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Section A: PoetryTED HUGHES: *New Selected Poems 1957–1994*

- 1 **Either** (a) By what means, and with what effects, does Hughes present beauty in the natural world? Refer to **two** poems in your answer.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on the following poem, considering ways in which Hughes presents the landscape.

Crow Hill

The farms are oozing craters in

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And lit the fox in the dripping ground.

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WILFRED OWEN: *Selected Poems*

- 2 **Either** (a) Discuss ways in which Owen presents the personal consequences of war in **two** poems.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on the following poem, considering ways in which it presents thoughts about death.

Wild with All Regrets

TO SIEGFRIED SASSOON

My arms have mutinied against me – brutes!
 My fingers fidget like ten idle brats,
 My back's been stiff for hours, damned hours.
 Death never gives his squad a Stand-at-ease.
 I can't read. There: it's no use. Take your book. 5
 A short life and a merry one, my buck!
 We said we'd hate to grow dead-old. But now,
 Not to live old seems awful: not to renew
 My boyhood with my boys, and teach 'em hitting,
 Shooting, and hunting – all the arts of hurting! 10
 – Well, that's what I learnt. That, and making money.
 Your fifty years in store seem none too many,
 But I've five minutes. God! For just two years
 To help myself to this good air of yours!
 One Spring! Is one too hard to spare? Too long? 15
 Spring air would find its own way to my lung,
 And grow me legs as quick as lilac-shoots.

* * *

Yes, there's the orderly. He'll change the sheets
 When I'm lugged out. Oh, couldn't I do that?
 Here in this coffin of a bed, I've thought 20
 I'd like to kneel and sweep his floors for ever –
 And ask no nights off when the bustle's over,
 For I'd enjoy the dirt. Who's prejudiced
 Against a grimed hand when his own's quite dust –
 Less live than specks that in the sun-shafts turn? 25
 Dear dust – in rooms, on roads, on faces' tan!
 I'd love to be a sweep's boy, black as Town;
 Yes, or a muckman. Must I be his load?
 A flea would do. If one chap wasn't bloody,
 Or went stone-cold, I'd find another body. 30

* * *

Which I shan't manage now. Unless it's yours.
 I shall stay in you, friend, for some few hours.
 You'll feel my heavy spirit chill your chest,
 And climb your throat on sobs, until it's chased
 On sighs, and wiped from off your lips by wind. 35

I think on your rich breathing, brother, I'll be weaned
 To do without what blood remained me from my wound.

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Songs of Ourselves

- 3 Either** (a) Compare ways in which **two** poems express personal distress.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on the following poem, considering ways in which it presents the speaker's methods of persuasion.

Come Live with me, and be my Love

Come live with me, and be my love,
 And we will all the pleasures prove
 That valleys, groves, hills and fields,
 Woods, or steepy mountains yields.

And we will sit upon the rocks,
 Seeing the shepherds feed their flocks
 By shallow rivers, to whose falls
 Melodious birds sing madrigals.

5

And I will make thee beds of roses
 And a thousand fragrant posies,
 A cap of flowers, and a kirtle
 Embroidered all with leaves of myrtle,

10

A gown made of our finest wool,
 Which from our pretty lambs we pull,
 Fair lined slippers for the cold,
 With buckles of the purest gold,

15

A belt of straw and ivy buds
 With coral clasps and amber studs:
 And if these pleasures may thee move,
 Come live with me, and be my love.

20

The shepherd swains shall dance and sing
 For thy delight each May morning:
 'If these delights thy mind may move,
 Then live with me, and be my love.'

Christopher Marlowe

Section B: Prose

JHUMPA LAHIRI: *The Namesake*

- 4 **Either** (a) Discuss ways in which Lahiri presents some of the relationships between men and women in the novel.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on the presentation of Ashima's memories and feelings in the following passage.

