OXFORD
INTERNATIONAL
AQA EXAMINATIONS

INTERNATIONAL GCSE
ENGLISH LITERATURE

Paper 1 Prose and drama

Tuesday 26 October 2021 07:00 GMT 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 The extract occurs near the end of the novel. Pip has been lured into a trap by Orlick.

> 'What are you going to do to me?'
>
> 'I'm a-going,' said he, bringing his fist down upon the table with a heavy blow, and rising as the blow fell, to give it greater force, 'I'm a-going to have your life!'
>
> He leaned forward, staring at me, slowly unclenched his hand and drew it across his mouth as if his mouth watered for me, and sat down again.
>
> 'You was always in Old Orlick's way since ever you was a child. You goes out of his way this present night. He'll have no more on you. You're dead!'
>
> I felt that I had come to the brink of my grave. For a moment I looked wildly round my trap for any chance of escape; but there was none.
>
> 'More than that,' said he, folding his arms on the table again, 'I won't have a rag of you, I won't have a bone of you, left on earth. I'll put your body in the kiln – I'd carry two such to it, on my shoulders – and, let people suppose what they may of you, they shall never know nothing.'

Starting with this extract, explore how Dickens presents the character of Orlick in *Great Expectations*.

[30 marks]

or

0 2 How does Dickens present justice and the law in *Great Expectations*?

[30 marks]

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or

Harper Lee: *To Kill a Mockingbird*

0 3 This extract occurs near the end of the novel. Miss Gates is teaching a Current Events lesson.

> She printed DEMOCRACY in large letters. 'Democracy,' she said. 'Does anybody have a definition?'
>
> 'Us,' somebody said.
>
> I raised my hand, remembering an old campaign slogan Atticus had once told me about.
>
> 'What do you think it means, Jean Louise?'
>
> '"Equal rights for all, special privileges for none",' I quoted.
>
> 'Very good, Jean Louise, very good,' Miss Gates smiled. In front of DEMOCRACY, she printed WE ARE A. 'Now class, say it all together, "We are a democracy".'
>
> We said it. Then Miss Gates said, 'That's the difference between America and Germany. We are a democracy and Germany is a dictatorship. Dictator-ship,' she said. 'Over here we don't believe in persecuting anybody. Persecution comes from people who are prejudiced. Pre-ju-dice,' she enunciated carefully.

Starting with this extract, explore how Lee shows Miss Gates' ideas are mistaken in *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

[30 marks]

or

0 4 How does Lee present Aunt Alexandra 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 Mama gets news from the hospital shortly after Papa's death.

> "They did an autopsy," she said. "They have found the poison in your father's body." She sounded as though the poison in Papa's body was something we all had known about, something we had put in there to be found, the way it was done in the books I read where white people hid Easter eggs for their children to find.
>
> "Poison?" I said.
>
> Mama tightened her wrapper, then went to the windows; she pushed the drapes aside, checking that the louvers were shut to keep the rain from splashing into the house. Her movements were calm and slow. When she spoke, her voice was just as calm and slow. "I started putting the poison in his tea before I came to Nsukka. Sisi got it for me; her uncle is a powerful witch doctor."
>
> For a long, silent moment I could think of nothing. My mind was blank, I was blank. Then I thought of taking sips of Papa's tea, love sips, the scalding liquid that burned his love onto my tongue. "Why did you put it in his tea?" I asked Mama, rising. My voice was loud. I was almost screaming. "Why in his tea?"
>
> But Mama did not answer. Not even when I stood up and shook her until Jaja yanked me away. Not even when Jaja wrapped his arms around me and turned to include her but she moved away.

Starting with this extract, explore to what extent you think Adichie presents Mama as a strong woman in *Purple Hibiscus*.

[30 marks]

or

0 6 'The novel *Purple Hibiscus* suggests that religion always has a negative effect on families and communities.'

To what extent do you agree with this statement about the ways religion is presented in *Purple Hibiscus*?

[30 marks]

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or

Kazuo Ishiguro: *Never Let Me Go*

0 7 In this extract the students have left Hailsham and Tommy is telling Kathy about his drawings of imaginary animals.

> That was when I first heard about his imaginary animals. When he started to describe what he'd been doing – I didn't actually see anything until a few weeks later – I found it hard to show much enthusiasm. In fact, I have to admit, I was reminded of the original elephant-in-the-grass picture that had started off all Tommy's problems at Hailsham. The inspiration, he explained, had come from an old children's book with the back cover missing which he'd found behind one of the sofas at the Cottages. He'd then persuaded Keffers to give him one of the little black notebooks he scribbled his figures in, and since then, Tommy had finished at least a dozen of his fantastic creatures.
>
> 'The thing is, I'm doing them really small. Tiny. I'd never thought of that at Hailsham. I think maybe that's where I went wrong. If you make them tiny, and you have to because the pages are only about this big, then everything changes. It's like they come to life by themselves. Then you have to draw in all these different details for them. You have to think about how they'd protect themselves, how they'd reach things. Honest, Kath, it's nothing like anything I ever did at Hailsham.'
>
> He started describing his favourites, but I couldn't really concentrate; the more excited he got telling me about his animals, the more uneasy I was growing. 'Tommy,' I wanted to say to him, 'you're going to make yourself a laughing stock all over again. Imaginary animals? What's up with you?' But I didn't. I just looked at him cautiously and kept saying: 'That sounds really good, Tommy.'

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

[30 marks]

or

0 8 'The world Ishiguro creates in *Never Let Me Go* is full of horror.'

How does Ishiguro create a sense of horror in the novel?

[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 is about to join the NSDAP.

After lodging his form at the Nazi headquarters on Munich Street, he witnessed four men throw several bricks into a clothing store named Kleinman's. It was one of the few Jewish shops that was still in operation in Molching. Inside, a small man was stuttering about, crushing the broken glass beneath his feet as he cleaned up. A star the colour of mustard was smeared to the door. In sloppy lettering, the words JEWISH FILTH were spilling over at their edges. The movement inside tapered from hurried to morose, then stopped altogether.

Hans moved closer and stuck his head inside. 'Do you need some help?'

Mr Kleinman looked up. A dust-broom was fixed powerlessly to his hand. 'No, Hans. Please. Go away.' Hans had painted Joel Kleinman's house the previous year. He remembered his three children. He could see their faces but couldn't recall their names.

'I will come tomorrow,' he said, 'and repaint your door.'

Which he did.

It was the second of two mistakes.

The first occurred immediately after the incident.

He returned to where he'd come from and drove his fist onto the door and then the window of the NSDAP. The glass shuddered but no-one replied. Everyone had packed up and gone home. A last member was further along Munich Street. When he heard the rattle of the glass, he noticed the painter.

He came back and asked what was wrong.

'I can no longer join,' Hans stated.

Starting with this extract, explore how Zusak presents Hans Hubermann as 'a man who appreciated fairness' in *The Book Thief*.

[30 marks]

or

1 0 How does Zusak present the relationship between Liesel and Frau Hermann in *The Book Thief*?

[30 marks]

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or

Oxford AQA Short Stories Anthology

1 1 This extract is the beginning of *Through the Tunnel*.

> Going to the shore on the first morning of the vacation, the young English boy stopped at a turning of the path and looked down at a wild and rocky bay, and then over the crowded beach he knew so well from other years. His mother walked on in front of him, carrying a bright striped bag in one hand. Her other arm, swinging loose, was very white in the sun. The boy watched that white, naked arm, and turned his eyes, which had a frown behind them, toward the bay and back again to his mother. When she felt he was not with her, she swung around. "Oh, there you are, Jerry!" she said. She looked impatient, then smiled. "Why, darling, would you rather not come with me? Would you rather -" She frowned, conscientiously worrying over what amusements he might secretly be longing for, which she had been too busy or too careless to imagine. He was very familiar with that anxious, apologetic smile. Contrition sent him running after her. And yet, as he ran, he looked over his shoulder at the wild bay; and all morning, as he played on the safe beach, he was thinking of it.
>
> Next morning, when it was time for the routine of swimming and sunbathing, his mother said, "Are you tired of the usual beach, Jerry? Would you like to go somewhere else?" "Oh, no!" he said quickly, smiling at her out of that unfailing impulse of contrition – a sort of chivalry. Yet, walking down the path with her, he blurted out, "I'd like to go and have a look at those rocks down there."

Starting with this extract, explore the ways women are presented in the Oxford AQA Short Stories Anthology.

Write about Jerry's mother in *Through the Tunnel* and **one** woman from **one** other story from the Oxford AQA Short Stories Anthology.

[30 marks]

or

1 2 Titles of short stories are often significant.

Explore the significance of the titles of *The Destructors* and **one** other story from the Oxford AQA Short Stories 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 Brutus has decided to join the conspirators.

BRUTUS It must be by his death. And for my part
I know no personal cause to spurn at him
But for the general. He would be crowned:
How that might change his nature, that's the question.
It is the bright day that brings forth the adder
And that craves wary walking. Crown him that,
And then I grant we put a sting in him
That at his will he may do danger with.
Th'abuse of greatness is when it disjoins
Remorse from power. And to speak truth of Caesar,
I have not known when his affections swayed
More than his reason. But 'tis a common proof
That lowliness is young ambition's ladder,
Whereto the climber-upward turns his face;
But when he once attains the upmost round
He then unto the ladder turns his back,
Looks in the clouds, scorning the base degrees
By which he did ascend. So Caesar may.
Then lest he may, prevent.

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

[30 marks]

or

1 4 How does Shakespeare present Mark Antony in *Julius Caesar*?

[30 marks]

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or

William Shakespeare: *Macbeth*

1 5 In this extract Macbeth is thinking about killing Duncan.

MACBETH If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well
It were done quickly. If th'assassination
Could trammel up the consequence, and catch,
With his surcease, success; that but this blow
Might be the be-all and the end-all here –
But here upon this bank and shoal of time –
We'd jump the life to come. But in these cases
We still have judgement here, that we but teach
Bloody instructions, which being taught, return
To plague th'inventor. This even-handed justice
Commends the'ingredience of our poison'd chalice
To our own lips. He's here in double trust:
First, as I am his kinsman and his subject –
Strong both against the deed; then, as his host,
Who should against his murderer shut the door,
Not bear the knife myself.

Starting with this extract, explore how Shakespeare presents Macbeth's inner conflict in the play.

[30 marks]

or

1 6 How does Shakespeare present chaos and disorder in *Macbeth*?

[30 marks]

Turn over for the next question

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or

JB Priestley: *An Inspector Calls*

1 7 This extract occurs shortly after the Inspector has left the Birlings' house.

ERIC [*bursting out*] What's the use of talking about behaving sensibly? You're beginning to pretend now that nothing's really happened at all. And I can't see it like that. This girl's still dead, isn't she? Nobody's brought her to life, have they?

SHEILA [*eagerly*] That's just what I feel, Eric. And it's what they don't seem to understand.

ERIC Whoever that chap was, the fact remains that I did what I did. And Mother did what she did. And the rest of you did what you did to her. It's still the same rotten story whether it's been told to a police inspector or to somebody else. According to you, I ought to feel a lot better – [*To* **GERALD**.] I stole some money, Gerald, you might as well know – [*As* **BIRLING** *tries to interrupt*.] I don't care, let him know. The money's not the important thing. It's what happened to the girl and what we all did to her that matters. And I still feel the same about it, and that's why I don't feel like sitting down and having a nice cosy talk.

