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LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

9695/31

Paper 3 Poetry and Prose

May/June 2017

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 **8** printed pages, **4** blank pages and **1** insert.



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Section A: Poetry

TED HUGHES: *New Selected Poems 1957–1994*

- 1 **Either** (a) With reference to **two** poems, discuss ways in which Hughes presents human relationships.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on the following poem, considering ways in which it presents a view of the football match.

Football at Slack

Between plunging valleys, on a bareback of hill

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Lifted the cloud's edge, to watch them.

3

ELIZABETH JENNINGS: *Selected Poems*

- 2 **Either** (a) Referring to **two** poems, discuss ways in which Jennings explores creativity.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on ways in which the following poem explores absence.

Absence

I visited the place where we last met.
Nothing was changed, the gardens were well-tended,
The fountains sprayed their usual steady jet;
There was no sign that anything had ended
And nothing to instruct me to forget. 5

The thoughtless birds that shook out of the trees,
Singing an ecstasy I could not share,
Played cunning in my thoughts. Surely in these
Pleasures there could not be a pain to bear
Or any discord shake the level breeze. 10

It was because the place was just the same
That made your absence seem a savage force,
For under all the gentleness there came
An earthquake tremor: fountain, birds and grass
Were shaken by my thinking of your name. 15

4

Songs of Ourselves, Volume 2

- 3 Either** (a) With reference to **two** poems, discuss ways in which poets express religious faith.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on ways in which the following poem presents the speaker's attitude to her husband.

The Forsaken Wife

Methinks 'tis strange you can't afford
 One pitying look, one parting word.
 Humanity claims this as its due,
 But what's humanity to you?

Cruel man! I am not blind; 5
 Your infidelity I find.
 Your want of love my ruin shows,
 My broken heart, your broken vows.
 Yet maugre all your rigid hate
 I will be true in spite of fate, 10
 And one preëminence I'll claim,
 To be forever still the same.

Show me a man that dare be true,
 That dares to suffer what I do,
 That can forever sigh unheard, 15
 And ever love without regard,
 I will then own your prior claim
 To love, to honour and to fame,
 But till that time, my dear, adieu.
 I yet superior am to you. 20

Elizabeth Thomas ('Corinna')

Section B: Prose

JHUMPA LAHIRI: *The Namesake*

- 4 **Either** (a) Discuss ways in which Lahiri presents clashes of different cultures in the novel.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on ways in which the following passage presents Ashima's experience of being a new mother.

She begins to pride herself on doing it alone, in devising a routine. Like Ashoke, busy with his teaching and research and dissertation seven days a week, she, too, now has something to occupy her fully, to demand her utmost devotion, her last ounce of strength. Before Gogol's birth, her days had followed no visible pattern. She would spend hours in the apartment, napping, sulking, rereading her same five Bengali novels on the bed. But now the days that had once dragged rush all too quickly toward evening—those same hours are consumed with Gogol, pacing the three rooms of the apartment with him in her arms. Now she wakes at six, pulling Gogol out of the crib for his first feeding, and then for half an hour she and Ashoke lie with the baby in bed between them, admiring the tiny person they've produced. Between eleven and one, while Gogol sleeps, she gets dinner out of the way, a habit she will maintain for decades to come. Every afternoon she takes him out, wandering up and down the streets, to pick up this or that, or to sit in Harvard Yard, sometimes meeting up with Ashoke on a bench on the MIT campus, bringing him some homemade samosas and a fresh thermos of tea. At times, staring at the baby, she sees pieces of her family in his face—her mother's glossy eyes, her father's slim lips, her brother's lopsided smile. She discovers a yarn store and begins to knit for the coming winter, making Gogol sweaters, blankets, mittens, and caps. Every few days she gives Gogol a bath in the porcelain sink in the kitchen. Every week she carefully clips the nails of his ten fingers and toes. When she takes him in his pram for his immunizations at the pediatrician's, she stands outside the room and plugs up her ears. One day Ashoke arrives home with an Instamatic camera to take pictures of the baby, and when Gogol is napping she pastes the square, white-bordered prints behind plastic sheets in an album, captions written on pieces of masking tape. To put him to sleep, she sings him the Bengali songs her mother had sung to her. She drinks in the sweet, milky fragrance of his skin, the buttery scent of his breath. One day she lifts him high over her head, smiling at him with her mouth open, and a quick stream of undigested milk from his last feeding rises from his throat and pours into her own. For the rest of her life she will recall the shock of that warm, sour liquid, a taste that leaves her unable to swallow another thing for the rest of the day.

