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[This question paper contains 16 printed pages.]

Your Roll No.....

Sr. No. of Question Paper : 327

C

Unique Paper Code : 52031901

Name of the Paper : English Language Through
Literature

Name of the Course : **B.Com. Prog.**

Semester : III

Duration : 3 Hours

Maximum Marks : 75

Instructions for Candidates

1. Write your Roll No. on the top immediately on receipt of this question paper.
2. This paper contains 3 unseen passages and questions based on them.
3. The questions are in **two** parts, **A** and **B**, **both** of which are compulsory. Students will attempt any **THREE** of the questions from each part.
4. Answers for **Part A** are to be written in **250-300** words and for **Part B** in **350-500** words.

P.T.O.

Passage 1 (750 words)

Even our college principal, Professor Khanapure, went out of his way to inquire about my welfare and if any boys were troubling me.

However, I can't say the same about my classmates.

One day, they brought a small bunch of flowers and stuck it in my plaited hair without my knowledge when the teacher was not around. I heard someone shout from the back—'Ms Flowerpot!' I quietly ran my fingers through my hair, found the flowers and threw them away. I did not say anything.

At times, they would throw paper air planes at my back. Unfolding the papers, I would find comments such as, 'A woman's place is in the kitchen or in medical science or as a professor, definitely not in an engineering college'...I was a target of Kannada limericks...All the boys would then sneak a glance at me to see my reaction, but I would simply hold back my tears and try my hardest to smile...

... I knew that my classmates were acting out for a reason. It was not that they wanted to bully or harass

me with deliberate intention as is the norm these days. It was just that they were unprepared—both mentally and physically—to deal with a person of the opposite sex studying with them. Our conservative society discouraged the mingling of boys and girls even as friends, and so, I was as interesting as an alien to them. My mind justified the reason for the boys' behaviour and helped me cope. And yet, the remarks, the pranks and the sarcasm continued to hurt.

My only outlet in college was my actual education. I enjoyed the engineering subjects and did very well in my exams. I found that I performed better than the boys, even in hard-core engineering subjects such as smithy, filing, carpentry and welding. The boys wore blue overalls and I wore a blue apron over my sari. I knew that I looked quite funny, but it was a small price to pay for the education I was getting.

When the exam results were announced, everyone else knew my marks before I did. Almost every semester, my classmates and seniors would make a singular effort to find out my marks and display them on the notice board for everyone to see. I had absolutely no privacy.

P.T.O.

Over the course of my studies, I realised that the belief 'engineering is a man's domain' is a complete myth. Not only was I just as capable as them, I also scored higher than all my classmates. This gave me additional confidence and I continued to not miss a single day or a single class. I persisted in studying hard, determined to top the subsequent examinations. In time, I became unfazed that my marks were displayed on the notice board. On the contrary, I was proud that I was beating all the boys at their own game as I kept bagging the first rank in the university.

My ability to be self-sufficient made me strong and the boys eventually started to respect me, became dependent on me for surveys and drawings and asked me for the answers of the assignments. I began to make friends...

...Between my classes, I also spent much time in the library and the librarian became very fond of me over time, eventually giving me extra books. I also spoke frequently to the gardener about the trees that should be planted in front of the college, and during my four years there, I had him plant coconut trees. Whenever I go to B.V.B. now, I look at the coconut trees and

fondly remember my golden days on the campus.

The four years passed quickly and the day came when I finally had to leave. I felt sad. I had come as a scared teenager and was leaving as a confident and bright young engineer! College had taught me the resilience to face any situation, the flexibility to adjust as needed, the importance of building good and healthy relationships with others, sharing notes with classmates and collaborating with others instead of staying by myself. Thus, when I speak of friends, I don't usually think of women but rather of men because I really grew up with them. When I later entered the corporate world, it was again dominated by men. It was only natural for my colleague or friend to be a man and only sometimes would there be women, whom I have got to know over many years.

Passage 2

Going out to the garden

this morning

to plant seeds

for my winter greens

P.T.O.

-the strong, fiery mustard
& the milder
broadleaf tumip-
I saw a gecko
who
like the rest of us
has been
reeling
from the heat.

Geckos like heat
I know this
but the heat
these last few days
has been excessive
for us
& for them.

A spray of water
from the hose

touched its skin:

I thought it would

run away.

There are crevices

aplenty

to hide in:

the garden wall

is made of stones.

But no

not only

did the gecko

not run away

it appeared

to raise

its eyes

& head

looking for more.

I gave it.
Squirt after
squirt
of cooling
spray
from the green
garden hose.

Is it the end
of the world?

It seemed to ask.

This bliss,
is it Paradise?

I bathed it
until we were both
washed clean
of the troubles
of this world
at least for this moment:

this moment of pleasure
of gecko
joy
as I with so much happiness
played Goddess
to Gecko.

Passage 3 (740 words)

After a dinner of dried apples and wheat cakes slightly burnt at the edges, and the last of the goat cheese, I climb the stairs of the farmhouse and find myself in the bedroom with the white hand-stitched quilt and lace-trimmed pillows. Whoever once slept in this room collected pine cones along the windowsill and hung a piece of cloth above the bed with tiny flowers printed into the fabric—now faded to pale, watery colors by the sun.