SHEILA And Eric's absolutely right. And it's the best thing any one of us has said tonight and it makes me feel a bit less ashamed of us. You're just beginning to pretend all over again.

Starting with this extract, explore how Priestley presents the character of Eric in *An Inspector Calls*.

[30 marks]

or

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

[30 marks]

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or

Arthur Miller: *The Crucible*

1 9 In this extract Reverend Hale is questioning the members of the Parris household about Betty's illness.

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Starting with this extract, explore the ways Miller presents the character of Tituba in *The Crucible*.

[30 marks]

or

2 0 How does Miller present the power of the girls in *The Crucible*?

[30 marks]

Turn over for the next question

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or

Lorraine Hansberry: *A Raisin in the Sun*

2 1 In this extract, Walter is talking about his plan to buy a liquor store with the insurance money.

> **Walter** Mama would listen to you. You know she listen to you more than she do me and Bennie. She think more of you. All you have to do is just sit down with her when you drinking your coffee one morning and talking 'bout things like you do and (*he sits down beside her and demonstrates graphically what he thinks her methods and tone should be*) you just sip your coffee, see, and say easy like that you been thinking 'bout that deal Walter Lee is so interested in, 'bout the store and all, and sip some more coffee, like what you saying ain't really that important to you … And the next thing you know, she be listening good and asking you questions and when I come home – I can tell her the details. This ain't no fly-by-night proposition, baby. I mean we figure it out, me and Willy and Bobo.
>
> **Ruth** (*with a frown*) Bobo?
>
> **Walter** Yeah. You see, this little liquor store we got in mind cost seventy-five thousand and we figured the initial investment on the place be 'bout thirty thousand, see. That be ten thousand each. Course, there's a couple of hundred you got to pay so's you don't spend your life just waiting for them clowns to let your licence get approved –
>
> **Ruth** You mean graft?
>
> **Walter** (*frowning impatiently*) Don't call it that. See there, that just goes to show you what women understand about the world. Baby, don't *nothing* happen for you in this world 'less you pay *somebody* off!

Starting with this extract, explore how Hansberry presents the ways Walter changes in *A Raisin in the Sun*.

[30 marks]

or

2 2 How does Hansberry present the female characters 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 Orlick as Pip's dark shadow: a man from the same lowly world of the forge who, denied the luck and patronage that lift Pip, turns his resentment into violence. At first he seems a sullen, almost comic figure on the edge of the story, but Dickens slowly reveals him as a real and murderous threat, and in this extract he becomes the embodiment of everything Pip has feared and tried to escape.

The extract is built on mounting menace. Orlick's declaration "I'm a-going to have your life!" is accompanied by a "heavy blow" of his fist, and Dickens tells us he rises "as the blow fell, to give it greater force", so that speech and violence are timed together like a performance. His dialect, "a-going", "You was", marks him as uneducated, and Dickens may be reminding the reader that Pip, now a gentleman, once spoke much the same way. The most disturbing detail is that he draws his hand across his mouth "as if his mouth watered for me". The simile makes Orlick predatory, almost cannibalistic, as though Pip were food, and it reduces the gentleman Pip to helpless prey.

Orlick's habit of calling himself "Old Orlick" in the third person is also revealing. It gives him a strange, detached grandeur, as if he is a figure from folklore or a force of nature rather than a man, and it suggests a long-nursed sense of grievance. His accusation, "You was always in Old Orlick's way since ever you was a child", is the key to his character. Dickens shows that Orlick sees Pip's rise as the cause of his own fall, and his threat that he will not leave "a rag" or "a bone" of Pip "left on earth" expresses a wish not only to kill him but to erase him completely. The plan to put the body "in the kiln" so that people "shall never know nothing" is terrifying

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because it is practical: Orlick has thought this through. Pip's response, that he had come "to the brink of my grave", and his wild search of the "trap" for escape, show the narrator stripped of all his gentlemanly confidence.

This climax has been carefully prepared. Earlier, Orlick is Joe's journeyman at the forge, a slouching, powerful, resentful man who seems to drift in and out of the story without purpose. His quarrel with Mrs Joe, when she objects to Joe giving him a half-holiday, ends in a fight with Joe in which Joe easily beats him, and soon afterwards Mrs Joe is struck down from behind with a convict's leg-iron. Dickens withholds the truth, so suspicion falls partly on Pip's convict, but the reader may notice Mrs Joe's odd, appeasing behaviour towards Orlick after the attack. In the extract's wider scene Orlick finally boasts that he did it, yet blames Pip for it, claiming that Pip was favoured while he was bullied. This twisted logic shows how resentment can pervert a person's sense of justice.

Orlick also functions as a dark double of Pip. Both come from the forge, both are attracted to Biddy, whom Orlick follows and "dances at" in a way that unsettles her, and both are drawn into Miss Havisham's orbit, since Orlick later becomes her porter until Pip has him dismissed through Jaggers. Pip's social climbing pushes Orlick further down, and Dickens perhaps uses him to expose the unattractive side of Pip's own ambition: his snobbery and his readiness to judge others from above. Orlick's later links with Compeyson, and his lurking on Pip's staircase in London on the night Magwitch returns, show that the criminal underworld Pip thought he had left behind is still close by.

Structurally, the timing of this scene heightens tension. Pip is lured to the sluice-house on the marshes just before he is due to help Magwitch escape, so his death would also doom his benefactor. The return to the marshes, the setting of

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the novel's opening, gives the episode a nightmarish circularity, as if Pip's childhood terrors have come back in adult form.

Ultimately, Dickens presents Orlick as more than a villain. He is the price of a rigidly divided society: a working man with no hope of advancement, consumed by envy of those who rise. Pip's rescue by Herbert, Startop and Trabb's boy suggests that loyalty and friendship can overcome such hatred, but Orlick remains a disturbing reminder of the violence that lies beneath Victorian respectability.

02 Dickens presents the law in Great Expectations as a powerful but morally hollow machine, one that punishes the poor harshly, protects the respectable, and is run by men who keep their consciences carefully separate from their work. Against this, he sets a deeper idea of justice based on conscience, loyalty and mercy, which Pip only learns to value by the end of the novel.

From the opening chapter, the law is a source of fear rather than protection. The young Pip, seized by Magwitch in the churchyard, steals food and a file for him, and is then tormented by guilt, convinced that he will be punished. Dickens's first person retrospective narration lets the older Pip smile at his childish terror while still conveying how deeply the threat of the law has entered his imagination. The soldiers who hunt the convicts across the marshes, and the image of the prison hulks lying offshore, make the state seem vast and impersonal. Even at home, "justice" is arbitrary: Mrs Joe's punishments with the Tickler are violent and unpredictable, suggesting that authority in this world is often cruel rather than fair.

The story of Magwitch and Compeyson is Dickens's sharpest criticism of the legal

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system. Told in flashback when Magwitch finally explains his past to Pip and Herbert, it reveals that both men were tried together, yet Compeyson, who looked and spoke like a gentleman, received a much lighter sentence, while Magwitch, rough and poor, was treated as the hardened villain and given twice as long. The flashback structure means the reader hears this injustice from the victim's own mouth, which builds sympathy for a man we first met as a terrifying figure. Dickens, writing in the 1860s, is exposing how class prejudice shaped Victorian courts, where appearance could matter more than guilt.

Jaggers is the human face of the law, and Dickens makes him both impressive and chilling. He is feared by clients and witnesses alike, and his skill lies in winning cases rather than discovering truth. His habit of washing his hands with scented soap after seeing clients is a powerful symbol: like Pontius Pilate, he wishes to clean himself of responsibility for the lives he deals with. The two plaster casts of hanged clients' faces in his office in Little Britain present justice as something grotesque, almost a form of entertainment, and Wemmick's cheerful talk of "portable property" reduces the condemned to sources of profit. Most tellingly, Jaggers secured the acquittal of Molly, his housekeeper, for a murder she very likely committed. Dickens may not be condemning this act of mercy, since it saved her child, Estella, but he shows that the outcomes of the law depend on cleverness and power rather than truth.

Many characters respond to the failures of the law by seeking private revenge. Miss Havisham, jilted by Compeyson, has no legal remedy for her humiliation, so she raises Estella as a weapon to break men's hearts. Orlick takes his own vengeance on Mrs Joe and later on Pip. Dickens suggests that where justice is absent, bitterness grows, and revenge corrupts those who pursue it, as Miss Havisham's anguished repentance before the fire later shows.

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The climax of the novel tests Pip's attitude to the law most severely. Magwitch's return from transportation is a capital offence, and after the failed escape he is tried and sentenced to death alongside many others in a single sitting, which Dickens presents as a mass ritual rather than individual justice. Yet by this stage Pip no longer sees Magwitch as a criminal. He holds his hand, tells him that his daughter lives, and prays for mercy on him as a sinner. Magwitch dies before execution, and his money is forfeited to the Crown, so Pip loses his fortune, but he has gained a moral understanding the law could never teach him.

Ultimately, Dickens contrasts legal justice with moral justice. Joe, who knows nothing of courts, quietly pays Pip's debts and nurses him back to health, embodying a goodness that requires no law at all. Through Pip's gradual movement from fear of the law to trust in his own conscience, Dickens argues that true justice lies in compassion and humility, and that a society which judges by class and appearance is itself guilty.

03

Lee uses Miss Gates to expose the hypocrisy at the heart of Maycomb. Her lesson on democracy sounds admirable, and many of her words are true in principle, but the novel as a whole shows that the town she speaks for does persecute people, and that Miss Gates herself shares the prejudice she claims to condemn. Through Scout's innocent narration, Lee lets the reader see the gap between what Maycomb says and what it does.

The extract is full of quiet irony. Miss Gates prints "DEMOCRACY in large letters", as if the idea were a simple spelling word, and when she asks for a definition, someone answers "Us". This single word is more revealing than the child realises:

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in Maycomb, democracy belongs to "us", the white community, and excludes everyone else. Scout's answer, Atticus's old slogan "Equal rights for all, special privileges for none", is praised as "Very good", but the reader, having just witnessed Tom Robinson's trial, knows that Maycomb grants neither equal rights nor fair treatment to its Black citizens. The chanting of "We are a democracy" makes the idea a rote formula repeated by children rather than a value lived out.

Miss Gates's claim that "Over here we don't believe in persecuting anybody" is the clearest example of her mistaken ideas. Her careful syllabification of "Pre-ju-dice" is darkly comic, because she teaches the word as if it were a foreign term, when prejudice surrounds her. Her contrast between "America and Germany" is meant to reassure, yet Lee, writing in the late 1950s, invites readers to see uncomfortable parallels between Nazi persecution of Jews and the Jim Crow laws of the American South. Within the same lesson, Cecil Jacobs's remark that Jews should not be persecuted because they are white shows how deeply racial thinking shapes even children's moral reasoning.

The novel then proves Miss Gates wrong through her own words. Scout later remembers hearing her outside the courthouse after the trial, saying that it was time somebody taught Black people a lesson because they were "getting way above themselves". Scout's puzzled question to Jem, about how someone can hate Hitler so much and then be "ugly about folks right at home", lays bare the hypocrisy with a child's clarity. Jem's furious reaction suggests that he too has been wounded by discovering how ordinary people can be cruel.

