



## Section A: Poetry

TED HUGHES: *New Selected Poems 1957–1994*

- 1 **Either** (a) With reference to **two** poems, discuss Hughes's presentation of men.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on ways in which Hughes develops a response to the thrushes in the following poem.

*Thrushes*

Terrifying are the attent sleek thrushes on the lawn,  
 More coiled steel than living – a poised  
 Dark deadly eye, those delicate legs  
 Triggered to stirrings beyond sense – with a start, a bounce, a stab  
 Overtake the instant and drag out some writhing thing. 5  
 No indolent procrastinations and no yawning stares.  
 No sighs or head-scratchings. Nothing but bounce and stab  
 And a ravening second.

Is it their single-mind-sized skulls, or a trained  
 Body, or genius, or a nestful of brats 10  
 Gives their days this bullet and automatic  
 Purpose? Mozart's brain had it, and the shark's mouth  
 That hungers down the blood-smell even to a leak of its own  
 Side and devouring of itself: efficiency which  
 Strikes too streamlined for any doubt to pluck at it 15  
 Or obstruction deflect.

With a man it is otherwise. Heroisms on horseback,  
 Outstripping his desk-diary at a broad desk,  
 Carving at a tiny ivory ornament  
 For years: his act worships itself – while for him, 20  
 Though he bends to be blent in the prayer, how loud and above what  
 Furious spaces of fire do the distracting devils  
 Orgy and hosannah, under what wilderness  
 Of black silent waters weep.

**Turn to page 4 for Question 2**

WILFRED OWEN: *Selected Poems*

- 2 **Either** (a) Discuss Owen's presentation and use of setting in **two** poems.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on some of the ways in which Owen presents the soldier in the following poem.

*Disabled*

He sat in a wheeled chair, waiting for dark,  
 And shivered in his ghastly suit of grey,  
 Legless, sewn short at elbow. Through the park  
 Voices of boys rang saddening like a hymn,  
 Voices of play and pleasures after day, 5  
 Till gathering sleep had mothered them from him.

\* \* \*

About this time Town used to swing so gay  
 When glow-lamps budded in the light blue trees,  
 And girls glanced lovelier as the air grew dim – 10  
 In the old times, before he threw away his knees.  
 Now he will never feel again how slim  
 Girls' waists are, or how warm their subtle hands;  
 All of them touch him like some queer disease.

\* \* \*

There was an artist silly for his face,  
 For it was younger than his youth, last year. 15  
 Now, he is old; his back will never brace;  
 He's lost his colour very far from here,  
 Poured it down shell-holes till the veins ran dry,  
 And half his lifetime lapsed in the hot race,  
 And leap of purple spurted from his thigh. 20

\* \* \*

One time he liked a blood-smear down his leg,  
 After the matches, carried shoulder-high.  
 It was after football, when he'd drunk a peg,  
 He thought he'd better join. – He wonders why. 25  
 Someone had said he'd look a god in kilts,  
 That's why; and maybe, too, to please his Meg;  
 Aye, that was it, to please the giddy jilts  
 He asked to join. He didn't have to beg;

\* \* \*

Smiling they wrote his lie; aged nineteen years. 30  
 Germans he scarcely thought of; all their guilt,  
 And Austria's, did not move him. And no fears  
 Of Fear came yet. He thought of jewelled hilts  
 For daggers in plaid socks; of smart salutes;  
 And care of arms; and leave; and pay arrears;  
*Esprit de corps*; and hints for young recruits. 35  
 And soon he was drafted out with drums and cheers.

\* \* \*

Some cheered him home, but not as crowds cheer Goal.  
 Only a solemn man who brought him fruits  
*Thanked* him; and then inquired about his soul.

\* \* \*

Now, he will spend a few sick years in Institutes, 40  
And do what things the rules consider wise,  
And take whatever pity they may dole.  
Tonight he noticed how the women's eyes  
Passed from him to the strong men that were whole.  
How cold and late it is! Why don't they come 45  
And put him into bed? Why don't they come?

