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LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

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Paper 3 Poetry and Prose

October/November 2018

2 hours

No Additional Materials are required.

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

An answer booklet is provided inside this question paper. You should follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.

Answer **two** questions, each from a different section.

You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers.

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

This document consists of **11** printed pages, **1** blank page and **1** insert.

Section A: Poetry

ROBERT FROST: *Selected Poems*

- 1 **Either** (a) Discuss ways in which Frost characterises people in his poems through their speech. Refer to **two** poems in your answer.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on ways in which the following poem presents the relationship between the human world and the natural world.

There Are Roughly Zones

We sit indoors and talk of the cold outside.
 And every gust that gathers strength and heaves
 Is a threat to the house. But the house has long been tried.
 We think of the tree. If it never again has leaves,
 We'll know, we say, that this was the night it died. 5
 It is very far north, we admit, to have brought the peach.
 What comes over a man, is it soul or mind—
 That to no limits and bounds he can stay confined?
 You would say his ambition was to extend the reach
 Clear to the Arctic of every living kind. 10
 Why is his nature forever so hard to teach
 That though there is no fixed line between wrong and right,
 There are roughly zones whose laws must be obeyed?
 There is nothing much we can do for the tree tonight,
 But we can't help feeling more than a little betrayed 15
 That the northwest wind should rise to such a height
 Just when the cold went down so many below.
 The tree has no leaves and may never have them again.
 We must wait till some months hence in the spring to know.
 But if it is destined never again to grow, 20
 It can blame this limitless trait in the hearts of men.

ELIZABETH JENNINGS: *Selected Poems*

- 2 **Either** (a) Compare ways in which Jennings presents suffering in **two** poems.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on ways in which the following poem explores religious feeling.

Harvest and Consecration

After the heaped piles and the cornsheaves waiting
 To be collected, gathered into barns,
 After all fruits have burst their skins, the sating
 Season cools and turns,
 And then I think of something that you said 5
 Of when you held the chalice and the bread.

I spoke of Mass and thought of it as close
 To how a season feels which stirs and brings
 Fire to the hearth, food to the hungry house
 And strange, uncovered things— 10
 God in a garden then in sheaves of corn
 And the white bread a way to be reborn.

I thought of priest as midwife and as mother
 Feeling the pain, feeling the pleasure too,
 All opposites together, 15
 Until you said no one could feel such passion
 And still preserve the power of consecration.

And it is true. How cool the gold sheaves lie,
 Rich without need to ask for any more
 Richness. The seed, the simple thing must die 20
 If only to restore
 Our faith in fruitful, hidden things. I see
 The wine and bread protect our ecstasy.

Songs of Ourselves, Volume 2

- 3 **Either** (a) Discuss ways in which **two** poems explore feelings caused by absence.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on the following poem, considering its presentation of the star.

To the Evening Star

Thou fair-haired angel of the evening,
Now, whilst the sun rests on the mountains, light
Thy bright torch of love; thy radiant crown
Put on, and smile upon our evening bed!
Smile on our loves; and, while thou drawest the 5
Blue curtains of the sky, scatter thy silver dew
On every flower that shuts its sweet eyes
In timely sleep. Let thy west wind sleep on
The lake; speak silence with thy glimmering eyes,
And wash the dusk with silver. Soon, full soon, 10
Dost thou withdraw; then the wolf rages wide,
And the lion glares through the dun forest.
The fleeces of our flocks are covered with
Thy sacred dew: protect them with thine influence.

William Blake

Turn over for Section B.

Section B: Prose

JHUMPA LAHIRI: *The Namesake*

- 4 **Either** (a) Discuss some of the ways in which the novel explores personal identity.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on ways in which the following passage presents Ashima as she prepares to give birth.

On a sticky August evening two weeks before her due date, Ashima Ganguli stands in the kitchen of a Central Square apartment, combining Rice Krispies and Planters peanuts and chopped red onion in a bowl. She adds salt, lemon juice, thin slices of green chili pepper, wishing there were mustard oil to pour into the mix. Ashima has been consuming this concoction throughout her pregnancy, a humble approximation of the snack sold for pennies on Calcutta sidewalks and on railway platforms throughout India, spilling from newspaper cones. Even now that there is barely space inside her, it is the one thing she craves. Tasting from a cupped palm, she frowns; as usual, there's something missing. She stares blankly at the pegboard behind the countertop where her cooking utensils hang, all slightly coated with grease. She wipes sweat from her face with the free end of her sari. Her swollen feet ache against speckled gray linoleum. Her pelvis aches from the baby's weight. She opens a cupboard, the shelves lined with a grimy yellow-and-white-checkered paper she's been meaning to replace, and reaches for another onion, frowning again as she pulls at its crisp magenta skin. A curious warmth floods her abdomen, followed by a tightening so severe she doubles over, gasping without sound, dropping the onion with a thud on the floor. 5 10 15

