

S.6 LITRI P.1LIRA TOWN COLLEGE

S.6 PRE-MOCK EXAMS 2011

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

P310 / 1 (PROSE AND POETRY)

TIME: 3 HRS

Answer all the questions from the three sections.

SECTION I

1. Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow.

THE JOURNEY

He rang a bell and she was taken back to the others. She went to a corner and just sat facing the wall, unable to talk even cry. Karega and Njuguna asked her what the man had wanted. She simply shrugged her shoulders.

The door opened and Njuguna was called outside by one of the many hands about the message from the chief: Wanja was a former wife of the gentleman. She had run away to Ilmorog and now she was refusing the man's bed. Njuguna explained the situation as tactfully as he could, presenting them with the harsh prospects before them.

"No" Karega shouted as soon as he got the gist of the man's demands.

"Will a child die.....will Joseph die just because..... because..... Besides she is ... in a way the man's wife" insisted Njuguna.

"But she does not know the man! She has, we all have, met him tonight for the first time! Karega protested incredulously.

"Let her deny it," said Njuguna with a tone of triumphant finally. "Is it true? Wanja, is it true?" Karega asked, and waited for her to answer. But she sat in the same position as if she had not heard his question. What painted her was not so much the man's lies not so much Njuguna's attitude, not even Karega's question, but what Njuguna had said about Joseph dying. She would be responsible for a death of another who did not even belong to her. She looked back to the origin of the journey. May be she was to blame. If she had not suggested, indeed, insisted on their coming into this place, when others had opted for a continuation of the journey.....if she had not slipped in her youth.....

Ifif so many ifs and they all weighed heavily on her. What was she to do? Give in to a man she hated, and hardly six months since she had vowed to herself? If she didn'tand Joseph died.....and Nyakinyna and the othersin the cold.....hungry.....thirsty.....the draught in Ilmorog.....failed mission.....no rescue.....more death.....what shall I do? What shall I do? Face another humiliation? She wished she had told Karega the whole truth about her past.....then he might have helped her solve her dilemma.....she raised her head and looked Karega full in the eyes.

“Yes! Yes: She whispered and stood up, reaching for the door. For a second, Karega sat completely still, immobile and gazed at the same spot: What did one believe? What really could one believe now? He stirred himself. He stood up and saw herself walk towards her and hold her by the hand just as she was about to open the door. She felt one thrilling shivering in the flesh, and raised her eyes away, aside, waiting for judgment from him. Anything, anything but this dilemma which was also her shame.

“I do not know any”, he said, a little put out by the pregnant silence in the room, but....but....must you go? He ended rather pathetically.

She looked at him again, briefly, saw the dancing intensity in his eyes, and almost hated him for his youth and his innocence. She was in that second conscious of the moral gulf of knowledge and experience between them and she steeled herself against crying. A bit impatiently, irritably in fact, she disengaged her hand, opened the door and walked out; banging the door so hard behind her that it left a tremor in the room and inside her. He must die, a voice thudded within, he must die. It was simple. It was bitterly sweet. It restored her calm and peace. Behind, in the room, Karega, who suddenly diminished further into his corner, groaned once. He should die, he said as if answering a question somebody had asked. If I had a light I would burn up the whole place, he said. Njuguna started by the unexpected groan and more by the utterance, looked at him, saw him huddled together in a statuesque position, and then looked at the wall. Youth, youth, Njuguna muttered to himself. Now silence and ill-foreboding gloom surrounded them both.

Finally on Monday morning the delegation reached the city. They joked and laughed at their new anxieties and constant amazement at everything: the streets, the buildings so tall, the heavy traffic and even the various dresses worn by men and women in the city. Crossing the streets was their most major undertaking. Once or twice, as they ran full speed across the streets, two or three cars screeched to a sudden stop with the drivers swearing: who are these Masai? These borobo and their donkeys – carts should be banned from the city: But they were glad that after so much hardship they had arrived in the famous city. There is no night so long that it will not give way to the light of the day. The office of the Hon. Nderi Wa Riera, M.P for Ilmorog and Southern Ruwani, were situated in the second floor of Iglood buildings in the then market street within a walking distance of Canny Restaurant and Jeevanjee Gardens. The main delegation waited in the gardens while Karega and Munira went to the offices to see if their honourable member would receive the delegation.