The persecution Miss Gates denies is everywhere in the novel. Tom Robinson, an innocent man whose crippled left arm makes the charge against him impossible, is convicted by an all-white jury because of the colour of his skin, and then shot

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seventeen times while trying to escape. Lee's physical settings reinforce segregation: Black spectators sit in the coloured balcony of the courtroom, and the Black community lives beyond the town dump, literally placed beneath the poorest white family, the Ewells. Even the "respectable" ladies of the missionary circle are hypocrites. Mrs Merriweather weeps over the poor Mruna tribe in Africa while complaining about her own resentful Black servants at home, and Lee's juxtaposition of foreign charity with local contempt mirrors Miss Gates's lesson exactly.

Persecution in Maycomb is not limited to race. Boo Radley has been turned into a monster by local gossip and children's games, and Dolphus Raymond is ostracised for living with a Black woman, pretending to be drunk so that the town can explain his choices. Mrs Dubose's vicious insults about Atticus defending a Black man, and the children at school who taunt Scout for the same reason, show how anyone who challenges the town's prejudice becomes a target too. Each of these examples shows a community that, contrary to Miss Gates's words, persecutes whoever is different.

Ultimately, Lee presents Miss Gates not as a villain but as a representative figure: a decent, educated woman who believes she is fair and cannot see her own bias. This is what makes her ideas so dangerous. Through Atticus, who insists that in a court of law all men must be equal, and through Scout's growing understanding of standing in someone else's shoes, Lee suggests that true democracy requires more than slogans on a blackboard. It demands the moral courage to recognise injustice at home.

04 Lee presents Aunt Alexandra as the voice of traditional Southern respectability:

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rigid, snobbish and obsessed with family background, yet capable of loyalty and quiet courage. Because we see her through Scout's first person narration, she begins as an almost comic obstacle to Scout's freedom, but as Scout matures, both she and the reader come to understand Alexandra more sympathetically.

Alexandra arrives at the Finch house in the summer before Tom Robinson's trial, announcing that it is time the children had a feminine influence. Scout's blunt verdict that "she was cold and she was there" captures the child's resentment perfectly. The phrasing is humorous because it is so flat, as if Alexandra were a piece of unwelcome furniture, and Lee uses Scout's innocent, unfiltered voice to puncture her aunt's dignity. Scout's descriptions of her formidable figure and immovable manner add to this comic effect, presenting her as a fortress of convention.

Alexandra's central obsession is heredity. She believes that the Finches are "Fine Folks", a term Scout explains with gentle sarcasm as meaning those who have lived on the same land for a long time, and she sees every family in Maycomb in terms of an inherited "streak", whether drinking, gambling or meanness. Lee presents this as absurd: as Scout observes, by this logic any family that stayed put long enough would be "fine". Alexandra even persuades Atticus to tell the children to live up to their name, a talk which so upsets Scout that Atticus abandons it. Here Lee contrasts Alexandra's concern with status against Atticus's belief in individual worth, and this reflects the class-conscious society of 1930s Alabama, where family name governed reputation.

Her snobbery becomes harsher when it touches other people. When Scout wishes to invite Walter Cunningham home, Alexandra refuses, insisting that he is "trash" and that the Finches do not mix with his kind. She also forbids Scout from

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visiting Calpurnia's house and urges Atticus to dismiss Calpurnia altogether, believing that a Black cook should not shape the children's upbringing. Atticus's firm refusal shows that Lee aligns the reader with his more humane values. Her constant pressure on Scout to wear dresses and behave like a lady presents her as the guardian of a narrow model of Southern womanhood, which Scout rebels against throughout.

Lee also contrasts Alexandra with Miss Maudie. Both are respectable women, but Maudie gardens in overalls, mocks hypocrisy and treats the children as equals, while Alexandra fits comfortably into the gossiping world of the missionary circle. The difference suggests that being a lady need not mean being narrow-minded.

Yet the novel complicates this picture. During the missionary tea in Chapter 24, Atticus brings news that Tom Robinson has been shot. In the kitchen, Alexandra reveals her distress, telling Miss Maudie that although she does not approve of everything her brother does, it is tearing him to pieces. For the first time, she defends Atticus rather than criticising him, and shows real concern for the cost of his stand. Then she returns to the ladies and continues serving as if nothing had happened. Scout, following her example, realises that being a lady can require great self-control, and decides that if her aunt could be a lady at a moment like that, so could she. Lee presents this as a turning point in Scout's understanding: femininity is no longer only a cage but also a form of strength.

This change is completed after Bob Ewell's attack on the children. Alexandra, shaken and perhaps guilty that she had ignored a feeling that something was wrong, hands Scout her overalls to wear in place of her ruined costume. The overalls are the very clothes she has always disapproved of, so the gesture is small but significant. Lee shows that love has overcome convention.

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Ultimately, Lee uses Aunt Alexandra to explore the strengths and weaknesses of the old South. Her prejudice and snobbery belong to the world that convicts Tom Robinson, yet her loyalty and composure suggest that people raised within that world can still grow. Through Scout's shifting perspective, Lee teaches the reader, as Atticus teaches his children, to understand a person before judging her.

05 Adichie presents Mama as a woman whose strength is hidden, slow and deeply ambiguous. For most of the novel she seems the most powerless figure in the household, silenced and beaten by Papa, yet the extract reveals that she has been quietly planning his death. I would argue that Mama is strong in her endurance and in her final act of resistance, but that Adichie also shows the terrible cost of a strength which has been forced into secrecy and violence.

The extract shocks the reader precisely because of its calm. Mama's announcement that "They have found the poison" is delivered as though it were "something we all had known about", and Kambili's odd simile comparing it to hidden Easter eggs placed "to be found" suggests both a child's struggle to make sense of horror and the strange inevitability of what Mama has done. Adichie repeats that Mama's movements and voice were "calm and slow". This repetition presents a woman who has finally gained control, perhaps for the first time in her married life. Even now she performs domestic tasks, tightening her wrapper and checking that the louvers are shut against the rain. These small gestures echo the role she has always played as the careful keeper of the house, but they now suggest composure rather than fear.

The confession itself is plain and unapologetic: "I started putting the poison in his

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tea before I came to Nsukka." The simple, declarative sentence shows no hesitation or plea for forgiveness. The detail that Sisi obtained it from her uncle, "a powerful witch doctor", is significant, because Mama has turned to the traditional world that Papa despised and to a fellow servant of the house. Adichie also creates bitter irony through the tea. Papa's Lipton tea, a symbol of his admiration for everything British, and the "love sips" he gave his children, which Kambili remembers burning his "love onto my tongue", become the means of his destruction. The tea had always mixed love with pain, so it is fitting that it carries both to the end.

However, Mama's silence at the end of the extract complicates her strength. She refuses to answer Kambili, even when Kambili shakes her, and she moves away when Jaja tries to include her in his embrace. This could suggest a woman hardened by what she has done, or one who cannot bear her children's pain. Kambili's fragmented reaction, "My mind was blank, I was blank", shows that Mama's act, though it frees the family, also wounds them.

Earlier in the novel, Mama's strength lies mainly in endurance. After each beating she polishes the ballerina figurines on the étagère, a ritual that allows her to absorb suffering silently. When Papa breaks them on Palm Sunday, she does not replace them, which Kambili later sees as a sign of change. Her miscarriages after Papa's violence, and her insistence that she must return to Enugu after fleeing to Aunty Ifeoma's flat, may seem like weakness. She asks where she would go if she left Eugene's house, and reminds Ifeoma that many men would have taken another wife when she struggled to have more children. Adichie shows how economic dependence and social pressure in postcolonial Nigeria trap women in violent marriages. Aunty Ifeoma, outspoken and independent, provides a contrast that makes Mama's silence seem both pitiable and understandable.

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Yet the reader can reinterpret this silence once the poisoning is revealed. Through Kambili's limited first person narration, we did not see Mama's inner life, so her apparent passivity may have concealed a growing determination. Adichie's foreshadowing of Papa's declining health, which Kambili mentions without understanding, rewards this reading.

The ending, however, raises doubts. Jaja takes the blame and spends nearly three years in prison, and Mama allows this. In the final section, she has become withdrawn and neglectful of herself, as if her strength has been used up in a single act. Her strength, then, is real but self-destructive.

Ultimately, I believe Adichie presents Mama as strong to a considerable extent. She breaks the cycle of abuse when no one else can, and she does so in a society that offers her no other escape. However, Adichie refuses to make her a simple heroine. Mama's story suggests that when women are silenced for so long, their strength may only emerge in desperate, tragic forms.

06 I disagree with the statement to a large extent. Adichie certainly presents religion as capable of devastating harm, most obviously through Papa's fanatical Catholicism, but the word "always" ignores the novel's careful contrasts. Through Father Amadi, Aunty Ifeoma and Papa-Nnukwu, Adichie suggests that faith can nurture love, joy and community. The problem in Purple Hibiscus is not religion itself but religion used as an instrument of control.

Papa's faith is undeniably destructive to his family. The novel opens with the line "Things started to fall apart at home when my brother, Jaja, did not go to

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communion", and Papa's response, flinging his heavy missal across the room and shattering Mama's figurines, establishes religion as the trigger for violence. The allusion to Achebe's Things Fall Apart is significant, suggesting that the colonial religion Papa has absorbed is breaking his family apart just as it broke traditional Igbo society. Papa punishes perceived sins with horrifying cruelty: he beats Mama, Jaja and Kambili with his belt when Kambili eats before Mass during her period, and he pours boiling water on Kambili's feet for staying in the same house as her "heathen" grandfather. Each time he weeps and claims he does it out of love, which makes his religion seem a terrible distortion of Christian compassion.

Adichie links Papa's extremism to colonialism. He is devoted to Father Benedict, a white priest who prefers Latin to Igbo in the services, and Papa's own accent becomes more British when he speaks to him. This suggests that, for Papa, Christianity has become bound up with rejecting his own culture. He refuses to let his father, Papa-Nnukwu, enter his house, allows his children only fifteen minutes with him a year, and will only offer to pay for his funeral if it is a Catholic one. In this sense, religion harms not only a family but a whole community, dividing generations and erasing tradition.

However, Papa-Nnukwu's traditional faith is presented with warmth and beauty. When Kambili watches his morning ritual at Nsukka, she sees him offer thanks to the gods and pray for his family, including the son who rejects him. Kambili realises that she has never seen anything like this tolerant generosity in Papa's prayers. The vivid descriptions of the mmuo at the Aro festival, with their masked spirits and processions, celebrate Igbo spirituality as communal and joyful. Adichie may be suggesting that indigenous religion, so often dismissed by colonial Christianity, offers its own sense of belonging.

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Most importantly, Adichie presents Catholicism itself positively through Father Amadi. He is a young Nigerian priest who sings Igbo songs during Mass, plays football with local boys, and encourages Kambili to speak and to run. His faith is open and human, and through him Kambili begins to discover her own voice. Similarly, Aunty Ifeoma is a devout Catholic, yet her home is full of laughter, debate and Igbo prayer songs, and she allows her children to question. The contrast between Father Benedict and Father Amadi, both priests of the same church, proves that religion's effect depends on how it is practised.

