OXFORD

INTERNATIONAL
AQA EXAMINATIONS

INTERNATIONAL GCSE
ENGLISH LITERATURE

Paper 1 Prose and Drama

Time allowed: 45 minutes

Materials

For this paper you must have:

- an Oxford International AQA Examinations 16-page answer book.

Instructions

- Answer **one** question from either **Section A** or **Section B**.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book.
- Use black ink or black ball-point pen. Do **not** use pencil.

Information

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 30.

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Section A: Prose

Answer **one** question from either **Section A** or **Section B** on your chosen text.

Either

Charles Dickens: *Great Expectations*

0 1 In this extract Pip meets Magwitch for the first time.

> 'Hold your noise!' cried a terrible voice, as a man started up from among the graves at the side of the church porch. 'Keep still, you little devil, or I'll cut your throat!'
>
> A fearful man, all in coarse grey, with a great iron on his leg. A man with no hat, and with broken shoes, and with an old rag tied round his head. A man who had been soaked in water, and smothered in mud, and lamed by stones, and cut by flints, and stung by nettles and torn by briars; who limped, and shivered, and glared and growled; and whose teeth chattered in his head as he seized me by the chin.
>
> 'O! Don't cut my throat, sir,' I pleaded in terror. 'Pray don't do it, sir.'
>
> 'Tell us your name!' said the man. 'Quick!'
>
> 'Show us where you live,' said the man. 'Pint out the place!'
>
> I pointed to where our village lay, on the flat in-shore among the alder-trees and pollards, a mile or more from the church.
>
> The man, after looking at me for a moment, turned me upside down, and emptied my pockets. There was nothing in them but a piece of bread. When the church came to itself – for he was so sudden and strong that he made it go head over heels before me, and I saw the steeple under my feet – when the church came to itself, I say, I was seated on a high tombstone, trembling, while he ate the bread ravenously.

Starting with this extract, explore how Dickens presents the relationship between Pip and Magwitch in *Great Expectations.*

[30 marks]

or

0 2 How does Dickens present ideas about education in *Great Expectations*?

[30 marks]

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or

Harper Lee: *To Kill a Mockingbird*

0 3 In this extract Atticus is questioning Mayella Ewell at the trial of Tom Robinson.

> 'Miss Mayella,' said Atticus, in spite of himself, 'a nineteen-year-old girl like you must have friends. Who are your friends?'
>
> The witness frowned as if puzzled. 'Friends?'
>
> 'Yes, don't you know anyone near your age, or older, or younger? Boys and girls? Just ordinary friends?'
>
> Mayella's hostility, which had subsided to grudging neutrality, flared again. 'You makin' fun o'me agin, Mr Finch?'
>
> Atticus let her question answer his.
>
> 'Do you love your father, Miss Mayella?' was his next.
>
> 'Love him, whatcha mean?'
>
> 'I mean, is he good to you, is he easy to get along with?'
>
> 'He does tollable, 'cept when – '
>
> 'Except when?'
>
> Mayella looked at her father, who was sitting with his chair tipped against the railing. He sat up straight and waited for her to answer.
>
> 'Except when nothin',' said Mayella. 'I said he does tollable.'
>
> Mr Ewell leaned back again.
>
> 'Except when he's drinking?' asked Atticus so gently that Mayella nodded.

Starting with this extract, explore the ways Lee uses the character of Mayella Ewell in *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Remember to include comments about how Lee presents the character of Mayella.

[30 marks]

or

0 4 How does Harper Lee present the black community in *To Kill a Mockingbird*?

[30 marks]

Turn over for the next question

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or

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie: *Purple Hibiscus*

0 5 In this extract Papa beats Mama, Jaja and Kambili because Kambili has eaten breakfast before the Sunday church service.

> He unbuckled his belt slowly. It was a heavy belt made of layers of brown leather with a sedate leather-covered buckle. It landed on Jaja first, across his shoulder. Then Mama raised her hands as it landed on her upper arm, which was covered by the puffy sequined sleeve of her church blouse. I put the bowl down just as the belt landed on my back. Sometimes I watched the Fulani nomads, white jellabas flapping against their legs in the wind, making clucking sounds as they herded their cows across the roads in Enugu with a switch, each smack of the switch swift and precise. Papa was like a Fulani nomad – although he did not have their spare, tall body – as he swung his belt at Mama, Jaja and me, muttering that the devil would not win. We did not move more than two steps away from the leather belt that swished through the air.
>
> Then the belt stopped, and Papa stared at the leather in his hand. His face crumpled; his eyelids sagged. 'Why do you like sin?'
>
> Mama took the belt from him and laid it on the table.
>
> Papa crushed Jaja and me to his body. 'Did the belt hurt you? Did it break your skin?' he asked, examining our faces. I felt a throbbing on my back, but I said no, that I was not hurt. It was the way Papa shook his head when he talked about liking sin, as if something weighed him down, something he could not throw off.

Starting with this extract, explore the ways Adichie presents domestic violence in *Purple Hibiscus*.

[30 marks]

or

0 6 How does Adichie present the character of Aunty Ifeoma in *Purple Hibiscus*?

[30 marks]

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or

Kazuo Ishiguro: *Never Let Me Go*

0 7 In this extract Miss Lucy has just overheard a group of Hailsham students talking about their plans for the future. Two boys have said they would like to become actors and travel to America.

The extract from Chapter 7 of *Never Let Me Go* cannot be reproduced due to third party copyright constraints.

Starting with this extract, explore how Ishiguro presents the Guardians in *Never Let Me Go*.

[30 marks]

or

0 8 Never *Let Me Go* has been described as 'a novel that questions at the deepest level what it is to be human'.

How does Ishiguro explore 'what it is like to be human' in *Never Let Me Go*?

[30 marks]

Turn over for the next question

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or

Markus Zusak: *The Book Thief*

0 9 In this extract Hans Hubermann tries to help one of the Jews being marched through the town on the way to Dachau.

> Then, one human.
> Hans Hubermann.
>
> It happened so quickly.
> The hand that held firmly onto Liesel's let it drop to her side as the man came struggling by. She felt her palm slap her hip.
> Papa reached into his paint cart and pulled something out. He made his way through the people, onto the road.
> The Jew stood before him, expecting another handful of derision, but he watched with everyone else as Hans Hubermann held his hand out and presented a piece of bread, like magic.
> When it changed hands, the Jew slid down. He fell to his knees and held Papa's shins.
> He buried his face between them and thanked him.
> Liesel watched.
> With tears in her eyes, she saw the man slide further forward, pushing Papa back to cry into his ankles.
> Other Jews walked past, all of them watching this small, futile miracle.

Starting with this extract, explore how Zusak presents people's kindness in *The Book Thief*.

[30 marks]

or

1 0 How does Liesel change in *The Book Thief* and how does Zusak present these changes by the ways he writes?

[30 marks]

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or

Oxford AQA Short Stories Anthology

1 1 In this extract from *Sandpiper* by Ahdaf Soueif, the narrator is thinking about her relationship with her husband.

> Yes, I am sick – but not just for home. I am sick for a time, a time that was and that I can never have again. A lover I had and can never have again.
>
> I watched him vanish – well, not vanish, slip away, recede. He did not want to go. He did not go quietly. He asked me to hold him, but he couldn't tell me how. A fairy godmother, robbed for an instant of our belief in her magic, turns into a sad old woman, her wand into a useless stick. I suppose I should have seen it coming. My foreignness, which had been so charming, began to irritate him. My inability to remember names, to follow the minutiae of politics, my struggles with his language, my need to be protected from the sun, the mosquitoes, the salads, the drinking water. He was back home, and he needed someone he could be at home with, at home. It took perhaps a year. His heart was broken in two, mine was simply broken.
>
> I never see my lover now. Sometimes, as he romps with Lucy on the beach, or bends over her grazed elbow, or sits across our long table from me at a dinner-party, I see a man I could yet fall in love with, and I turn away.

Starting with this extract, explore the ways writers present unhappy relationships. Write about the relationship between the narrator and her husband in *Sandpiper* and one relationship from **one** other story from the Oxford AQA Anthology.

[30 marks]

or

1 2 How do writers present conflict in *The Rain Horse* and **one** other story from the Oxford AQA Anthology?

[30 marks]

Turn over for Section B

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Section B: Drama

Answer **one** question from either **Section A** or **Section B** on your chosen text.

Either

William Shakespeare: *Julius Caesar*

1 3 In this extract Cinna the poet is on his way to Caesar's funeral.

CINNA	Directly I am going to Caesar's funeral.
FIRST PLEBEIAN	As a friend or an enemy?
CINNA	As a friend.
SECOND PLEBEIAN	That matter is answered directly.
FOURTH PLEBEIAN	For your dwelling – briefly.
CINNA	Briefly, I dwell by the Capitol.
THIRD PLEBEIAN	Your name, sir, truly.
CINNA	Truly, my name is Cinna.
FIRST PLEBEIAN	Tear him to pieces, he's a conspirator.
CINNA	I am Cinna the poet, I am Cinna the poet.
FOURTH PLEBEIAN	Tear him for his bad verses, tear him for his bad verses.
CINNA	I am not Cinna the conspirator.
FOURTH PLEBEIAN	It is no matter, his name's Cinna. Pluck but his name out of his heart and turn him going.
THIRD PLEBEIAN	Tear him, tear him! Come, brands ho, firebrands! To Brutus', to Cassius'; burn all! Some to Decius' house, and some to Casca's; some to Ligarius'! Away, go!
Exeunt all the plebeians forcing out Cinna	

Starting with this extract, explore how Shakespeare presents the plebeians in *Julius Caesar*.

[30 marks]

or

1 4 How does Shakespeare present the relationship between Brutus and Cassius in *Julius Caesar*?

[30 marks]

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or

William Shakespeare: *Macbeth*

1 5 In this extract Macduff has just been told that his wife and children have been murdered.

MACDUFF	Did heaven look on, And would not take their part? Sinful Macduff, They were all struck for thee. Naught that I am; Not for their own demerits but for mine, Fell slaughter on their souls. Heaven rest them now.
MALCOLM	Be this the whetstone of your sword, let grief Convert to anger. Blunt not the heart, enrage it.
MACDUFF	O, I could play the woman with mine eyes And braggart with my tongue. But gentle heavens, Cut short all intermission. Front to front Bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myself; Within my sword's length set him. If he scape, Heaven forgive him too.

Starting with this extract, explore how Shakespeare presents the character of Macduff in *Macbeth*.

[30 marks]

or

1 6 Macbeth says: 'I dare do all that may become a man; who dares do more is none.'

How does Shakespeare present different ideas about being 'a man' in *Macbeth*?

[30 marks]

Turn over for the next question

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or

JB Priestley: *An Inspector Calls*

1 7 In this extract Gerald has just told the Inspector about his involvement with Eva Smith.

GERALD [*gravely*]**:** I see. Well, I never saw her again, and that's all I can tell you.

INSPECTOR: It's all I want to know from you.

GERALD: In that case – as I'm rather more – upset – by this business than I probably appear to be – and – well, I'd like to be alone for a little while – I'd be glad if you'd let me go.

INSPECTOR: Go where? Home?

GERALD: No. I'll just go out – walk about – for a while, if you don't mind. I'll come back.

INSPECTOR: All right, Mr Croft.

SHEILA: But just in case you forget – or decide not to come back, Gerald, I think you'd better take this with you. [*She hands him the ring.*]

GERALD: I see. Well, I was expecting this.

SHEILA: I don't dislike you as I did half an hour ago, Gerald. In fact, in some odd way, I rather respect you more than I've ever done before. I knew anyhow you were lying about those months last year when you hardly came near me. I knew there was something fishy about that time. And now at least you've been honest. And I believe what you told us about the way you helped her at first. Just out of pity. And it was my fault really that she was so desperate when you first met her. But this has made a difference. You and I aren't the same people who sat down to dinner here.

