a deliberate gap between how others see her and what she actually does. Almost everyone in the novel, including her father, her aunt, Morris and at first the narrator himself, describes her as plain, slow and dull. Yet when she is tested she proves steadfast, honest and quietly immovable, and by the end her strength takes the form of a dignified refusal that no one can break.

At the start James seems to agree with the low opinion of her. The narrator tells us she is not clever or beautiful, and her father privately finds her a disappointment compared with the brilliant wife he lost. Her clumsy love of finery, such as the rich red dress she wears to Mrs Almond's party, makes her look awkward rather than elegant. James lets the reader underestimate her, so that her later resistance comes as a surprise and feels earned.

Her first real act of strength is her love for Morris, which she declares to her

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father despite her fear of him. For a daughter who has always obeyed and admired the Doctor, simply saying she is engaged to a man he disapproves of requires great courage. She does not argue cleverly, because that is not her nature, but she does not give way either. James shows that her strength lies in constancy rather than eloquence: she keeps repeating, in simple terms, that she loves Morris and will wait for him.

The journey to Europe is designed to break that constancy, and it fails. In the scene in the Alps, the Doctor confronts her in a lonely valley at dusk and speaks to her with a cold, almost threatening intensity, admitting that he is not a very good man and implying how easily he could leave her there. The setting, wild and isolated, makes Catherine seem small and vulnerable, yet she endures his anger without surrendering. When they return to New York after many months, she is still engaged. The trip that was meant to cure her has only proved how firm she is.

Her strength becomes most painful, and most impressive, when she sees the truth. She realises that her father does not really love her and tells Morris so, which is a bitter recognition for a woman who had idolised him. When Morris abandons her, she suffers deeply, but she does not collapse publicly or beg. She keeps her humiliation private and refuses to let her father, or Mrs Penniman, see how much she is hurt. James presents this self-control as a kind of quiet heroism.

In later years she turns down other suitors, showing that she will not marry simply to fill her life. Most strikingly, when the dying Doctor asks her to promise that she will never marry Morris after his death, she refuses to promise. She has no intention of marrying Morris, yet she will not let her father control her even now. This is perhaps her greatest act of strength, because she accepts the loss of

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much of her inheritance rather than give him the satisfaction of submission. James makes us admire a woman who values her own integrity more than money.

The ending completes the transformation. When Morris returns, older and still charming, he expects her to welcome him. Instead she calmly rejects him, telling him that he treated her badly and that she cannot feel as she once did. There is no anger or theatre, only firmness. James ends with her taking up her fancy-work again, settling down "for life, as it were". Some readers find this ending sad, because her life seems narrow and lonely. Yet I am persuaded that it also shows strength: she has chosen this life for herself, free from her father's contempt, Mrs Penniman's meddling and Morris's greed.

Ultimately James persuades me that Catherine is stronger than she seems because her strength is unspectacular. She never wins an argument, and she is never witty, but she outlasts everyone who underestimated her. Her quiet endurance becomes, by the end, the most powerful force in the novel.

16 Lahiri portrays the relationship between Nikhil and Maxine as an intense love affair that is really a love affair with a way of life. Maxine and her family offer Gogol, now calling himself Nikhil, an escape from the Bengali world of his parents, and Lahiri makes the relationship powerful precisely because it is so seductive and yet so incomplete. It ends not with a quarrel but with the return of everything he had tried to leave behind.

From the first meeting Lahiri makes it clear that Nikhil is attracted to the whole world Maxine belongs to. She is confident, direct and comfortable, and it is she who takes the initiative. When he first visits the Ratliffs' elegant house in

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Manhattan, he is overwhelmed by it: the books, the paintings, the relaxed, wine-filled dinners where conversation flows easily and everyone has opinions. Lahiri describes these meals in loving, sensuous detail, and the effect is to show how dazzled Nikhil is. He falls in love with Gerald and Lydia almost as much as with Maxine, and he soon practically lives with them. The present tense of Lahiri's narration gives these scenes an immediacy that conveys the thrill of a new identity being tried on.