The sensation passes, only to be followed by a more enduring spasm of discomfort. In the bathroom she discovers, on her underpants, a solid streak of brownish blood. She calls out to her husband, Ashoke, a doctoral candidate in electrical engineering at MIT, who is studying in the bedroom. He leans over a card table; the edge of their bed, two twin mattresses pushed together under a red and purple batik spread, serves as his chair. When she calls out to Ashoke, she doesn't say his name. Ashima never thinks of her husband's name when she thinks of her husband, even though she knows perfectly well what it is. She has adopted his surname but refuses, for propriety's sake, to utter his first. It's not the type of thing Bengali wives do. Like a kiss or caress in a Hindi movie, a husband's name is something intimate and therefore unspoken, cleverly patched over. And so, instead of saying Ashoke's name, she utters the interrogative that has come to replace it, which translates roughly as "Are you listening to me?" 20 25 30

At dawn a taxi is called to ferry them through deserted Cambridge streets, up Massachusetts Avenue and past Harvard Yard, to Mount Auburn Hospital. Ashima registers, answering questions about the frequency and duration of the contractions, as Ashoke fills out the forms. She is seated in a wheelchair and pushed through the shining, brightly lit corridors, whisked into an elevator more spacious than her kitchen. On the maternity floor she is assigned to a bed by a window, in a room at the end of the hall. She is asked to remove her Murshidabad silk sari in favor of a flowered cotton gown that, to her mild embarrassment, only reaches her knees. A nurse offers to fold up the sari but, exasperated by the six slippery yards, ends up stuffing the material into Ashima's slate blue suitcase. Her obstetrician, Dr. Ashley, gauntly handsome in a Lord Mountbatten sort of way, with fine sand-colored hair swept back from his temples, arrives to examine her progress. The baby's head is in the proper position, has already begun its descent. She is told that she is still in early labor, three centimeters dilated, beginning to efface. "What does it mean, dilated?" 35 40

she asks, and Dr. Ashley holds up two fingers side by side, then draws them apart, explaining the unimaginable thing her body must do in order for the baby to pass. 45
The process will take some time, Dr. Ashley tells her; given that this is her first pregnancy, labor can take twenty-four hours, sometimes more. She searches for Ashoke's face, but he has stepped behind the curtain the doctor has drawn. "I'll be back," Ashoke says to her in Bengali, and then a nurse adds: "Don't you worry, Mr. Ganguli. She's got a long ways to go. We can take over from here." 50

Chapter 1

EDITH WHARTON: *The House of Mirth*

- 5 **Either** (a) 'And the other women – my best friends – well, they use me or abuse me; but they don't care a straw what happens to me.'

In the light of Lily's comment, discuss Wharton's presentation of relationships between women.

- Or** (b) Comment closely on the writing of the following passage, considering its effectiveness as the ending of the novel.

He raised the lid of the desk, and saw within it a cheque-book and a few packets of bills and letters, arranged with the orderly precision which characterised all her personal habits. He looked through the letters first, because it was the most difficult part of the work. They proved to be few and unimportant, but among them he found, with a strange commotion of the heart, the note he had written her the day after the Brys' entertainment.

5

'When may I come to you?' – his words overwhelmed him with a realisation of the cowardice which had driven him from her at the very moment of attainment. Yes – he had always feared his fate, and he was too honest to disown his cowardice now; for had not all his old doubts started to life again at the mere sight of Trenor's name?

10

He laid the note in his card-case, folding it away carefully, as something made precious by the fact that she had held it so; then, growing once more aware of the lapse of time, he continued his examination of the papers.

To his surprise, he found that all the bills were receipted; there was not an unpaid account among them. He opened the chequebook, and saw that, the very night before, a cheque of ten thousand dollars from Mrs Peniston's executors had been entered in it. The legacy, then, had been paid sooner than Gerty had led him to expect. But, turning another page or two, he discovered with astonishment that, in spite of this recent accession of funds, the balance had already declined to a few dollars. A rapid glance at the stubs of the last cheques, all of which bore the date of the previous day, showed that between four and five hundred dollars of the legacy had been spent in the settlement of bills, while the remaining thousands were comprehended in one cheque, made out, at the same time, to Charles Augustus Trenor.

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Selden laid the book aside, and sank into the chair beside the desk. He leaned his elbows on it, and hid his face in his hands. The bitter waters of life surged high about him, their sterile taste was on his lips. Did the cheque to Trenor explain the mystery or deepen it? At first his mind refused to act – he felt only the taint of such a transaction between a man like Trenor and a girl like Lily Bart. Then, gradually, his troubled vision cleared, old hints and rumours came back to him, and out of the very insinuations he had feared to probe, he constructed an explanation of the mystery. It was true, then, that she had taken money from Trenor: but true also, as the contents of the little desk declared, that the obligation had been intolerable to her, and that at the first opportunity she had freed herself from it, though the act left her face to face with bare unmitigated poverty.