Starting with this extract, explore the ways Priestley presents the relationship between Sheila and Gerald in *An Inspector Calls*.

[30 marks]

or

1 8 How does Priestley present responsibility in *An Inspector Calls*?

[30 marks]

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or

Arthur Miller: *The Crucible*

1 9 In this extract Mary Warren has just returned home after a day giving evidence in the courtroom.

MARY WARREN: You must see it, sir, it's God's work we do. So I'll be gone every day for some time. I'm – I am an official of the court, they say, and I – [*She has been edging toward offstage*]

PROCTOR: I'll official you! [*He strides to the mantel, takes down the whip hanging there.*]

MARY WARREN [*terrified, but coming erect, striving for her authority*]: I'll not stand whipping any more!

ELIZABETH [*hurriedly, as Proctor approaches*]: Mary, promise now you'll stay at home –

MARY WARREN [*backing from him, but keeping her erect posture, striving, striving for her way*]: The Devil's loose in Salem, Mr Proctor; we must discover where he's hiding!

PROCTOR: I'll whip the Devil out of you! [*With whip raised he reaches out for her, and she streaks away and yells.*]

MARY WARREN [*pointing at* **ELIZABETH**]: I saved her life today!

[*Silence. His whip comes down.*]

ELIZABETH [*softly*]: I am accused?

MARY WARREN [*quaking*]: Somewhat mentioned. But I said I never see no sign you ever sent your spirit out to hurt no one, and seeing I do live so closely with you, they dismissed it.

ELIZABETH: Who accused me?

MARY WARREN: I am bound by law. I cannot tell it. [*To Proctor*]: I only hope you'll not be so sarcastical no more. Four judges and the King's deputy sat to dinner with us but an hour ago. I – I would have you speak civilly to me, from this out.

Starting with this extract, explore how Miller presents the character of Mary Warren in *The Crucible*.

[30 marks]

or

2 0 How does Miller present the importance of reputation in *The Crucible*?

[30 marks]

Turn over ►

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or

Lorraine Hansberry: *A Raisin in the Sun*

2 1 In this extract Mama is wondering what to do with the insurance money the family is about to receive.

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Starting with this extract, write about how Hansberry explores the importance of dreams in *A Raisin in the Sun*.

[30 marks]

or

2 2 Mrs Johnson, the Youngers' neighbour, describes the family as 'one proud-acting bunch of coloured folks.' How does Hansberry explore family pride in *A Raisin in the Sun*?

[30 marks]

END OF QUESTIONS

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

Question number

01

Dickens presents the relationship between Pip and Magwitch as one that begins in terror and ends in love, and in tracing that change he challenges the Victorian assumption that a man's worth is fixed by his class or his criminal record. Because the older Pip narrates, we see Magwitch first through the eyes of a frightened child and later through the eyes of a man who has been ashamed of him, so the relationship becomes a measure of how far Pip himself has to grow.

The extract opens with a violent interruption. The exclamation "Hold your noise!" and the threat to "cut your throat" burst out of the silence of the churchyard, and the fact that the man "started up from among the graves" makes him seem almost like a ghost rising from the dead. For a small orphan who has just been looking at his parents' tombstones, Magwitch is a nightmare made flesh. Yet Dickens immediately complicates this. The long, cumulative sentence in which Magwitch is "soaked in water, and smothered in mud, and lamed by stones, and cut by flints" piles up passive verbs, so that the convict is presented as someone things have been done to. The "great iron on his leg" marks him as a prisoner of the state, and the list of injuries invites pity even while the child shrinks away. The final verbs, "limped, and shivered, and glared and growled", mix the suffering of a victim with the snarl of an animal, which captures the double way Pip, and the reader, will see him for much of the novel.

The power in the relationship is shown physically. Magwitch "turned me upside down", and the comic exaggeration of the church that went "head over heels" until Pip "saw the steeple under my feet" reflects how completely his world is overturned. It is also a symbolic moment: this meeting will literally turn Pip's life

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upside down, since Magwitch's money will later lift him into a gentleman's life. Tellingly, all Pip has is "a piece of bread", which the man eats "ravenously". The adverb suggests desperate hunger rather than cruelty, and the scene hints that the relationship is founded on Pip feeding a starving man, an act of unwilling charity that Magwitch never forgets.

Dickens develops this bond quickly. When Pip brings the file and the stolen pork pie, his pity grows, and when Magwitch is recaptured he protects the boy by claiming that he stole the food himself from the blacksmith's. This loyalty quietly reverses the opening: the man who threatened to cut Pip's throat now shields him. The two one-pound notes later passed to Pip by a stranger in the Three Jolly Bargemen keep the convict secretly present in Pip's life, a kind of buried thread in the plot.

The great turning point comes when Magwitch returns from New South Wales and reveals that he, not Miss Havisham, is Pip's benefactor. Dickens uses a stormy night to mirror Pip's inner chaos, and Pip's reaction is horror and repugnance. Magwitch's claim that he is Pip's "second father" is deeply moving, since he has worked as a transported convict to make "a gentleman" of the boy, but Pip can only feel that his fine life rests on a criminal's money. Here Dickens exposes the snobbery of Victorian society, and of Pip himself: the gentility Pip valued turns out to have been bought by the very kind of man he has learned to despise. Magwitch's account of his past, and of Compeyson, who received a lighter sentence because he looked like a gentleman, makes the reader see that the law punished class as much as crime. The revelation that Magwitch is Estella's father adds a final irony, linking the convict to the very girl who made Pip ashamed of being "common".

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By the end, the relationship is transformed. During the failed escape on the Thames and in the prison hospital, Pip stays beside Magwitch, holds his hand and tells him that his lost daughter lives, is a lady and is loved. His closing prayer for mercy on "a sinner" shows that he now sees Magwitch as a fellow human being rather than a disgrace. Pip admits that he has come to see in Magwitch a better man than he had been to Joe.

Ultimately, Dickens uses the relationship to dramatise Pip's moral education. The figure who first rose from the graves as a monster becomes, through gratitude, loyalty and love, almost a true father, and Pip's journey from fear to tenderness shows that real gentility lies in the heart rather than in money or birth.

02 Dickens presents education in Great Expectations as something far broader than book learning. The novel is a Bildungsroman, so its whole structure is a kind of education, and Dickens draws a sharp contrast between the polish taught to make a "gentleman" and the moral education Pip only gains through suffering. In doing so he questions the Victorian belief that schooling and manners make a person better, suggesting instead that the most valuable lessons are about loyalty, humility and love.

At the start, formal education is presented as almost a joke. Pip's village schooling at the evening school run by Mr Wopsle's great-aunt is chaotic, and the old woman sleeps through lessons. Dickens uses comedy here to criticise the poor provision for working-class children in the early nineteenth century. Pip's real teacher is Biddy, and his first painful attempt at a letter to Joe, written on a slate with wild spellings, is both funny and touching. The irony is that Joe, who cannot read it, is delighted, and this is the first sign that Dickens values affection

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over accuracy.

Joe's own lack of education is central. He explains that his violent father kept him from school, and his struggle to read even the letters of his own name shows how poverty deprives people of learning. Yet Dickens presents Joe as morally the wisest figure in the novel. His gentle, ungrammatical speech carries truth, and his patience with Pip shows a goodness that no schooling could teach. Because Pip narrates in retrospect, the older Pip's shame at how he treated Joe colours the whole account, guiding the reader to see Joe's dignity long before the younger Pip does.

The turning point in Pip's attitude comes at Satis House. Estella sneers at his "coarse hands" and "thick boots", and from then on Pip connects being uneducated with being "common". This is a different kind of education: Miss Havisham has deliberately trained Estella to break men's hearts in revenge for her own jilting. Dickens shows that an education shaped by bitterness can damage a child as cruelly as neglect, and Estella's coldness is the product of a corrupt teacher. Pip's own sense of inferiority, learned in that decaying room with its stopped clocks, drives his longing to rise.

When Pip comes into his expectations, Dickens satirises the education of a gentleman. Herbert Pocket, who renames him Handel, corrects his table manners with such kindness that the scene is warmly comic, telling him for instance that it is not necessary to stuff food into his mouth or to use a knife where it does not belong. Pip is tutored by Matthew Pocket, yet among the educated young gentlemen is Bentley Drummle, a brutal and stupid man. Dickens uses Drummle to prove that a gentleman's education is no guarantee of character, and Drummle later mistreats Estella in marriage. Even more pointed is the story of Compeyson,

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the educated forger who is given a lighter sentence than Magwitch at their trial because he looks and speaks like a gentleman. Through this, Dickens attacks a society, and a legal system, that judges people by the surface signs of learning and class.

Biddy offers a contrasting model. She educates herself quietly, becomes a schoolmistress, and gains a modest independence. Her learning is used to serve others: she teaches Pip and later Joe. Dickens shows education rewarded when it is joined with kindness, and the fact that Joe, under Biddy's teaching, can eventually write a letter while nursing Pip through his fever is a small but moving sign of how learning can grow out of love.

Finally, Pip's most important education is moral. He learns, painfully, that his benefactor is the convict Magwitch, and that his genteel life was built on a criminal's gratitude. He loses his fortune, falls ill and is nursed by Joe, and he realises that the people he was ashamed of were worth more than the gentlemen he admired. His growing tenderness towards Magwitch and his humility before Joe and Biddy show that he has finally learned what matters.

Dickens therefore presents two kinds of education side by side. The education of a gentleman makes Pip snobbish, idle and in debt, whereas the education of experience makes him humble and loving. The Bildungsroman structure suggests that real learning cannot be bought with money: it has to be earned through mistakes, shame and forgiveness.

03 Lee uses Mayella Ewell as both a perpetrator and a victim of Maycomb's injustice. Her false accusation sends an innocent black man to his death, yet Lee presents

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her with uncomfortable sympathy, as a lonely, abused girl trapped by poverty, her father and the racial code of 1930s Alabama. Through Mayella, Lee shows how prejudice damages everyone it touches, including those who use it.

In the extract, Atticus's questions expose Mayella's isolation. The simple phrase "a nineteen-year-old girl like you must have friends" assumes something ordinary, but her puzzled echo, "Friends?", reveals that the idea is almost foreign to her. Lee shows that Mayella cannot even recognise the word as something that applies to her. Her suspicion that Atticus is "makin' fun o'me agin" is revealing: she reads ordinary politeness as mockery, which suggests that no one has ever treated her with respect. Lee adds that Atticus "let her question answer his", a quiet narrative comment that invites the reader to understand, as Scout slowly does, that the answer to "Who are your friends?" is no one.

The questions about her father are even more disturbing. Mayella's reply, "Love him, whatcha mean?", shows that love is not something she connects with Bob Ewell. Her broken answer, "He does tollable, 'cept when", trails off, and the dash shows her stopping herself in fear. Lee then directs our eyes to Bob, "sitting with his chair tipped against the railing", who "sat up straight and waited". This small physical detail is chilling: his change of posture acts as a silent threat, and Mayella immediately retreats into "Except when nothin'". Only when Atticus asks "so gently" about drinking does she nod. The adverb "gently" contrasts Atticus's humane manner with Bob's menace, and implies that Mayella responds to kindness when she finds it. Lee leaves the darker suggestion of what happens when Bob is drinking for the reader to infer, which makes it more troubling.

Beyond the extract, Lee uses Mayella to show the effects of poverty and neglect. The Ewells live behind the town dump in a shack, and the children are rarely at

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school. Yet in this squalor Lee places a row of red geraniums in chipped slop jars, tended as carefully as Miss Maudie's flowers. This image is symbolic: it suggests that Mayella longs for beauty and dignity and tries, against everything, to make her life better. Tom's evidence adds to this picture. She saved her nickels for a long time to send the younger children into town for ice cream so she could be alone with him, a detail that is both pitiful and sinister. Scout concludes that Mayella must have been the loneliest person in the world, lonelier even than Boo Radley, and this comparison links Mayella to the novel's outsiders.