Lahiri uses implicit contrast to make the relationship powerful. Nikhil keeps noticing how different the Ratliffs are from his own parents: they are open about their pleasures, they never seem anxious about the future, and Maxine argues with her parents freely. He realises, with something like guilt, that he prefers this. Lahiri presents his immersion as both liberating and troubling, because the more at home he feels with the Ratliffs, the more he hides from his own family. He tells his parents very little about Maxine and lets them assume much less than the truth.

The lunch at Pemberton Road is a revealing moment. Maxine meets Ashima and Ashok, and Nikhil watches the encounter with acute discomfort. Ashima cooks elaborately for her guest, and Maxine is friendly and relaxed, but Nikhil is painfully conscious of the gulf between the two worlds, of his parents' formality and of the fact that he and Maxine cannot show affection in front of them. Lahiri lets us see that Maxine's ease, so attractive in Manhattan, highlights how divided Nikhil is.

The summer at the lake house in New Hampshire shows the relationship at its height and hints at its limits. Nikhil spends his birthday there, cut off from his parents, who have no way of reaching him easily. Among the Ratliffs' friends a

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dinner guest assumes he must be from India and talks about how he must never get ill there, and he replies that he is from Boston. The moment is small but revealing: even in this idyll he is seen as foreign, and Maxine's world cannot entirely absorb him. Lahiri suggests that his escape is partly an illusion.

The relationship is finally broken by Ashok's death. When Nikhil learns that his father has died in Cleveland, he goes alone to deal with his father's things, and Lahiri makes this one of the most moving sections of the novel. Afterwards he is drawn back into Bengali rituals of mourning, eating simple food and spending time with his mother and sister. Maxine offers comfort, but she does not understand. She suggests he come away with her to escape, which shows her love but also her inability to see what his family means to him now. She feels excluded, and Nikhil feels she cannot share his grief. Lahiri does not blame either of them; the relationship simply cannot survive the weight of his loss.

The end of the affair is quietly painful. Later Nikhil hears that Maxine is engaged, and the news emphasises how completely her life has moved on. Lahiri uses the relationship to show a stage in his search for identity: Maxine represented the American self he longed to become, but his father's death reminded him of debts and loyalties he could not shed. The relationship is powerful because it is both real love and a form of running away, and its ending marks the beginning of Nikhil's slow return to his family and his name.

18 Lindsay makes the novel shocking in two different ways. The first great shock, the disappearance on the Rock, is shocking because it is inexplicable: ordinary, sunny reality simply opens up and swallows people. The second, the death of Sara Waybourne, is shocking because it is all too explicable: it is the cruel, human

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consequence of neglect and fear inside the College. I want to explore how Lindsay makes each moment disturbing, and how the second, quieter shock may in fact be the more painful.

The disappearance is shocking partly because Lindsay builds up such a calm and pleasant atmosphere beforehand. The picnic takes place on a hot, bright St Valentine's Day, with cake, chatter and girls in white muslin. Lindsay lingers on the heat, the drowsiness after lunch and the beauty of Miranda, so that the reader is lulled. Yet she plants unsettling details: the watches of Mr Hussey and Miss McCraw stop at twelve, and the Rock itself is described as ancient and indifferent, a presence older than the people beneath it. When the four girls set off to explore, the narrative follows them into a strange, dreamlike state in which they seem to lose ordinary sense of time and self. Lindsay's prose becomes slow and hypnotic, and this makes the reader uneasy without quite knowing why.

The shock itself arrives through Edith. Lindsay ends the dreamy sequence abruptly with Edith fleeing down the slope, screaming, unable to explain what she has seen. The sudden noise and panic shatter the peace of the picnic ground. Lindsay withholds any clear explanation, so the reader is left in the same confusion as the adults. The later discovery that Miss McCraw is also missing, and Edith's vague memory of seeing her climbing upwards without her skirt, in her drawers, adds a strange and almost indecent detail that makes the event even more disturbing for a respectable Victorian setting. The shock lies in the mystery: four people simply vanish, and the narrative refuses to tell us how.

