



**Cambridge International Examinations**  
Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education

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**LITERATURE (ENGLISH)**

**0486/12**

Paper 1 Poetry and Prose

**May/June 2018**

**1 hour 30 minutes**

No Additional Materials are required.

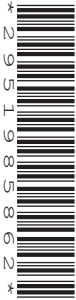
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**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

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: **one** question from Section A and **one** question from Section B.

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.



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**SECTION A: POETRY**

Answer **one** question from this section.

**SONGS OF OURSELVES VOLUME 1: from Part 5**

**Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.**

**Either 1** Read this poem, and then answer the question that follows it:

*The Trees*

The trees are coming into leaf  
Like something almost being said;  
The recent buds relax and spread,  
Their greenness is a kind of grief.

Is it that they are born again  
And we grow old? No, they die too.  
Their yearly trick of looking new  
Is written down in rings of grain.

5

Yet still the unresting castles thresh  
In fullgrown thickness every May.  
Last year is dead, they seem to say,  
Begin afresh, afresh, afresh.

10

*(Philip Larkin)*

How does Larkin strikingly convey feelings of uncertainty in this poem?

Or 2 Explore the ways in which Brontë vividly expresses feelings of grief in *Cold In The Earth*.

*Cold In The Earth*

Cold in the earth, and the deep snow piled above thee!  
Far, far removed, cold in the dreary grave!  
Have I forgot, my Only Love, to love thee,  
Severed at last by Time's all-wearing wave?

Now, when alone, do my thoughts no longer hover  
Over the mountains on Angora's shore;  
Resting their wings where heath and fern-leaves cover  
That noble heart for ever, ever more?

5

Cold in the earth, and fifteen wild Decembers  
From those brown hills have melted into spring –  
Faithful indeed is the spirit that remembers  
After such years of change and suffering!

10

Sweet Love of youth, forgive if I forget thee  
While the World's tide is bearing me along:  
Stern desires and darker hopes beset me,  
Hopes which obscure but cannot do thee wrong.

15

No other Sun has lightened up my heaven;  
No other Star has ever shone for me:  
All my life's bliss from thy dear life was given –  
All my life's bliss is in the grave with thee.

20

But when the days of golden dreams had perished  
And even Despair was powerless to destroy,  
Then did I learn how existence could be cherished,  
Strengthened and fed without the aid of joy;

Then did I check the tears of useless passion,  
Weaned my young soul from yearning after thine;  
Sternly denied its burning wish to hasten  
Down to that tomb already more than mine!

25

And even yet, I dare not let it languish,  
Dare not indulge in Memory's rapturous pain;  
Once drinking deep of that divinest anguish,  
How could I seek the empty world again?

30

(Emily Brontë)

**SONGS OF OURSELVES VOLUME 2: from Part 1**

**Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.**

**Either 3** Read this poem, and then answer the question that follows it:

*For My Grandmother Knitting*

There is no need they say  
but the needles still move  
their rhythms in the working of your hands  
as easily  
as if your hands 5  
were once again those sure and skilful hands  
of the fisher-girl.

You are old now  
and your grasp of things is not so good  
but master of your moments then 10  
deft and swift  
you slit the still-ticking quick silver fish.  
Hard work it was too  
of necessity.

But now they say there is no need 15  
as the needles move  
in the working of your hands  
once the hands of the bride  
with the hand-span waist  
once the hands of the miner's wife 20  
who scrubbed his back  
in a tin bath by the coal fire  
once the hands of the mother  
of six who made do and mended  
scraped and slaved slapped sometimes 25  
when necessary.

But now they say there is no need  
the kids they say grandma  
have too much already  
more than they can wear 30  
too many scarves and cardigans –  
gran you do too much  
there's no necessity.

*(Liz Lochhead)*

In what ways does Lochhead vividly create feelings of sadness in this poem?

Or 4 Explore the ways in which Chong depicts powerful changes in *lion heart*.