However, Lee does not let sympathy excuse her. Mayella breaks what Atticus calls a "rigid and time-honored code" by tempting a black man, and to cover her shame and her father's violence she accuses Tom of rape. Her outburst in court, when she shouts at the jury and calls them cowards, shows how she uses the power her whiteness gives her. The bruises on the right side of her face, which point to the left-handed Bob, and Tom's useless left arm prove the truth, yet the jury still convicts. Lee uses Mayella to expose how, in the segregated South, a white woman's word, even an obviously false one, outweighed a black man's innocence. Mayella is therefore partly responsible for Tom's death when he is shot trying to escape.

Atticus's response guides the reader's judgement. In his closing speech he says he has "nothing but pity" for her, describing her as a victim of cruel poverty and ignorance. Lee shapes our view through Scout, a child narrator who sees Mayella's loneliness without fully understanding the adult evil around her, which makes the pity feel innocent and honest.

Lee therefore uses Mayella as a tragic, divided figure. She is a mockingbird of sorts herself, damaged by her father and her world, and yet she destroys a true

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mockingbird in Tom. Through her, Lee shows that racism and poverty create victims who in turn create further victims, and that justice in Maycomb fails both of them.

04 Harper Lee presents Maycomb's black community as dignified, loyal and generous, yet systematically oppressed by the white town that depends on it. Seen through the eyes of Scout, a child who has not yet absorbed the town's prejudice, black characters appear more decent than many of the white characters who look down on them. However, because the novel is told from a white perspective, Lee's portrayal also has limits, and the community is often presented as a group to be pitied and protected rather than heard.

Calpurnia is the most developed black character, and through her Lee shows both closeness and division. She is the Finches' cook and housekeeper, but she is also a stern mother figure who disciplines Scout and teaches her manners, as when she scolds her for criticising Walter Cunningham's eating. Her position in the household is unusually trusted, which reflects Atticus's values. Yet the visit to First Purchase Church reveals that Calpurnia leads a double life. She speaks differently among her own people, explaining that it would not do to seem as if she were putting on airs. Lee uses this detail to show that black people in Maycomb had to adapt themselves constantly to survive in two separate worlds.

The church scene presents the black community with warmth and admiration. The church is named First Purchase because it was bought with the first earnings of freed slaves, which ties the community to its history of slavery and its pride in freedom. There are no hymn-books because few can read, so Zeebo, the garbage collector and Calpurnia's son, "lines" the hymns for the congregation. Lee shows

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how a community denied education has found its own way to worship together. The congregation's generosity is clear when Reverend Sykes keeps the doors shut until they have collected enough money for Helen Robinson, even though they are poor. Lee contrasts this practical charity with the hypocrisy of the white missionary circle, who pity distant Africans while despising their neighbours.

Lee does not present the community as entirely united, however. Lula confronts Calpurnia for bringing white children to the church, and her hostility shows that segregation breeds resentment on both sides. This brief moment adds realism, suggesting that black people had good reason to distrust white intrusion.

Tom Robinson is presented as the novel's central victim and as a mockingbird figure. In court he is courteous and honest, in contrast to the rude, swaggering Bob Ewell. His left arm, crippled in a cotton gin, makes the charge against him physically impossible, yet he is convicted. Tellingly, his fatal mistake is admitting that he felt sorry for Mayella, because a black man pitying a white woman overturns the racial hierarchy of the 1930s South. Lee uses Tom to expose the injustice of Jim Crow laws and the courts that enforced them, echoing real cases such as the Scottsboro trials. His death, shot many times while trying to escape from prison, is described by Mr Underwood as the senseless slaughter of songbirds, linking him directly to the title.

The black community's response to the trial is presented with great dignity. Forced to sit in the coloured balcony, they rise as Atticus leaves the courtroom, and Reverend Sykes tells Scout, "Miss Jean Louise, stand up. Your father's passin'." This quiet act of respect is one of the most moving moments in the novel. The next morning the Finches' kitchen is full of food left by black families in gratitude, though they have so little. Lee shows that the community recognises moral

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courage even when it cannot achieve justice.

Atticus's visit to tell Helen Robinson of Tom's death shows the human cost of racism. Helen collapses as soon as she sees his face, and Lee presents her grief through the shocked observation of Dill. Elsewhere, Dolphus Raymond's mixed-race children are described as belonging nowhere, which shows how segregation leaves people trapped between communities.

Some readers argue that Lee's presentation is limited: black characters rarely speak for themselves and often seem to exist to teach the white Finches a lesson. Yet perhaps this limitation is itself revealing, since it reflects the narrowness of Scout's world. Overall, Lee presents the black community as morally strong and deeply wronged, and through their suffering she forces readers to confront the injustice of a society that would destroy its most innocent members.

05 Adichie presents domestic violence in Purple Hibiscus as something hidden behind religion, love and respectability, and as a cycle that damages every member of the family, including the abuser. Because Kambili narrates in a flat, careful voice, the reader often understands more than she can say, so the violence feels all the more disturbing for being described so calmly.

In the extract, the beating is shown as ritual rather than rage. Papa "unbuckled his belt slowly", and the adverb suggests something deliberate and almost ceremonial. Kambili describes the belt in strange detail, "layers of brown leather" with a "sedate leather-covered buckle". The word "sedate" is unsettling: it belongs to calm respectability, the very image Papa presents in public, and it implies that the violence is part of the family's ordered, churchgoing life. The repeated verb

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"landed" moves from Jaja to Mama to Kambili, and the sentence structure shows the blows spreading across the whole family, so that no one is spared. The detail of Mama's "puffy sequined sleeve of her church blouse" sharply juxtaposes Sunday finery with brutality, suggesting that faith and violence are tangled together in this home.

The simile comparing Papa to a "Fulani nomad" herding cows with a switch, "swift and precise", is especially telling. It reduces his wife and children to animals being driven, yet it is offered through a child's memory of watching nomads, as if Kambili can only process the horror by turning it into a familiar picture. Papa's muttering "that the devil would not win" reveals his self-justification: he believes he is fighting sin, not hurting his family. The final line of the paragraph, "We did not move more than two steps away", is perhaps the most disturbing, since it shows how trained the family has become in submission.

Adichie then shows Papa's tortured love. His face "crumpled", he asks "Why do you like sin?", and he crushes the children to him asking "Did it break your skin?" Kambili says she is not hurt though she feels "a throbbing" on her back. This lie shows how completely she has learned to protect her father and deny her own pain. Her observation that something "weighed him down" invites a degree of sympathy, suggesting that Papa is himself a prisoner of the rigid faith he imposes.

Across the novel, the violence escalates. The opening, when Papa flings his heavy missal at Jaja and breaks Mama's figurines on the étagère, makes the shattered ornaments a symbol of the family's fragile surface. After every beating Mama polishes those figurines, a silent ritual of coping. Mama loses a baby after Papa beats her, and Kambili notices the trail of blood but the family never speaks of it openly. When Kambili and Jaja stay in the same house as their grandfather, whom

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Papa regards as a heathen, he pours hot water over their feet, saying that this is what they do to themselves when they walk into sin. The language of punishment as self-inflicted shows how he shifts the blame onto his victims. Later, when he finds the painting of Papa-Nnukwu and Kambili curls over its torn pieces, he kicks her so badly that she ends up in hospital. Jaja's damaged finger, injured as a child for failing his catechism, is a lasting physical mark of this regime.

Adichie also reveals where Papa's violence comes from. He tells Kambili that as a boy he was punished by a priest with boiling water on his hands, which shows how cruelty passed down through a colonial, missionary Catholicism has shaped him. This complicates any simple judgement. Adichie contrasts the private tyrant with the public hero who funds charities and whose newspaper bravely criticises the military government, showing how easily abuse can hide behind reputation.

The image of the "love sip" captures Kambili's confused feelings. The scalding tea Papa offers his children burns their tongues, yet Kambili treasures it as a sign of his love. Adichie suggests that in this house, love and pain have become inseparable.

Silence is the family's response for most of the novel. Kambili and Jaja communicate through their eyes rather than aloud, and Kambili stammers and struggles to speak at Aunty Ifeoma's. Only in Nsukka, among laughter and argument, does she begin to find her voice. The violence finally ends with more violence, as Mama poisons Papa's tea, and Jaja takes the blame and goes to prison. Adichie thus presents domestic violence as a force that poisons love and faith, and which can only be broken at a great and tragic cost.

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Adichie presents Aunty Ifeoma as the novel's voice of freedom: a strong, warm, outspoken woman who offers Kambili and Jaja an alternative to their father's oppressive world. Seen through the eyes of the timid Kambili, Ifeoma seems almost astonishing in her boldness, and Adichie uses her to show that faith, family and love can exist without fear.

From her first appearance, Ifeoma is defined by her voice and laughter. Kambili notices how loudly she laughs and how freely she speaks, even to Papa, her elder brother, whom everyone else treats with nervous deference. Because Kambili narrates in such a restrained way, Ifeoma's ease stands out sharply, and her confidence is presented as something Kambili has never seen in a woman. She teases, argues and contradicts, and Adichie contrasts this openly with Mama's soft, apologetic silence.

Ifeoma's home in Nsukka is presented as the opposite of the Enugu compound. Her flat is small, and as a widowed university lecturer she struggles with the rising cost of food, fuel shortages and unpaid salaries. Yet it is full of noise, books, music and debate. At meals her children Amaka, Obiora and Chima are encouraged to question and disagree, and Ifeoma praises them for thinking for themselves. Adichie suggests that freedom matters more than wealth: Kambili's home is luxurious but silent, while Ifeoma's is poor but alive. Her prayers are full of Igbo songs and joyful singing, which shows a Catholic faith that is warm and tolerant rather than rigid and punishing.

Ifeoma's tolerance is clearest in her treatment of her father, Papa-Nnukwu. While Papa refuses to let his children spend time with a man he calls a heathen, Ifeoma insists that he is simply a traditionalist and treats him with love, bringing him to Nsukka when he is ill. Through her, Adichie suggests that traditional Igbo culture

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and Christianity can live side by side, in contrast to Papa's belief, shaped by colonial missionaries, that the old ways must be rejected. Kambili's experience of watching Papa-Nnukwu's morning prayers in Ifeoma's flat is one of the moments where her view of the world begins to change.

The symbol of the purple hibiscus is closely tied to Ifeoma. The flowers grow in her garden in Nsukka, and Kambili later compares Jaja's defiance to these "experimental" hibiscus, describing them as "rare, fragrant with the undertones of freedom". Ifeoma's garden is where change grows, and when Jaja takes stalks home to plant in Enugu, Adichie suggests that Ifeoma's influence has been carried into Papa's house. The purple colour, a blend rather than a pure shade, mirrors Ifeoma's blending of faith and tradition.

Ifeoma is also presented as a mother figure who helps Kambili find her voice. She notices Kambili's silence and gently challenges her, encouraging her to answer back when Amaka mocks her. Under Ifeoma's roof Kambili begins to laugh and to recognise her feelings for Father Amadi. Adichie shows that Ifeoma's care is not soft indulgence but a belief that children should grow strong and independent.

Ifeoma is equally direct with Mama. When Mama returns after her miscarriage, Ifeoma urges her to leave, telling her that sometimes life begins when marriage ends. This bold remark challenges the expectation in Nigerian society that a wife must endure anything to keep her marriage, and it plants the idea of escape that Mama later acts upon, though in a far darker way than Ifeoma intended.