Ashima feels lonely suddenly, horribly, permanently alone, and briefly, turned away from the mirror, she sobs for her husband. She feels overwhelmed by the thought of the move she is about to make, to the city that was once home and is now in its own way foreign. She feels both impatience and indifference for all the days she still must live, for something tells her she will not go quickly as her husband did. For thirty-three years she missed her life in India. Now she will miss her job at the library, the women with whom she's worked. She will miss throwing parties. She will miss living with her daughter, the surprising companionship they have formed, going into Cambridge together to see old movies at the Brattle, teaching her to cook the food Sonia had complained of eating as a child. She will miss the opportunity to drive, as she sometimes does on her way home from the library, to the university, past the engineering building where her husband once worked. She will miss the country in which she had grown to know and love her husband. Though his ashes have been scattered into the Ganges, it is here, in this house and in this town, that he will continue to dwell in her mind. 5 10 15

She takes a deep breath. In a moment she will hear the beeps of the security system, the garage door opening, car doors closing, her children's voices in the house. She applies lotion to her arms and legs, reaches for a peach-colored terry-cloth robe that hangs from a hook on the door. Her husband had given her the robe years ago, for a Christmas now long forgotten. This too she will have to give away, will have no use for where she is going. In such a humid climate it would take days for such a thick material to dry. She makes a note to herself, to wash it well and donate it to the thrift shop. She does not remember the year she'd gotten the robe, does not remember opening it, or her reaction. She knows only that it had been either Gogol or Sonia who had picked it out at one of the department stores at the mall, had wrapped it, even. That all her husband had done was to write his name and hers on the to-and-from tag. She does not fault him for this. Such omissions of devotion, of affection, she knows now, do not matter in the end. She no longer wonders what it might have been like to do what her children have done, to fall in love first rather than years later, to deliberate over a period of months or years and not a single afternoon, which was the time it had taken for her and Ashoke to agree to wed. It is the image of their two names on the tag that she thinks of, a tag she had not bothered to save. It reminds her of their life together, of the unexpected life he, in choosing to marry her, had given her here, which she had refused for so many years to accept. And though she still does not feel fully at home within these walls on Pemberton Road she knows that this is home nevertheless — the world for which she is responsible, which she has created, which is everywhere around her, needing to be packed up, given away, thrown out bit by bit. She slips her damp arms into the sleeves of the robe, ties the belt around her waist. It's always been a bit short on her, a size too small. Its warmth is a comfort all the same. 20 25 30 35 40

Chapter 12

EDITH WHARTON: *The House of Mirth*

5 **Either** (a) How far, and in what ways, do you consider Selden to be a victim of society?

Or (b) Comment closely on the presentation of Lily in the following passage.

Seating herself on the upper step of the terrace, Lily leaned her head against the honeysuckles wreathing the balustrade. The fragrance of the late blossoms seemed an emanation of the tranquil scene, a landscape tutored to the last degree of rural elegance. In the foreground glowed the warm tints of the gardens. Beyond the lawn, with its pyramidal pale-gold maples and velvety firs, sloped pastures dotted with cattle; and through a long glade the river widened like a lake under the silver light of September. Lily did not want to join the circle about the tea-table. They represented the future she had chosen, and she was content with it, but in no haste to anticipate its joys. The certainty that she could marry Percy Gryce when she pleased had lifted a heavy load from her mind, and her money troubles were too recent for their removal not to leave a sense of relief which a less discerning intelligence might have taken for happiness. Her vulgar cares were at an end. She would be able to arrange her life as she pleased, to soar into that empyrean of security where creditors cannot penetrate. She would have smarter gowns than Judy Trenor, and far, far more jewels than Bertha Dorset. She would be free for ever from the shifts, the expedients, the humiliations of the relatively poor. Instead of having to flatter, she would be flattered; instead of being grateful, she would receive thanks. There were old scores she could pay off as well as old benefits she could return. And she had no doubts as to the extent of her power. She knew that Mr Gryce was of the small chary type most inaccessible to impulses and emotions. He had the kind of character in which prudence is a vice, and good advice the most dangerous nourishment. But Lily had known the species before: she was aware that such a guarded nature must find one huge outlet of egoism, and she determined to be to him what his Americana had hitherto been: the one possession in which he took sufficient pride to spend money on it. She knew that this generosity to self is one of the forms of meanness, and she resolved so to identify herself with her husband's vanity that to gratify her wishes would be to him the most exquisite form of self-indulgence. The system might at first necessitate a resort to some of the very shifts and expedients from which she intended it should free her; but she felt sure that in a short time she would be able to play the game in her own way. How should she have distrusted her powers? Her beauty itself was not the mere ephemeral possession it might have been in the hands of inexperience: her skill in enhancing it, the care she took of it, the use she made of it, seemed to give it a kind of permanence. She felt she could trust it to carry her through to the end.

And the end, on the whole, was worth while. Life was not the mockery she had thought it three days ago. There was room for her after all, in this crowded selfish world of pleasure whence, so short a time since, her poverty had seemed to exclude her. These people whom she had ridiculed and yet envied were glad to make a place for her in the charmed circle about which all her desires revolved. They were not as brutal and self-engrossed as she had fancied – or rather, since it would no longer be necessary to flatter and humour them, that side of their nature became less conspicuous. Society is a revolving body which is apt to be judged according to its place in each man's heaven; and at present it was turning its illuminated face to Lily.