There are also more ambiguous moments. Papa's faith drives his genuine generosity: he funds churches and schools and supports the pro-democracy newspaper, the Standard, showing moral courage against the military regime. Kambili's own spiritual experience at Aokpe, where she believes she sees the Virgin Mary smiling, gives her a sense of love that is entirely separate from Papa's fear. Even Amaka's refusal to take an English confirmation name shows young people reshaping faith on their own terms rather than rejecting it.

Adichie's symbolism supports this balanced view. The purple hibiscus, an experimental flower from Aunty Ifeoma's garden, represents the freedom that grows in a home where faith and individuality coexist, while the broken figurines represent the damage of a rigid, punishing piety.

In conclusion, I largely disagree with the statement. Adichie undoubtedly exposes the harm that religious fanaticism, shaped by colonial attitudes, can cause to families and communities. Yet by setting Papa against Father Amadi, Aunty Ifeoma and Papa-Nnukwu, she shows that religion can be a source of love, tolerance and identity. What destroys the Achike family is not faith, but Papa's need to control.

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07

Ishiguro presents art as one of the most important things in the students' lives, yet its true significance is hidden from them for most of the novel. At Hailsham it is a source of status, anxiety and hope; for Tommy it becomes a desperate attempt to prove that he can love; and finally, through Miss Emily's revelation, it emerges as evidence that the clones have souls. Ishiguro uses art to ask what makes a life valuable, and to expose a society that needs proof before it will treat these young people as human.

In the extract, Tommy's imaginary animals are presented with a mixture of tenderness and unease. His explanation that he is drawing them "really small. Tiny" suggests something fragile and intimate, and his excited idea that "they come to life by themselves" hints, perhaps unconsciously, at the clones themselves: created beings who seem to take on life of their own. His interest in "how they'd protect themselves, how they'd reach things" is poignant, since the students are completely unable to protect themselves from the donation programme. The creatures could be read as symbols of the students' own vulnerable, constructed existence.

Kathy's narration complicates our response. Her confession, "I have to admit", typical of her careful, self-correcting voice, shows that she cannot share Tommy's enthusiasm, and she is reminded of "the original elephant-in-the-grass picture that had started off all Tommy's problems". The unspoken words she imagines saying, "you're going to make yourself a laughing stock all over again", reveal her protective love, while her repeated, cautious "That sounds really good, Tommy" shows how she conceals her true feelings. Ishiguro creates dramatic tension between Tommy's hope and Kathy's fear, foreshadowing the later moment when Ruth mocks the

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animals in front of others.

The extract recalls how central art was at Hailsham. Kathy explains that a student's popularity depended heavily on how good they were at creating, and the Exchanges, where students bought each other's paintings and poems with tokens, turned art into a currency of respect. Tommy's childish elephant picture, which looks as though a much younger child drew it, leads to years of mockery and tantrums. Miss Lucy's assurance that it does not matter if he is not creative briefly frees him, but she later retracts it, telling him that his art is important after all. This contradiction reflects the guardians' own confusion about what they are doing.

Madame's Gallery is the novel's central mystery. She takes the best work away, and the students build theories around it, eventually believing that couples who are truly in love could use their art to obtain a "deferral" from donations, because art reveals the inner self. Kathy's first person retrospective narration sustains the mystery: she shares rumours as the children believed them, so the reader feels their hope. The art that Tommy produces in the Cottages, and later as Kathy's patient, is therefore a hopeful act, an attempt to make his love for Kathy visible.

The final revelation is devastating. When Kathy and Tommy visit Madame and Miss Emily, they learn that there are no deferrals. Miss Emily explains that the art was collected to show the outside world that the students had souls at all, because society preferred not to think of them as fully human. Art, which the students treated as a private expression of self, was in fact evidence in a public campaign. The tragedy is that this evidence changes nothing: Hailsham has closed, and the movement it represented has failed. Tommy's rage in the field afterwards, when he screams into the darkness, suggests that he finally understands his

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drawings could never save him.

Ishiguro, writing in 2005 amid public debates about cloning, uses art to raise questions about humanity. The students' creativity, their memories and their love prove their souls more surely than any gallery, and the reader never doubts that they are human. Perhaps Ishiguro is also reflecting on his own art form: literature itself exists to reveal the inner lives of others.

Ultimately, art in Never Let Me Go is both precious and powerless. It gives the students identity, meaning and hope, yet it cannot change their fate. Through Tommy's tiny, carefully imagined creatures, Ishiguro shows that human beings create in order to be seen, and the novel's sorrow lies in a world that refuses to look.

08 Ishiguro creates horror in Never Let Me Go not through shocking violence but through quietness. The real horror lies in the gap between what happens to the students, who are raised only to have their organs removed until they die, and the calm, accepting way in which they and their narrator describe it. By making the monstrous seem ordinary, Ishiguro forces the reader to feel the horror that the characters themselves cannot.

The opening establishes this method immediately. Kathy introduces herself with the simple statement that she is thirty-one and has been a carer for over eleven years, speaking as if describing an ordinary career. Her tone is conversational, even pleased, as she mentions that her donors tend to do well. Only gradually does the reader realise what "carer" and "donor" mean. Ishiguro's euphemisms, "donations" for organ removal and "complete" for death, are chillingly bland. They conceal the

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brutal reality behind administrative language, and they suggest a society that has deliberately hidden its cruelty. The more gently Kathy uses these words, the more horrifying they become.

The horror is intensified by the students' conditioning. At Hailsham they are, in Miss Lucy's words, "told and not told": given information about their futures so early and so vaguely that they absorb it without fully understanding. Kathy's retrospective narration repeatedly returns to moments when the truth almost surfaced, such as Miss Lucy's outburst in the pavilion, when she tells the students plainly that their lives are set out for them and they will start donating as young adults. The children's response, a kind of embarrassed silence followed by jokes, shows how thoroughly they have been taught to accept their fate. Ishiguro makes the reader ask why they do not run away, and the absence of rebellion is perhaps the most disturbing element of the novel.

Black humour adds to the unease. When Tommy cuts his elbow, other students tease him that the wound might "unzip", so his arm would fall open. The joke is childish, but it reveals that, at some level, the children know their bodies are made to be opened. Ishiguro uses their innocent laughter to hint at a knowledge too frightening to face directly.

The reactions of outsiders also create horror. When the children deliberately crowd round Madame, she recoils from them with a shudder, as though she were afraid of spiders. Kathy describes realising for the first time that people outside fear and are repulsed by them. This moment is quietly devastating because it shows that the students are seen as less than human, and the reader is forced to recognise that the society Ishiguro depicts resembles our own in its ability to ignore suffering when it benefits from it.

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As the novel progresses, the physical horror becomes harder to avoid. Ruth's completion after her second donation is witnessed by Kathy as Ruth struggles in pain in the recovery centre, and Tommy approaches his fourth donation, which the students know is likely to be the last. Ishiguro also hints at wider atrocities. Miss Emily reveals that the conditions at most other places where clones were raised were far worse than Hailsham, and she describes the Morningdale scandal, in which a scientist tried to create children with enhanced abilities, frightening the public and destroying support for humane treatment. Because we see only what Kathy sees, these larger horrors remain at the edge of the story, and what is left unsaid becomes more frightening than what is described.

Ishiguro's setting reinforces this mood. The novel takes place in an alternative England in the late 1990s, with familiar landscapes of fields, service stations and seaside towns, so the horror is located in an ordinary, recognisable world rather than a distant future. Published in 2005, not long after the cloning of Dolly the sheep, the novel taps into real anxieties about science outpacing ethics.

The ending is perhaps the most haunting moment. Kathy, having lost both Ruth and Tommy, stands by a fence in Norfolk where rubbish has caught on the barbed wire and imagines Tommy appearing. She does not cry out or rebel; she simply drives away to continue her duties before her own donations begin. Ultimately, Ishiguro suggests that the greatest horror is not the system itself but the calm acceptance it produces, both in its victims and in the society that allows it.

09 Zusak presents Hans Hubermann as "a man who appreciated fairness" not through grand speeches but through small, quiet decisions which cost him dearly. In a

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novel set in Nazi Germany, where unfairness has become the law, Hans's sense of justice is shown as instinctive rather than political, and Zusak suggests that true heroism often belongs to ordinary, overlooked people who refuse to accept cruelty as normal.

The extract places Hans's fairness against a brutal backdrop. The violence against Kleinman's shop is presented in blunt, physical detail: men "throw several bricks" and "A star the colour of mustard was smeared to the door." The verb "smeared" makes the Nazi symbol seem dirty and careless, and the words "JEWISH FILTH" are capitalised so that they shout from the page, while their "sloppy lettering" suggests hatred that is thoughtless and crude. Against this, Mr Kleinman is described with pity: the "dust-broom was fixed powerlessly to his hand", and the adverb "powerlessly" captures the helplessness of Jewish citizens in the 1930s, when boycotts and attacks on Jewish businesses were openly tolerated. Zusak's sentence "The movement inside tapered from hurried to morose, then stopped altogether" slows the rhythm down, as if Kleinman's hope is slowly draining away.

Hans's response is simple and immediate. His question "Do you need some help?" is plain and unheroic, yet in context it is dangerous. Even more striking is his promise to "repaint your door", followed by the blunt one-line paragraph "Which he did." Zusak isolates this sentence to show that Hans is a man whose fairness is measured in actions rather than words. It is significant that Hans "could see their faces but couldn't recall their names": he does not help because Kleinman is a close friend, but because he sees him as a human being, which is exactly what Nazi propaganda tried to deny.

Death's narration then adds irony. He calls Hans's kindness "the second of two mistakes", and the first is his fury at the NSDAP office, where he "drove his fist

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onto the door". The short declarative "I can no longer join" sounds almost formal and calm, but it is a moral rebellion. By calling these acts "mistakes", Death is speaking from the perspective of the regime and of survival: in Nazi terms, fairness is an error. The reader, however, sees that these "mistakes" are the moments when Hans is most admirable. This ironic labelling is typical of Zusak's narrator, who often reveals outcomes in advance so that our attention moves from what happens to why it matters.

Hans's fairness is rooted in his past. Through flashback to the First World War, Zusak reveals that Erik Vandenburg saved Hans's life, and that Hans promised Erik's widow he would help if she ever needed it. The accordion, which Hans keeps and plays, becomes a symbol of this debt, so that every time he plays it he is remembering a promise. When Max Vandenburg arrives in Himmel Street years later, Hans hides him in the basement, risking his family's lives. Hans sees this as simple fairness: a life was given to him, so he must protect another.

His fairness also shapes his relationship with Liesel. He treats her with patience and respect from the moment she arrives, sitting with her through her nightmares and teaching her to read in the basement by painting words on the wall. Death describes him as barely visible, "an un-special person", and this deliberate understatement is important. Zusak seems to suggest that Hans's goodness goes unnoticed precisely because it is so modest, and that this makes it more believable and more moving.

The most powerful example comes when Hans gives bread to an elderly Jewish man being marched through Molching to Dachau. He is whipped in the street for it, and the consequence is devastating: fearing a search, Max has to leave the basement. Zusak presents fairness here as something that cannot be calculated;

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Hans acts on instinct and pays the price. His son, Hans Junior, a committed Nazi, condemns him as a coward, yet Zusak inverts this judgement, since Hans's quiet defiance takes far more courage than following the crowd.