*lion heart*

You came out of the sea,  
 skin dappled scales of sunlight;  
 Riding crests, waves of fish in your fists.  
 Washed up, your gills snapped shut.  
 Water whipped the first breath of your lungs,  
 Your lips' bud teased by morning mists. 5

You conquered the shore, its ivory coast.  
 Your legs still rocked with the memory of waves.  
 Sinews of sand ran across your back—  
 Rising runes of your oceanic origins. 10  
 Your heart thumped— an animal skin drum  
 heralding the coming of a prince.

In the jungle, amid rasping branches,  
 trees loosened their shadows to shroud you.  
 The prince beheld you then, a golden sheen. 15  
 Your eyes, two flickers; emerald blaze  
 You settled back on fluent haunches;  
 The squall of a beast, your roar, your call.

In crackling boats, seeds arrived, wind-blown,  
 You summoned their colours to the palm 20  
 of your hand, folded them snugly into loam,  
 watched saplings swaddled in green,  
 as they sunk roots, spawned shade,  
 and embraced the land that embraced them.

Centuries, by the sea's pulmonary, 25  
 a vein throbbing humming bumboats—  
 your trees rise as skyscrapers.  
 Their ankles lost in swilling water,  
 as they heave themselves higher  
 above the mirrored surface. 30

Remember your self: your raw lion heart,  
 Each beat a stony echo that washes  
 through ribbed vaults of buildings.

Remember your keris, iron lightning  
 ripping through tentacles of waves, 35  
 double-edged, curved to a point—

flung high and caught unsheathed, scattering  
 five stars in the red tapestry of your sky.

(Amanda Chong)

GILLIAN CLARKE: from *Collected Poems*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 5 Read this poem, and then answer the question that follows it:

*Pipistrelle*

Dusk unwinds its spool  
among the stems of plum-trees,  
subliminal messenger  
on the screen of evening,  
a night-glance as day cools  
on the house-walls. 5

We love what we can't see,  
illegible freehand  
fills every inch of the page.  
We sit after midnight  
till the ashes cool  
and the bottle's empty. 10

This one, in a box, mouse  
the size of my thumb in its furs  
and sepia webs of silk  
a small foreboding,  
the psalms of its veins  
on bible-paper, 15

like a rose I spread once in a book  
till you could read your future  
in the fine print. 20

Explore how Clarke vividly creates impressions of the bat in this poem.



Or 6 How does Clarke movingly convey feelings about being a mother in *Catrin*?

*Catrin*

I can remember you, child,  
As I stood in a hot, white  
Room at the window watching  
The people and cars taking  
Turn at the traffic lights. 5

I can remember you, our first  
Fierce confrontation, the tight  
Red rope of love which we both  
Fought over. It was a square  
Environmental blank, disinfected 10

Of paintings or toys. I wrote  
All over the walls with my  
Words, coloured the clean squares  
With the wild, tender circles  
Of our struggle to become 15  
Separate. We want, we shouted,  
To be two, to be ourselves.

Neither won nor lost the struggle  
In the glass tank clouded with feelings  
Which changed us both. Still I am fighting 20  
You off, as you stand there

With your straight, strong, long  
Brown hair and your rosy,  
Defiant glare, bringing up  
From the heart's pool that old rope, 25  
Tightening about my life,  
Trailing love and conflict,  
As you ask may you skate  
In the dark, for one more hour.

**SECTION B: PROSE**

Answer **one** question from this section.

**CHINUA ACHEBE: *No Longer at Ease***

**Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.**

**Either 7** Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

They had mixed grill, which Obi admitted wasn't too bad.

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‘Good old Sam! He doesn’t spare them.’

*[from Chapter 4]*

How does Achebe make this such a revealing moment in the novel?

- Or**      **8**      Explore the ways in which Achebe makes Obi’s relationship with his father so powerful in the novel.