Adichie does not make Ifeoma perfect or all-powerful. She is worn down by the political instability that follows the coup, and the university's increasing control over its staff leaves her under suspicion and eventually without work. Her decision

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to leave for America shows that even a strong woman can be defeated by a corrupt state. Some readers may feel that this departure suggests freedom in Nigeria is fragile and has to be sought elsewhere.

Overall, Adichie presents Aunty Ifeoma as a vital counterpoint to Papa. Where he rules by fear, she leads by laughter, argument and love, and through her Adichie shows Kambili, and the reader, that independence and faith need not be enemies. Like the hibiscus in her garden, Ifeoma represents a different kind of freedom, one which takes root in the people she touches.

07 Ishiguro presents the Guardians as deeply ambiguous figures: they are teachers, carers and substitute parents, but they are also, in effect, the guards of a system that raises children to die. The word "guardian" suggests protection, yet the novel steadily subverts it, so that the reader comes to ask whether the Guardians protect the students from the truth or simply protect society from having to face it. Miss Lucy's outburst in this extract is the moment when that tension breaks the surface.

In the extract, Miss Lucy reacts to the boys' innocent daydream of acting and travelling to America by abandoning the careful language the Guardians normally use. She tells the students plainly that such futures are impossible, that their lives have already been decided, and that they will begin donating organs while they are still young. The setting under the pavilion in the rain adds to the sense of an unplanned, almost confessional moment, as if she can no longer bear the pretence. Her complaint that the students have been "told and not told" is the key phrase. It exposes the Guardians' method: information is drip-fed so early and so vaguely that the children absorb it without truly understanding it. Ishiguro makes Miss

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Lucy the one Guardian who sees this as a betrayal, and her frustration suggests a genuine moral conscience. Yet even her honesty is limited, since the information changes nothing about the students' fate.

What makes the scene especially powerful is Kathy's reaction as narrator. She recalls the speech with a strange calmness, noting that most students seemed to shrug it off. Because Kathy is a reliable recorder but an unreliable interpreter, the reader understands the horror of Miss Lucy's words more fully than she does. Ishiguro uses this gap between narrator and reader to show how successfully the Guardians have shaped the students' acceptance.

Across the novel, the other Guardians reveal different sides of this role. Miss Geraldine is the gentle favourite, admired by the younger students, and Ruth claims she was given a pencil case by her as a special mark of affection. Ruth's secret guard formed to protect Miss Geraldine from an imagined kidnap plot is full of dramatic irony: the children believe they are protecting their Guardian, when it is they who will never be protected. The episode shows how much the students crave a parental bond with the adults around them.

Miss Emily, the head Guardian, is the clearest authority figure. In her assemblies she is stern and controlled, and the students both respect and fear her. Her true motives are revealed only near the end, when Kathy and Tommy visit her and Madame. She explains that Hailsham was a progressive experiment, and that the students' art was collected to show the outside world that they were human, saying that it was done "to prove you had souls at all". This revelation reframes the Guardians as reformers, almost campaigners, who fought to give clones a better childhood. Yet Miss Emily's defence is chilling in its own way. She insists that by sheltering the students from the truth they gave them a happy childhood,

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and she treats the outcome of their lives as unchangeable. The reader may feel that her kindness is real but her vision is limited: she has improved the conditions of the system without ever opposing the system itself.

Madame, though not a Guardian, sharpens this picture. The students notice that she shrinks from them as if from spiders, and when she watches Kathy dancing alone to the song "Never Let Me Go" she weeps. At the end she calls Kathy and Tommy "poor creatures", a phrase that is pitying but also distancing, since a creature is not quite a person. Ishiguro shows that even those who fight for the clones cannot fully see them as equals.

Miss Lucy's fate shows the limits on any Guardian who breaks the rules. Later she tells Tommy that she was wrong to say his lack of creativity did not matter, and soon afterwards she leaves Hailsham. Miss Emily later admits that Lucy was let go because her ideas would have destroyed the students' happiness.

Ultimately, Ishiguro presents the Guardians as kind people trapped within a cruel arrangement. Their care is sincere, but their silence makes them complicit. Through them the novel asks an uncomfortable question about how ordinary decent people can accept and even soften an injustice instead of resisting it.

08 Ishiguro explores what it is to be human by taking characters whom society regards as less than human, clones raised only to donate their organs, and showing that their inner lives are full of the same loves, jealousies, hopes and fears as anyone else's. The quiet horror of the novel lies in this paradox: the more ordinary Kathy, Ruth and Tommy seem, the more inhuman the society that uses them appears.

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Ishiguro's most important method is Kathy's narrative voice. She tells the story as a carer in her early thirties, looking back with a gentle, conversational tone, often addressing the reader as "you" as if we share her experiences. Her concerns are strikingly normal: friendships, school gossip, who sat where, small quarrels and reconciliations. By giving the clones such a familiar perspective, Ishiguro makes it impossible to see them as anything other than human. The dystopian elements, such as "donations", "carers" and "completing", are mentioned in the same calm voice, and the gap between Kathy's ordinary tone and the terrible facts creates the novel's unsettling effect.

The novel suggests that memory is central to being human. Kathy repeatedly returns to Hailsham in her mind, and her careful, sometimes uncertain recollections show a need to make sense of her life. When she is unsure whether she remembers something correctly, she admits it, which makes her feel more real. At the very end, standing by a fence in Norfolk covered in rubbish, she imagines Tommy appearing across the field. Her refusal to let her memories go suggests that holding on to the people we love is part of what makes us human, even when we know we will lose them.

Love and relationships also define humanity in the novel. The triangle between Kathy, Ruth and Tommy is full of recognisable emotion: Ruth's possessiveness, Kathy's hidden longing and Tommy's loyalty. Ruth's jealousy and her cruelty in keeping Kathy and Tommy apart are painfully human flaws, and her later confession and wish to make amends show the capacity for regret and forgiveness. The rumour that a couple truly in love might be granted a "deferral" becomes a hope that their love could prove their worth. When Madame and Miss Emily tell them that deferrals never existed, Tommy's anguished screaming in the dark field

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echoes the tantrums of his childhood, a moment of overwhelming pathos.

Ishiguro also uses art and creativity to raise the question of the soul. At Hailsham, students are encouraged to produce art, and the best is taken for Madame's "Gallery". The students believe this is a privilege, but Miss Emily finally explains that the art was collected to show the outside world that the clones were human, saying it was done "to prove you had souls at all". This turns the novel's central question back on the reader: the clones never doubt their own humanity, but the society around them does. Tommy's late drawings of strange imaginary animals, created in the hope of winning a deferral, suggest a fragile, almost childlike attempt to show what is inside him.

The search for identity reinforces this idea. Ruth's hope of finding her "possible", the person from whom she was cloned, reflects a universal human desire to know where we come from. When the woman in the office in Norfolk turns out not to resemble her closely, Ruth bitterly claims that clones are modelled on "trash", such as prostitutes and criminals. Her despair shows how deeply she wants her origins to matter, which is itself a profoundly human need.

The reactions of "normal" people expose the limits of others' humanity. Madame shrinks from the students as if from spiders, and even in pity she calls Kathy and Tommy "poor creatures". The Guardians, too, accept the system while trying to soften it. Ishiguro suggests that the readiness of society to look away, because the donation programme cures illnesses, reveals a moral failure. The real question is perhaps not whether the clones are human, but whether those who exploit them are behaving humanely.

Perhaps the most disturbing aspect is the clones' acceptance. They never attempt

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to escape, and Kathy describes her fate with resignation. Some readers find this frustrating, yet it can be read as Ishiguro's comment on all human lives: everyone lives with the knowledge of death and largely accepts the roles they are given. In this sense, the clones' short lives are a heightened version of our own.

Ishiguro therefore presents humanity not as a biological fact but as something shown through memory, love, creativity and the longing for meaning. By making the clones so human and the society around them so cold, the novel asks the reader to question who in the story is truly human.

09 Zusak presents kindness in The Book Thief as something small, physical and dangerous: a piece of bread, a book, a teddy bear, a hiding place. Against the vast machinery of Nazi Germany these acts can look "futile", yet Death, the narrator who has seen the worst of humanity, treats them as the only real miracles in the novel. Kindness is therefore presented not as a feeling but as a choice made under threat, and its value lies precisely in the fact that it costs something.

The extract builds slowly towards Hans's act. The short, isolated sentences "Then, one human." and "Hans Hubermann." set him apart from the crowd typographically, as if he steps out of the page as well as onto the road. The phrase "one human" is especially telling: in a parade designed to strip Jews of their humanity, Zusak implies that kindness is what makes someone fully human, and that most of the watching crowd have temporarily lost that quality. The urgency of "It happened so quickly" suggests that true kindness is instinctive rather than calculated; Hans does not weigh the risk, which is exactly why it is so moving.

Zusak focuses on hands to show what kindness gives up. Hans's hand "let it drop"

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from Liesel's, and the sharp physical detail "She felt her palm slap her hip" reminds us that by helping a stranger Hans briefly lets go of his own child's safety. The bread is presented "like magic", a simile that links kindness to wonder, almost to fairy tale, in a world where ordinary decency has become extraordinary. The Jew's reaction is overwhelming: he "fell to his knees", "held Papa's shins" and "buried his face". The verbs move steadily downward, showing how starved the man is not only of food but of recognition. Death's final description, "this small, futile miracle", holds two ideas in tension. The bread cannot save the man, and Hans is whipped for it, yet it is still a "miracle". I think Zusak wants the reader to see that kindness matters even when it changes nothing materially, because it insists that the victim is a person.

The extract also shows kindness being passed on. "Liesel watched" stands alone as a paragraph, and her "tears" suggest she is learning from Papa what courage looks like. This links to the wider novel, where Liesel and Rudy later leave bread on the road for another procession of prisoners. Bread becomes a motif of kindness across the text: it echoes the food the Hubermanns share with Max even though they barely have enough themselves. Zusak's structure makes these repeated gestures form a pattern, as if kindness, like words, can be planted and grow.

The Hubermanns' greatest kindness is hiding Max in the basement. Hans does this to keep a promise to Erik Vandenburg, Max's father, who saved his life in the First World War, so kindness is shown as a debt of loyalty that outlasts war. Rosa is a more surprising figure. Her constant insults, such as "Saumensch", seem harsh, yet she nurses Max when he is ill and comes to Liesel's school, pretending to scold her, only to tell her that Max has woken up. Zusak uses this contrast between rough speech and tender action to suggest that kindness is often hidden beneath ordinary, even unpleasant, surfaces, just as Max is hidden beneath the house.

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Max repays this kindness with art. He paints over pages of Mein Kampf to create The Standover Man for Liesel, literally erasing Hitler's words with a gift of friendship. This is perhaps the novel's clearest statement of how kindness resists cruelty: it takes the materials of hatred and turns them into something loving. Similarly, Ilsa Hermann, the mayor's wife, quietly allows Liesel to take books from her library and later gives her a blank book to write in, which becomes the very story we are reading. Kindness here is creative; it gives Liesel her voice.

Even Rudy, who longs to be hard, shows kindness at the moment it is least expected, placing a teddy bear beside the dying enemy pilot. Death, who collects the pilot, notices this gesture, and it is fitting that the narrator who ends by confessing "I am haunted by humans" is moved by such moments. The cruelty of the Nazi regime makes these acts poignant because they are rare and risky. Zusak ultimately presents kindness as the quiet counterweight to evil, never strong enough to stop the war, but strong enough to prove that humanity survives inside it.

10 Liesel changes from a silent, traumatised and illiterate child into a young woman who understands both the destructive and the redemptive power of words. Zusak presents this change as a moral education as much as an emotional one: she learns to trust, then to love, and finally to judge the world she lives in. Crucially, he tells her story through Death, whose knowing, fragmented narration lets us see every stage of her growth against the shadow of what is coming.