Ultimately, Zusak uses Hans to show that fairness in an unjust society is a form of resistance. From repainting Kleinman's door to the bread on the road, his actions are small, but the novel insists that they matter. Hans's death in the bombing of Himmel Street makes his goodness all the more poignant, and he remains the moral centre of a story in which words are used to destroy, while Hans uses paint, music and bread to restore a sense of humanity.

10 Zusak presents the relationship between Liesel and Frau Hermann as an unlikely friendship built almost entirely through books and silence. It begins in awkwardness and suspicion, passes through anger and theft, and ends in mutual rescue. Through it, Zusak explores how grief can isolate people and how words, which the Nazi regime used as weapons, can also heal and connect.

At first the two are separated by class, age and experience. Liesel meets Ilse Hermann, the mayor's wife, when she delivers Rosa's washing to the large house on Grande Strasse. The contrast between the wealthy household and the poverty of Himmel Street is clear, and Frau Hermann is presented as a strange, almost ghostly figure: she stands in her bathrobe, with fluffy hair, saying very little. The people of Molching think of her as an eccentric, and Zusak withholds the reason for her silence, so that Liesel and the reader both find her unsettling. Later we learn that her son Johann died in the First World War, freezing to death, and that Ilse has never recovered. Her silence, therefore, is grief, and Zusak gradually turns her from an odd local figure into a tragic one.

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The turning point comes after the book burning on Hitler's birthday, when Liesel steals a smouldering copy of The Shoulder Shrug. Zusak builds tension through Death's narration, and the section "A Little Something to Dampen the Euphoria" warns the reader that Liesel has been seen. We expect the mayor's wife, a member of the Nazi elite, to report her. Instead, when Liesel next visits, Ilse leads her into the library. This scene is one of the most joyful in the novel: Liesel is overwhelmed by the sheer number of books and runs her hands along the shelves. The two still barely speak, yet the library becomes a space where they understand each other. Zusak suggests that Ilse, who has been unable to express her pain, recognises in Liesel someone who also needs words to survive. The irony is powerful: the wife of a Nazi official quietly rewards a girl for stealing from a Nazi book burning.

The relationship is not presented sentimentally. When the mayor cancels the washing because of the war, Ilse offers Liesel a book, and Liesel lashes out, cruelly telling her that it is time she dealt with her son's death. Liesel's anger stems from her own losses, her brother and her mother, and from the injustice of rich people keeping their comfort while the Hubermanns struggle. Zusak shows that grief can make people cruel as well as close. Later, Liesel and Rudy climb through the library window to steal books, and the relationship continues in a strange, wordless way. Ilse deliberately leaves the window open and, at one point, a plate of biscuits, which shows that she knows exactly who the thief is and is choosing to allow it. The repeated thefts become a kind of conversation, a game of trust between two people who cannot yet speak openly.

Eventually, words do pass between them. Liesel writes a letter of apology, and Ilse responds by visiting Himmel Street and giving her a small black book with blank

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pages, encouraging her to write. This gift is crucial to the structure of the novel. The book Liesel writes in the basement is "The Book Thief" itself, and because she is in the basement writing when the bombs fall, she survives. In a sense, Frau Hermann's gift saves Liesel's life. Zusak also gives her the final act of kindness: after the bombing destroys Himmel Street, it is Ilse who takes Liesel home. The girl who once trespassed into her house now becomes part of it.

Through this relationship, Zusak presents books as a bridge between people who seem to have nothing in common. Liesel's closing words, "I have hated the words and I have loved them", sum up her journey, and it is partly through Ilse that she learns to love them. Both characters are damaged by loss, and both find that reading and writing offer a way to survive it. Ultimately, Zusak suggests that compassion can cross barriers of class and grief, and that the smallest, quietest gestures, an open window or a blank notebook, can be acts of profound love.

11 In the Oxford AQA Short Stories Anthology, women are often presented as figures who are vulnerable, isolated and misunderstood, yet who carry more strength and complexity than the people around them recognise. In Through the Tunnel, Lessing presents Jerry's mother as loving but anxious, a woman trying to balance protection with freedom, while in A Real Durwan, Lahiri presents Boori Ma as a marginalised old woman whose dignity is gradually stripped from her by the community she serves. Both writers use these women to explore how society judges and limits female lives.

From the opening of Through the Tunnel, Lessing presents the mother through the eyes of her son, which immediately makes her seem distant. The boy "watched that white, naked arm", and the repetition of whiteness, first "very white in the

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sun", suggests fragility and exposure. The adjective "naked" is unexpected; it implies that she is unprotected, perhaps even out of place on the beach. This physical detail hints at her emotional vulnerability. We later learn that she is a widow with an only child, and the image of the single arm "swinging loose" may symbolise her loneliness, a woman without a partner, carrying the responsibility of raising a son alone.

Lessing also presents her as anxious and self-critical. She "frowned, conscientiously worrying" over what Jerry might want, and the narrative suggests she fears she has been "too busy or too careless to imagine" it. The adverb "conscientiously" shows that her care is deliberate and effortful, as if she is constantly checking herself. Her "anxious, apologetic smile" reveals a mother who is unsure of her role. Lessing later makes this explicit, telling us she is determined to be "neither possessive nor lacking in devotion". This balanced phrase captures the impossible position many mothers face, and it explains why she lets Jerry go to the wild bay alone. Her love is real, but it takes the form of restraint.

Jerry's response, "Contrition sent him running after her", shows that her vulnerability creates guilt in him. The narrator's phrase "a sort of chivalry" casts Jerry as a little knight protecting a lady, which is touching but also shows how the mother's dependence weighs on him. Structurally, the contrast between the "safe beach" and the "wild bay" maps onto mother and independence. When Jerry finally swims through the tunnel, the experience is like a rebirth, and Lessing implies that he must escape the safe world of his mother to become a man. Yet at the end, the mother remains unaware of the danger he faced. She simply worries that he should not swim too much, and the reader feels the poignancy of a parent who can never fully know her child.

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In A Real Durwan, Lahiri presents a very different woman. Boori Ma is an elderly refugee who sweeps the stairwell of a Calcutta apartment building and sleeps in the stairwell itself. She constantly tells stories of her former wealth before Partition, describing a life of servants and luxury. Lahiri uses the repeated phrase "believe me, don't believe me" to create ambiguity: the reader, like the residents, cannot be sure whether her stories are true. This refrain gives Boori Ma a voice, but it also shows how powerless she is, since her past can neither be proved nor taken seriously.

Like Jerry's mother, Boori Ma is defined by her vulnerability, but her isolation is social rather than emotional. The residents tolerate her as an unofficial guard, but she has no real status, and Lahiri shows how quickly that tolerance disappears. When the building is improved and a basin is stolen while she is away, the residents blame her and drive her out, claiming that what they need is a real durwan. The title becomes bitterly ironic: Boori Ma has protected the building with loyalty, yet she is dismissed as fake. Lahiri presents a woman who is old, poor and alone as the easiest person for a community to sacrifice.

Comparing the two, both writers present women whose inner lives are richer than others perceive. Jerry's mother appears simply anxious, but Lessing reveals a careful, painful self-awareness; Boori Ma appears to be a fantasist, but Lahiri invites sympathy for a displaced woman clinging to memory. Both are presented through others' eyes, the son's and the residents', which emphasises how women in these stories are often judged from outside. Ultimately, the anthology suggests that women's strength is quiet and frequently unrecognised, and that the people around them, whether a growing boy or a selfish community, rarely see them fully.

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12

The titles of short stories carry unusual weight because the form is so compressed: a title can frame the reader's expectations, point to a central symbol, or contain an irony that only becomes clear by the end. In The Destructors, Graham Greene uses his title to make destruction seem organised, almost professional, which forces the reader to look for meaning in a seemingly senseless act. In Through the Tunnel, Doris Lessing uses a literal title that gradually becomes symbolic, so that the tunnel represents Jerry's passage from childhood into independence.

Greene's title is immediately unsettling. "Destructors" is not a word normally used to describe people; we might expect "vandals" or "wreckers". The unusual noun makes destruction sound like a job or a title of rank, and this is exactly how the Wormsley Common Gang behave. When T. proposes pulling down Old Misery's house, the boys work methodically over the bank holiday, removing floors, staircases and panelling from the inside with the seriousness of skilled tradesmen. Greene even claims that "destruction after all is a form of creation", a paradox which suggests the gang find a kind of artistry in their task. The title therefore prepares us to see the boys not as careless hooligans but as builders in reverse.

The title is also significant in its context. The story is set in London after the Blitz, where bombed sites and ruined houses are part of the boys' everyday landscape. The war has made destruction normal, and the "destructors" can be seen as children shaped by it. Old Misery's house, possibly built by Wren, survives among the ruins as a symbol of the old order, of beauty, tradition and class. T., whose father has come down in the world, seems to resent everything that the house stands for. His claim that love and hate are "hooey" and that "There's only things" reveals a chilling emptiness, and the title may refer to this attitude as much as to the act itself: the boys are destroying not just a building but the values attached to it. Greene emphasises this when the gang burn Old Misery's

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savings rather than steal them. They are not thieves; they are destructors, and their act has no material motive.

The plural form of the title is important too. The story is as much about the gang as a group as about any individual. T. replaces Blackie as leader, and Greene shows how a collective can carry out something that no single boy might attempt. The final image of the house collapsing as the lorry driver pulls away, and his laughter at the sight, extends the idea of destruction beyond the boys. Even an adult finds it funny, which suggests that the impulse to destroy is widespread in post-war society. The title, then, may ultimately apply to everyone.

In contrast, Lessing's title Through the Tunnel seems simple and literal. It describes the physical challenge Jerry sets himself: to swim through an underwater tunnel in the rocks of the wild bay, as the older local boys can. However, the preposition "Through" is significant. It implies a journey with a beginning and an end, an ordeal that must be completed rather than avoided. The title focuses the reader's attention on the goal and creates suspense: we read the story waiting to discover whether Jerry will make it.

As the story develops, the tunnel becomes symbolic. At the start, Jerry is torn between his mother on the "safe beach" and the "wild bay", and the tunnel represents the passage between these worlds. His painful preparation, counting his breath, suffering nosebleeds, practising with his goggles, shows the effort needed to grow up. The swim itself is presented as a terrifying, dark, claustrophobic experience, and his emergence into the light reads like a kind of rebirth. The title therefore suggests that growing up is not a gradual drift but a difficult crossing that must be made alone.

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The endings of both stories show how titles gather meaning. In The Destructors, the house is gone, and the title confirms the gang's success with bleak irony. In Through the Tunnel, once Jerry has succeeded, Lessing tells us that it was no longer important to go to the bay: the tunnel has served its purpose. Both titles, then, point to a central act, but while Greene's suggests something that tears down, Lessing's suggests something that carries a child forward. Together they show how a title can shape a reader's moral and emotional response to an entire story.

13 Shakespeare presents ambition in Julius Caesar as a dangerous and slippery quality: everyone condemns it, yet almost everyone is driven by it. In this soliloquy, Brutus convinces himself that Caesar must die because of what his ambition might become, but across the play Shakespeare exposes how the word "ambitious" is used as a political weapon, and how the ambition of others, from Cassius to Antony and Octavius, proves just as destructive as anything Caesar actually did.