In the rosy glow it diffused her companions seemed full of amiable qualities. She liked their elegance, their lightness, their lack of emphasis: even the self-assurance which at times was so like obtuseness now seemed the natural sign of social ascendancy. They were lords of the only world she cared for, and they were ready to admit her to their ranks and let her lord it with them. Already she felt within

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her a stealing allegiance to their standards, an acceptance of their limitations, a 50
disbelief in the things they did not believe in, a contemptuous pity for the people who
were not able to live as they lived.

Book 1, Chapter 4

Stories of Ourselves

6 Either (a) ‘Our views of characters sometimes change as a story develops.’

In the light of this comment, discuss the presentation of characters in **two** stories.

Or (b) Comment closely on ways in which the opening of *The Lemon Orchard* develops a sense of threat.

The men came down between two long, regular rows of trees. The winter had not passed completely and there was a chill in the air; and the moon was hidden behind long, high parallels of cloud which hung like suspended streamers of dirty cotton wool in the sky. All of the men but one wore thick clothes against the coolness of the night. The night and earth was cold and damp, and the shoes of the men sank into the soil and left exact, ridged foot prints, but they could not be seen in the dark. 5

One of the men walked ahead holding a small cycle lantern that worked from a battery, leading the way down the avenue of trees while the others came behind in the dark. The night close around was quiet now that the crickets had stopped their small noises, but far out others that did not feel the presence of the men continued the monotonous creek-creek-creek. Somewhere, even further, a dog started barking in short high yaps, and then stopped abruptly. The men were walking through an orchard of lemons and the sharp, bitter-sweet citrus smell hung gently on the night air. 10

‘Do not go so fast,’ the man who brought up the rear of the party called to the man with the lantern. ‘It’s as dark as a kaffir’s soul here at the back.’ 15

He called softly, as if the darkness demanded silence. He was a big man and wore khaki trousers and laced-up riding boots, and an old shooting jacket with leather patches on the right breast and the elbows.

The shotgun was loaded. In the dark this man’s face was invisible except for a blur of shadowed hollows and lighter crags. Although he walked in the rear he was the leader of the party. The lantern-bearer slowed down for the rest to catch up with him. 20

‘It’s cold, too, Oom,’ another man said.

‘Cold?’ the man with the shotgun asked, speaking with sarcasm. ‘Are you colder than this verdomte hotnot, here?’ And he gestured in the dark with the muzzle of the gun at the man who stumbled along in their midst and who was the only one not warmly dressed. 25

This man wore trousers and a raincoat which they had allowed him to pull on over his pyjamas when they had taken him from his lodgings, and he shivered now with chill, clenching his teeth to prevent them from chattering. He had not been given time to tie his shoes and the metal-covered ends of the laces clicked as he moved. 30

‘Are you cold, hotnot?’ the man with the light jeered.

The coloured man did not reply. He was afraid, but his fear was mixed with a stubbornness which forbade him to answer them. 35

‘He is not cold,’ the fifth man in the party said. ‘He is shivering with fear. Is it not so, hotnot?’

The coloured man said nothing, but stared ahead of himself into the half-light made by the small lantern. He could see the silhouette of the man who carried the light, but he did not want to look at the two who flanked him, the one who had complained of the cold, and the one who had spoken of his fear. They each carried a sjambok and every now and then one of them slapped a corduroyed leg with his. 40

‘He is dumb also,’ the one who had spoken last chuckled.

‘No, Andries. Wait a minute,’ the leader who carried the shotgun said, and they all stopped between the row of trees. The man with the lantern turned and put the light on the rest of the party. 45

‘What is it?’ he asked.

‘Wag’n oomblikkie. Wait a moment,’ the leader said, speaking with forced casualness. ‘He is not dumb. He is a slim hotnot; one of those educated bushmen. Listen, hotnot,’ he addressed the coloured man, speaking angrily now. ‘When a baas 50 speaks to you, you answer him. Do you hear?’ The coloured man’s wrists were tied behind him with a riem and the leader brought the muzzle of the shotgun down, pressing it hard into the small of the man’s back above where the wrists met. ‘Do you hear, hotnot? Answer me or I will shoot a hole through your spine.’

The Lemon Orchard

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