The Secretary, a heavy lipsticked and wigged lady, whom they found curing her nails, looked the two men up and down and then froze their expectant hearts: the M.P was not in; he had gone to Mombasa and was expected back any day. She saw the sudden drop of their tones and the dullness in their eyes and for some reason she felt pity: would they try the afternoon of the following day? With despondent faces and hearts, Karega and Munira went back to the others: Where would they sleep tonight? Why? O why had they not thought of such a possibility? But what would they have done even if they had known it? Karega and Munira found the others in another crisis: Abdulla’s donkey and cart had been detained by the police for holding up the traffic and shitting in one of the streets and in Jeevanjee Gardens. But Abdulla explained the circumstances of their journey. The police said they would hold the donkey until the group was to leave.

Karega was not particularly religious: but even he felt a devil had been trailing them and their mission. They had endured lashes of hunger and thirst and cruelty of their fellow men. Now fortune had decided to strike at the already fallen. People looked up at him, the author of the journey, expecting him to solve the riddle. But what can I do? He asked himself bitterly, unable to tell them the most obvious truth: that they would have to stay and spend the night in the Jeevanjee Gardens.

Adapted from “Petals of Blood” by Ngugi Wa’thiongo.

Questions:

1. In brief, give the major problems the people talked about encountered on their journey.
2. What was the purpose of the journey?
3. Give the meanings of the following phrases as used in the passage:
 - (a) the many hands
 - (b) refusing the man’s bed
 - (c) got the gist of the man’s demand
 - (d) the author of the journey
4. “The Secretary looked the two men up and down”. What do you think this statement means?

SECTION II

Read the passage below and answer the three questions asked after it.

The full Nigerian moon in the clear blue sky poured down its light upon the village. The high-pitched brown thatched roofs showed up in their rural setting against the greener background of spreading cocoa and kola trees, and the tall straight pawpaw and palm trees. These faded into the dark grey horizon where heaven and earth met over the hill that overlooked the village. The moon shone full on the south and west walls of the houses and threw dark shadows on the other aspects. The long irregular cracks in the walls were no longer like structural defects, but looked like the irregular design of an artist to relieve the monotony of the brown surface. Fragments of chinaware and flasks of mica built into the walls reflected the rays of the moon and caught the eye with their glitter.

The branches and foliage of the big Odan tree in the village square cast a shadow of considerable area and irregular shade, relieved here and there by bright patches where the moon shone through gaps in the foliage.

A few hours before, the brown laterite earth had been thoroughly baked by the merciless rays of the tropical sun. Now dew was falling. The ground breathed coolness and happiness. At irregular intervals, momentary darkness descended upon the village as the moon disappeared behind the scattered bluish-grey drifts of cloud.

The first signs of assault on the peaceful serenity of the night began on Grandma Gbemi’s veranda. It started with a group of four urchins who, starting from the other side of the

village square, made a rapid dash past the big Odan tree, and scampered up the veranda, panting. Presently others joined them. They came in little groups of twos and threes. Those coming from the other side of the square always ran past the Odan tree. Its spirit was known to be no lover of children.

In a short while the veranda and its surroundings were seething with youthful activity. Boys and girls of varying ages and sizes ran and skipped, laughed and cried at one and the same time. The veranda was the base, with the field of operation extending as far into the moonlit side of the house as the boldness of the child would allow. A few paces beyond in the shadows evil spirits and ghosts and witches were known to be lurking in the dark.

This describes a typical Nigerian village scene when children come to play on bright moonlit nights.

Questions:

1. Why was it more pleasant to come out in the night than by day?
2. What change did the coming of the night and moonlight make to the house walls?
3. In your own words, why did the children keep away from:
 - (a) shadows
 - (b) one particular shadow?

SECTION III

Read the poem below twice and answer the questions that follow:

POPULAR LOVE SONG

Do not love, my cousin
Like your shadow
For at night fall shadows vanish
And I must keep watch for you
Until the cocks crow;
Nor like papper
That warms the belly
For what should I use
To take off hunger?
Nor like your pillow

Together through the hours of sleep
In the day time hardly meeting;
Nor like rice
No sooner eaten than forgotten;
Nor like sweet words

That vanish into air; nor like honey
Sweet but common place.
Love me like a good dream,
Your life at night-time
My hope in daytime;
Like a piece of silver,
On land and long voyage
A faithful companion;
Or like the gourd,
Whole, it fetches water,
Broken, the pieces make bridged for valihas.
(Flavien Ramairo; Malagasy Republic)

Footnote: Cousin: a traditional term of love in Malagasy

Valiha: a string musical instrument often used to accompany
Malagasy folk songs, which are usually about love.

Questions:

1. Lines 1 – 8 attempts to define the kind of love the poet does not want. What are the reasons which the poet gives for rejecting each of these?
2. From line 19 to the end, the poet illustrates what kind of love he wants. What kind of love is that?
3. What are the comparisons the poet makes in the poem? How appropriate do you think they are?

-END-