The death of Sara Waybourne is shocking in a completely different way. Lindsay presents Sara throughout as a lonely, imaginative orphan who is bullied by Mrs Appleyard and devoted to Miranda, whom she lost on the Rock. Her guardian has

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stopped paying the fees, and Mrs Appleyard, increasingly desperate as the College falls apart, tells her she must leave and return to the orphanage she dreads. The reader already feels deep pity for her, so we sense that something terrible is approaching. Lindsay heightens the suspense by having Mrs Appleyard tell the staff that Sara's guardian has collected her, a lie that the reader recognises and that makes the headmistress seem sinister.

When Sara's body is finally discovered in the College grounds by the gardener, the shock is all the greater because it has been concealed and delayed. Lindsay describes the discovery in plain, almost clinical terms, and the bluntness contrasts sharply with the dreamy language of the Rock. Here there is no mystery to soften the horror: a child, unwanted and terrified, has died alone. The fact that the people responsible for her care failed to notice or to help makes the moment morally shocking as well as physically horrifying.

Lindsay connects the two shocks. The disappearance begins a chain of disasters, and Sara's death shows how the mystery's effects spread outwards, destroying the College's reputation, Mrs Appleyard's nerve and the lives of the vulnerable. Soon afterwards Mrs Appleyard herself is found dead at the foot of the Rock, which suggests that the place claims everyone touched by it.

For me, the disappearance is the more famous shock, but Sara's death is the more painful. The first unsettles us because it cannot be explained; the second appals us because it could so easily have been prevented. Lindsay uses both to show a world in which order and respectability are fragile, and beneath them lie forces, natural and human, that are capable of terrible cruelty.

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Martel creates a strikingly vivid impression of Pi's life in India as a kind of lost paradise: a childhood full of animals, gods, eccentric adults and boyish comedy, recalled with warmth and humour by an older narrator who knows that all of it is about to be swept away. For me, what makes these early chapters so memorable is the way Martel balances lightness and depth, so that a story about a schoolboy's nickname or a visit to a bakery quietly prepares us for the questions of survival and belief that dominate the rest of the novel.

The first striking impression is of the Pondicherry Zoo as a magical home. Pi describes growing up among animals as if it were the most natural thing in the world, and Martel lets his narrator linger over the routines of the zoo at dawn and the habits of its creatures with real tenderness. Yet this is not a sentimental picture. Pi argues, almost like a lecturer, that animals in the wild are not free in any romantic sense, and that a well run zoo gives an animal a secure territory. The famous sign in his father's zoo, which invites visitors to discover the most dangerous animal and then reveals a mirror, is a sharp little joke that also carries a serious warning about human beings.

That warning becomes shocking in the episode of the tiger and the goat. Pi's father, determined to cure his sons of the habit of seeing animals as friendly pets, makes Pi and Ravi watch as a live goat is fed to the tiger Mahisha. Martel narrates the moment with an abrupt, brutal economy, and the reaction of the boys and their mother makes it clear how traumatic it is. Coming in the middle of so much affectionate comedy, the scene jolts the reader. It is also a careful piece of structure: the lesson that a tiger is not a cuddly companion is exactly the knowledge Pi will need in the lifeboat, so his Indian childhood is shown to be a training ground as well as a paradise.