*Songs of Ourselves*

- 3 **Either** (a) Compare the ways writers use the sonnet form in **two** poems from your selection.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on ways in which the symbol of the rose is developed in the following poem.

Song: *Go, Lovely Rose!*

Go, lovely rose!  
 Tell her that wastes her time and me  
 That now she knows,  
 When I resemble her to thee,  
 How sweet and fair she seems to be. 5

Tell her that's young,  
 And shuns to have her graces spied,  
 That hadst thou sprung  
 In deserts, where no men abide,  
 Thou must have uncommended died. 10

Small is the worth  
 Of beauty from the light retired;  
 Bid her come forth,  
 Suffer herself to be desired,  
 And not blush so to be admired. 15

Then die! that she  
 The common fate of all things rare  
 May read in thee;  
 How small a part of time they share  
 That are so wondrous sweet and fair! 20

Edmund Waller

**Turn to page 8 for Question 4**

## Section B: Prose

JHUMPA LAHIRI: *The Namesake*

- 4 **Either** (a) Discuss the significance of the train crash to the development of the characterisation of Ashoke.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on the following passage, considering its presentation of Gogol's first experience of school.

"Welcome to elementary school, Nikhil. I am your principal, Mrs. Lapidus."

Gogol looks down at his sneakers. The way the principal pronounces his new name is different from the way his parents say it, the second part of it longer, sounding like "heel."

She bends down so that her face is level with his, and extends a hand to his shoulder. "Can you tell me how old you are, Nikhil?" 5

When the question is repeated and there is still no response, Mrs. Lapidus asks, "Mr. Ganguli, does Nikhil follow English?"

"Of course he follows," Ashoke says. "My son is perfectly bilingual."

In order to prove that Gogol knows English, Ashoke does something he has never done before, and addresses his son in careful, accented English. "Go on, Gogol," he says, patting him on the head. "Tell Mrs. Lapidus how old you are." 10

"What was that?" Mrs. Lapidus says.

"I beg your pardon, madam?"

"That name you called him. Something with a G." 15

"Oh that, that is what we call him at home only. But his good name should be—is"—he nods his head firmly—"Nikhil."

Mrs. Lapidus frowns. "I'm afraid I don't understand. Good name?"

"Yes."

Mrs. Lapidus studies the registration form. She has not had to go through this confusion with the other two Indian children. She opens up the folder and examines the immunization record, the birth certificate. "There seems to be some confusion, Mr. Ganguli," she says. "According to these documents, your son's legal name is Gogol." 20

"That is correct. But please allow me to explain—"

"That you want us to call him Nikhil."

"That is correct."

Mrs. Lapidus nods. "The reason being?"

"That is our wish."

"I'm not sure I follow you, Mr. Ganguli. Do you mean that Nikhil is a middle name? Or a nickname? Many of the children go by nicknames here. On this form there is a space—" 30

"No, no, it's not a middle name," Ashoke says. He is beginning to lose patience. "He has no middle name. No nickname. The boy's good name, his school name, is Nikhil." 35

Mrs. Lapidus presses her lips together and smiles. "But clearly he doesn't respond."

"Please, Mrs. Lapidus," Ashoke says. "It is very common for a child to be confused at first. Please give it some time. I assure you he will grow accustomed." 40

He bends down and this time in Bengali, calmly and quietly, asks Gogol to please answer when Mrs. Lapidus asks a question. "Don't be scared, Gogol," he says, raising his son's chin with his finger. "You're a big boy now. No tears."

Though Mrs. Lapidus does not understand a word, she listens carefully, hears that name again. Gogol. Lightly, in pencil, she writes it down on the registration form.



Ashoke hands over the lunch box, a windbreaker in case it gets cold. He thanks Mrs. Lapidus. “Be good, Nikhil,” he says in English. And then, after a moment’s hesitation, he is gone. 45

When they are alone, Mrs. Lapidus asks, “Are you happy to be entering elementary school, Gogol?”