JANE AUSTEN: *Mansfield Park*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 9 Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

After some minutes spent in this way, Miss Bertram observing the iron gate, expressed a wish of passing through it into the park, that their views and their plans might be more comprehensive. It was the very thing of all others to be wished, it was the best, it was the only way of proceeding with any advantage, in Henry Crawford's opinion; and he directly saw a knoll not half a mile off, which would give them exactly the requisite command of the house. Go therefore they must to that knoll, and through that gate; but the gate was locked. Mr Rushworth wished he had brought the key; he had been very near thinking whether he should not bring the key; he was determined he would never come without the key again; but still this did not remove the present evil. They could not get through, and as Miss Bertram's inclination for so doing did by no means lessen, it ended in Mr Rushworth's declaring outright that he would go and fetch the key. He set off accordingly. 5

'It is undoubtedly the best thing we can do now, as we are so far from the house already,' said Mr Crawford, when he was gone. 10

'Yes, there is nothing else to be done. But now, sincerely, do not you find the place altogether worse than you expected?'

'No, indeed, far otherwise. I find it better, grander, more complete in its style, though that style may not be the best. And to tell you the truth,' speaking rather lower, 'I do not think that I shall ever see Sotherton again with so much pleasure as I do now. Another summer will hardly improve it to me.' 20

After a moment's embarrassment the lady replied, 'You are too much a man of the world not to see with the eyes of the world. If other people think Sotherton improved, I have no doubt that you will.' 25

'I am afraid I am not quite so much the man of the world as might be good for me in some points. My feelings are not quite so evanescent, nor my memory of the past under such easy dominion as one finds to be the case with men of the world.' 30

This was followed by a short silence. Miss Bertram began again. 'You seemed to enjoy your drive here very much this morning. I was glad to see you so well entertained. You and Julia were laughing the whole way.'

'Were we? Yes, I believe we were; but I have not the least recollection at what. Oh! I believe I was relating to her some ridiculous stories of an old Irish groom of my uncle's. Your sister loves to laugh.' 35

'You think her more light-hearted than I am.'

'More easily amused,' he replied, 'consequently you know,' smiling, 'better company. I could not have hoped to entertain *you* with Irish anecdotes during a ten miles' drive.' 40

'Naturally, I believe, I am as lively as Julia, but I have more to think of now.'

'You have undoubtedly—and there are situations in which very high spirits would denote insensibility. Your prospects, however, are too fair to justify want of spirits. You have a very smiling scene before you.' 45

'Do you mean literally or figuratively? Literally I conclude. Yes, certainly, the sun shines and the park looks very cheerful. But unluckily that iron gate, that Ha-ha, give me a feeling of restraint and hardship. I cannot get

out, as the starling said.' As she spoke, and it was with expression, she walked to the gate; he followed her, 'Mr Rushworth is so long fetching this key!' 50

'And for the world you would not get out without the key and without Mr Rushworth's authority and protection, or I think you might with little difficulty pass round the edge of the gate, here, with my assistance; I think it might be done, if you really wished to be more at large, and could allow yourself to think it not prohibited.' 55

'Prohibited! nonsense! I certainly can get out that way and I will. Mr Rushworth will be here in a moment you know—we shall not be out of sight.'

'Or if we are, Miss Price will be so good as to tell him, that he will find us near that knoll, the grove of oak on the knoll.' 60

*[from Chapter 10]*

How does Austen vividly portray the relationship between Maria Bertram and Henry Crawford at this moment in the novel?

**Or**      **10** What impressions of Sir Thomas and Lady Bertram as parents does Austen's writing create for you?

WILLA CATHER: *My Ántonia*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 11 Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

We found the Shimerdas working just as if it were a week-day. Marek was cleaning out the stable, and Ántonia and her mother were making garden, off across the pond in the draw-head. Ambrosch was up on the windmill tower, oiling the wheel. He came down, not very cordially. When Jake asked for the collar, he grunted and scratched his head. The collar belonged to grandfather, of course, and Jake, feeling responsible for it, flared up. 5

‘Now, don’t you say you haven’t got it, Ambrosch, because I know you have, and if you ain’t a-going to look for it, I will.’

Ambrosch shrugged his shoulders and sauntered down the hill toward the stable. I could see that it was one of his mean days. Presently he returned, carrying a collar that had been badly used — trampled in the dirt and gnawed by rats until the hair was sticking out of it. 10

‘This what you want?’ he asked surlily.