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That was all he knew – all he could hope to unravel of the story. The mute lips on the pillow refused him more than this – unless indeed they had told him the rest in the kiss they had left upon his forehead. Yes, he could now read into that farewell all that his heart craved to find there; he could even draw from it courage not to accuse himself for having failed to reach the height of his opportunity.

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He saw that all the conditions of life had conspired to keep them apart; since his very detachment from the external influences which swayed her had increased his spiritual fastidiousness, and made it more difficult for him to live and love uncritically.

But at least he *had* loved her – had been willing to stake his future on his faith in her – and if the moment had been fated to pass from them before they could seize it, he saw now that, for both, it had been saved whole out of the ruin of their lives.

45

It was this moment of love, this fleeting victory over themselves, which had kept them from atrophy and extinction; which, in her, had reached out to him in every struggle against the influence of her surroundings, and in him, had kept alive the faith that now drew him penitent and reconciled to her side.

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He knelt by the bed and bent over her, draining their last moment to its lees; and in the silence there passed between them the word which made all clear.

Book 2, Chapter 14

Stories of Ourselves

- 6 **Either** (a) Compare the presentation and importance of human relationships in **two** stories.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on the presentation of the characters and their attitudes in the following passage from *An Englishman's Home*.

Build. It was a word so hideous that no one in Much Malcock dared use it above a whisper. 'Housing scheme', 'Development', 'Clearance', 'Council houses', 'Planning' – these obscene words had been expunged from the polite vocabulary of the district, only to be used now and then, with the licence allowed to anthropologists, of the fierce tribes beyond the parish boundary. And now the horror was in their midst, the mark of Plague in the court of the Decameron. 5

After the first moment of shock, Mr Metcalfe rallied for action, hesitated for a moment whether or no to plunge down the hill and challenge the enemy on his own ground, and decided against it; this was the moment to act with circumspection. He must consult Lady Peabury. 10

It was three-quarters of a mile to the house; the lane ran past the gate which gave access to Westmacott's field; a crazily-hung elm gate and deep cow-trodden mud, soon in Mr Metcalfe's imagination, to give place to golden privet and red gravel. Mr Metcalfe could see the heads of the intruders bobbing beyond the hedge; they bore urban, purposeful black hats. He drove on, miserably. 15

Lady Peabury was in the morning-room reading a novel; early training gave a guilty spice to this recreation, for she had been brought up to believe that to read a novel before luncheon was one of the gravest sins it was possible for a gentlewoman to commit. She slipped the book under a cushion and rose to greet Mr Metcalfe. 20

'I was just getting ready to go out,' she explained. 20

Mr Metcalfe had no time for politenesses.

'Lady Peabury,' he began at once, 'I have very terrible news.'

'Oh dear! Is poor Mr Cruttwell having trouble with the Wolf Cub account again?' 25

'No; at least, he is; there's another fourpence gone astray; on the credit side this time, which makes it more worrying. But that isn't what I came about. It is something that threatens our whole lives. They are going to build in Westmacott's field.' Briefly, but with emotion, he told Lady Peabury what he had seen. 25

She listened gravely. When he had finished there was silence in the morning-room; six little clocks ticked among the chintzes and the potted azaleas. At last Lady Peabury spoke: 30

'Westmacott has behaved very badly,' she said.

'I suppose you can't blame him.'

'I do blame him, Mr Metcalfe, very severely. I can't understand it at all. He always seemed a very decent man ... I was thinking of making Mrs Westmacott secretary of the Women's Institute. He had no right to do a thing like that without consulting us. Why, I look right on to that field from my bedroom windows. I could never understand why you didn't buy the field yourself.' 35

It was let for £3 18s.; they had asked £170 for it; there was tithe and property tax on top of that. Lady Peabury knew this.

'Any of us could have bought it at the time of sale,' said Mr Metcalfe rather sharply. 40

'It always went with your house.'

In another minute, Mr Metcalfe felt, she would be telling him that *he* had behaved very badly; that *he* had always seemed a very decent man.

She was, in fact, thinking on just those lines at the moment. 'I daresay it's not too late even now for you to make an offer,' she said. 45

'We are all equally threatened,' said Mr Metcalfe. 'I think we ought to act together. Hodge won't be any too pleased when he hears the news.'

Colonel Hodge had heard, and he was none too pleased. He was waiting at the Hall when Mr Metcalfe got back.

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'Do you know what that scoundrel Westmacott has done?'

'Yes,' said Mr Metcalfe rather wearily, 'I know.' The interview with Lady Peabury had not gone off quite as he had hoped. She had shown no enthusiasm for common action.

'Sold his field to a lot of jerry builders.'

55

'Yes, I know.'

'Funny, I always thought it was *your* field.'

'No,' said Mr Metcalfe, 'never.'

'It always used to go with this house.'

'Yes, I know, but I didn't happen to want it.'

60

'Well, it's put us all in a pretty nasty fix, I must say. D'you suppose they'd sell it back to you now?'

An Englishman's Home

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