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Cambridge International AS & A Level

Cambridge International Examinations
Cambridge International Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced Level

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH **9695/72**

Paper 7 Comment and Appreciation **May/June 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.
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 **7** printed pages, **1** blank page and **1** insert.

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CAMBRIDGE International Examinations

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1 Write a critical commentary on the following passage from the novel *White Dog Fell from the Sky* (published in 2013) by Eleanor Morse.

Isaac has escaped from a racial attack in apartheid South Africa by lying underneath a coffin in a hearse (a funeral car) that has driven into the neighbouring country, Botswana.

The hearse pulled onto a scrubby track, traveled several hundred feet, and stopped. The passenger door opened, followed by the driver's door. Two men stepped out. They walked to the rear door, and together the men slid out a coffin and laid it carefully on the ground. They returned to the car, struggled with something inside, and dragged out a limp body. It was so covered with road dust, its face was gone.

The driver splashed a bucket of water over it, nudged it with a toe. Rivulets ran down the side of one cheek, water etching through dust to walnut-colored skin.

"He's late, no more in this world," the passenger said.

The eyelids fluttered, and the driver said, "See, you are wrong." They stood a moment and watched the man on the ground. Then they loaded the coffin back into the hearse and fled. There would be trouble when the man came to. Or if he didn't, there would also be trouble.

The sun was risen above the first line of scrub when Isaac opened an eye. The light hurt. The hearse was gone, and with it the small cardboard suitcase his brother Nthusi had given him. A wind blew close to the ground, kicking up a fine dust, covering over the tracks. The dust would cover him too, he thought without interest, if he lay there long enough.

A thin white dog sat next to him, like a ghost. It frightened him when he turned his head and saw her. He was not expecting a dog, especially not a dog of that sort. Normally he would have chased a strange dog away. But there was no strength in his body. He could only lie on the ground. I am already dead, he thought, and this is my companion. When you die, you are given a brother or a sister for your journey, and this creature is white so it can be seen in the land of the dead. The white dog's nose pointed away from him. From time to time, her eyes looked sideways in his direction and looked away. Her ears were back, her paws folded one over the other. She was a stately dog, a proper-acting dog.

A cigarette wrapper tumbled across the ground, stopped a moment, and blew on. A cream soda can lay under a stunted acacia, its orange label faded almost to white. Seeing those things, he thought, I am not dead. You would not be finding trash in the realm of the dead.

He heard a voice nearby, a woman calling to a child, scolding. He sat up. No part of his body was unbruised. Which country was he in? Had he made it over the border?

He called to the woman, but she didn't appear to hear him. She stood with a child near a makeshift dwelling made of cardboard, propped up with a couple of wooden posts, with a roof of rusted iron and blue plastic sheeting. She gripped her child tight around his upper arm, and with the other hand splashed water from a large coffee tin. Her boy struggled and broke free, running so fast that tiny droplets of water fell out behind him. "Moemedi!" she cried.

"*Dumela, mma*[1]," Isaac said in greeting, getting to his feet and wobbling toward her.

She eyed him. Clouds of dust rose as he struck his pants with his hands. "Where am I? Which country am I in?"

She didn't answer.

He stood silently, and then said, "Please, *mma,* am I in Botswana?"

"*Ee, rra*." Yes, sir.

His palm traveled down the length of his face, as though opening a curtain. His eyes filled with relief and with the fear of the kilometers between him and his mother

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and brothers and sisters and all he'd known and understood and embraced and finally escaped.

The woman must have seen the boy inside the man, lost like a young goat in the desert. "Where is your mother?" she asked.

"Pretoria."

"Your father?"

"Johannesburg."

"What are you doing here?"

He was unable to speak.

"Do you want tea?"

"*Ee, mma.*" He took a step toward her and fell backward onto the dog. As he was going down, his eye caught the soda can in the bushes. The sky had been blue, the dog white, but now the dog was blue and the sky white.

"You are drunk."

"No, *mma*, I've had nothing to drink."

"My husband is a jealous man. You cannot stay here," she said. Her body was already bent, even though her boy was young, running, running with his friends among thorns and discarded tin cans. She disappeared into the cardboard shack while Isaac sat on the ground with the white dog. Long ago before he'd gone to school, he remembered his mother telling him that there were oceans on Earth. She said that the water was so big, you could not see to the land on the other side. She'd heard that the water threads connected to the moon, so when the moon grew larger, the waters also grew larger, like an older brother sharing food with a younger brother. But she didn't know where the big water came from and went back to. Maybe to the center of the Earth, she told him, where it can't be seen, flowing underneath. His head felt like that water, with the moon pulling on it, the waters going back and forth.

The woman came back out of her house, with a tin mug.

[1] *Dumela, mma* – hallo madam

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2 Write a critical comparison of the following two poems: *Can It Be?* (published in 1926) by Manmohan Ghose and *She Dwelt among the Untrodden Ways* (published in 1800) by William Wordsworth.