Jake jumped off his horse. I saw a wave of red come up under the rough stubble on his face. ‘That ain’t the piece of harness I loaned you, Ambrosch; or, if it is, you’ve used it shameful. I ain’t a-going to carry such a looking thing back to Mr Burden.’ 15

Ambrosch dropped the collar on the ground. ‘All right,’ he said coolly, took up his oil-can, and began to climb the mill. Jake caught him by the belt of his trousers and yanked him back. Ambrosch’s feet had scarcely touched the ground when he lunged out with a vicious kick at Jake’s stomach. Fortunately, Jake was in such a position that he could dodge it. This was not the sort of thing country boys did when they played at fisticuffs, and Jake was furious. He landed Ambrosch a blow on the head — it sounded like the crack of an axe on a cow-pumpkin. Ambrosch dropped over, stunned. 20

We heard squeals, and looking up saw Ántonia and her mother coming on the run. They did not take the path around the pond, but plunged through the muddy water, without even lifting their skirts. They came on, screaming and clawing the air. By this time Ambrosch had come to his senses and was sputtering with nosebleed. 25

Jake sprang into his saddle. ‘Let’s get out of this, Jim,’ he called.

Mrs Shimerda threw her hands over her head and clutched as if she were going to pull down lightning. ‘Law, law!’ she shrieked after us. ‘Law for knock my Ambrosch down!’ 30

‘I never like you no more, Jake and Jim Burden,’ Ántonia panted. ‘No friends any more!’

Jake stopped and turned his horse for a second. ‘Well, you’re a damned ungrateful lot, the whole pack of you,’ he shouted back. ‘I guess the Burdens can get along without you. You’ve been a sight of trouble to them, anyhow!’ 35

We rode away, feeling so outraged that the fine morning was spoiled for us. I hadn’t a word to say, and poor Jake was white as paper and trembling all over. It made him sick to get so angry. 40

[from Book 1 Chapter 18]

Explore the ways in which Cather makes this such a tense moment in the novel.

15

- Or**     **12** When he meets her again after a long time, Jim says to *Ántonia*: ‘You really are a part of me.’

How does Cather vividly convey the truth of this statement?

CHARLES DICKENS: *Hard Times*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 13 Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

Removing her eyes from him, she sat so long looking silently towards the town, that he said, at length: 'Are you consulting the chimneys of the Coketown works, Louisa?'

'There seems to be nothing there, but languid and monotonous smoke. Yet when the night comes, Fire bursts out, father!' she answered, turning quickly. 5

'Of course I know that, Louisa. I do not see the application of the remark.' To do him justice he did not, at all.

She passed it away with a slight motion of her hand, and concentrating her attention upon him again, said, 'Father, I have often thought that life is very short.' – This was so distinctly one of his subjects that he interposed: 10

'It is short, no doubt, my dear. Still, the average duration of human life is proved to have increased of late years. The calculations of various life assurance and annuity offices, among other figures which cannot go wrong, have established the fact.' 15

'I speak of my own life, father.'

'O indeed? Still,' said Mr Gradgrind, 'I need not point out to you, Louisa, that it is governed by the laws which govern lives in the aggregate.'

'While it lasts, I would wish to do the little I can, and the little I am fit for. What does it matter!' 20

Mr Gradgrind seemed rather at a loss to understand the last four words; replying, 'How, matter? What, matter, my dear?'

'Mr Bounderby,' she went on in a steady, straight way, without regarding this, 'asks me to marry him. The question I have to ask myself is, shall I marry him? That is so, father, is it not? You have told me so, father. Have you not?' 25

'Certainly, my dear.'

'Let it be so. Since Mr Bounderby likes to take me thus, I am satisfied to accept his proposal. Tell him, father, as soon as you please, that this was my answer. Repeat it, word for word, if you can, because I should wish him to know what I said.' 30

'It is quite right, my dear,' retorted her father, approvingly, 'to be exact. I will observe your very proper request. Have you any wish, in reference to the period of your marriage, my child?'