Pa appears in the doorway, his left hand clutching his pipe while his right reaches into his coat pocket for the pouch of tobacco. "If anything happens," he says, eyes clicking to the window, "run past the orchard

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into the woods, and keep going. If those men come back, you need to get away from here. Don't wait for me."

I touch the window' frame lined with dust. The clouds have moved away to the south, revealing a wet, clear sky, and I imagine climbing down the roof, dropping to the porch, then sprinting out into the trees—the breath burning my lungs. Maybe I could make it into the dark unseen. Or maybe those men would catch me and drag me back to the farmhouse.

"If they had seen your mark, if they knew who you were—" Pa shakes his head, eyes lifting to me, and I wonder if he's been thinking about this since we left the miners' cabin. Maybe this is why he took the rifle from me when I was so close to pulling the trigger. It wasn't just about avoiding a gunfight; he was worried what would happen if they saw the tattoo on my neck. He didn't care about Odie, about his supply in the cabin—he only cared about me, making sure they didn't discover who I am. "They would have taken you, Vega. And I'm not sure I'd be able to find you."

His words make me feel instantly cold, an echo across my flesh. My name, my past, the marks on my skin... put me in danger. Put everyone near me in danger.

But I wonder if maybe death isn't the worst thing out here. It's being *taken*. Hauled away like Odie and never seen again.

"Okay." I nod at him. but I also know: If those men come riding up the road in the night, guns drawn from their hips, I won't leave Pa behind. I'll stay and fight. It's a feeling inside me I can't explain. A stubbornness maybe—the same part of me that refused to lower the rifle, to accept that they would take Odie and there was nothing we could do.

Because there is a cold desperation in the eyes of every person I've met since leaving the valley, a wild kind of fear hardened into their bones, a thirst that is deeper than the need for water. But a need to survive.

A feeling I didn't know existed, until now.

And if I want to survive in this world, I can't always hide. Tucked away in the valley. Sometimes... I will need to fight.

P.T.O.

Pa glances down the hall, listening, like he hears something. But it's only the house settling, the last of the rain shedding from the roof. "Get some sleep," he says at last. "We'll leave just after sun-up. Fort Bell is still a day-and-a-half walk from here, and we don't want to miss the market, sell what tonic we have left."

I nod. *Another day and a half lost.* Another day and a half ticking closer to the end. He slips away down the hall, and I hear the *thwap* of the front door as he walks out onto the porch.

I slide open the bedroom window and let in the night breeze, listening to Pa puff on his pipe from the front porch. I doubt he'll sleep tonight; instead he'll watch the road, listening for any distant sounds of horses coming up the drive. But right now, only the evening birds chitter from the trees, and the wind sings down the halls of the old house. I like it here, with its sweet-smelling orchard and tall, protective trees and hidden driveway.

But we can't stay.

I watch the horizon, the swirling, spinning universe coming awake above me, feeling a calm in my chest, the night sky familiar to me in a way that no place down here could ever feel.

QUESTIONS

PART A

Answer **any 3** of the following : (3×10=30)

Question 1 is based on Passage 1;

Questions 2 and 3 are based on Passage 2;

Questions 4 and 5 are based on Passage 3;

1. Why do her classmates show hostility towards the speaker in Passage 1? Does she reciprocate their scorn/abhorrence? Why or why not? Give reasons. (10)
2. The poet in Passage 2 seems to be a seasoned gardener, familiar with and attentive towards the plants and creatures that inhabit her garden. Do you agree with this statement? Give illustrations from the poem to support your answer. (10)

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3. Why does bathing the gecko make the poet in Passage 2 feel happy? What does "being a Goddess to gecko" mean in the last stanza of Passage 2? (10)
4. Is the speaker in Passage 3 in a state of panic or is she trying to face the situation she is in with some courage and bravery? Do you think she is afraid because of the danger she is in? Why or why not? (10)
5. What do you make of the speaker's father from the description given in Passage 3? What kind of a person is he? What do you think his relationship with the speaker is like? (10)

PART B

Answer any 3 of the following : (3×15=45)

Questions 6 & 7 are based on Passage 1;

Question 8 is based on Passage 2;

Questions 9 and 10 are based on Passage 3;

6. Imagine you are the speaker of Passage 1. Drawing on your experiences from the past, write a letter to your daughter teaching her about the importance of persistence. (15)

7. Imagine you are the speaker of Passage 1. Write a diary entry venting out your emotions about your mistreatment by your classmates and your decided course of action under these circumstances. (15)
8. Unlike the poet in Passage 2, who is not scared to find a lizard in her garden, many people are revolted at the sight of such creatures. Imagine that the poet were to tell a friend who is intensely afraid of creepy-crawlies about her encounter with the gecko. Draft a conversation between the poet and her friend exploring what this encounter meant to the poet. How would the listener react? Would they judge the incident differently? (15)
9. Assume a scenario where the speaker of Passage 3 listens to her/his father and tries to get some sleep but wakes up in the middle of the night because of a bad dream. Imagine what the dream sequence might be like. Write a first person narrative from the perspective of the speaker describing the dream. (15)

P.T.O.

10. Assume a scenario where the attackers are able to trace the speaker and her/his father in their hideout in Passage 3. How do you think the speaker will react to the attack? Will he/she listen to her father and run away or stay behind and fight? Write a dramatic extract in continuation of the passage exploring these possibilities. Keep your writing consistent with the plot points revealed in Passage 3. (15)

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