Letters arrive from her parents, from her husband's parents, from aunts and uncles and cousins and friends, from everyone, it seems, but Ashima's grandmother. The letters are filled with every possible blessing and good wish, composed in an alphabet they have seen all around them for most of their lives, on billboards and newspapers and awnings, but which they see now only in these precious, pale blue missives. Sometimes two letters arrive in a single week. One week there are three. As always Ashima keeps her ear trained, between the hours of twelve and two, for the sound of the postman's footsteps on the porch, followed by the soft click of the mail slot in the door. The margins of her parents' letters, always a block of her mother's hasty penmanship followed by her father's flourishing, elegant hand, are frequently decorated with drawings of animals done by Ashima's father, and Ashima tapes these on the wall over Gogol's crib. "We are dying to see him," her mother writes. "These are the most crucial months. Every hour there is a change. Remember it." Ashima writes back with careful descriptions of her son, reporting the circumstances of his first smile, the day he first rolls over, his first squeal of delight. She writes that they are saving money for a trip home the following December, after Gogol turns one.

EDITH WHARTON: *The House of Mirth*

- 5 **Either** (a) At Lily's last moments, Wharton writes that 'She had been unhappy, and now she was happy.'

In the light of this, discuss Wharton's presentation of the final stages of Lily's life.

- Or** (b) Comment closely on ways in which Wharton develops the reader's response to the exchange between Lily and Rosedale in the following passage.

There was no time now to wonder how he had heard of her obtaining the letters: all her world was dark outside the monstrous glare of his scheme for using them. And it was not, after the first moment, the horror of the idea that held her spellbound, subdued to his will; it was rather its subtle affinity to her own inmost cravings. He would marry her tomorrow if she could regain Bertha Dorset's friendship; and to induce the open resumption of that friendship, and the tacit retraction of all that had caused its withdrawal, she had only to put to the lady the latent menace contained in the packet so miraculously delivered into her hands. Lily saw in a flash the advantage of this course over that which poor Dorset had pressed upon her. The other plan depended for its success on the infliction of an open injury, while this reduced the transaction to a private understanding, of which no third person need have the remotest hint. Put by Rosedale in terms of business-like give-and-take, this understanding took on the harmless air of a mutual accommodation, like a transfer of property or a revision of boundary lines. It certainly simplified life to view it as a perpetual adjustment, a play of party politics, in which every concession had its recognised equivalent: Lily's tired mind was fascinated by this escape from fluctuating ethical estimates into a region of concrete weights and measures. 5 10 15

Rosedale, as she listened, seemed to read in her silence, not only a gradual acquiescence in his plan, but a dangerously far-reaching perception of the chances it offered; for as she continued to stand before him without speaking, he broke out, with a quick return upon himself: 'You see how simple it is, don't you? Well, don't be carried away by the idea that it's too simple. It isn't exactly as if you'd started in with a clean bill of health. Now we're talking let's call things by their right names, and clear the whole business up. You know well enough that Bertha Dorset couldn't have touched you if there hadn't been – well – questions asked before – little points of interrogation, eh? Bound to happen to a good-looking girl with stingy relatives, I suppose; anyhow, they *did* happen, and she found the ground prepared for her. Do you see where I'm coming out? You don't want these little questions cropping up again. It's one thing to get Bertha Dorset into line – but what you want is to keep her there. You can frighten her fast enough – but how are you going to keep her frightened? By showing her that you're as powerful as she is. All the letters in the world won't do that for you as you are now; but with a big backing behind you, you'll keep her just where you want her to be. That's *my* share in the business – that's what I'm offering you. You can't put the thing through without me – don't run away with any idea that you can. In six months you'd be back again among your old worries, or worse ones; and here I am, ready to lift you out of 'em tomorrow if you say so. *Do you say so, Miss Lily?*' he added, moving suddenly nearer. 20 25 30 35