The extract opens with a decision already made: "It must be by his death." The blunt, monosyllabic statement suggests that Brutus has reached his conclusion before building his argument, and the rest of the speech becomes a search for justification. He admits that he knows "no personal cause to spurn at him / But for the general", presenting himself as a disinterested patriot acting for Rome. Yet the very next line, "He would be crowned", shows how much of his reasoning rests on assumption. The conditional "would" and the question "How that might change his nature, that's the question" reveal that Brutus is condemning Caesar for something that has not yet happened. Shakespeare invites the audience to notice the weakness of a murder justified by possibility.

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Brutus relies on vivid imagery to make this possibility seem real. The metaphor "It is the bright day that brings forth the adder" suggests that power, like sunlight, draws out hidden danger, and the serpent recalls the Garden of Eden, associating ambition with temptation and sin. He continues the image with "we put a sting in him", implying that a crown would give Caesar a weapon he does not yet possess. The most developed image is the ladder: "lowliness is young ambition's ladder". Shakespeare describes the climber who, reaching "the upmost round", turns his back and goes on "scorning the base degrees / By which he did ascend." This is a powerful picture of ambition as ingratitude, yet it is a general proverb, "a common proof", rather than evidence about Caesar. Brutus even concedes that Caesar's "affections" have never "swayed / More than his reason." The final half-line, "So Caesar may. / Then lest he may, prevent", exposes the flimsiness of the logic: "may" is repeated, and murder is justified as prevention.

Elsewhere, Shakespeare keeps Caesar's ambition ambiguous. Casca reports that Caesar refused the crown three times at the Lupercal, but suggests he was reluctant to let it go. Caesar's request that Antony touch Calpurnia during the race may hint at a wish for an heir, and a dynasty. In Act 3 he declares himself "constant as the northern star", and the celestial imagery elevates him above ordinary men, which might seem to justify Brutus's fears. Yet Caesar is also presented as physically frail and superstitious, so the audience is never sure whether he is a tyrant in the making or simply a proud old man.

Shakespeare suggests that the real ambition may belong to the conspirators. Cassius resents Caesar's greatness, complaining that he bestrides the world "Like a Colossus" while "we petty men" walk beneath him. His envy, more than any principle, drives the plot, and he manipulates Brutus with forged letters. After the assassination, Brutus declares "ambition's debt is paid", and in his funeral speech

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he tells the plebeians "as he was ambitious, I slew him." Antony then turns the word against him, repeating that "Brutus says he was ambitious" while reminding the crowd that Caesar refused the crown and wept for the poor. The repetition makes "ambitious" sound hollow, and the audience sees how easily the accusation can be undermined.

Finally, Shakespeare reveals that removing Caesar does not remove ambition. In Act 4, Antony, Octavius and Lepidus coolly mark names for death, Antony agreeing that his own nephew must die, and he dismisses Lepidus as a "slight unmeritable man". This ruthless scheming is far worse than anything Caesar is shown to do. For an Elizabethan audience anxious about the succession of an ageing queen, the play would warn that removing a ruler by force breeds civil war. Ultimately, Shakespeare presents ambition as universal and corrupting, and Brutus's soliloquy is tragic because he kills to prevent ambition, only to unleash it everywhere.

14

Shakespeare presents Mark Antony as a man who is consistently underestimated. At first he seems a loyal follower and pleasure-seeker, but after Caesar's death he emerges as the most skilful politician in the play, able to grieve sincerely and manipulate ruthlessly at the same time. Through Antony, Shakespeare explores the power of rhetoric and suggests that loyalty and political cunning are not opposites but can exist uneasily in the same person.

In the opening act, Antony is presented as close to Caesar but rather lightweight. At the Feast of Lupercal, Caesar tells him not to forget to touch Calpurnia during the race, and Antony replies with total obedience, saying that when Caesar commands, it is performed. This shows a relationship of trust, since Caesar shares his private anxiety about childlessness with him. Caesar later comments that

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Antony loves plays and revels, and this reputation leads the conspirators to dismiss him. When Cassius argues that Antony should die alongside Caesar, Brutus insists that "Antony is but a limb of Caesar", which will be useless once the head is cut off. This metaphor is ironic, because the "limb" will prove strong enough to destroy them. Shakespeare builds dramatic irony here: the audience is primed to watch for what Antony becomes.

His first great test comes immediately after the assassination. Antony sends a servant ahead with a careful, flattering message, and then enters to shake the bloody hands of each conspirator in turn. This is an extraordinary piece of political theatre: by touching their bloody hands he seems to accept them, yet he is also marking them, almost naming each one for future revenge. He flatters Brutus as noble and wise, and persuades him to allow a funeral speech. As soon as he is alone, his true feelings break out in the apostrophe "O, pardon me, thou bleeding piece of earth, / That I am meek and gentle with these butchers!" The contrast between "meek and gentle" and "butchers" exposes how deliberately he has been performing. He then prophesies civil war, with Caesar's spirit crying "'Havoc!'" and letting "slip the dogs of war". The violent imagery reveals a man whose grief has turned into a fierce desire for vengeance.

The funeral speech in Act 3 Scene 2 is the clearest presentation of Antony's power. Shakespeare contrasts it deliberately with Brutus's speech, which is in prose, logical and balanced, built on antithesis such as "Not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more." Antony speaks in verse and appeals to emotion. He begins humbly, "Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears", placing "Friends" first to win the crowd's affection, and claims he comes "to bury Caesar, not to praise him." He then repeats that "Brutus is an honourable man" until the phrase becomes sarcastic, undermining Brutus without directly attacking him. He

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uses rhetorical questions, pauses for apparent grief, and reminds the crowd that Caesar refused the crown and wept for the poor. Most cunningly, he mentions Caesar's will but pretends he should not read it, building suspense until the plebeians demand it. Showing them the wounded body, he calls Brutus's stab "the most unkindest cut of all", the double superlative emphasising betrayal. The result is a riot, and his cold remark "Mischief, thou art afoot, / Take thou what course thou wilt" shows that he has deliberately unleashed chaos. Even the murder of the innocent Cinna the poet is a consequence of his words.

In Act 4, Shakespeare reveals a much darker Antony. Sitting with Octavius and Lepidus, he agrees to the death of his own nephew in exchange for others, plans to cut down the money Caesar left to the people in his will, and dismisses Lepidus as a "slight unmeritable man" once he has been used. The man who moved the crowd with the generosity of Caesar's will now plans to reduce it. This shows Antony as a ruthless politician whose loyalty to Caesar coexists with naked ambition.

At the end of the play, however, Shakespeare restores some nobility to him. Over Brutus's body, Antony declares "This was the noblest Roman of them all", recognising that Brutus alone acted for the common good. This generous tribute complicates our judgement: Antony can be manipulative and cruel, yet also capable of honesty and respect. Ultimately, Shakespeare presents him as a brilliant, ambiguous figure, whose skill with words shows the Elizabethan audience how easily the passions of a crowd can be steered, and how much power belongs to whoever controls the story.

15 Shakespeare presents Macbeth's inner conflict as a struggle between ambition and

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conscience, which is fiercest before the murder of Duncan and then slowly hardens into despair. In this soliloquy, Macbeth is still capable of reasoning morally, and his divided mind is shown through hesitant, tangled language. Across the play, Shakespeare charts how this conflict is never resolved but suppressed, so that Macbeth's tragedy lies in silencing the voice that might have saved him.

The opening lines are full of conditional structures: "If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well / It were done quickly." The repetition of "done" shows Macbeth circling around the deed without naming it, as if the word murder is too terrible to say. Even when he does name it, he uses the formal, Latinate "assassination", which distances him from the act. His wish that it could "trammel up the consequence" uses the image of catching something in a net, and the sibilance of "surcease, success" makes the two ideas slide together, revealing how closely he links Duncan's death with his own gain. Yet the very fact that he is weighing consequences shows that he cannot commit himself wholeheartedly.

The conflict deepens as he considers the afterlife and earthly justice. The metaphor of "this bank and shoal of time" presents human life as a narrow sandbank in the ocean of eternity, and he claims he would "jump the life to come", risking damnation. This is a shocking admission for a Jacobean audience, who believed that killing a king, God's anointed, was a sin against heaven itself. However, he immediately turns to the fear of consequences here: "we but teach / Bloody instructions, which being taught, return / To plague th'inventor." This prophetic line foreshadows the cycle of violence that will consume him. The image of the "poison'd chalice" returned "To our own lips" by "even-handed justice" has religious resonance, suggesting a corrupted communion cup, and implies that the universe itself is morally balanced.

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Macbeth then lists the reasons against the murder with almost legal precision: Duncan is "here in double trust", as Macbeth is "his kinsman and his subject" and also "his host". The dashes and enjambment in these lines create a broken rhythm, as though he is thinking aloud and finding each new reason more powerful. The final half-line, "Not bear the knife myself", is stark and monosyllabic, showing his conscience at its clearest. Shortly afterwards, he decides "We will proceed no further in this business", and only Lady Macbeth's attacks on his masculinity overturn this decision. Shakespeare shows that his inner conflict is real but vulnerable to persuasion.

The conflict begins earlier, when the witches' prophecies first unsettle him. In Act I Scene 3 he says the "supernatural soliciting / Cannot be ill, cannot be good", and the balanced antithesis captures his uncertainty. He admits that the "horrid image" of murder makes his hair stand on end, showing that his imagination is already ahead of his morality. In Act I Scene 4, his aside "Stars, hide your fires" reveals that he knows his "black and deep desires" are shameful.

Shakespeare uses dramatic devices to externalise this conflict. Before the murder, Macbeth sees a dagger, asking "Is this a dagger which I see before me". The hallucination suggests that his mind is projecting its own violent intention, and his uncertainty over whether it is real reflects his divided self. After the murder, he is horrified, believing he heard a voice cry that "Macbeth does murder sleep", and asking whether "all great Neptune's ocean" could wash the blood from his hand. The hyperbole shows that guilt has overwhelmed him. At the banquet, Banquo's ghost forces this conflict into public view: Macbeth struggles to appear regal while terrified, crying "Thou canst not say I did it", which reveals his guilty conscience to the assembled lords.

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Structurally, however, the conflict diminishes. By Act 3 he admits "O, full of scorpions is my mind", and later that he is "in blood / Stepped in so far" that returning would be as hard as going on. The image suggests he has given up the struggle. He orders the murder of Macduff's family without hesitation, and by Act 5 he says he has "almost forgot the taste of fears". His "To-morrow, and to-morrow" soliloquy shows a man who has defeated his conscience only to find life meaningless. Shakespeare presents this as Macbeth's true tragedy: the inner conflict in the extract shows a man who understood exactly what he was doing, and chose ambition anyway.

16 Shakespeare presents chaos and disorder in Macbeth as the inevitable result of breaking the natural order. For a Jacobean audience who believed in the Divine Right of Kings and the Great Chain of Being, the murder of a king was not just a crime but a violation of God's design, and Shakespeare shows disorder spreading outwards from Macbeth's mind to his marriage, his country and even nature itself, until order is finally restored under Malcolm.

The play opens in chaos. The witches appear in "thunder, lightning, or in rain", and their paradox "Fair is foul, and foul is fair" establishes a world where moral values are inverted. Their chanting in rhyming tetrameter, unlike the iambic pentameter of the nobles, sets them apart as unnatural beings. Shakespeare presents them as agents of disorder, since their prophecies awaken Macbeth's ambition and set the tragedy in motion. King James himself had written about witchcraft, and an audience would have seen them as dangerous instruments of evil.

