
WORLD LITERATURE

0408/02

Paper 2: Unseen

October/November 2016

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. It describes a time when someone returns to his village after years away.

How does the writer movingly convey the feelings created by the return of the 'lost child' to the village?

To help you answer, you might consider:

- the different responses of the mother and the father
- the response of the 'lost child'
- the ways in which the poet's words convey how much the 'lost child' has changed.

The Lost Child

In the midday heat
a speck appears on the lake.
The anxious mother runs down to the beach
to welcome her long-awaited child.

The boat takes shape.
As she stares her tears flow –
the child has come back from his journeying.
The moment he sets foot, mother embraces him.

Father sits at the centre of the house
as if he couldn't care less.
The child is crestfallen¹ at his mother's side –
but men know to restrain their feelings.

The child sits down, is told to talk,
a chicken is slaughtered, rice cooks.
The whole village is asking,
'Are you married, any children?'

The lost child has come back
but now he knows no-one.
How many harvests have been and gone?
What has happened?

The whole village is asking,
'Any children, how many?'
The lost child is silent –
He has questions of his own.

At dusk after the meal
his mother moves closer, she wants him to speak.
The child stares, the mother asks
if it is cold in Europe.

The child is silent, remembering forgotten things –
the cold of Europe, the seasons of its cities.
His mother is quiet, has ceased talking –
no resentment, only joy.

Night has come, mother is asleep,
father has been snoring some time.
The waves swish on the beach.
They know the child has not returned.

¹ *crestfallen*: sad, downhearted

OR

- 2 Read carefully the following extract from a novel set in 1913. The extract describes the arrival of Dr Condor at the house of Mr Kekesfalva.

Explore how the writing vividly conveys the narrator's first impressions of Dr Condor.

To help you answer, you might consider:

- the description of Dr Condor's appearance
- the portrayal of Dr Condor's actions and speech
- the ways in which the writing presents the narrator's reactions.

At last Kekesfalva and Dr Condor came in. They were in the middle of animated conversation, and I had to exert great self-control not to show a certain consternation¹, for my first impression of this Dr Condor was a great disappointment. Whenever we meet someone after hearing many interesting things about him, the imagination goes to work conjuring up a visual image in advance. In imagining a brilliant doctor such as Kekesfalva had described, I had resorted to the usual physical features that an average theatrical director and make-up artiste would use to present such a physician on stage: an intellectual face, a sharp and penetrating eye, elegant bearing, sparkling and witty conversation. I felt a painful jolt of surprise, then, when I found myself unexpectedly bowing to a stocky, rather stout gentleman, short-sighted and with a bald patch, wearing a crumpled grey suit dusted with cigarette ash and with his tie carelessly arranged. Instead of the keen diagnostic gaze I had expected, a casual and rather sleepy glance was turned on me from behind cheap, steel-rimmed pince-nez². Even before Kekesfalva had introduced me, Condor was offering me a small, moist hand, and then he turned straight to the table where all the equipment for smoking stood to light a cigarette. He stretched, almost lazily.

"Well, there we are. And I might as well confess at once, my dear friend, that I'm hungry as a hunter and would be glad if we could have something to eat soon."

As he spoke he went over to the table, sat down without waiting for the rest of us, tucked his napkin into his neck and began drinking soup—rather too noisily for my liking. He did not say another word to either Kekesfalva or me during this urgent operation. There seemed to be nothing on his mind but the food, and at the same time his short-sighted eyes were turned to the wine bottle.

"Excellent—a fine Szamorodni Tokay³, the 'ninety-seven vintage too! I remember that from last time. It's worth rattling out here on the train for your Tokay alone! No, Josef, don't pour it yet. I'll take a glass of beer first ... yes, thank you."

Emptying the glass of beer at a single draught, he began helping himself lavishly from the dish quickly served up, and then slowly munched with relish. As he seemed to be ignoring the rest of us, I had plenty of time to observe him from one side as he feasted. Disappointed, I saw that this man, so enthusiastically praised to me, had the most ordinary, fleshy face imaginable, like a full moon pitted with little dimples and craters, a potato-shaped nose, a double chin, ruddy cheeks with a dark five o'clock shadow and a short, thick neck. He sat there eating at his leisure, his waistcoat creased and half unbuttoned, and gradually the ponderous persistence of his munching came to irritate me—perhaps because I rather doubted whether a man who ate and drank so copiously, holding his wine up to the light before gulping it and smacking his lips, would be able to give me a precise answer to such a discreet question as I had to ask.

Condor sometimes interrupted his rapid chewing and munching with casual and, I may say, nonchalant questions, queries that called for no real answer. He appeared to overlook my presence entirely. I had heard a good deal before about

the typical offhand manner of medical men, but I began to feel a certain anger in the company of this coarse if well-meaning physician. In my annoyance, I said not a word.

However, he was not in the least disturbed by our presence, and when we finally moved into the salon, where black coffee was waiting ready for us, he sat down with a grunt of pleasure in, of all places, the best armchair, which was fitted with all kinds of special comforts like a swivelling bookcase and ashtrays, and had adjustable arms. Annoyance makes one sharp-sighted as well as bad-tempered, and I could not help noticing with a certain satisfaction, as he lolled there at his ease, that his legs were short, with socks flopping around his ankles, and his paunch was flabby. To demonstrate how disinclined I was to get to know him any better, I moved my chair so that my back was turned to him. However, he seemed entirely indifferent to my ostentatious⁴ silence and the nervous way old Kekesfalva kept pacing around the room and plying him with cigars, matches and cognac. Condor helped himself to no fewer than three expensive imported cigars from the box, placing two in reserve beside his coffee cup. Well as the deep chair fitted itself to his form, it still did not seem to be comfortable enough for him. He shifted and fidgeted about until he had found the best position in it. Only when he had drunk his second cup of coffee did he sigh with satisfaction, like an animal that has eaten its fill. Repellent, I told myself, repellent.

¹*consternation*: dismay

²*pince-nez*: spectacles

³*Szamorodni Tokay*: a type of wine

⁴*ostentatious*: very obvious, deliberately emphasised

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