“My parents want me to have another name in school.” 50

“And what about you, Gogol? Do you want to be called by another name?”

After a pause, he shakes his head.

“Is that a no?”

He nods. “Yes.”

“Then it’s settled. Can you write your name on this piece of paper?” 55

Gogol picks up a pencil, grips it tightly, and forms the letters of the only word he has learned thus far to write from memory, getting the “L” backward due to nerves.

“What beautiful penmanship you have,” Mrs. Lapidus says. She tears up the old registration form and asks Mrs. McNab to type up a new one.

Chapter 3

EDITH WHARTON: *The House of Mirth*

- 5 **Either** (a) Simon Rosedale asks, 'Why should I mind saying that I want to get into society?'

In the light of this comment, discuss Wharton's presentation of social ambition in the novel.

- Or** (b) Comment closely on the following passage, considering the presentation of Selden's thoughts and behaviour.

Selden had in fact given her the utmost measure of his sureness, had even stretched it a shade to meet the anxiety in her eyes. And now, as he turned away, strolling down the hill toward the station, that anxiety remained with him as the visible justification of his own. It was not, indeed, anything specific that he feared: there had been a literal truth in his declaration that he did not think anything would happen. 5  
What troubled him was that, though Dorset's attitude had perceptibly changed, the change was not clearly to be accounted for. It had certainly not been produced by Selden's arguments, or by the action of his own soberer reason. Five minutes' talk sufficed to show that some alien influence had been at work, and that it had not so much subdued his resentment as weakened his will, so that he moved under it 10  
in a state of apathy, like a dangerous lunatic who has been drugged. Temporarily, no doubt, however exerted, it worked for the general safety: the question was how long it would last, and by what kind of reaction it was likely to be followed. On these points Selden could gain no light; for he saw that one effect of the transformation had been to shut him off from free communion with Dorset. The latter, indeed, 15  
was still moved by the irresistible desire to discuss his wrong; but, though he revolved about it with the same forlorn tenacity, Selden was aware that something always restrained him from full expression. His state was one to produce first weariness and then impatience in his hearer; and when their talk was over, Selden began to feel that he had done his utmost, and might justifiably wash his hands of the sequel. 20

It was in this mind that he had been making his way back to the station when Miss Bart crossed his path; but though, after his brief word with her, he kept mechanically on his course, he was conscious of a gradual change in his purpose. The change had been produced by the look in her eyes; and in his eagerness to define the nature of that look, he dropped into a seat in the gardens, and sat brooding upon the question. 25  
It was natural enough, in all conscience, that she should appear anxious: a young woman placed, in the close intimacy of a yachting-cruise, between a couple on the verge of disaster, could hardly, aside from her concern for her friends, be insensible to the awkwardness of her own position. The worst of it was that, in interpreting Miss Bart's state of mind, so many alternative readings were possible; and one of 30  
these, in Selden's troubled mind, took the ugly form suggested by Mrs Fisher. If the girl was afraid, was she afraid for herself or for her friends? And to what degree was her dread of a catastrophe intensified by the sense of being fatally involved in it? The burden of offence lying manifestly with Mrs Dorset, this conjecture seemed on the face of it gratuitously unkind; but Selden knew that in the most one-sided 35  
matrimonial quarrel there are generally countercharges to be brought, and that they are brought with the greater audacity where the original grievance is so emphatic. Mrs Fisher had not hesitated to suggest the likelihood of Dorset's marrying Miss Bart, if 'anything happened'; and though Mrs Fisher's conclusions were notoriously rash, she was shrewd enough in reading the signs from which they were drawn. Dorset 40  
had apparently shown marked interest in the girl, and this interest might be used to cruel advantage in his wife's struggle for rehabilitation. Selden knew that Bertha would fight to the last round of powder: the rashness of her conduct was illogically combined with a cold determination to escape its consequences. She could be as unscrupulous in fighting for herself as she was reckless in courting danger, and 45

whatever came to her hand at such moments was likely to be used as a defensive missile. He did not, as yet, see clearly just what course she was likely to take, but his perplexity increased his apprehension, and with it the sense that, before leaving, he must speak again with Miss Bart. Whatever her share in the situation – and he had always honestly tried to resist judging her by her surroundings – however free she might be from any personal connection with it, she would be better out of the way of a possible crash; and since she had appealed to him for help, it was clearly his business to tell her so.

