



LITERATURE (ENGLISH)

0486/41

Paper 4 Unseen

May/June 2019

1 hour 15 minutes

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 **either** Question 1 **or** Question 2.

You are advised to spend about 20 minutes reading the question paper and planning your answer.

Both questions in this paper carry equal marks.

This document consists of **5** printed pages, **3** blank pages and **1** Insert.

Answer **either** Question 1 **or** Question 2.

EITHER

- 1 Read carefully the poem on the opposite page. The poet has difficulty sleeping (insomnia). She describes both her insomnia and a good night's sleep.

How does the poet memorably convey her experiences to you?

To help you answer this question, you might consider:

- how the poet describes her insomnia
- how she describes the experience of sleep
- what you find striking about the way the poem ends.

One Night Comes Like a Blessing

Like a cruel lover or spiteful mistress
No-Sleep demands my restless attentiveness.

No-Sleep prefers me stripped –
a dark projectionist

winding and unwinding the reel of my thoughts.
An old grained movie I can't switch off –

a starring of loves and loss, TV footage,
soft tears, mortifications¹, smothered laughs.

Then, one night comes like a blessing.
A visitation of wings that sees me falling.

Whoever wants me now, I am swimming
towards my House of Dreams.

Let no one disturb this peace.
Let no one shake me

even from the branches of nightmares.
Come morning I am reborn again –

a fresh-faced Eve – emerging from the rib's² shadow –
ready to meet the daily pandemonium³ of living.

¹ *mortifications*: embarrassments

² *Eve ... rib's*: In the Bible, Eve is the first woman, created from the rib of the first man

³ *pandemonium*: wild and noisy disorder or confusion

OR

- 2 Read carefully the extract opposite. Eilis is a young Irish girl who has recently moved to the USA. She has received letters from her mother, her sister Rose and her brother Jack, who remain at home in Ireland.

How does the writer vividly convey Eilis's growing sense of homesickness?

To help you answer this question, you might consider:

- how the writer describes her reactions to the letters from home
- how he portrays her increasing unhappiness
- how he contrasts her feelings about home and where she lives now.

The letters told Eilis little; there was hardly anything personal in them and nothing that sounded like anyone's own voice. Nonetheless, as she read them over and over, she forgot for a moment where she was and she could picture her mother in the kitchen taking her Basildon Bond¹ notepad and her envelopes and setting out to write a proper letter with nothing crossed out. Rose, she thought, might have gone into the dining room to write on paper she had taken home from work, using a longer, more elegant white envelope than her mother had. Eilis imagined that Rose when she was finished might have left hers on the hall table, and her mother would have gone with both letters in the morning to the post office, having to get special stamps for America. She could not imagine where Jack had written his letter, which was briefer than the other two, almost shy in its tone, as though he did not want to put too much in writing.

She lay on the bed with the letters beside her. For the past few weeks, she realized, she had not really thought of home. The town had come to her in flashing pictures, such as the one that had come during the afternoon of the sale, and she had thought of course of her mother and Rose, but her own life in Enniscorthy², the life she had lost and would never have again, she had kept out of her mind. Every day she had come back to this small room in this house full of sounds and gone over everything new that had happened. Now, all that seemed like nothing compared to the picture she had of home, of her own room, the house in Friary Street, the food she had eaten there, the clothes she wore, how quiet everything was.

All this came to her like a terrible weight and she felt for a second that she was going to cry. It was as though an ache in her chest was trying to force tears down her cheeks despite her enormous effort to keep them back. She did not give in to whatever it was. She kept thinking, attempting to work out what was causing this new feeling that was like despondency, that was like how she felt when her father died and she watched them closing the coffin, the feeling that he would never see the world again and she would never be able to talk to him again.

She was nobody here. It was not just that she had no friends and family; it was rather that she was a ghost in this room, in the streets on the way to work, on the shop floor. Nothing meant anything. The rooms in the house on Friary Street belonged to her, she thought; when she moved in them she was really there. In the town, if she walked to the shop or to the Vocational School, the air, the light, the ground, it was all solid and part of her, even if she met no one familiar. Nothing here was part of her. It was false, empty, she thought. She closed her eyes and tried to think, as she had done so many times in her life, of something she was looking forward to, but there was nothing. Not the slightest thing. Not even Sunday. Nothing maybe except sleep, and she was not even certain she was looking forward to sleep. In any case, she could not sleep yet, since it was not yet nine o'clock. There was nothing she could do. It was as though she had been locked away.

¹ *Basildon Bond*: brand of stationery

² *Enniscorthy*: Eilis's home town in Ireland

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