Scotland is also in political chaos at the start. The rebellion of Macdonwald, the Norwegian invasion and the treachery of the Thane of Cawdor show a kingdom

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under threat. Yet this disorder is brought under control by Macbeth and Banquo, who fight on the side of the rightful king. The Captain's description of Macbeth unseaming Macdonwald "from the nave to th'chops" is brutally violent, but it is violence in the service of order. Shakespeare uses this to create tragic irony: the man who restores order at the start becomes its greatest destroyer, and the first Thane of Cawdor's treachery foreshadows that of the second.

The murder of Duncan unleashes chaos in nature. Shakespeare uses pathetic fallacy to show the universe reacting. Lennox reports that "The night has been unruly", with chimneys blown down and strange screams heard. In Act 2 Scene 4, Ross and the Old Man describe unnatural events: darkness covers the day, and "A falcon, tow'ring in her pride of place, / Was by a mousing owl hawked at and killed." The falcon, a noble bird, represents Duncan, while the owl, a lowly hunter of mice, represents Macbeth, so the image symbolises the overturning of hierarchy. Most disturbingly, Duncan's horses break loose and eat each other. These grotesque details suggest that when the king is murdered, the whole of creation falls into disorder.

Chaos also invades the social world, most clearly in the banquet scene. The scene opens with Macbeth telling his guests that they know their own degrees, and the seating plan reflects a well-ordered court. Yet the appearance of Banquo's ghost causes Macbeth to rave in front of his lords, and Lady Macbeth dismisses them hurriedly: "Stand not upon the order of your going, / But go at once." The word "order" is ironic, since the ceremony of the banquet has collapsed. Shakespeare uses this to show that a usurper can never create a stable court, because his guilt keeps breaking through.

Disorder also exists within the Macbeths themselves. Macbeth's mind becomes

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chaotic: he cries "O, full of scorpions is my mind", and his sleeplessness reflects the disruption of the natural rhythms of life. Lady Macbeth, who once called on spirits to "unsex" her, ends the play sleepwalking, trying to wash imaginary blood from her hands, and her broken speech in prose, rather than the controlled verse she used earlier, shows that her mind has disintegrated. Shakespeare suggests that those who disrupt order are destroyed by the disorder they create.

Under Macbeth's tyranny, Scotland itself suffers. Macduff's wife and children are slaughtered, and Ross laments "Alas, poor country, / Almost afraid to know itself." The personification presents Scotland as a wounded, frightened being. Malcolm and Macduff describe the country as bleeding and sinking beneath the yoke, imagery which presents tyranny as a disease.

Finally, Shakespeare restores order. Malcolm, the rightful heir, returns with English support, Birnam Wood comes to Dunsinane, and Macbeth is killed. Malcolm promises to act "in measure, time and place", and the calm, balanced phrasing contrasts with the chaos that preceded it. Macbeth is dismissed as a "dead butcher". By ending in this way, Shakespeare reassures his audience, including a king who had survived the Gunpowder Plot, that disorder caused by regicide is temporary and that legitimate rule will ultimately prevail.

17 Priestley presents Eric as the character who travels furthest in the play: from an immature, drunken and slightly shameful son who is "not quite at ease" in his own family, to a young man who accepts guilt more honestly than anyone except Sheila. Through him, Priestley suggests that the younger generation, however flawed, is capable of the moral change that the older Birlings refuse, which was a hopeful message for an audience in 1945 who were rebuilding society after two

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world wars.

In this extract Eric's language is blunt and urgent. The stage direction "[bursting out]" shows that he can no longer contain himself, and his rhetorical questions, "This girl's still dead, isn't she? Nobody's brought her to life, have they?", cut through his parents' relief that the Inspector may have been a hoax. The plain monosyllables of "still dead" refuse any comforting euphemism, and Priestley uses Eric to drag the conversation back from reputation to the human cost. His parents want to "pretend" nothing happened; Eric insists that what matters is moral truth, not legal consequences.

The repetition in "I did what I did. And Mother did what she did. And the rest of you did what you did to her" is especially striking. The syntax is almost childlike in its simplicity, yet the effect is powerful: the parallel structure spreads guilt evenly across every member of the family, echoing the Inspector's message that each of them "helped" to destroy Eva. The phrase "rotten story" suggests something decaying at the heart of the respectable Birling household. Even his confession to Gerald, "I stole some money", is offered with a new honesty, and the dismissive "The money's not the important thing" shows that he has rejected his father's capitalist values, in which money is always the important thing. Sheila's support, "Eric's absolutely right", visually and verbally aligns the two children against their parents, so the stage becomes divided by generation.

This seriousness contrasts sharply with how Eric is introduced. In the opening stage directions he is "half shy, half assertive", a description which suggests a young man who has not yet found who he is. At the dinner he "suddenly guffaws" for no clear reason, and Sheila teases him that he is "squiffy". Priestley uses these small details, along with his drinking from the decanter, to hint that Eric has a

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hidden problem. When Gerald jokes that Eric might have been "up to something", Eric reacts uneasily and sharply, a moment of foreshadowing that the audience only understands later. Even in Act 1, however, Eric shows a flicker of conscience when he asks why the workers shouldn't "try for higher wages", suggesting that his instincts are better than his father's.

Priestley's structure delays Eric's full involvement for maximum tension. While he is offstage, Mrs Birling condemns the unknown father of Eva's child, insisting he should be made an example of. The dramatic irony is intense, because the audience and Sheila realise the truth before Mrs Birling does, and the act ends with Eric's entrance, pale and distressed. His own story in Act 3 is far from heroic: he admits he was in a "state when a chap easily turns nasty", which hints at sexual coercion, and he treated Eva as an object. Priestley does not excuse him. Yet Eric's anger at his mother, "you killed her", and his accusation that Birling is "not the kind of father a chap could go to when he's in trouble" expose how the cold, status-obsessed parenting of the upper middle class has failed its own children.

By the end, Eric's language has changed decisively. When Birling celebrates the possibility of a hoax, Eric insists that "the girl's dead and we all helped to kill her", and he agrees with Sheila that the family's attitude frightens him. Some readers might feel his change is incomplete, since his guilt focuses partly on his own discomfort. Nevertheless, Priestley clearly positions Eric and Sheila as the audience's hope. Set in 1912, just before the disaster of the First World War, the play shows a younger generation beginning to accept collective responsibility, which Priestley's 1945 audience, voting for the welfare state, were invited to complete.

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18

Priestley presents women in An Inspector Calls as divided by class and age, but united by the way a patriarchal, capitalist society limits and judges them. Through the contrast between Mrs Birling, Sheila and the absent Eva Smith, he shows that some women uphold the system that oppresses others, while the younger generation can learn to see past it. Writing in 1945 about 1912, a time before women could vote and when working-class girls had almost no protection, Priestley uses his female characters to expose how privilege corrupts compassion.

Mrs Birling is introduced as "a rather cold woman and her husband's social superior". The adjective "cold" sets the tone for her entire role, and the reference to her superior class suggests that her identity rests on status. She polices behaviour, correcting her husband for complimenting the cook and treating her children like infants. Her attitude to other women is chilling. She dismisses Eva as one of the "girls of that class" and claims that her scruples were "absurd in a girl in her position", as if moral feelings were a privilege of wealth. The irony is that, as chair of the Brumley Women's Charity Organisation, she holds power specifically to help women, yet she uses it to refuse help to a pregnant girl. Priestley presents her as a woman who has absorbed patriarchal and class prejudice so completely that she becomes its enforcer. Even when the truth is revealed, she declares "I accept no blame for it at all", and her refusal to change makes her one of the play's clearest targets.

Sheila, by contrast, begins as a stereotypical upper-middle-class daughter, "very pleased with life and rather excited", whose world revolves around her engagement and her ring. Her mother advises her to accept that men with "important work" will neglect their wives, which shows the narrow role expected of her. Yet Sheila is the first to feel genuine remorse. Her confession about having Eva sacked from Milwards is revealing: Eva was "pretty" and the dress would "suit her", while Sheila

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was jealous. Priestley uses the clothes imagery to suggest that the only difference between the two young women is money; dressed in the same expensive clothes, Eva would be just as respectable. Sheila's honesty, "If she'd been some miserable plain little creature, I don't suppose I'd have done it", shows her facing her own vanity. Earlier she insists that the factory girls "aren't cheap labour", they're "people", which echoes the Inspector's values. Her growing confidence is shown through her language: by the end she challenges her parents directly and warns her mother not to build "a kind of wall" between the family and Eva. Priestley presents Sheila as the hope that women of her generation might reject both snobbery and the passive role society gave them.

Eva Smith never appears, yet she dominates the play. Priestley's decision to keep her offstage is a powerful dramatic method: she becomes a symbol of the voiceless working class, and especially of working-class women whose bodies and labour are used by others. She is sacked by Birling for asking for higher wages, sacked again because of Sheila's jealousy, kept as a mistress by Gerald, used by Eric and rejected by Mrs Birling. Each episode shows a different form of power, economic, social and sexual, exercised over her. Her changed name, "Daisy Renton", suggests how women in her position had to reinvent themselves to survive. Importantly, she is shown to have dignity: she refuses money she knows is stolen, which exposes how wrong Mrs Birling's assumptions are. Her horrific death, the disinfectant that "burnt her inside out", is a brutal image of how society destroyed her from the inside.

Even Edna, the maid, silently reminds the audience of the women who serve the Birlings without being noticed. Ultimately, Priestley suggests that Eva represents "millions and millions" of women like her. By contrasting the cold Mrs Birling with the transformed Sheila, he argues that women's fate depends on whether privileged

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people choose responsibility or prejudice, and he leaves his audience to decide which side they are on.

19 Miller presents Tituba as one of the most vulnerable people in Salem: a black slave from Barbados whose status makes her the obvious scapegoat the moment witchcraft is suspected. Through her, Miller shows how a society that fears outsiders and demands confessions will crush those with the least power, and how terror can force people to say whatever their accusers want to hear.

In this extract, as Hale questions the Parris household, Tituba is quickly cornered. The questioning moves from Abigail to Tituba because Abigail, sensing danger, redirects blame onto her, claiming that Tituba made her do it and that "She makes me drink blood!" Miller exposes the cruel logic of the hierarchy here: a white niece of the minister can save herself by accusing the slave, and nobody questions it. Tituba's first response is denial, "I don't compact with no Devil!", but the double negative and non-standard grammar mark her immediately as different from the educated Puritans around her. Miller uses her dialect throughout to emphasise her isolation; she does not speak the language of power, and so her words carry no weight.

Tituba's turn towards confession is driven by fear, not truth. Parris threatens to whip her to death and Putnam demands that she be hanged, and Miller makes the pressure almost physical as Hale presses her for names. Hale's language is persuasive and flattering, telling her she has been chosen to help cleanse the village, so that confession is presented as her only route to safety. Miller subtly shows that it is the interrogators who supply the details: Hale and Putnam suggest names such as Goody Good and Goody Osburn, and Tituba repeats them.

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Her desperate cry, "No, no, don't hang Tituba!", reveals that she has understood the rules of Salem more quickly than anyone: confess and accuse, and you will live.