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Martel makes Pi's schooldays equally striking through comedy. The story of his name, taken from a Parisian swimming pool loved by the family friend Mamaji, leads to the misery of being mocked as "Pissing" by his classmates and teachers. Pi's response is ingenious: at the start of a new school year he marches to the blackboard and rebrands himself, drawing the symbol for pi and its value, 3.14. His comment that in this irrational number "I found refuge" is lovely, because it shows a boy using imagination and wit to escape a cruel reality, which is precisely what the adult Pi may later do with his story of the tiger. Perhaps the most original impression of all comes from Pi's religious life. Born a Hindu, he speaks of Hindu worship in rich, sensuous terms, then on holiday meets a kindly priest and is moved by the story of Christ, and later discovers Islam through Mr Kumar, a Muslim baker whose simple, devoted prayer amazes him. Martel deliberately pairs this Mr Kumar with another Mr Kumar, Pi's atheist biology teacher, so that faith and reason both shape the boy. The climax is the gloriously comic scene on the esplanade, where the pandit, the priest and the imam all discover that the boy belongs to each of them and begin to quarrel. Pi's innocent reply, quoting "Bapu Gandhi" and concluding "I just want to love God", cuts through their pomposity. The scene is funny, but it also makes a serious point: the adults are fighting over labels, while the child simply wants to worship.

Finally, Martel shapes all of this through retrospective narration. The adult Pi, living in Canada, tells the story, and the short italic sections by the author show him as a gentle, rather sad man surrounded by religious objects. This frame gives the Indian chapters a glow of nostalgia, but also a shadow, because we know the family and the zoo will be lost when his father decides to sell the animals and emigrate. Overall, Martel's impressions of Pi's life in India are striking because they are so varied: comic, tender, philosophical and occasionally violent. By the time the family boards the ship, we know Pi intimately as a curious, playful, spiritual boy,

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and this makes what happens to him afterwards all the more powerful.

21 Richardson makes this such a sad moment by trapping us inside Dolly's mind at the very evening she has longed for, so that we feel every small humiliation as she does. The passage moves from hope to shame, from shame to a wish for death, and finally to silent tears, and what makes it so painful for me is that nothing dramatic happens at all: Dolly is simply not chosen, again and again.

The passage opens with "several false hopes", and Richardson structures the first paragraph as a cruel cycle of expectation and disappointment. The men, "so splendid in their white shirt fronts", seem to be coming, "and then it was always not her." The awkward, childlike phrasing of "always not her" is heartbreaking, because it sounds like Dolly's own voice. The ellipses in "flitted past ... moved on" slow the sentence down so that we watch the men's eyes drift away from her, and the verbs suggest something light and careless, as if she is not worth a second glance. The fullest false hope is the "handsome young man" who seems to be "making straight for her". Richardson builds the moment with Dolly's eager preparation, stretching her lips and showing "all her teeth (they were very good)", and the bracketed comment is touching, since she is clinging to anything that might make her attractive. The anticlimax is crushing: his eyes "ran away", and he chooses a girl "who wasn't even pretty". Dolly's resentful little judgement is understandable and very human.

Richardson also uses physical detail to show Dolly's distress. Her "pretty blue dress and the cornflowers", once a source of pride, is becoming "quite tashy" because she squeezes her "hot hands" in her lap. The spoiling of the dress mirrors the spoiling of the evening, and the clenched hands reveal tension she cannot otherwise

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express.

The shift to the second person in "pretending you were enjoying yourself" and "what to do with your eyes" draws the reader into Dolly's position, making the agony of being watched feel universal. The programme is a particularly sad symbol. Its blank spaces are a public record of failure, and her "shame at its emptiness" drives her to hide it down the front of her dress so that she can claim to have lost it. Richardson adds the bitter irony that her preparation is pointless: "But they didn't". Nobody even asks.

Her anger then breaks through in exclamations and repetition: "how she hated them! It wasn't fair ... it wasn't fair." The repeated phrase captures a girl close to tears, and her complaint that men "chose just who they fancied" exposes how powerless the young women are, waiting to be picked like goods. Even the "leap-year dance", which should give her a chance, only deepens her shame; Auntie Cha's hearty "Now then, Dolly, here's your chance!" contrasts with Dolly digging herself "deeper into her seat", a phrase which suggests she wants to disappear. Her lie about a headache shows how hard she must work to protect her pride.

The emotional climax comes in a series of wishes that grow darker. She longs for black clothes and grey hair like her aunt's, then to be "an old, old woman", then safe in bed, and finally, in a short sentence placed at the end of the paragraph, "that she was dead." Richardson's gradual escalation makes this last wish shocking, and it reveals how much the evening, "to which she had once counted the days", has crushed her.

