

LIRA TOWN COLLEGE
S.6 HOLIDAY PACKAGE, APRIL 2010
LITERATURE IN ENGLISH
P3101 / 2 [PLAY]

Attempt all questions.

[T.S ELIOT: MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL]

1. What is Thomas Becket's message in his sermon on Christmas day, and how is it related to the rest of the play, Murder in the Cathedral?
2. Analyze the character of Thomas Becket as portrayed by T.S Elliot in his play, Murder in the Cathedral. Does Becket have any dramatic appeal for you? Why or why not?
3. What is the attitude of the chorus to Thomas Becket in Murder in the Cathedral? How effectively does T.S Eliot portray this attitude?
4. Read the extract below carefully and answer the questions following it.

PRIEST (Severally)

My Lord, you must not stop here. To the minister. Through the cloister. No time to waste. They are coming back, armed, to the altar, to the altar.

THOMAS

All my life they have been coming, these feet. All my life I have waited, Death will come only when I am worthy.

And if I am worthy, there is no danger.

I have therefore only to make perfect my will.

PRIEST

My Lord they are coming. They will break through presently

You will be killed. Come to the altar

Make haste, my Lord. Don't stop here talking. It is not right.

What shall become of us, my Lord, if you are killed; what shall become of?

THOMAS

Peace! Be quiet! Remember where you are, and what is happening;

No life here is sought for but mine,

And I am not in danger: only near to death.

PRIEST

My Lord, to vespers! You must not be absent from vespers.
You must not be absent from divine office. To vespers. In to the Cathedral!

THOMAS

Go to vespers; remember me at your prayers.
They shall find the shepherd here, the flock shall be spared.
I have heard a tremor of bliss, a wink of heaven, a whisper,
Proceed to a joyful consummation.

PRIESTS

Seize him! Force him!
Keep your hands off!

- (a) Briefly give the context of this passage.
- (b) Describe the priests' emotions and how they are portrayed in this passage.
- (c) Describe the likely reactions of the audience on seeing this scene. Give reasons to support your answer.

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