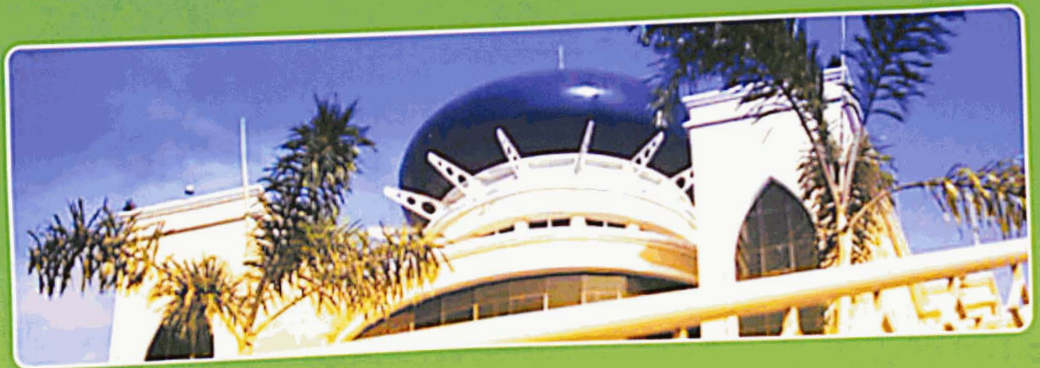


**2014**

**ECL3143**

# **Introduction to Literature**

**Program Pensiswazahan Guru**



**NORHAILI MASSARI  
HARISON MOHD SIDEK**

**Program Pensiswazahan Guru**





# **INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE ECL3143**

**Program Pensiswazahan Guru**





# INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE

## ECL3143

### Program Pensiswazahan Guru

NORHAILI MASSARI  
HARISON MOHD SIDEK

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[mila@19@yahoo.com](mailto:mila@19@yahoo.com)

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# PROGRAM PENSISWAZAHAN GURU ECL3143

## Introduction to Literature

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Pengarah Projek : Dr. Noor Azizi Ismail  
Dekan Fakulti Pengajian Bahasa Utama

Timbalan Pengarah projek : Dr. Harison Mohd Sidek  
Timbalan Dekan (Akademik & Penyelidikan)

Penyelaras Projek : Dr. Noorhayati Hashim  
Ketua Program Pendidikan

Penulis Modul : Norhaili Massari  
Dr. Harison Mohd Sidek

Editor : Dr. Myra Aidrin Mohd Ali



# GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE COURSE

## INTRODUCTION

The course guideline is provided in order to assist students in understanding the content and the requirements of the course. Students are advised to read and refer carefully to the course guidelines to enable them to complete the course successfully.

The ECL3143 Introduction to Literature course was developed with the aim to equip English language teachers with the knowledge of basic literary concepts and to develop their ability to critically interpret literatures written in English. The course includes a variety of important and relevant texts and writers representative of the main periods and genres. It will guide the English language teachers in understanding the meanings associated with literature and introduces the main genres of literature as a body of knowledge and study. The course is also designed to provide exposure to English language teachers in engaging with critical analysis and practise writing it. This course would assist the English language teachers in enriching their knowledge about literatures written in English, and later benefit them with the necessary background knowledge, understanding and experience to teach literature as part of the curriculum or utilising literature as a small "L" into the language classroom.

## TARGET GROUP

This course is offered to all students in the Teaching of English as a Second Language (TESL) undergraduate program for primary schools in Malaysia.

## ALLOCATION OF STUDENT LEARNING TIME

According to the MQA standard, each credit hour requires 40 hours of learning time on the students' part. Hence, for this course students are required to spend 120 hours of learning time. The estimate learning time for ECL 3143 course is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Estimation of Student Learning Time for ECL 3143 Course**

No.	Learning Activities	Learning Hours	
		Face to Face	Independent Learning
1.	Tutorial	10	
2.	Online Tutorial	-	40
3.	Module reading and assignment completion	-	40
4.	Teaching & Learning Video via G.O.A.L.S	-	30
Total Learning Time		120	

## **CURRICULUM SPECIFICATIONS OF ECL 3143 (INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE) LEARNING OUTCOMES OF THE COURSE:**

At the end of the course, students should be able to:

1. Interpret literary works in relation to its period. (C4)
2. Master literary elements in prose and poetry. (P2)
3. Formulate critical response to issues in literary texts. (A4)
4. Think critically and creatively during class activities and discussions. (CT3)

## **COURSE SYNOPSIS**

This course equips students with the knowledge and understanding about literature and also guides students with the underlying principles and practise in undertaking critical analysis in relation to the teaching of English as a second language. By exposing students to a variety of texts and writers representative of the main periods and genres in English it seeks to equip students with the knowledge of basic literary concepts and to develop their ability to critically interpret literatures in English.