Her confession is also darkly ironic. She claims the Devil told her that "Mr. Parris must be kill", describing him as a "mean man and no gentle man". On one level this is a terrified performance, but on another it allows her to voice resentment towards the master who has mistreated her, safely disguised as the Devil's words. Miller invites us to see that even a fabricated confession can reveal real tensions in the household. Dramatically, Tituba's confession is the spark for the whole tragedy. Abigail immediately seizes the moment and cries that she wants to open herself, then begins naming names, joined by Betty, and the act ends in a frenzy of accusations. Tituba is therefore both the first victim of the hysteria and, unwillingly, the trigger that unleashes it.

Earlier in Act I, Miller hints at her precarious position. She enters frightened, asking whether "My Betty" will be well, and the possessive shows genuine affection for the child, yet Parris dismisses her harshly. Her role in the forest, conjuring for the bored and repressed girls, presents her as an exotic figure onto whom the Puritans project their fears about anything foreign or sensual. Abigail later reminds her, "You beg me to conjure", but Tituba's attempt to defend herself is ignored; the audience can see that the girls' own desires have been transferred onto the outsider.

When we see Tituba again in Act 4, Miller presents a pitiful and changed figure. In prison with Sarah Good, she is half mad, longing for the Devil to fly her home to Barbados, where she insists there is "no Hell". There is a grim comedy in this scene, but also deep sadness: the trials have broken her, and her longing for Barbados reminds us that she was taken from her homeland and never belonged in

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Salem. Her degradation contrasts sharply with the nobility of Proctor, who will die rather than give a false confession, while Tituba lives because she gave one. Miller, writing during the McCarthy era, uses this contrast to show how confession and naming names could save a life while destroying a person. Tituba is therefore presented with sympathy as a victim of racism, fear and a society that punishes difference.

20 Miller presents the power of the girls in The Crucible as both shocking and paradoxical. In a Puritan theocracy where young, unmarried girls had almost no status, Abigail and her followers become the most powerful people in Salem, able to send respected adults to the gallows simply by pointing and screaming. Miller suggests that this power does not come from the girls alone, but from a society so frightened, so rigid and so eager to believe in the Devil that it hands authority to anyone who claims to see him.

From the opening act, Miller establishes Abigail's control over the other girls. When Betty tries to confess, Abigail shakes her and threatens all of them: anyone who breathes "the edge of a word" will face "a pointy reckoning that will shudder you". The violent, unusual imagery is frightening because it is so vivid, and the threat to come "in the black of some terrible night" shows that Abigail uses fear as a weapon long before the court gives her official power. She also reminds them that she "saw Indians smash my dear parents' heads", a brutal memory that hints at the trauma behind her hardness and makes her seem capable of anything. At this stage, her power is private and secret, restricted to a frightened group of girls.

The end of Act I transforms this into public power. After Tituba confesses, Abigail cries out that she wants to open herself and begins naming women she claims to

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have seen "with the Devil". Miller structures the climax as a chant of accusations, with Betty joining in, so that the girls' voices rise over the adults'. For girls whose lives were normally governed by silence, obedience and hard work, this is an intoxicating release, and Miller makes the audience feel the danger of a society suddenly listening to them.

In Act 2, Miller shows this power through Mary Warren, the timid servant who now declares she is "an official of the court" and refuses to be whipped. The reversal is almost comic, but it is also disturbing: a servant girl now has power over her master. Mary's account of the court, where women are condemned on the girls' word, reveals how quickly accusations become death sentences. Elizabeth recognises the danger, observing that where Abigail walks "the crowd will part like the sea for Israel". The biblical simile shows that Abigail is now treated almost as a prophet. Proctor's furious response, that "the little crazy children are jangling the keys of the kingdom", captures Miller's central irony: children, the least powerful people in Salem, now hold the keys to heaven and hell.

The courtroom scene in Act 3 is where Miller presents the girls' power most dramatically. When Mary Warren tries to tell the truth, Abigail suddenly stares at the ceiling and pretends to see a yellow bird in the rafters. The other girls copy her, repeating Mary's words back to her in unison. This mimicry is terrifying in performance because it turns a group of girls into a single force, and Mary's individual voice is drowned out. Unable to resist, Mary breaks and turns on Proctor, calling him "the Devil's man". Miller shows that collective hysteria is stronger than individual truth. Abigail's confidence is so great that she even warns Danforth to "beware", asking whether he thinks himself "so mighty that the power of Hell may not turn your wits". The assertive tone shows that she believes herself untouchable, able to threaten the Deputy Governor himself.

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Yet Miller also suggests the limits of this power. In Act 4, Abigail flees Salem after stealing Parris's money, which suggests that she knows the community is turning against the trials. Her power was always borrowed from the court; once the court begins to doubt, she runs. By then, however, the girls' accusations have killed Rebecca Nurse and will kill Proctor. Writing during McCarthyism, Miller shows how a society gripped by fear can give enormous power to accusers, and that the real guilt lies not only with the girls but with the authorities who chose to believe them.

21 Hansberry presents Walter's change as a painful journey from a man who believes money and manipulation are the only routes to dignity, to a man who finally discovers that his worth lies in pride, family and refusing to be bought. In this extract, Walter is at his most desperate and most mistaken, and Hansberry uses it to establish the values he will eventually reject.

At the start of the extract, Walter tries to use Ruth to manipulate Mama. He believes Mama "listen to you more than she do me", which reveals his frustration that, despite being the man of the house, he has little authority in a home run by his mother. His instructions to Ruth are almost theatrical: the stage direction says he "demonstrates graphically" how she should behave, and the repetition of "sip your coffee" and "sip some more coffee" shows him scripting a performance. Hansberry suggests that Walter sees life as a series of deals and strategies, and that he is willing to turn even his wife's quiet morning conversations into a sales pitch. His insistence that "This ain't no fly-by-night proposition, baby" is ironic, because the audience later learns that it is exactly that.

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The mention of "Bobo" makes Ruth frown, and her single-word question hints at her distrust of Walter's friends. Hansberry fills Walter's speech with numbers, "seventy-five thousand", "thirty thousand", "ten thousand each", which makes the plan sound solid but also shows how money dominates his thinking. Crucially, he admits the need to pay "a couple of hundred" to get the licence approved, and when Ruth names this as "graft" he snaps, "Don't call it that." His cynical claim that "don't nothing happen for you in this world 'less you pay somebody off" shows that he has accepted a corrupt view of America, where success is bought rather than earned. His sexist remark that this shows "what women understand about the world" reveals his frustration with the women around him, and perhaps his insecurity: he dismisses their moral objections because he cannot answer them.

Elsewhere in the early scenes, Walter's dissatisfaction is clear. He complains that he spends his days as a chauffeur driving a white man around, and he resents Beneatha's ambition to become a doctor, suggesting she should be a nurse or get married instead. When Mama asks why he talks so much about money, he insists, "it is life", and Mama's reply, that freedom "used to be life", shows the generational gap between them. In Act 2, when George Murchison mockingly calls him "Prometheus", Walter does not understand the reference, which reveals both his fiery ambition and his lack of education. His drunken boast "I'm a giant" surrounded by "ants" shows how trapped and humiliated he feels.

The turning point comes when Mama gives Walter the remaining money and he hands it all to Willy Harris, including Beneatha's share. When Bobo reveals that Willy has disappeared, Walter's dream collapses. His despair leads him to his lowest point: he decides that there is nothing in the world but "taking", and he plans to accept Lindner's offer to buy the family out. Hansberry shows his self-loathing most painfully when he rehearses the speech he will give Lindner, adopting the

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subservient voice of a stereotyped black servant, calling him "Captain, Mistuh, Bossman". This performance mirrors the one he scripts for Ruth in the extract, but now he is acting out his own humiliation.

Hansberry's structure makes the final reversal powerful. Mama insists that Travis stays to watch, so Walter must face his son. Instead of accepting the money, he tells Lindner that his father "earned it for us brick by brick", and the family will move in. The contrast between the planned speech and the real one shows Walter finally standing up with dignity. The presence of Travis makes this especially poignant, as Walter passes on pride rather than shame. Mama recognises that he has come "into his manhood". In a 1950s America of segregation and limited opportunity, Hansberry suggests that real manhood is not wealth but integrity.

22 Hansberry presents the female characters in A Raisin in the Sun as the moral backbone of the Younger family, yet each woman represents a different response to the pressures of race, poverty and gender in 1950s Chicago. Through the generational contrast between Mama, Ruth and Beneatha, Hansberry explores what it means to be a black woman at a time of segregation, and suggests that their strength, endurance and vision hold the family together.

Mama, or Lena, is the matriarch. She is rooted in the past, in faith and in the memory of her late husband, Big Walter, whose insurance money drives the plot. Hansberry uses her plant as a central symbol: it is a small, struggling thing that has never had enough sunlight, yet she tends it devotedly. The plant represents both Mama's dream of a garden and house of her own and her care for her family, who have also been starved of opportunity in their cramped apartment. Her authority is clear when she slaps Beneatha for denying God and makes her repeat,

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"In my mother's house there is still God." The short, firm statement shows her determination that her family will keep their values. Yet Hansberry does not make her simply traditional. Her decision to buy a house in Clybourne Park, a white neighbourhood, is a quietly radical act, and when she finally gives Walter the money she shows a willingness to trust and to let go. Her advice to Beneatha after Walter loses the money, to "measure him right", shows a deep, compassionate wisdom: love is most needed when people are at their lowest.

Ruth represents the exhausted, practical wife. From the first scene, Hansberry presents her waking the family, cooking and nagging Travis to eat, and the cramped setting emphasises how much of her life is spent caring for others in a space too small for them. Her relationship with Walter is strained, and he dismisses her as part of a world of women who do not understand him. Yet Ruth has her own quiet strength and independence. Her secret consideration of an abortion, having paid a down payment to a woman, shows how desperate poverty makes her, but it also shows her taking a decision about her own body and future without asking Walter. When the house seems lost, her passionate promise to work and scrub floors if she has to reveals that her dream is just as intense as his. Hansberry presents her as a woman whose sacrifices are largely invisible, but without whom the family would collapse.

Beneatha is the youngest and the most modern. She wants to become a doctor, an ambition that challenges the expectations of both race and gender, and Walter's suggestion that she should be a nurse or simply get married shows the sexism she faces even at home. Hansberry uses costume to show her search for identity: after Asagai gives her Nigerian robes, she dresses up and dances, and later cuts her hair short, rejecting the straightened style that imitated white beauty. Asagai's name for her, "Alaiyo", meaning one for whom bread is not enough, captures her hunger

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for ideas and meaning. Her rejection of the wealthy George Murchison, whom she sees as shallow and assimilated, shows that she will not marry simply for money or status. However, Hansberry also presents her as young and sometimes self-absorbed; her quick changes of hobby are gently mocked, and her harsh words about Walter after he loses the money show a lack of compassion that Mama must correct.

Mrs Johnson, the gossiping neighbour, provides a contrast. She warns the family about bombings in white areas, and her pessimism shows how racism has made some people afraid to hope. Hansberry thus presents a range of women, from the fearful to the visionary.

Ultimately, Hansberry presents the women as different but united. Mama represents faith and endurance, Ruth practical sacrifice, and Beneatha the future. At a time before the civil rights and women's movements had achieved their aims, Hansberry, herself a black woman whose family had fought housing segregation, gives these women dignity, complexity and the power to keep the family's dream alive.