
LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

9695/72

Paper 7 Comment and Appreciation

May/June 2015

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.

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 **7** printed pages, **1** blank page and **1** insert.

1 Write a critical commentary on the following extract from the opening chapter of *Train to Pakistan* (1956) by Khushwant Singh.

Juggut Singh had been gone from his home about an hour. He had only left when the sound of the night goods train told him that it would now be safe to go. For him, as for the dacoits¹, the arrival of the train that night was a signal. At the first distant rumble, he slipped quietly off his charpoy² and picked up his turban and wrapped it round his head. Then he tiptoed across the courtyard to the haystack and fished out a spear. He tiptoed back to his bed, picked up his shoes, and crept toward the door. 5

“Where are you going?”

Juggut Singh stopped. It was his mother.

“To the fields,” he said. “Last night wild pigs did a lot of damage.” 10

“Pigs!” his mother said. “Don’t try to be clever. Have you forgotten already that you are on probation—that it is forbidden for you to leave the village after sunset? And with a spear! Enemies will see you. They will report you. They will send you back to jail.” Her voice rose to a wail. “Then who will look after the crops and the cattle?” 15

“I will be back soon,” Juggut Singh said. “There is nothing to worry about. Everyone in the village is asleep.”

“No,” his mother said. She wailed again.

“Shut up,” he said. “It is you who will wake the neighbors. Be quiet and there will be no trouble.” 20

“Go! Go wherever you want to go. If you want to jump in a well, jump. If you want to hang like your father, go and hang. It is my lot to weep. My kismet³,” she added, slapping her forehead, “it is all written there.”

Juggut Singh opened the door and looked on both sides. There was no one about. He walked along the walls till he got to the end of the lane near the pond. He could see the gray forms of a couple of adjutant storks slowly pacing up and down in the mud looking for frogs. They paused in their search. Juggut Singh stood still against the wall till the storks were reassured, then went off the footpath across the fields toward the river. He crossed the dry sand bed till he got to the stream. He stuck his spear in the ground with the blade pointing upward, then stretched out on the sand. He lay on his back and gazed at the stars. A meteor shot across the Milky Way, trailing a silver path down the blue-black sky. Suddenly a hand was on his eyes. 25

“Guess who?”

Juggut Singh stretched out his hands over his head and behind him, groping; the girl dodged them. Juggut Singh started with the hand on his eyes and felt his way up from the arm to the shoulder and then on to the face. He caressed her cheeks, eyes and nose that his hands knew so well. He tried to play with her lips to induce them to kiss his fingers. The girl opened her mouth and bit him fiercely. Juggut Singh jerked his hand away. With a quick movement he caught the girl’s head in both his hands and brought her face over to his. Then he slipped his arms under her waist and hoisted her into the air above him with her arms and legs kicking about like a crab. He turned her about till his arms ached. He brought her down flat upon him limb to limb. 40

The girl slapped him on the face. 45

“You put your hands on the person of a strange woman. Have you no mother or sister in your home? Have you no shame? No wonder the police have got you on their register as a bad character. I will also tell the Inspector Sahib that you are a budmash⁴.”

“I am only budmash with you, Nooro. We should both be locked up in the same cell.” 50

“You have learned to talk too much. I will have to look for another man.”

Juggut Singh crossed his arms behind the girl's back and crushed her till she could not talk or breathe. Every time she started to speak he tightened his arms round her and her words got stuck in her throat. She gave up and put her exhausted face against his. He laid her beside him with her head nestling in the hollow of his left arm. With his right hand he stroked her hair and face. 55

¹ *dacoits*: armed robbers

² *charpoy*: a bed

³ *kismet*: fate

⁴ *budmash*: naughty (person)

2 Write a critical commentary on the following poem.

The poet writes about his love of old books, and wonders how he himself will be remembered.

Among His Books

My days among the Dead are past;
 Around me I behold,
 Where'er these casual eyes are cast,
 The mighty minds of old:
 My never-failing friends are they, 5
 With whom I converse day by day.

With them I take delight in weal¹
 And seek relief in woe;
 And while I understand and feel 10
 How much to them I owe,
 My cheeks have often been bedewed²
 With tears of thoughtful gratitude.

My thoughts are with the Dead; with them
 I live in long-past years,
 Their virtues love, their faults condemn, 15
 Partake their hopes and fears,
 And from their lessons seek and find
 Instruction with an humble mind.

My hopes are with the Dead; anon³
 My place with them will be, 20
 And I with them shall travel on
 Through all Futurity;
 Yet leaving here a name, I trust,
 That will not perish in the dust.