'None, father. What does it matter!' 35

Mr Gradgrind had drawn his chair a little nearer to her, and taken her hand. But, her repetition of these words seemed to strike with some little discord on his ear. He paused to look at her, and, still holding her hand, said:

'Louisa, I have not considered it essential to ask you one question, because the possibility implied in it appeared to me to be too remote. But, perhaps I ought to do so. You have never entertained in secret any other proposal?' 40

'Father,' she returned, almost scornfully, 'what other proposal can have been made to *me*? Whom have I seen? Where have I been? What are my heart's experiences?' 45

'My dear Louisa,' returned Mr Gradgrind, reassured and satisfied, 'you correct me justly. I merely wished to discharge my duty.'



‘What do I know, father,’ said Louisa in her quiet manner, ‘of tastes and fancies; of aspirations and affections; of all that part of my nature in which such light things might have been nourished? What escape have I had from problems that could be demonstrated, and realities that could be grasped?’ As she said it, she unconsciously closed her hand, as if upon a solid object, and slowly opened it as though she were releasing dust or ash. 50

55

*[from Book 1 Chapter 15]*

How does Dickens make this moment in the novel so disturbing?

- Or**      **14** Does Dickens make it possible for you to have any sympathy for young Tom Gradgrind throughout the novel?

**MICHAEL FRAYN: *Spies***

**Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.**

**Either 15** Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

Did Stephen understand at last who it was down there in the darkness, when he heard his own name spoken?

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over, then. It's over.'

'It's

*[from Chapter 10]*

How does Frayn make this such a powerful moment in the novel?

**Or 16** 'How adults behave among themselves is a mystery,' says Stephen.

How does Frayn vividly convey Stephen's lack of understanding of adults?

KATE GRENVILLE: *The Secret River*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 17 Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

The other sort of native was the kind that Thornhill had met on that first night, when they had been on the very edge of civilisation. This sort of native was invisible to those like Sal who confined themselves to the township. They lived in the forest and in the bays where settlement had not yet reached, and melted away if any of the new arrivals tried to come close. Even in the few months Thornhill had seen the settlement grow, he had watched how those hidden ones retreated with each new patch of cleared land. 5

They wandered about, naked as worms, sheltering under an overhang of rock or a sheet of bark. Their dwellings were no more substantial than those of a butterfly resting on a leaf. They caught their feeds of fish, gathered a few oysters, killed a possum or two, then moved on. The most Thornhill ever saw was a silhouette stalking along a ridge, or bending over with a fishing spear poised to strike through the water. He might see the splinter of a canoe, fragile as a dead leaf against the dazzle of the sun on the water, with a figure sitting in it, knees drawn up to its shoulders, or a twist of blue smoke rising from some hidden place in the forest. But the canoe had always gone by the time he rowed over to it, and the smoke vanished when he looked at it too closely. 10

During the day, if a person kept to the settlement and did not look about himself too hard, he would see no one out there in the tangled landscape. He might even imagine that there was no one there at all. But at night, a man out in a boat on Port Jackson saw the campfires everywhere, winking among the trees. Sometimes the breeze brought the sound of their singing, a high hard dirge, and the rhythmic clapping of sticks. 15

There were no signs that the blacks felt the place belonged to them. They had no fences that said *this is mine*. No house that said, *this is our home*. There were no fields or flocks that said, *we have put the labour of our hands into this place*. 20

But sometimes men were speared. Word would go round the settlement: that so-and-so lay at this moment in the hospital with the spear still in him and the doctor shaking his head. That another had got one in the neck so the life had pumped out of him in a minute and left him as white as a piece of veal. 25

Thornhill never spoke of those spearings to Sal, but she heard of them from their neighbours, and he had found her more than once poring over the smudged pages of the *Sydney Gazette*, her finger under the words, mouthing them out to herself. *They got him just along the way here*, she said without looking at him. *Just around in the bay*. 30

But there was no point dwelling on the spears of the blacks. They were like the snakes or the spiders, not something that could be guarded against. He reminded her that even in London a man might be killed for the contents of his pocketbook. He meant it as a kind of reassurance, but Sal went silent. He came to dread seeing the *Gazette* spread out on the table. 35

Whatever he said to Sal, he was glad to spend his days out on the water. On land he was always within range of a spear. 40

45

[from Part Two]

21

How does Grenville vividly convey the mysteriousness of the 'native' people to Thornhill at this moment in the novel?