50

Book 2, Chapter 3

*Stories of Ourselves*

- 6 **Either** (a) Compare the ways in which **two** stories present a clash of views or values.
- Or** (b) Comment closely on ways in which the following passage from *The Yellow Wall Paper* creates an effective ending to the story.

But I am here, and no person touches this paper but me – not *alive!*  
 She tried to get me out of the room – it was too patent! But I said it was so quiet and empty and clean now that I believed I would lie down again and sleep all I could; and not to wake me even for dinner – I would call when I woke.

So now she is gone, and the servants are gone, and the things are gone, and there is nothing left but that great bedstead nailed down, with the canvas mattress we found on it. 5

We shall sleep downstairs tonight, and take the boat home tomorrow.  
 I quite enjoy the room, now it is bare again.  
 How those children did tear about here!  
 This bedstead is fairly gnawed!  
 But I must get to work. 10

I have locked the door and thrown the key down into the front path.  
 I don't want to go out, and I don't want to have anybody come in, till John comes.  
 I want to astonish him. 15

I've got a rope up here that even Jennie did not find. If that woman does get out, and tries to get away, I can tie her!  
 But I forgot I could not reach far without anything to stand on!  
 This bed will *not* move!

I tried to lift and push it until I was lame, and then I got so angry I bit off a little piece at one corner – but it hurt my teeth. 20

Then I peeled off all the paper I could reach standing on the floor. It sticks horribly and the pattern just enjoys it! All those strangled heads and bulbous eyes and waddling fungus growths just shriek with derision!

I am getting angry enough to do something desperate. To jump out of the window would be admirable exercise, but the bars are too strong even to try. 25

Besides, I wouldn't do it. Of course not. I know well enough that a step like that is improper and might be misconstrued.

I don't like to *look* out of the windows even – there are so many of those creeping women, and they creep so fast. 30

I wonder if they all come out of that wallpaper, as I did?

But I am securely fastened now by my well-hidden rope – you don't get *me* out in the road there!

I suppose I shall have to get back behind the pattern when it comes night, and that is hard! 35

It is so pleasant to be out in this great room and creep around as I please!  
 I don't want to go outside. I won't, even if Jennie asks me to.

For outside you have to creep on the ground, and everything is green instead of yellow.

But here I can creep smoothly on the floor, and my shoulder just fits in that long smooch around the wall, so I cannot lose my way. 40

Why, there's John at the door!  
 It is no use, young man, you can't open it!  
 How he does call and pound!  
 Now he's crying for an axe. 45

It would be a shame to break down that beautiful door!  
 'John, dear!' said I in the gentlest voice, 'the key is down by the front steps, under a plantain leaf!'

That silenced him for a few moments.  
Then he said – very quietly indeed, ‘Open the door, my darling!’ 50  
‘I can’t,’ said I. ‘The key is down by the front door, under a plaintain leaf!’  
And then I said it again, several times, very gently and slowly, and said it so  
often that he had to go and see, and he got it, of course, and came in. He stopped  
short by the door.  
‘What is the matter?’ he cried. ‘For God’s sake, what are you doing?’ 55  
I kept on creeping just the same, but I looked at him over my shoulder.  
‘I’ve got out at last,’ said I, ‘in spite of you and Jennie! And I’ve pulled off most of  
the paper, so you can’t put me back!’  
Now why should that man have fainted? But he did, and right across my path  
by the wall, so that I had to creep over him every time! 60

*The Yellow Wall Paper*





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