At the start of the novel Liesel is defined by loss. Her brother Werner dies on the train, her mother gives her away, and the only thing she takes from the graveside

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is The Grave Digger's Handbook, a book she cannot read. Zusak makes this first theft deeply symbolic: Liesel clings to words before she understands them, as if they are the only thing left connecting her to her family. On Himmel Street she is defensive and wary. She wets the bed, has nightmares, and lashes out physically, beating Ludwig Schmeikl when he mocks her poor reading. Her violence is presented sympathetically, because it shows a child with no other language for her pain.

The first great change is learning to trust, and Zusak ties this to Hans. Their midnight reading lessons after her nightmares, and later the words painted on the basement wall, turn the place of her fear into a place of learning. Hans's accordion and his patience give her stability, while Rosa's harsh nicknames, like "Saumensch", gradually reveal themselves as a gruff form of love. The structure of the early chapters, built around small domestic routines, mirrors the way Liesel slowly settles into a family. By the time she fears losing them more than anything, the reader has watched that love being built word by word.

Liesel's moral sense develops as she begins to understand Nazism. At the book burning on Hitler's birthday she realises that the Führer is responsible for her mother's suffering, and she steals The Shoulder Shrug from the smouldering pile. This second theft is a quiet act of rebellion, rescuing words from those who want to destroy them. When she declares that she hates Hitler, Hans slaps her on the church steps, and the shock of this violence from the gentlest character shows her that words can be dangerous as well as precious. From here, Liesel learns to keep secrets, most importantly the secret of Max in the basement.

Max accelerates her growth. Their friendship, based on shared nightmares and shared stories, teaches her empathy. She brings him descriptions of the weather

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because he cannot see the sky, and when he is ill she reads to him and leaves him small gifts. Zusak presents her maturing through what she gives rather than what she takes: the book thief becomes a giver. Max's gifts to her, especially The Word Shaker, frame this explicitly as a parable in which a girl's words grow into a tree that resists the Führer's forest of hatred. Liesel is presented as that girl.

Her growing power with words is seen in the air raid shelter, where she reads aloud to calm her frightened neighbours. Words, which once made her feel ashamed, now make her a source of comfort. Yet Zusak complicates this. In the mayor's library she tears pages from a book because she has realised that words also built the Nazi regime. Her line "I have hated the words and I have loved them" captures her final, mature understanding: language is morally neutral until people choose how to use it. This is perhaps the clearest marker of how far she has come from the child who simply wanted to read.

Death's narration shapes how we see these changes. He reveals the destruction of Himmel Street and Rudy's death long before they happen, so that every scene of growth is shadowed by loss. This foreshadowing makes Liesel's development feel urgent and fragile. When the bombs fall, she survives only because she is in the basement writing her own story. Her final transformation, from reader to author, is complete: she becomes the book thief of the title, but what she has stolen is a voice.

At the end, Liesel kisses Rudy's dead lips, the kiss he always asked for, which shows how her emotional defensiveness has given way to open grief and love. Death's closing words, "I am haunted by humans", suggest that Liesel has changed him too. Zusak presents her change not as a simple happy ending but as survival with understanding: she has learned both what humans can destroy and what they

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can create.

11 Both Ahdaf Soueif and Doris Lessing present unhappy relationships as ones defined by distance rather than open conflict. In Sandpiper the narrator and her husband have not quarrelled so much as drifted into two separate worlds, while in Through the Tunnel Jerry and his widowed mother love each other but cannot quite reach one another. In both stories the unhappiness lies in what remains unsaid, and both writers use setting to make that silent distance visible.

Soueif's extract is built on loss and repetition. The narrator is "sick for a time, a time that was and that I can never have again", and the repetition of "time" and "never have again" gives the passage the rhythm of mourning. Strikingly, she speaks of her husband as "A lover I had", as though he were dead, even though he is sitting across the dinner table. This suggests that the man she married has effectively disappeared, replaced by a stranger. The verbs she uses to describe the change, "slip away, recede", are gentle and gradual, echoing the movement of the tide on the beach where the story is set. The relationship did not break suddenly; it ebbed.

The fairy tale image deepens this sense of disillusion. The narrator becomes "a sad old woman, her wand into a useless stick", a metaphor that shows how love depended on belief and enchantment. Once her husband stops believing in her "magic", she is reduced to something ordinary and powerless. Soueif then lists the qualities that "began to irritate him": her "inability to remember names", her "struggles with his language", her "need to be protected" from sun, mosquitoes and drinking water. The cumulative list mirrors the slow accumulation of small irritations that wear a marriage down, and it reveals the cultural gulf at the heart

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of the story. What was once "charming" foreignness becomes a barrier. The line "he needed someone he could be at home with, at home" is painfully circular, the triple use of "home" stressing that his home is precisely where she can never belong.

The most poignant sentence is "His heart was broken in two, mine was simply broken." The parallel structure contrasts their experiences: he is divided between her and his country, while she is left with nothing to divide. Yet the final paragraph complicates our sympathy. When she sees him with their daughter Lucy, she glimpses "a man I could yet fall in love with, and I turn away." The word "yet" holds a flicker of hope, but she chooses to turn away, perhaps to protect herself. The unhappiness is therefore shared and mutual, a tragedy with no villain. Throughout the story, the hot beach and the heavy sun intensify her sense of being trapped in a landscape that belongs to him, so the setting itself becomes an expression of their estrangement.

In Through the Tunnel, the unhappiness is quieter. Jerry's mother is a widow on holiday with her only son, and Lessing presents her as anxious to avoid being possessive while also wanting to keep him close. At the start she walks towards the safe, crowded beach while Jerry looks back at the wild, rocky bay. This contrasting setting symbolises the gap opening between them: the safe beach represents his childhood and her protection, the bay represents risk and independence. When she lets him go, Lessing shows her worry carefully hidden, which suggests that love and loneliness are mixed together in this relationship.

Jerry's need to prove himself by swimming through the underwater tunnel is undertaken completely alone, and the fact that he never tells his mother about it shows the secret distance between them. The tunnel itself works as a symbol of a

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rite of passage: he passes through darkness and danger and emerges, bleeding, into a new stage of life that she has no part in. When he returns, their conversation is polite and slightly awkward. He boasts that he can stay underwater for minutes, and she gently tells him not to overdo it, missing the significance completely. The reader understands what she does not, and this dramatic irony creates sadness: mother and son are close in body but separated by experience.

Comparing the two, Soueif's relationship is more openly unhappy because it is adult love that has died, and the narrator narrates her own grief in a confessional first person voice. Lessing's third person narration, by contrast, observes from outside, so the strain between Jerry and his mother is implied rather than stated. Yet both writers suggest that relationships suffer when people move into worlds the other cannot enter, whether a foreign country or the private challenge of growing up. In Sandpiper that distance feels permanent; in Through the Tunnel it feels like a natural, if painful, part of a child separating from a parent.

12 Ted Hughes in The Rain Horse and Graham Greene in The Destructors both present conflict as something that grows out of a deeper disturbance than the surface struggle suggests. In The Rain Horse a young man's battle with a horse becomes a conflict between a modern, detached human being and a nature that seems to reject him. In The Destructors the gang's war against an old man's house is really a conflict between generations, between past and present, and within the gang itself. In both stories the conflict ends with the destruction of something, and in both the reader is left unsettled about who, if anyone, has won.

Hughes begins with internal conflict before any external threat appears. The young man returns to the countryside of his youth after twelve years and feels only

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disappointment and irritation; the landscape fails to give him the feelings he expected. The relentless rain, mud and cold make the setting hostile from the start, and his discomfort, with his good clothes and shoes ruined, shows that he no longer belongs here. This prepares us for the horse, which seems to embody the landscape's resentment of him.

The horse is presented as a symbol of nature's threatening, almost supernatural power. It appears suddenly at the edge of the wood, black and motionless in the rain, watching him. Hughes makes its behaviour feel deliberate and intelligent: it charges, retreats, waits for him and charges again, as though it is hunting him. The young man's fear grows into panic, and his attempts to fight back, throwing stones and arming himself with a stake, seem pathetic against the size and force of the animal. Hughes's long, breathless sentences during the chases mimic his exhaustion and confusion. The conflict becomes a kind of nightmare in which the man is reduced to something primitive, running, hiding and defending himself like an animal.

The ending refuses a clear resolution. When the horse finally disappears, the young man is left battered, filthy and drained, his clothes ruined, with a strange sense of having been emptied out by the experience. Hughes implies that the real conflict was within him all along: between the man he has become and the wild world he once knew. Nature has not simply attacked him; it has exposed how disconnected and fragile modern man is.

Greene's conflict is social rather than natural. The story is set in London after the Blitz, among bomb sites, and the gang meets in a car park beside Old Misery's house, which has survived the bombing. The house was built by Wren, so it represents history, beauty and the old order. Old Misery, Mr Thomas, represents

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the older generation, and the boys' hostility towards him is shown when he offers them sweets and they treat his kindness with suspicion. The conflict between old and young is therefore also a conflict between a culture that valued craftsmanship and a generation raised among ruins, for whom destruction is normal.

Greene also presents conflict within the gang. At the start Blackie is the leader, but T., the quiet new boy, takes control when he proposes destroying the house from the inside. The dialogue in the early meeting shows the tension: the other boys are shocked and suspicious, and a vote is held which Blackie loses. Greene uses this to show how quickly authority shifts and how T.'s cold intensity wins power. When asked whether he hates Old Misery, T. dismisses love and hate as "soft" and claims there are only things, which suggests a frightening emptiness. His motive is not personal hatred but a kind of nihilism born of the war.

The most disturbing idea is that the narrator presents the gang's work as almost artistic. Greene describes them working with the seriousness of builders, and he comments that "destruction after all is a form of creation". This paradox suggests that the boys find purpose and even beauty in tearing things down, a reflection of a world in which the adults have just spent years doing the same. The final image of the lorry driver pulling the house down and laughing, telling Mr Thomas there is nothing personal about it, extends the conflict beyond the boys: even an adult finds the destruction funny. The old man's grief is met with laughter, which is the story's bleakest note.

Comparing the two, Hughes presents conflict as a primal struggle between an individual and nature, told closely through one character's fear, while Greene presents it as a collective, almost political conflict shaped by history. Yet both writers use conflict to reveal a loss of connection: the young man with the land he

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came from, the boys with the past and with ordinary human feeling. In both stories the conflict leaves the reader with a disturbing sense that destruction has become part of the modern world.

13 Shakespeare presents the plebeians of Rome as a powerful but mindless force: easily moved, quick to change sides, and capable of terrifying violence once their emotions are roused. They are rarely individuals; they speak as a crowd, and their importance lies in the way the political leaders use them. In this extract, the murder of Cinna the poet shows the logical end of that manipulation, as the people of Rome become a mob that no longer cares about truth, reason or even names.

The extract opens with what seems like an interrogation, but Shakespeare quickly turns it into something absurd and threatening. The plebeians fire questions at Cinna, and their speeches are short, overlapping and aggressive. The use of four separate voices, First, Second, Third and Fourth Plebeian, creates the effect of being surrounded, and Cinna's attempts to answer playfully, echoing their words "Directly", "Briefly" and "Truly", show a man trying to keep a conversation civil when it has already become a trial. His wit is wasted on them; they are not listening.

The turning point is brutally sudden. As soon as Cinna gives his name, the First Plebeian cries "Tear him to pieces, he's a conspirator." There is no pause and no evidence. Cinna's desperate repetition, "I am Cinna the poet, I am Cinna the poet", shows him clinging to his identity, but the Fourth Plebeian's reply, "Tear him for his bad verses", turns the murder into a grotesque joke. This dark humour is deeply unsettling: the crowd is no longer seeking justice for Caesar but enjoying violence

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for its own sake. The line "It is no matter, his name's Cinna" reveals the emptiness of their logic. To them a name is enough, and the cruel image "Pluck but his name out of his heart" literalises their violence, suggesting they would destroy a man to remove a word.