**Or**      **18** In what ways does Grenville portray Sal as heroic?

R K NARAYAN: *The English Teacher*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 19 Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

I stood at the bathroom doorway and grimly waited. She finished the child's business and came out bearing her on her arm. While passing me she seized the child's hand and tapped me under the chin with it and passed on without a word to her room. She later met me in my room as I sat gloomily gazing at the table. 5

'Why have you not had your tiffin or wash?' she asked, coming up behind and gently touching my shoulder.

'I don't want any tiffin,' I snapped.

'Why are you so angry?' she asked.

'Who asked you to give away that clock?' I asked. 10

'I didn't give it away. That man gave me twelve annas for it—a very high price indeed.'

'Now you are a ...' I began. I looked at the paper corner and wailed: 'You have given away those papers too! There were old answer papers there...' 15

'Yes, I saw them,' she said. 'They were four years old. Why do you want old papers?' she asked. I was too angry to answer. 'You have no business to tamper with my things,' I said. 'I don't want any tiffin or coffee.' I picked up my coat, put it on and rushed out of the house, without answering her question: 'Where are you going?' 20

I went straight back to the college. I had no definite plan. There was no one in the college. I peeped into the debating hall, hoping there might be somebody there. But the evening was free from all engagements. I remembered that I hadn't had my coffee. I walked about the empty corridors of the college. I saw the servant and asked him to open our common room. I sent him to fetch me coffee and tiffin from the restaurant. I opened my locker and took out a few composition books. I sat correcting them till late at night. I heard the college clock strike nine. I then got up and retraced my way home. I went about my work with a business-like air. I took off my coat, went at great speed to the bathroom and washed. I first 30

took a peep into my wife's room. I saw her rocking the baby in the cradle. I went into the kitchen and told the old lady: 'Have the rest dined?'

The old lady answered: 'Susila waited till eight-thirty.'

I was not interested in this. Her name enraged me. I snapped: 'All right, all right, put up my leaf and serve me. I only wanted to know if the child had eaten.' This was to clear any misconception anyone might entertain that I was interested in Susila. 35

I ate in silence. I heard steps approaching, and told myself: 'Oh, she is coming.' I trembled with anxiety, lest she should be going away elsewhere. I caught a glimpse of her as she came into the dining room. I bowed my head, and went on with my dinner unconcerned, though fully aware that 40

she was standing before me, dutifully as ever, to see that I was served correctly. She moved off to the kitchen, spoke some words to the old lady, and came out, and softly moved back to her own room. I felt angry: 'Doesn't even care to wait and see me served. She doesn't care. If she cared, would she sell my clock? I must teach her a lesson.' 45

After dinner I was back in my room and sat down at my table. I had never been so studious at any time in my life. I took out some composition

books. I noticed on a corner of my table a small paper packet. I found enclosed in it a few coins. On the paper was written in her handwriting: 50

Time-piece	12 annas
Old paper	1 rupee
	<hr/>
Total	One rupee and twelve annas.

I felt furious at the sight of it. I took the coins and went over to her room. The light was out there. I stood in the doorway and muttered: 'Who cares for this money? I can do without it.' I flung it on her bed and returned to my room. 55

Later, as I sat in my room working, I heard the silent night punctuated by sobs. I went to her room and saw her lying with her face to the wall, sobbing. I was completely shaken. I didn't bargain for this. I watched her silently for a moment, and collected myself sufficiently to say: 'What is the use of crying, after committing a serious blunder?' Through her sobs, she sputtered: 'What do you care, what use it is or not. If I had known you cared more for a dilapidated clock.' She didn't finish her sentence, but broke down and wept bitterly. I was baffled. I was in an anguish myself. I wanted to take her in my arms and comfort her. But there was a most forbidding pride within me. I merely said: 'If you are going to talk and behave like a normal human being, I can talk to you. I can't stand all this nonsense.' 60

'You go away to your room. Why do you come and abuse me at midnight?' she said. 65

'Stop crying, otherwise people will think a couple of lunatics are living in this house. ...' 70

*[from Chapter 2]*

How does Narayan make this moment in the novel so powerful?