Robert Southey (1774–1843)

¹ *weal*: good health and happiness

² *bedewed*: made damp

³ *anon*: soon

Turn to page 6 for Question 3

3 Write a critical commentary on the following extract from the play *The Boy Comes Home*, by A.A. Milne (1882–1956).

The action of the play takes place shortly after the end of the First World War. Philip has been with the Army in France for four years, and has just returned home. His parents both died before the war, and he has been brought up by his uncle and aunt, James and Emily. He is just finishing his breakfast in the next room, two hours later than the others.

- Emily* [unconvinced]: Well, I think that Philip's four years out there have made him more of a man; he doesn't seem somehow like a boy who can be told what to do. I'm sure they've taught him something.
- James:* I've no doubt that they've taught him something about – er – bombs and – er – which end a revolver goes off, and how to form fours. But I don't see that that sort of thing helps him to decide upon the most suitable career for a young man in after-war conditions. 5
- Emily:* Well, I can only say you'll find him different.
- James:* I didn't notice any particular difference last night.
- Emily:* I think you'll find him rather more – I can't quite think of the word, but Mrs. Higgins could tell you what I mean. 10
- James:* Of course, if he likes to earn his living any other way, he may; but I don't see how he proposes to do it so long as I hold the purse-strings. [Looking at his watch] Perhaps you'd better tell him that I cannot wait any longer. 15
- [EMILY opens the door leading into the dining-room and talks through it to PHILIP.]
- Emily:* Philip, your uncle is waiting to see you before he goes to the office. Will you be long, dear?
- Philip* [from the dining-room]: Is he in a hurry? 20
- James* [shortly]: Yes.
- Emily:* He says he *is* rather, dear.
- Philip:* Couldn't he come and talk in here? It wouldn't interfere with my breakfast.
- James:* No. 25
- Emily:* He says he'd rather you came to *him*, darling.
- Philip* [resigned]: Oh, well.
- Emily* [to JAMES]: He'll be here directly, dear. Just sit down in front of the fire and make yourself comfortable with the paper. He won't keep you long. [She arranges him.] 30
- James* [taking the paper]: The morning is not the time to make oneself comfortable. It's a most dangerous habit. I nearly found myself dropping off in front of the fire just now. I don't like this hanging about, wasting the day. [He opens the paper.]
- Emily:* You should have had a nice sleep, dear, while you could. We were up so late last night listening to Philip's stories. 35
- James:* Yes, yes. [He begins a yawn and stifles it hurriedly.] You mustn't neglect your duties, Emily. I've no doubt you have plenty to do.
- Emily:* All right, James, then I'll leave you. But don't be hard on the boy.
- James* [sleepily]: I shall be just, Emily; you can rely upon that. 40

- Emily [going to the door]: I don't think that's quite what I meant. [She goes out.]
 [JAMES, who is now quite comfortable, begins to nod. He wakes up with a start, turns over the paper, and nods again. Soon he is breathing deeply with closed eyes.] 45
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- Philip [coming in]: Sorry to have kept you waiting, but I was a bit late for breakfast. [He takes out his pipe.] Are we going to talk business or what?
- James [taking out his watch]: A bit late! I make it just two hours.
- Philip [pleasantly]: All right, Uncle James. Call it two hours late. Or twenty-two hours early for tomorrow's breakfast, if you like. [He sits down in a chair on the opposite side of the table from his uncle, and lights his pipe.] 50
- James: You smoke now?
- Philip [staggered]: I what? 55
- James [nodding at his pipe]: You smoke?
- Philip: Good heavens! What did you think we *did* in France?
- James: Before you start smoking all over the house, I should have thought you would have asked your aunt's permission.
 [PHILIP looks at him in amazement, and then goes to the door.] 60
- Philip [calling]: Aunt Emily! ... Aunt Emily! ... Do you mind my smoking in here?
- Aunt Emily [from upstairs]: Of course not, darling.
- Philip [to JAMES, as he returns to his chair]: Of course not, darling. [He puts back his pipe in his mouth.] 65
- James: Now, understand once and for all, Philip, while you remain in my house I expect not only punctuality, but also civility and respect. I will *not* have impertinence.
- Philip [unimpressed]: Well, that's what I want to talk to you about, Uncle James. About staying in your house, I mean. 70
- James: I don't know what you do mean.
- Philip: Well, we don't get on too well together, and I thought perhaps I'd better take rooms somewhere. You could give me an allowance until I came into my money. Or I suppose you could give me the money now if you really liked. I don't quite know how father left it to me. 75
- James [coldly]: You come into your money when you are twenty-five. Your father very wisely felt that to trust a large sum to a mere boy of twenty-one was simply putting temptation in his way. Whether I have the power or not to alter his dispositions, I certainly don't propose to do so.
- Philip: If it comes to that, I *am* twenty-five. 80
- James: Indeed? I had an impression that that event took place in about two years' time.

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