The scene ends in chaos. The Third Plebeian's exclamations, "Tear him, tear him!" and "firebrands!", and the rapid list of conspirators' houses, "To Brutus', to Cassius'; burn all!", create a frantic rhythm as the crowd spreads through Rome. The stage direction "forcing out Cinna" leaves his death offstage, which perhaps makes it more horrifying, as the audience must imagine what happens next. This is anarchy, and Shakespeare shows that once the mob is unleashed, innocent people are its first victims.

This violence is the result of manipulation that Shakespeare has been building throughout the play. In the opening scene, the commoners are introduced through comedy. The cobbler's punning, calling himself a mender of "bad soles", presents them as cheerful working people enjoying a holiday to celebrate Caesar's triumph. Yet the tribunes Flavius and Marullus scold them as "You blocks, you stones, you worse than senseless things!", reminding them that they once cheered for Pompey, the very man Caesar has defeated. From the start, then, Shakespeare establishes the plebeians as fickle, following whoever is most powerful at the moment.

Their fickleness reaches its height in the funeral speeches of Act 3 Scene 2. Brutus speaks to them in balanced, logical prose and wins them over so completely that they shout "Let him be Caesar", a response that is deeply ironic, since he has just killed Caesar to stop one man ruling Rome. They have entirely missed his point. Antony then turns them in the opposite direction with emotional rhetoric: the repeated phrase "honourable man", the display of Caesar's wounded body and

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the reading of the will. Shakespeare shows their allegiance shifting line by line until they cry for revenge and rush off to burn the conspirators' houses. Antony's chilling comment, "Mischief, thou art afoot", shows that he knows exactly what he has released, and the scene with Cinna follows immediately to show its consequences.

For an Elizabethan audience in 1599, with an ageing queen and no clear heir, the fear of civil disorder was very real, and the plebeians may have reflected anxieties about what an angry crowd might do if the political order broke down. Shakespeare does not present them as evil, but as dangerous when they are used by ambitious men. Later, Antony coldly discusses how to reduce the money left to the people in Caesar's will, showing that the leaders who flatter the plebeians actually despise them.

Overall, Shakespeare presents the plebeians as a reflection of the play's central concern with persuasion and power. They have enormous strength but no direction of their own, and the murder of Cinna the poet exposes the tragic cost of a society in which words can be twisted to turn ordinary people into a mob.

14 Shakespeare presents the relationship between Brutus and Cassius as an unequal partnership built on mutual need: Cassius needs Brutus's reputation for honour, and Brutus needs Cassius's practical energy, yet neither fully understands the other. It begins in manipulation, is strained by Brutus's moral idealism, almost breaks in a bitter quarrel, and ends in a love that seems genuine only when it is too late. Through this relationship Shakespeare explores the gap between principle and politics.

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At the start, Cassius approaches Brutus carefully, as a persuader working on a target. In Act I Scene 2 he flatters Brutus, offering to be his "glass", a mirror that will show Brutus his own worth, and then works on his fears about Caesar. His rhetoric is vivid and contemptuous: Caesar "doth bestride the narrow world / Like a Colossus", while other men "peep about" beneath him. He appeals directly to Brutus's sense of Roman freedom with "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, / But in ourselves, that we are underlings." The affectionate "dear Brutus" sits beside a message designed to provoke, which shows how Cassius blends friendship with persuasion. Brutus's guarded replies reveal his caution, but also that Cassius has touched something already present in him.

Shakespeare then gives Cassius a soliloquy that exposes his motives. He admits "Well, Brutus, thou art noble; yet I see / Thy honourable metal may be wrought / From that it is disposed." The metaphor of metal being reshaped suggests that Cassius sees Brutus as material to be worked, and the soliloquy form lets the audience share his calculation. He plans to throw forged letters through Brutus's window, pretending to be ordinary citizens. The relationship is therefore founded on a deception, and the audience is made uneasy that Brutus's noble decision rests on Cassius's trickery. Cassius knows that the conspiracy needs Brutus because his reputation will make murder look like justice.

Once Brutus joins, however, the balance of power reverses. Brutus repeatedly overrules Cassius, and Shakespeare structures these moments to show that Cassius is usually right. Brutus rejects an oath, refuses to include Cicero and, most fatally, insists that Antony be spared, saying "Let us be sacrificers, but not butchers, Caius." Later he allows Antony to speak at the funeral despite Cassius's warning. Cassius gives way each time, which suggests both his respect for Brutus and his dependence on him. Dramatic irony grows as the audience watches Brutus's

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idealism make every practical mistake Cassius predicted.

The tension breaks in the quarrel scene of Act 4 Scene 3. Brutus accuses Cassius of having "an itching palm", of selling offices for money, and Cassius is wounded that Brutus has humiliated him. The language is sharp and personal. Brutus mocks him with "There is no terror, Cassius, in your threats", and Cassius's emotional response, offering his dagger and his heart, shows that for him the friendship matters more than the argument. The scene is striking because the cold political manipulator of Act I now seems desperate for love, while the noble Brutus appears proud and harsh. Only when Brutus reveals that Portia is dead does the audience understand his anger, and Cassius's shocked sympathy turns the quarrel into reconciliation. Shakespeare shows two men under pressure whose bond is deeper than either expected.

Even so, Brutus again overrules Cassius on strategy, insisting on marching to Philippi with his famous speech "There is a tide in the affairs of men". Cassius agrees, though reluctantly, and the decision leads to defeat. The final stage of their relationship is tragic. Believing Titinius captured and the battle lost, Cassius has Pindarus kill him, declaring "Caesar, thou art revenged, / Even with the sword that killed thee." His death results from a misunderstanding, which reflects how the whole relationship has been shaped by misjudgement.

Brutus's response is generous and moving. He calls Cassius "The last of all the Romans", an epitaph that praises him for the very Roman virtues he once questioned. He also says "O Julius Caesar, thou art mighty yet!", recognising that Caesar's spirit has turned the conspirators against themselves. By the end, the friendship has become genuine and loyal, but it has been unable to save either man.

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Overall, Shakespeare presents Brutus and Cassius as a partnership in which manipulation slowly turns into affection, and practical sense repeatedly gives way to idealism. Their relationship dramatises the play's central tragedy: noble intentions cannot succeed when they rest on deception and poor judgement, and the bond between them, however sincere by the end, is destroyed by the very conspiracy that created it.

15 Shakespeare presents Macduff as the moral opposite of Macbeth: a loyal, perceptive and deeply feeling man whose goodness is defined by his love for Scotland and his family. Yet he is not a flawless hero. His decision to flee to England leaves his family undefended, and in this extract Shakespeare shows him wrestling with guilt as well as grief. By the end he becomes the instrument of justice, but his journey there is marked by suffering, which makes his victory feel earned rather than simple.

The extract opens with Macduff questioning God: "Did heaven look on, / And would not take their part?" The rhetorical question reveals a crisis of faith, as he cannot understand how divine justice allowed innocent children to be slaughtered. Yet he quickly turns the blame on himself: "Sinful Macduff, / They were all struck for thee." Referring to himself in the third person creates a sense of self-judgement, as if he stands outside himself to condemn the man who left them. "Naught that I am" is a stark admission of worthlessness. Shakespeare makes clear that his family died "Not for their own demerits but for mine", suggesting that Macduff sees their deaths as punishment for his choices. This guilt makes him more human and complex than a conventional avenger. The short final prayer, "Heaven rest them now", shows his tenderness surviving within despair.

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Malcolm's response, "Be this the whetstone of your sword", converts grief into a weapon, and the imperative "Blunt not the heart, enrage it" reflects a view of manhood in which feeling must be turned into violence. Macduff's reply is more subtle. He admits "O, I could play the woman with mine eyes / And braggart with my tongue", recognising two easy responses, weeping and boasting, and rejecting both. Earlier in this scene he insists that he must "feel it as a man", showing that for Macduff true masculinity includes grief. Shakespeare uses him to challenge the brutal idea of manhood that Lady Macbeth promotes elsewhere in the play.

His grief then hardens into purpose. The phrase "Cut short all intermission" shows his impatience, and the confrontational image "Front to front / Bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myself" anticipates the final duel. Calling Macbeth "this fiend of Scotland" presents him as demonic, which aligns Macduff with heaven's side. The final lines, "If he scape, / Heaven forgive him too", are bitterly ironic: Macduff stakes everything on the fight, implying that if he lets Macbeth escape, he will be so much to blame that heaven might as well forgive the tyrant too. His determination is absolute.

Beyond the extract, Shakespeare presents Macduff as perceptive from early on. He discovers Duncan's body and cries "O horror, horror, horror!", and his line "Confusion now hath made his masterpiece!" shows his sense that the natural order has been destroyed. While Macbeth speaks in elaborate, suspicious language, Macduff's grief is direct. In his conversation with Ross and the Old Man, his language becomes cautious; he refuses to attend Macbeth's coronation at Scone, and his remark "Lest our old robes sit easier than our new!" hints, carefully, that the new reign may be worse. This guarded speech shows a politically shrewd man

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who knows that open opposition is dangerous.

The witches' apparition warns Macbeth to "beware Macduff", and Macbeth's response, to slaughter his family, is the play's most savage act. Shakespeare shows us Lady Macduff's perspective before the murder. She accuses her husband of abandoning them, saying "He loves us not; / He wants the natural touch." This invites the audience to question Macduff. Perhaps he put his country before his family; perhaps he simply never imagined Macbeth would kill women and children. Either way, Shakespeare makes his patriotism costly.

In England, Macduff is tested by Malcolm, who pretends to be more wicked than Macbeth. Macduff's cry "O Scotland, Scotland!" and his response to Malcolm's false confessions, "Fit to govern? / No, not to live", show that his loyalty is to Scotland's good, not to any individual. This makes him a symbol of the honest subject a Jacobean audience would admire, someone who supports lawful kingship rather than personal ambition.

In the final act he fulfils the prophecy, revealing he was "from his mother's womb / Untimely ripped", and his command "Turn, hell-hound, turn!" echoes the demonic imagery of the extract. He brings Macbeth's head to Malcolm, restoring order. Overall, Shakespeare presents Macduff as a man whose goodness is tested by terrible loss, and whose combination of feeling and courage offers the play's most convincing model of what a man should be.

16 Macbeth's line "I dare do all that may become a man; who dares do more is none" contains the play's moral argument about masculinity: true manhood has limits, and a man who crosses them becomes something less than human. Shakespeare

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sets this idea against a more brutal version of masculinity, voiced most powerfully by Lady Macbeth, in which being a man means daring anything, including murder. Through Macbeth's fall, and through contrasting figures such as Macduff, Banquo and Duncan, Shakespeare suggests that the most complete men combine courage with conscience and feeling.

The play opens with a traditional, warrior ideal. The Captain describes Macbeth in battle as a fearless killer who "unseamed him from the nave to th'chops", and the graphic, almost gleeful violence of the image presents him as admirable precisely because he is ruthless. Duncan rewards this with titles, calling him "worthy" and praising him as a valiant cousin. In this world, manhood is proved on the battlefield, and Shakespeare makes the audience share this admiration at first. Yet the same capacity for violence will later be turned against Duncan himself, which suggests that this ideal of manhood is dangerous when separated from loyalty.