Or 20 How does Narayan's writing memorably depict the lives of women in Malgudi?

from *Stories of Ourselves*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

- Either 21 Read this extract from *The People Before* (by Maurice Shadbolt), and then answer the question that follows it:

He had a police party out, a health officer too. They scoured the hills, and most of the caves they could find. They discovered no trace of a burial, nor did they find anything in the caves. At one stage someone foolishly suggested we might have imagined it all. So my father produced the launchman and people from the township as witnesses to the fact that an old Maori, dying, had actually been brought to our farm. 5

That convinced them. But it didn't take them anywhere near finding the body. They traced the remnants of the tribe, living up the coast, and found that indeed an old man of the tribe was missing. No one denied that there had been a visit to our farm. But they maintained that they knew nothing about a body. The old man, they said, had just wandered off into the bush; they hadn't found him again. 10

He might, they added, even still be alive. Just to be on the safe side, in case there was any truth in their story, the police put the old man on the missing persons register, for all the good that might have done. 15

But we knew. We knew every night we looked up at the hills that he was there, somewhere.

So he was still alive, in a way. Certainly it was a long time before he let us alone. 20

And by then my father had lost all taste for the farm. It seemed the land itself had heaped some final indignity upon him, made a fool of him. He never talked again, anyway, about running sheep on the hills.

When butter prices rose and land values improved, a year or two afterwards, he had no hesitation in selling out. We shifted into another part of the country entirely, for a year or two, and then into another. Finally we found ourselves milking a small herd for town supply, not far from the city. We're still on that farm, though there's talk of the place being purchased soon for a city sub-division. We think we might sell, but we'll face the issue when it arises. 25

Now and then Jim comes to see us, smart in a city suit, a lecturer at the university. My father always found it difficult to talk to Jim, and very often now he goes off to bed and leaves us to it. One thing I must say about Jim: he has no objection to helping with the milking. He insists that he enjoys it; perhaps he does. It's all flatland round our present farm, with one farm much like another, green grass and square farmhouses and pine shelter belts, and it's not exactly the place to sit out on a summer evening and watch shadows gathering on the hills. Because there aren't hills within sight; or shadows either, for that matter. It's all very tame and quiet, apart from cars speeding on the highway. 30

I get on reasonably well with Jim. We read much the same books, have much the same opinions on a great many subjects. The city hasn't made a great deal of difference to him. We're both married, with young families. We also have something else in common: we were both in the war, fighting in the desert. One evening after milking, when we stood smoking and yarning in the cool, I remembered something and decided I might put a question to Jim. 35

45



‘You know,’ I began, ‘they say it’s best, when you’re under fire in the war, to fix your mind on something remote. So you won’t be afraid. I remember Dad telling me that. I used to try. But it never seemed any good. I couldn’t think of anything. I was still as scared as hell.’ 50

‘I was too. Who wasn’t?’

‘But, I mean, did you ever think of anything?’

‘Funny thing,’ he said. ‘Now I come to think of it, I did. I thought of the old place – you know, the old place by the river. Where,’ he added, and his face puckered into a grin, ‘where they buried that old Maori. And where I found those greenstones. I’ve still got it at home, you know, up on the mantelpiece. I seem to remember trying to give it away once, to those Maoris. Now I’m glad I didn’t. It’s my only souvenir from there, the only thing that makes that place still live for me.’ He paused. ‘Well, anyway, that’s what I thought about. That old place of ours.’ 55 60

I had a sharp pain. I felt the dismay of a long-distance runner who, coasting confidently to victory, imagining himself well ahead of the field, finds himself overtaken and the tape snapped at the very moment he leans forward to breast it. For one black moment it seemed I had been robbed of something which was rightfully mine. 65

I don’t think I’ll ever forgive him.

Explore the ways in which Shadbolt makes this such a satisfying ending to the story.

- Or**      **22** Explore the ways in which the writer creates a strong sense of place in **either** *To Da-duh, in Memoriam* (by Paule Marshall) **or** *Billennium* (by J G Ballard).



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