The words, and the movement which accompanied them, combined to startle Lily out of the state of tranced subservience into which she had insensibly slipped. Light comes in devious ways to the groping consciousness, and it came to her now through the disgusted perception that her would-be accomplice assumed, as a matter of course, the likelihood of her distrusting him and perhaps trying to cheat him of his share of the spoils. This glimpse of his inner mind seemed to present the whole transaction in a new aspect, and she saw that the essential baseness of the act lay in its freedom from risk. 40 45

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She drew back with a quick gesture of rejection, saying, in a voice that was a surprise to her own ears: 'You are mistaken – quite mistaken – both in the facts and in what you infer from them.'

Rosedale stared a moment, puzzled by her sudden dash in a direction so different from that toward which she had appeared to be letting him guide her.

50

'Now what on earth does that mean? I thought we understood each other!' he exclaimed; and to her murmur of 'Ah, we do *now*,' he retorted with a sudden burst of violence: 'I suppose it's because the letters are to *him*, then? Well, I'll be damned if I see what thanks you've got from him!'

Book 2, Chapter 7

Stories of Ourselves

- 6 **Either** (a) Discuss ways in which **two** stories explore relationships within families.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on ways in which the following passage from *The Signalman* creates atmosphere in the story.

The cutting was extremely deep, and unusually precipitate. It was made through a clammy stone, that became oozy and wetter as I went down. For these reasons, I found the way long enough to give me time to recall a singular air of reluctance or compulsion with which he had pointed out the path.

When I came down low enough upon the zigzag descent to see him again, I saw that he was standing between the rails on the way by which the train had lately passed, in an attitude as if he were waiting for me to appear. He had his left hand at his chin, and that left elbow rested on his right hand, crossed over his breast. His attitude was one of such expectation and watchfulness that I stopped a moment, wondering at it.

I resumed my downward way, and stepping out upon the level of the railroad, and drawing nearer to him, saw that he was a dark sallow man, with a dark beard and rather heavy eyebrows. His post was in as solitary and dismal a place as ever I saw. On either side, a dripping-wet wall of jagged stone, excluding all view but a strip of sky; the perspective one way only a crooked prolongation of this great dungeon; the shorter perspective in the other direction terminating in a gloomy red light, and the gloomier entrance to a black tunnel, in whose massive architecture there was a barbarous, depressing, and forbidding air. So little sunlight ever found its way to this spot, that it had an earthy, deadly smell; and so much cold wind rushed through it, that it struck chill to me, as if I had left the natural world.

Before he stirred, I was near enough to him to have touched him. Not even then removing his eyes from mine, he stepped back one step, and lifted his hand.

This was a lonesome post to occupy, I said, and it had riveted my attention when I looked down from up yonder. A visitor was a rarity, I should suppose; not an unwelcome rarity, I hoped? In me, he merely saw a man who had been shut up within narrow limits all his life, and who, being at last set free, had a newly-awakened interest in these great works. To such purpose I spoke to him; but I am far from sure of the terms I used; for, besides that I am not happy in opening any conversation, there was something in the man that daunted me.

He directed a most curious look towards the red light near the tunnel's mouth, and looked all about it, as if something were missing from it, and then looked at me.

That light was part of his charge? Was it not?

He answered in a low voice, 'Don't you know it is?'

The monstrous thought came into my mind, as I perused the fixed eyes and the saturnine face, that this was a spirit, not a man. I have speculated since, whether there may have been infection in his mind.

In my turn I stepped back. But in making the action, I detected in his eyes some latent fear of me. This put the monstrous thought to flight.

'You look at me,' I said, forcing a smile, 'as if you had a dread of me.'

'I was doubtful,' he returned, 'whether I had seen you before.'

'Where?'

He pointed to the red light he had looked at.

'There?' I said.

Intently watchful of me, he replied (but without sound), 'Yes.'

'My good fellow, what should I do there? However, be that as it may, I never was there, you may swear.'

'I think I may,' he rejoined. 'Yes; I am sure I may.'

The Signalman

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