The quotation in the question comes from Act I Scene 7, when Macbeth has decided not to kill Duncan. Here he defines manhood morally: a man does what is fitting and honourable, and anyone who goes further "is none", no longer a man at all. Lady Macbeth immediately attacks this definition. She tells him "When you durst do it, then you were a man", tying masculinity entirely to daring and action. Her taunts work because Shakespeare shows how insecure Macbeth is about his identity, and her shocking image of dashing out the brains of her own nursing baby rather than break her word suggests she has rejected every gentle, maternal quality to achieve power. Earlier she calls on spirits to "unsex me here", implying that in her view cruelty is masculine and compassion is weak. For a Jacobean audience, a wife controlling her husband and rejecting her womanhood in this way would have seemed deeply unnatural, and Shakespeare uses it to expose how twisted her version of manhood is.

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Macbeth adopts this brutal ideal after the murder. When he persuades the murderers to kill Banquo, he mocks them: when they protest "We are men, my liege", he replies "Ay, in the catalogue ye go for men", comparing them to different breeds of dog. He now uses the same tactic his wife used on him, questioning manhood to provoke violence. At the banquet, Lady Macbeth asks him "Are you a man?" when he sees Banquo's ghost, showing that even his terror is treated as a failure of masculinity. Shakespeare presents the irony clearly: the more Macbeth tries to prove himself a man through killing, the more he becomes a monster, exactly as his own line predicted.

Macduff offers the opposite model. When he learns that his family have been murdered, Malcolm urges him to "Dispute it like a man", but Macduff answers "I shall do so; / But I must also feel it as a man." Here Shakespeare explicitly redefines manhood to include grief and love. Macduff then turns his feeling into lawful action against a tyrant, combining emotion with courage. Banquo too is a more balanced man. He hears the same prophecies as Macbeth but resists them, and his protective love for Fleance, urging him to flee as he is attacked, shows a masculinity built on care rather than ambition. Duncan, though too trusting, represents a wise, generous older man whose authority comes from kindness.

By the end, Macbeth clings to a hollow, purely physical idea of manhood. Trusting the prophecy that no man "of woman born" can harm him, he fights on, and even when he learns that Macduff was "Untimely ripped" he chooses to die fighting. There is a remnant of the old warrior here, but it feels empty because he has already destroyed everything that gave his courage meaning. Old Siward's acceptance of his son's death, glad that he died like a soldier, presents a more traditional view, but Malcolm's gentler response suggests the new king will value

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feeling too.

Overall, Shakespeare presents competing ideas of what it means to be "a man". The violent, daring masculinity championed by Lady Macbeth leads to tyranny and destruction, while the play's restoration of order comes through men like Macduff and Malcolm, who show that real manhood includes conscience, love and restraint. Macbeth's own early words prove tragically true: by daring to do more than becomes a man, he becomes none.

17 Priestley presents the relationship between Sheila and Gerald as one that begins as a polished social and commercial arrangement and is slowly stripped down to something more honest, but also more fragile. In this extract the engagement is effectively broken, yet paradoxically Sheila speaks to Gerald with more genuine respect than at any point before. Priestley uses the couple to show that relationships built on appearances cannot survive the Inspector's questions, and that only the young are capable of the kind of change he demands.

At the start of the extract Gerald is unusually exposed. The adverb "gravely" in the stage direction and his broken, hesitant speech, interrupted by pauses as he admits he is more "upset" than he appears, show the easy confidence of the "well-bred young man-about-town" beginning to crack. His wish to "be alone for a little while" suggests that his memories of Daisy Renton have moved him more than his engagement ever did. The Inspector's blunt question "Go where? Home?" is pointed: it reminds the audience that Gerald's real home, and his real loyalties, lie with the Crofts rather than with Sheila, and that he may simply walk out of the relationship.

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Sheila's response is the dramatic climax of their relationship. Her line "just in case you forget" is quietly ironic, since Gerald has already "forgotten" her once, during "those months last year when you hardly came near me". The stage direction "She hands him the ring" is a powerful visual reversal. In Act One the ring was produced by Gerald as a gift, a symbol of possession, and Sheila marvelled at it; now she is the one with agency, physically handing back the token that bound her. Gerald's flat reply, "I was expecting this", suggests he understands that the arrangement has been exposed for what it was.

What is most striking, though, is that Sheila does not respond with simple anger. She says she can "rather respect you more than I've ever done before", and the comparative "more" implies that respect was largely missing from the engagement. Her colloquial admission that she "knew there was something fishy" shows that she was never as naive as her parents assumed: she noticed his absence but chose not to challenge it, perhaps because a young woman of her class was expected to accept such things. The short, emphatic sentences, "And now at least you've been honest" and "Just out of pity", show her weighing his behaviour fairly, while her acceptance that "it was my fault really" reveals how far she has moved from the spoilt girl who had Eva sacked. The final line, "You and I aren't the same people who sat down to dinner here", is the thematic heart of the extract. Priestley suggests that the relationship cannot simply resume because the people in it have changed, and Sheila sees this with a clarity Gerald lacks.

Earlier in the play the relationship is presented through the language of business and class. Mr Birling calls Gerald "just the kind of son-in-law I always wanted" and openly hopes for the day when Crofts and Birlings will work together for "lower costs and higher prices". The engagement dinner is less a celebration of love than a merger, and Birling is anxious about Lady Croft's approval because Gerald's

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family are socially superior. Even Sheila's teasing line about "all last summer, when you never came near me" is described as half playful and half serious, so Priestley plants a small crack in the celebration from the opening minutes. Her childish use of "Mummy" also presents her as a girl being handed from one family to another, a reflection of how marriages in 1912 often served family interests.

Gerald's affair with Daisy Renton exposes the inequality of the relationship. His description of Daisy as "very pretty, soft brown hair and big dark eyes" reveals a romantic tenderness he never shows Sheila, while his comment that he "didn't feel about her as she felt about me" shows how easily wealthy men could take and discard working-class women. Sheila's sarcastic "I suppose we're all nice people now" shows her refusing to let the family hide behind respectability.

The ending confirms the gap between them. When the Inspector's identity is questioned, Gerald is quick to believe nothing has really happened, and he offers the ring again, assuming that "everything's all right now". Sheila's reply, "It's too soon. I must think", is crucial. She does not reject him completely, which leaves the relationship open, but she refuses to return to the old arrangement. Priestley, writing in 1945 for an audience about to vote for social change, uses the couple to show that the younger generation can learn, but that only those who genuinely accept responsibility, like Sheila, truly change. Gerald, finally, seems to belong with the Birling parents rather than with her.

18 Priestley presents responsibility as the central moral battleground of An Inspector Calls: a conflict between the selfish individualism of the capitalist Birlings, who believe a man should look after only himself and his own, and the Inspector's socialist vision that "we are responsible for each other". By setting the play in 1912

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but staging it in 1945, Priestley invites his audience to judge which view led to two world wars and which should shape the new Britain they were about to build.

From the opening, Mr Birling defines responsibility in the narrowest possible terms. His speech to Gerald and Eric insists that "a man has to mind his own business and look after himself and his own", and he dismisses "community and all that nonsense". Priestley undermines him through dramatic irony: Birling has just called the Titanic "unsinkable, absolutely unsinkable" and mocked the idea of war, so a 1945 audience knows his judgement is worthless. Crucially, Priestley uses timing to make the point theatrical. At the very moment Birling is lecturing about self-interest, the "sharp ring of a front door bell" interrupts him, as though the play itself is answering his philosophy. The Inspector's arrival is presented as a direct challenge to it.

The Inspector then methodically shows that each character has a share of responsibility for Eva Smith's death. Priestley uses the structure of a detective play, with one photograph and one confession at a time, so that responsibility becomes a chain rather than a single act. Birling sacked her for asking for higher wages; Sheila had her dismissed from Milwards in a fit of jealousy; Gerald kept her and then abandoned her; Eric got her pregnant; Mrs Birling refused her charity. The Inspector's phrase "Each of you helped to kill her" stresses shared, collective guilt, and Priestley suggests that the system of class and money connects all their actions. When Birling protests that he "can't accept any responsibility", the Inspector reminds him that "public men, Mr Birling, have responsibilities as well as privileges", reversing the idea that wealth exempts the powerful from moral duty.

Mrs Birling is Priestley's sharpest study of evasion. She insists "I accept no blame for it at all" and, in a superb piece of dramatic irony, tells the Inspector to "go

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and look for the father of the child. It's his responsibility." The audience gradually realises that the father is her own son, Eric, so she is unknowingly condemning her own family. Priestley uses this moment to show that refusing responsibility is not just cold but self-destructive: the moral order she ignores comes back to her own doorstep.

In contrast, Priestley presents the younger generation as capable of accepting responsibility. Sheila admits "I know I'm to blame" and is genuinely ashamed, while Eric angrily tells his father that he is "not the kind of father a chap could go to when he's in trouble", suggesting that the family's failure of responsibility begins at home. Sheila's later warning to her parents, "You began to learn something. And now you've stopped", shows her becoming almost a second Inspector, carrying his message into the family after he has gone.

The Inspector's final speech is the clearest statement of Priestley's message. Its short declaratives, "We don't live alone. We are members of one body. We are responsible for each other", have the rhythm of a sermon, and the biblical echo of "one body" gives social responsibility an almost religious authority. The repetition of "millions and millions and millions of Eva Smiths and John Smiths" turns one girl into a symbol of the entire working class, and his warning that if people do not learn this lesson they will be taught it "in fire and blood and anguish" would have had terrible resonance for an audience who had just lived through two world wars.

Finally, Priestley tests whether the characters have truly accepted responsibility. When Gerald suggests the Inspector was a hoax, Birling and Sybil relax at once, and Birling mocks "the famous younger generation who know it all". They care about scandal, not about the dead girl, which shows that their sense of responsibility was only ever fear of public exposure. The final telephone call

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announcing that a girl has died and an inspector is on his way is a cyclical twist that refuses them escape. Priestley seems to suggest that responsibility cannot be avoided: either society accepts it willingly, as Sheila and Eric begin to, or it will be forced upon us. For a post-war audience, the play becomes a call to accept a collective responsibility for the welfare of everyone.

19 *Miller presents Mary Warren as a weak, frightened girl who briefly discovers the intoxicating power the court gives to the powerless, but who never has the moral strength to use it well. In this extract she is at her most assertive, yet her authority is borrowed, nervous and easily shattered. Across the play Miller uses her to show how fear, rather than conviction, drives the hysteria in Salem, and how a vulnerable person can be pulled in whichever direction the strongest will commands.*

At the start of the extract Mary has absorbed the language of the court. Her claim that "it's God's work we do" shows how the girls cloak their accusations in religious righteousness, and her stammering announcement that she is "an official of the court" reveals both pride and insecurity. The broken syntax shows she is repeating a title she barely believes in, while the phrase "they say" exposes that her new status is something others have given her. Even as she speaks, the stage direction shows her "edging toward offstage", so her body contradicts her bold words. Miller allows the audience to see that her confidence is a thin performance.

Proctor's furious retort, "I'll official you!", is almost comic, mocking her inflated title by turning it into a verb of punishment, but the whip makes the moment threatening. The whip is a reminder of Mary's original position as a servant who could be beaten, and her cry "I'll not stand whipping any more!" marks a turning

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point: for the first time she resists her master. Miller's stage directions are revealing here. She is "terrified, but coming erect, striving for her authority", and the repetition of "striving, striving" suggests how desperately she is trying to hold on to her new identity. Her declaration that "The Devil's loose in Salem" shows how quickly she has learned that the language of witchcraft can protect her.

The climax of the extract is her shout "I saved her life today!" Miller follows it with "Silence. His whip comes down." This stage direction transfers power in a single gesture: Mary has suddenly become dangerous, because she holds information about Elizabeth's life. Elizabeth's soft question "I am accused?" creates chilling tension, and Mary's evasive "Somewhat mentioned" shows both her guilt and her sense of importance. Her non-standard grammar, "I never see no sign", reminds us she is uneducated and young, which makes her role in deciding life and death all the more disturbing. The final lines, where she boasts that "Four judges and the King's deputy sat to dinner with us" and asks to be spoken to "civilly", show how flattered she is by her new social status. Miller suggests that the court seduces the powerless by offering them a respect they have never had.