Can It Be?

I mind me how her smile was sweet
  And how her look was gay.
O, she was laughter, joy complete!
  And can she now be clay?

I see the roses on her grave
  They make my sad heart bleed.
I see the daisies shine like stars.
  And is she earth indeed?

All lovely things with beauty are,
  And just deeds shine as just.
And faith and truth and duty are.
  And is she only dust?

The great sky keeps its solemn blue:
  Fresh earth is wildly fair.
Can all things be, and I and you—
  She nothing, she nowhere?

She Dwelt among the Untrodden Ways

She dwelt among the untrodden ways
  Beside the springs of Dove[1];
A maid whom there were none to praise,
  And very few to love.

A violet by a mossy stone
  Half-hidden from the eye!
—Fair as a star, when only one
  Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
  When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in her grave, and, Oh,
  The difference to me!

[1] *Dove* – a river in the north of England

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Turn over for Question 3.

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3 Write a critical commentary on the following passage from the novel *What the Future Holds* (published in 1989) by Sarah Mkhonza. This novel is set in Swaziland, in southern Africa.

When Kiki boarded the bus that day she was an angry woman, determined to see Menzi and talk to him about her life and the baby's. She had heard that he worked for the Standard Bank in town and she knew that she could no longer sit at home and be stubborn because it also affected the life of her little one.

As the bus drove on she was working out what she would say to Menzi. She would tell him that he must not pretend to be smart because that would not help him. She would tell him that he had ruined her life. She would have been doing nursing right now; instead there she was, walking about with an infant sniffing on her back. This had not been an agreement. She had not said she wanted to be a mother. She had never said she wanted anything at all. She had not spoken a word. He had done it all to her. And there she was, taking all the suffering like a lamb before the shearers. Yes, she would tell him like she had never told anybody before.

When the bus got to town, she tied the baby securely on her back, got off and went straight to the bank. When she reached the door she spotted him, right behind the counter, head bowed, and cursed under her breath.

She made sure she joined the queue that he was serving. Her heart was pounding and her fury was mounting. She could feel the baby's weight on her back. She didn't know if it was right to do what she was going to do, but what else was there? She watched the people in front of her as the queue became shorter and braced herself for the encounter. She was not going to beg, for beggars received only small amounts. She was determined to fight for her rights. It had to be now or never. The suffering that she had gone through was great. There were only four people in front of her now and she decided to look down so that Menzi would not see her. She began to play with the baby's feet, realising that it helped to relieve her tension. There were now two people in front of her and she could see Menzi very clearly. He was wearing a gold watch, a spotlessly white shirt and navy blue trousers. She looked at herself. She had on one of her dresses – a drab old thing – a pair of slippers and a red *doek*[1] on her head. She began to feel a misfit in this world of the rich, but what did it matter? She had not come here to show off her clothes but to deal with this young man once and for all.

She watched as he counted the money and admired how adept he was at doing it. But even the devil is quite adept in his wily ways. She saw how his fingers came alive as he counted coin after coin. When the last person moved out of the way, Kiki moved closer to the counter and started loosening the baby on her back. When she had removed him from her back, she held the baby in her arm and turned to look at Menzi. She looked him right in the eyes, then down at the baby and said nothing. The young teller spoke first.

'And what can I do for you, *sisi*?[2] Do you want to open an account?' he asked her, pretending he did not recognise her.

'You ask that when you made me bring this baby into the world?'

'What do you mean? I want to continue with my work *sisi*, please don't delay me.'

'Look, do you know how much this baby has delayed me? Menzi, don't fool around, *Bhuti wami*.[3] There is just no time for that. I have suffered long enough.'

'What do you want me to do? I am at work now. You are delaying the customers behind you.'

'Look, I have told you I don't care about delaying people, I am one person whose life has been standing still for almost two years now,' she replied, taking out her coins and putting them on the counter. 'That is not even enough for me to go back home with. What does this baby eat? What does he wear? Why should I suffer all alone when you are walking up and down the streets, young and handsome and loved by them all? Tell me, why?'

'Listen …'

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'Look, when both of my ears are open you don't have to tell me to do that!' she said with an impatience that cut him short.

'You should have told me about the baby.'

'I should have what? Weren't you the one who acted as if you knew everything, had answers for everything when all this happened? Look, *Bhuti wami*, I am a very tired and impatient young woman. I am about ready to scream and I don't care what happens. I am going to talk to the manager of this bank. You must support this child, must support me. I had to leave school to go and scrounge about for food for your baby like a scavenging dog. I have had enough of it,' she said moving towards the manager's office.

[1] *doek* – a coloured head-dress
[2] *sisi* – young woman
[3] *Bhuti wami* – my brother (a greeting from one person to another)

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