Cambridge Assessment International Education

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LITERATURE IN ENGLISH **0475/41**

Paper 4 Unseen **October/November 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. The poet gives a voice to the feelings of a passionate fourteen-year-old girl.

How does the poet convey the girl's emotions?

To help you answer this question, you might consider:

- how the poet conveys the girl's frustrations
- how she imagines the girl's desires
- the effect of the girl's unanswered questions.

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Hanging Fire

I am fourteen

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with the door closed.

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Or

2 Read carefully the following extract from a novel which is set in the time of the mythical war between the Ancient Greeks and the Trojans. Achilles, the greatest hero of the Greeks and the son of a goddess, is refusing to fight and is preparing to sail home. His friend, Patroclus, is now on the battlefield in his place and is violently killed by Hector, the Trojan leader. The passage shows Achilles' reaction.

How does the writer make this such a dramatic moment?

To help you answer this question, you might consider:

- how the writer portrays the death of Patroclus
- how she conveys Achilles' attempts to deny what he has heard
- the impact of the silence at the end of the passage.

On the battlefield, Patroclus hears Achilles calling his name and for a second his concentration falters. A second, but long enough, because suddenly there's Hector straight in front of him. He tries to raise Achilles' sword but already it's too late. Hector drives the spear hard into his side – it goes in so easily – and suddenly he's on the ground, thrashing like a fish in a pool that's drying out. Dark shapes of Trojan fighters crowd in, blocking off the light. 'Achilles!' he shouts. And again, as the red blood spurts out of him and his spirit begins to slip away into the dark: '*Achilles. . .*'

A mile away, Achilles lifts his head. Just for a moment there he'd thought he heard Patroclus calling his name. Patroclus? Well, no, it can't be. A man's voice, though, which is strange because the men are all out there fighting. There are only women left in the camp. The bitterness of that realization bites into him.

He knows whose voice it was, but he's afraid to let himself think what that could mean. So he tells himself, *No, it was a gull*. Their cries sound amazingly human sometimes. . .

Lifting his gaze to the rafters, he tries to pray, but prayer never comes easily to him – he's his mother's son, he knows too much about the gods – and after a few stumbling words he abandons the attempt. No point sitting here. Time he was back on the ship, though if the advance continues at that rate, they'll soon be out of sight.

He's barely reached the door when he hears his name being called again, and this time there's no mistaking it. So they are back! Somehow or other – god knows how – *they're back*.

He throws the door open and steps on to the veranda, expecting to see the yard teeming with men and horses, but there's nobody there. Only silence, and somewhere in the distance a door banging loose on its hinges.

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Back on to the ship, see what's happening. Halfway up the rope ladder, he stops, because something's caught his eye. A movement. And then he sees it: a chariot being driven hard and fast, the horses emerging from a cloud of dust. Somehow – and he knows this immediately – he has to stop that chariot getting here, because when it does, he's going to hear the worst words he's ever heard. And so he exerts the full force of his will to push it back, but not even his power can stop time or solidify air.

He takes a deep breath, lets himself drop to the ground and walks into the centre of the yard to wait for what he knows is coming. Nothing moves in the huts around him. Not a breath of wind stirs.

White sun. Black shadows, knife-edged. Silence.

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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

2

The writer makes this a dramatic moment by separating the reader's knowledge from Achilles'. We witness Patroclus die in the opening paragraph, so everything that follows becomes an agonising wait as the greatest of the Greek heroes struggles not to know what we already know. The drama lies less in the violence than in the slow, terrible approach of the truth, which ends not in an outburst but in a stunned and ominous silence.

The death of Patroclus is told with brutal speed. The repetition of "A second, but long enough" shows how a single lapse in concentration costs him his life, and it is cruelly ironic that the lapse is caused by hearing Achilles call his name: love itself becomes the distraction that kills him. The present tense makes the action feel immediate, while the word "suddenly", used twice, captures how quickly a warrior is reduced to a body "on the ground". The aside "it goes in so easily" is especially chilling. Its flat, almost conversational tone suggests the shocking fragility of human flesh, and the word "easily" strips the moment of any heroic glory. The simile "thrashing like a fish in a pool that's drying out" is painfully undignified: Patroclus is no longer a hero in borrowed armour but a helpless creature gasping for life. The image of "Dark shapes" that "crowd in, blocking off the light" works on two levels, as Trojan soldiers surrounding him and as death closing over him. His final cry, which fades from "'Achilles!'" to the trailing ellipsis of "'Achilles. . .'", lets his voice and his spirit drain away together, and the red blood against the encroaching dark gives the scene a vivid, tragic intensity.

The writer then cuts to Achilles with the simple phrase "A mile away", a cinematic shift that makes the reader feel the distance between the friends and the

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impossibility of rescue. What follows is a study in denial. The fragmented internal voice, "Patroclus? Well, no, it can't be", lets us hear Achilles arguing with himself, and the casual "Well" is heartbreaking because we know exactly why it is that voice. The writer tells us plainly that "He knows whose voice it was, but he's afraid", so the reader sees a fearless warrior made fearful for the first time. His explanation, "No, it was a gull", is almost pitiful in its smallness, and the added reassurance that their cries can sound "amazingly human" reads like a man talking himself into a lie. Even his attempt at prayer collapses into "a few stumbling words", which suggests he is cut off from any comfort. When he hears his name again, his hopeful exclamation "So they are back!" raises his spirits only so the writer can crush them: the yard he expects to be "teeming with men and horses" is empty, and the single detail of "a door banging loose on its hinges" creates an eerie, desolate atmosphere, as if the camp itself has been abandoned by life.

Tension rises further when Achilles sees the chariot. The short, broken sentences "A movement. And then he sees it" slow the reader down and mimic his dawning dread. The phrase "being driven hard and fast" contrasts with Achilles' paralysis, and his desperate wish to stop it arriving is deeply moving because he understands that it carries "the worst words he's ever heard". The writer's comment that "not even his power can stop time or solidify air" is a striking reversal: the son of a goddess, who can do almost anything on the battlefield, is powerless against grief. I find this the most dramatic moment of all, because his superhuman strength is suddenly shown to be useless.

The passage ends in stillness rather than action. Achilles chooses to "wait for what he knows is coming", and the use of "knows" shows denial finally giving way to acceptance. The repeated negatives, "Nothing moves" and "Not a breath of wind stirs", create an unnatural hush, as though the world is holding its breath with

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him. The final line, "White sun. Black shadows, knife-edged. Silence.", is a series of minor sentences that strips language down to stark images. The contrast of white and black suggests a world without comfort or middle ground, and "knife-edged" quietly recalls the violence of Patroclus' death, hinting at the violence Achilles' grief may soon unleash. By ending on the single word "Silence", the writer withholds the news itself, so the reader is left suspended in Achilles' dread at the precise moment before his world breaks, which makes the scene more powerful than any description of his grief could be.