Earlier, in Act One, Miller introduces Mary as a "subservient, naive, lonely girl", and she is the most frightened of the group. She begs Abigail to confess because "witchery's a hangin' error", showing she understands the danger but lacks the courage to act alone. Abigail easily silences her with threats. Later in Act Two her new assertiveness becomes almost farcical when she protests "I am eighteen and a woman, however single!" when Proctor sends her to bed; the humour exposes how childish her claim to adult authority really is. The poppet she gives Elizabeth, innocently made in court, becomes the very evidence used against her mistress, which shows how Mary's weakness causes harm even when she means none.

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In Act Three Mary is the key to saving the accused, and Miller builds intense dramatic tension around her. She bravely admits that the girls were pretending, but when asked to faint on demand she cannot, because the atmosphere is no longer there. When Abigail and the girls begin the "yellow bird" performance, mimicking her every word, Mary is overwhelmed. Her desperate cries to Abigail are swallowed by the group, and she finally turns on Proctor, screaming "You're the Devil's man!" and "I'll not hang with you!" Her collapse destroys Proctor's case and leads directly to his arrest. Miller uses her vacillation to show how hysteria crushes individual truth.

Writing during McCarthyism, when people under pressure named friends and colleagues to save themselves, Miller presents Mary as a sympathetic but damning figure. She is not evil like Abigail; she is simply too frightened to stand alone. Through her, Miller suggests that tyranny depends less on villains than on ordinary people who lack the courage to resist.

20

Miller presents reputation as one of the most powerful forces in Salem: a public currency that people protect at almost any cost, and which the witch trials both expose and exploit. In a Puritan theocracy where private sin was public business, a good name determined a person's place in the community. Yet Miller's structure suggests a gradual shift in what reputation means, from a selfish concern with how others see you to Proctor's final, deeply personal understanding of his "name" as integrity itself.

In Act One, reputation drives almost every character's first actions. Parris is less worried about his sick daughter than about what the dancing in the woods will do to his position. He fears "a faction that is sworn to drive me from my pulpit", and

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his frantic questioning of Abigail shows a weak, self-pitying man whose ministry matters more to him than truth. Abigail, by contrast, defends her name with fierce confidence. Her outburst "My name is good in the village! I will not have it said my name is soiled!" is ironic, since the audience soon learns that she has been dismissed by Elizabeth Proctor and that no one will employ her. The repetition of "name" shows how obsessed Salem is with public standing, and her claim that Elizabeth is "blackening my name in the village" reveals her resentment. Miller suggests that Abigail's damaged reputation is one source of her vengeance: the trials offer her a way to transform herself from disgraced servant into a figure of holy authority.

Proctor's concern with reputation is more complicated. He is introduced as a respected farmer who has a "sharp and biting way with hypocrites", but his affair with Abigail is a secret that threatens to ruin him. In Act Two Elizabeth urges him to go to Salem and tell the court that Abigail admitted the dancing had nothing to do with witchcraft, but he hesitates. The tense, clipped dialogue between husband and wife, with Elizabeth's cool suspicion and his angry protests that she judges him constantly, shows that his reluctance stems partly from fear of exposure. His reputation literally stands between him and the truth that could save innocent people.

The court scene in Act Three is where reputation and truth collide most dramatically. To destroy Abigail's credibility, Proctor finally confesses to adultery, crying that he has "known her" and that "it is a whore's vengeance". By declaring that he has "rung the doom of my good name", Proctor sacrifices the thing Salem values most, and Miller makes this a moment of enormous tension. The cruel irony follows when Elizabeth, who has never lied, is brought in and lies to protect her husband's name, denying the affair. Her loving act of protecting his reputation

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destroys him. Miller shows how a society that values appearances above honesty turns even virtue against itself.

The authorities, too, are trapped by reputation. Danforth refuses to postpone the hangings in Act Four because "twelve are already hanged for the same crime", so pardoning others would admit the court had been wrong. His concern for the court's authority, and his own, outweighs justice. Hale, who once arrived proud of his expertise, now returns to beg the accused to lie and save their lives, showing that he has abandoned his own professional reputation in guilt.

The climax of the play reframes reputation completely. Proctor agrees to confess to witchcraft to save his life, but refuses to let his signed confession be nailed to the church door. His anguished cry "Because it is my name! Because I cannot have another in my life!" and his plea "leave me my name!" are the emotional peak of the play. The repeated exclamations and the simple, monosyllabic language strip the idea of reputation down to its core: a man's name is his identity and his soul. Unlike Parris or Abigail, Proctor is no longer concerned with public opinion; he will not lie to save himself or to betray his fellow prisoners. When he tears up the confession, he chooses death over a false name, and Elizabeth's final line, "He have his goodness now. God forbid I take it from him!", confirms that he has recovered his integrity.

Miller wrote the play during the McCarthy era, and he himself later refused to name names before the House Un-American Activities Committee. Through Proctor's journey, Miller suggests that the reputation worth having is not the one granted by the community, but the one a person can live and die with in their own conscience.

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Hansberry presents dreams as both the lifeblood of the Younger family and the source of its deepest conflicts. Each character's dream is a response to poverty and racial injustice in 1950s Chicago, and the insurance money in this extract turns those dreams from private longings into urgent, competing claims. Through the play Hansberry suggests that dreams are necessary for survival, but that their value depends on whether they serve the family's dignity or only material success.

In the extract Mama's uncertainty about the money is central. The cheque represents her husband's life, and her reluctance to spend it carelessly shows that it carries moral weight for her rather than simply financial value. When Ruth gently suggests that Mama might use some of it to enjoy herself, Mama dismisses the idea, which presents her as someone whose dreams are always for the family rather than for herself. Hansberry also makes clear that she does not want to invest in Walter's liquor store, showing that her dreams are rooted in her religious values. Her conflict with her son is therefore set up as a conflict between two kinds of dream.

Mama's own dream emerges as she remembers the plans she and Big Walter made when they first moved into the apartment. They intended it to be temporary, saving little by little for a house with a garden, and her nostalgic memory of this hope shows how long it has been deferred. The way she recalls her husband, working himself to exhaustion and grieving for their lost baby, gives the dream a tragic history. She remembers him saying that God seemed to give the black man "nothing but dreams", yet he believed children made those dreams worthwhile. This idea reframes dreams as an inheritance passed down through generations: Mama's dream of a house is a way of honouring Big Walter's sacrifice and giving her grandson Travis a better future.

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The title of the play deepens this theme. It comes from Langston Hughes's poem, which asks "What happens to a dream deferred? / Does it dry up / like a raisin in the sun?" and ends with the possibility that it may "explode". Hansberry dramatises each of these possibilities. Mama's dream has been deferred for decades and risks drying up, like her small, struggling plant on the windowsill, which she tends lovingly despite its lack of sunlight. The plant becomes a symbol of her dream: fragile, neglected by circumstance, but kept alive by care.

Walter's dream is the one closest to exploding. He longs to invest in the liquor store with Willy Harris and Bobo, believing money is the only route to manhood and respect. His frustration as a chauffeur, and his outburst in which he describes himself as a giant surrounded by ants, show how the deferral of his dream turns into bitterness and conflict with Ruth, Beneatha and Mama. When Mama finally entrusts him with the remaining money and he loses it to Willy Harris, Hansberry shows the devastating consequence of a dream built on trust in a system that exploits the poor.

Beneatha's dream of becoming a doctor is presented as idealistic and modern, but it too is threatened. Walter mocks her ambition and suggests she should be a nurse or get married, revealing gendered limits on dreams. When the money disappears, she loses hope, and her conversation with Asagai in Act Three explores whether dreams of progress are naive. Asagai's insistence that people must keep believing in the future suggests that dreams are worth holding even when they are betrayed.

By the end, Hansberry suggests that the most important dream is not money but dignity. When Walter refuses Mr Lindner's offer and tells him that his father earned the house "brick by brick", he reclaims the family's pride and joins his

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dream with his mother's. Mama's line that he has finally come into his manhood, "kind of like a rainbow after the rain", offers hope, though the family's move into a hostile white neighbourhood leaves their future uncertain. Mama's final action of returning to take her plant shows that the dream survives, carried forward rather than fulfilled. Hansberry implies that dreams deferred can still be redeemed when they are rooted in love and self-respect.

22 Mrs Johnson's remark that the Youngers are "one proud-acting bunch of coloured folks" is meant as a criticism, but Hansberry turns it into a celebration. She presents pride as the family's deepest strength: a refusal to accept the humiliation that a segregated, racist society in 1950s Chicago tries to impose on them. However, Hansberry also explores different kinds of pride, and the drama of the play lies in the tension between pride in money and status, and the deeper pride in identity and dignity that the family finally embraces.

Hansberry establishes this pride in the very first stage directions. The apartment is cramped, worn and overcrowded, yet its furniture was once chosen with "care and love and even hope". This setting introduces a family who are poor but not defeated, and Mama's careful tending of her small plant reflects the same quiet pride: she keeps something alive and growing even in a room that gets little light. Mama's pride is rooted in faith and family history. When Beneatha mocks God, Mama slaps her and makes her repeat "In my mother's house there is still God", a moment that shows how fiercely she guards the values of her home. Her pride is not arrogance but self-respect earned through generations of struggle.

Walter's pride is presented more ambiguously. Humiliated by his job as a chauffeur, he wants money to prove his manhood, and his dream of the liquor store is driven

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by wounded pride. Hansberry suggests that his pride has been distorted by a society that measures worth only in wealth. Mama's sorrowful observation that once freedom used to be life, but "now it's money" captures her fear that her son has lost the older pride of their ancestors. When Walter loses the money to Willy Harris, his despair leads him to consider the most shameful act of all: accepting Lindner's payment to stay out of Clybourne Park. In a painful scene he rehearses a grovelling performance, calling himself the servant of a "Captain, Mistuh, Bossman". Hansberry uses this mimicry of a degrading stereotype to show how close Walter comes to abandoning his pride.

Mama's response is one of the most powerful speeches in the play. She reminds him that she comes from five generations of slaves and sharecroppers, but that none of them ever let anyone pay them to accept that they were not fit to walk the earth. Her short, devastating conclusion, "We ain't never been that poor", redefines poverty itself: the family may lack money, but true poverty would be the loss of dignity. Hansberry suggests that pride in one's heritage is worth more than any sum Lindner could offer.

The climax comes when Walter faces Lindner. Instead of accepting the money, he speaks slowly and simply, telling him that the family are proud people and that his father earned the house "brick by brick". The image of building brick by brick links pride to labour, inheritance and patience, and Walter's decision to move in reclaims the dignity he almost sold. Mama's quiet comment that he has come into his manhood "kind of like a rainbow after the rain" shows that his pride has been restored in its truest form. Hansberry presents this as the moment the family's pride becomes political, a refusal to accept segregation.

Beneatha represents another kind of pride: pride in African identity. Influenced by

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Asagai, she cuts her straightened hair and wears Nigerian robes, rejecting what she calls assimilationism. These dramatic methods of costume and appearance make her pride visible on stage, and Asagai's affectionate name for her, Alaiyo, links her to a heritage beyond America. Her conflict with George Murchison, who is wealthy but dismissive of African history, contrasts pride in material success with pride in roots.

Hansberry, writing in 1959 as the civil rights movement grew, shows that pride is not simply a personal trait but an act of resistance. Mrs Johnson's warnings about bombings and her sneer at the family's pride suggest a fearful acceptance of injustice, while the Youngers refuse to be cowed. The play ends with the family leaving for an uncertain and possibly dangerous future, yet Mama's final return for her plant suggests that their pride, like the plant, will be carried with them and given room to grow.