

**JADAVPUR UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
MASTER OF ARTS
ADMISSION TEST 2022**

Time: Two Hours

Full Marks: 100

I. Read the poems given below and answer all the following questions. (30 marks)

POEM 1

And the just man trailed God's shining agent,
over a black mountain, in his giant track,
while a restless voice kept harrying his woman:
"It's not too late, you can still look back

at the red towers of your native Sodom,
the square where once you sang, the spinning-shed,
at the empty windows set in the tall house
where sons and daughters blessed your marriage-bed."

A single glance: a sudden dart of pain
stitching her eyes before she made a sound . . .
Her body flaked into transparent salt,
and her swift legs rooted to the ground.

Who will grieve for this woman? Does she not seem
too insignificant for our concern?
Yet in my heart I never will deny her,
who suffered death because she chose to turn.

POEM 2

Here only flame upon flame
and black among the red sparks,
streaks of black and light
grown colourless;

why did you turn back,
that hell should be reinhabited
of myself thus
swept into nothingness?

why did you glance back?
why did you hesitate for that moment?
why did you bend your face

caught with the flame of the upper earth,
above my face?

what was it that crossed my face
with the light from yours
and your glance?
what was it you saw in my face?
the light of your own face,
the fire of your own presence?

What had my face to offer
but reflex of the earth,
hyacinth colour
caught from the raw fissure in the rock
where the light struck,
and the colour of azure crocuses
and the bright surface of gold crocuses
and of the wind-flower,
swift in its veins as lightning
and as white.

- a) What do you think are the themes of the poems? Analyse. (10)
- b) Critically comment on the difference in perspective and mode of representation adopted by the poets in the two poems. (10)
- c) Both poems refer to an act of looking back. What do you think is the significance of looking back in these two poems? (10)

2) Read the passage below and answer **all** the questions that follow. (30 marks)

'Have you seen those new AI artworks?' exclaimed Rishabh, bursting into the canteen. 'I tell you, the author is dead! Machines can make better art than humans now!'

'You think so?' Sangecta put her tea down and turned to look at him. 'Actually, Rishabh, those programmes don't make art, they just have a very big library of art elements made by humans, all with keywords attached, and when you put in your search keywords, the programme is very good at mixing and matching the elements and creating the output. It's not like the machine starts with a blank canvas.'

'Alright, if the author isn't dead, then certainly that's a nail in their coffin. I bet they'll invent a machine that can read books very soon.' Rishabh sat down on the bench. 'Just like making coffee!'

'And then we won't have jobs,' said Ardeshir gloomily. 'I tell you, by the time we finish our education, there'll be machines to teach literature as well. That's how late capitalism operates. Marx was wrong: it's not the state that's going to wither away, it's humanity itself.'

'It depends on how you define teaching,' said Sangecta. 'If it's just cramming facts into students to make them pass exams, well, I'm pretty sure machines could do that better than I

could. But I doubt if the students actually learn anything under that system. I mean, we've all been through high school, right?

All three of them groan.

'I blame the literary critics,' said Rishabh. 'If they hadn't made such a fuss about the ineffable mysteries of literature, those coders would never have bothered to investigate. What scientist can resist a good mystery?'

Sangeeta laughed. 'Well, according to Jorge Luis Borges, the first thinkers to imagine mechanical replacements for human creativity were Aristotle and Cicero. So it's not a new idea.'

'Sort of like a monkey bashing away at a typewriter and writing a masterpiece by accident?' said Ardeshir sarcastically. 'Provided the monkey keeps it up for centuries, I suppose.'

'More or less,' said Sangeeta. 'I suppose the real trick will be to read through and discard all the rubbish drafts that will dilute the results.'

'And who will do that?' muttered Ardeshir. 'More monkeys?'

'No,' said Sangeeta mischievously. 'Literature graduates.'

'See, Rishabh?' said Ardeshir, smiling at last. 'You'll never be out of a job.'

- a) Which of these speakers do you identify with the most? Explain why. (10)
 - b) Summarise *in your own words* what you think the main point of this passage is. (10)
 - c) What is your idea of human creativity? Give reasons for your answer. (10)
- 3) Write an essay on *any one* of the following topics: (40 marks)
- a) "Novels arise out of the shortcomings of history."
 - b) "There is a pleasure sure in being mad which none but madmen know."
 - c) "Words are such uncertain things, they so often sound well but mean the opposite of what one thinks they do."
 - d) The future of teaching.
 - e) Three new trends in literature that you think will grow stronger in this century.
 - f) Ideas are bulletproof.