The final paragraphs offer two dances that are worse than none. The son's invitation may be pity, "or else his mother had whispered again", and Dolly's legs

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are "heavy as lead", an image that links her body to the weight "she felt inside". The boy who "hopped like a grasshopper" with "hot and sticky" hands is comic, yet the comedy is painful because he is staring at another girl. The ending is quietly devastating: Auntie Cha "pressed her lips" in silent disappointment, and Dolly turns away because "her mouth was jumping in and out as if it might have to cry". By stopping just short of tears, Richardson leaves us with suppressed grief, and the sadness lingers far longer than an outburst would.

22 The ending of Hawthorne's "Dr Heidegger's Experiment" is particularly satisfying for me because it completes the story's moral pattern with neat, ironic precision. Everything the four guests have done during their brief return to youth leads naturally to their final, absurd decision, and the closing lines expose their foolishness while giving the wise doctor the last word. It is satisfying not because it is happy, but because it feels inevitable and just.

Hawthorne prepares for the ending from the start. Each of the four guests, Mr Medbourne, Colonel Killigrew, Mr Gascoigne and the Widow Wycherly, is introduced through a past of greed, self-indulgence, political corruption or vanity, and the doctor's question is whether a second youth would make them wiser. The withered rose, revived in the water from the Fountain of Youth, acts as a symbol of what the experiment offers: a temporary return of bloom. Because the reader is invited from the beginning to judge whether these people have learned anything, the ending feels like the answer to a question the story has been asking all along.

As the guests drink, Hawthorne shows them repeating exactly the faults that ruined them. Gascoigne launches into patriotic speeches, Medbourne works out schemes for profit, Killigrew grows boisterous and flirtatious, and the Widow gazes

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at her reflection. The comedy reaches a climax when the three men quarrel over the Widow and grapple with one another. In the struggle the vase is knocked over and the precious water spills across the floor. This is structurally satisfying: their rivalry destroys the very thing that gave them youth, so their folly literally causes their own loss. The narrator's delicate detail of an old butterfly reviving in the spilt water and settling on the doctor's white head adds a touch of beauty, and also reminds us that the doctor, unlike his guests, remains calm and unmoved.

The return to age is handled with quiet, almost chilling restraint. A shiver passes through the guests, the rose begins to shrivel again, and the four realise they are once more old and grey. The Widow's instinctive reaction, hiding her face because she cannot bear to see her own wrinkles, completes her portrait as someone who has never valued anything beyond beauty. There is something sad here, but the pathos is controlled; Hawthorne refuses to let us pity them too much, because their behaviour has shown that they wasted their second chance just as they wasted their first.

What makes the ending truly satisfying is the contrast between the doctor and his guests. Dr Heidegger, still holding the withered rose, declares that he would not drink from the fountain even if it flowed at his own doorstep, and adds "Such is the lesson ye have taught me!" His calm judgement turns the whole evening into a moral demonstration: he has learned from watching them that a return to youth without wisdom is worthless. The rose also links him to Sylvia, the fiancée he lost long ago, and his willingness to love the faded flower as it is suggests a mature acceptance of time and loss that his friends cannot reach.

The final sentence then delivers the sharpest irony. The four guests have learned nothing, and instead resolve to make a pilgrimage to Florida to find the Fountain

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of Youth and drink from it constantly. Hawthorne ends on this decision without comment, letting the reader recognise its foolishness. It is darkly comic, because their response to losing youth through their own folly is to seek more of the same, and it confirms the story's warning that people cling to illusions rather than accept the lessons of experience.

For me, then, the ending is satisfying because it ties together symbol, character and moral. The spilt water, the withering rose, the doctor's wise refusal and the guests' ridiculous plan all fit together, so that the story closes with a clear, ironic judgement on human vanity, delivered with a light touch that lets the reader enjoy the joke while feeling its truth.