## **COURSE CONTENT**

This course comprises 9 units. The overall content of the course is as follows:

- Unit 1 : What is Literature?
- Unit 2 : Introduction to Genres of Literature: Prose
- Unit 3 : Introduction to Genres of Literature: Characteristics, Techniques & Language of Fiction
- Unit 4 : Introduction to Genres of Literature: Stories and Meanings in Fiction
- Unit 5 : Introduction to Genres of Literature: Poetry (Characteristics & Types)
- Unit 6 : Introduction to Genres of Literature: Elements of Poetry
- Unit 7 : Introduction to Genres of Literature: The Nature of Drama & its Elements
- Unit 8 : Introduction to Genres of Literature: Tragedy & Comedy in Drama
- Unit 9 : Introduction to Genres of Literature: The Novel & *Scorpion Orchid*

# UNIT 1 ➤ What is Literature?



At the end of the unit, students should be able to:

1. Define literature and evaluate the varied definitions of literature.
2. Understand the forms of literature.

## 1.1

## INTRODUCTION

Literature, in its most general sense, consists of a vast repertoire of human expressions carried out through the medium of language, both in oral or written forms. It is a study that concerns people; the life and activities connected to it. In essence, literature concerns all; including you and me.

One of the things that literature does is to make us see—hear, feel, love— what the author thinks is a valuable part of the experience of living (Barnett et.al, 1994). A thousand years ago, a Japanese writer, Lady Murasaki, made this point when she had one of the characters in her book talk about what motivates an author:

Again and again something in one's life or in that around one will seem so important that one cannot bear to let it pass into oblivion. There must never come a time, the writer feels, when people do not know about this

(ibid)

In this light, we could probably agree with Lady Murasaki, that writers of literature try to capture, impart and share the important moments or events in their experiences, thoughts, emotions or visions, and try to make the readers feel the significance. Through their literary works, these writers try to show what love is like, what grief is, or what bliss is for each facet of life in their own unique existence or in the worlds that they are envisioning.

## 1.2

## DEFINITION

In its most general term, literature can refer to anything written (Barnett et.al, 1994); from stories written as short stories or novels, to the product description on the labels of canned food. However, literature as a subject matter, that is itself a discipline, holds a more specific definition. It is an art form whose medium is language, oral and written and, is different from the ordinary spoken and written language in three distinct ways;

1. It is concentrated and meaningful (even if it denies meaning)
2. Its purpose is not simply to explain, argue or make a point but rather to give a sense of pleasure in the discovery of a new experience
3. It demands intense concentration from readers

(Henderson et. al, 1994)

In its creative forms and ways, literature is expected to hold their audience's interest and to provide them pleasure as it takes them through the "literary journeys".

Other writers define literature as the following:

Moody (1987) "Literature springs from our inborn love of telling a story, of arranging words in pleasing patterns, of expressing in words some special aspects of our human experience".

Boulton (1980) provides a functional dimension of literature as "the imaginative work that gives us R's: recreation, recognition, revelation and redemption"

Rees (1973) "Literature is a permanent expression in words of some thoughts or feelings in ideas about life and the world".

Thus, literature can be summed up as human expressions in words (spoken/written) that are specially arranged in powerful, effective and captivating manner and forms; to convey thoughts, feelings, ideas and/or life experiences in creative and imaginative ways.



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## APPENDICES

1. Unit 3 (Cover page: *Melor In Perspective* by Che Husna Azhari) 1 page

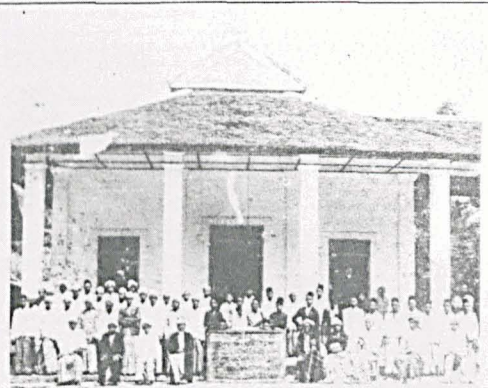


Dr. Che Husna Azhari lectures in the Department of Mechanical and Materials Engineering, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. She started her creative writing career by the publication of a collection of short stories entitled *Kelantan Tales: An Anthology of Short Stories*, in February 1992. She has since written a novella *The Rambutan Orchard* and this current edition of *Melor in Perspective*. Her fourth book, one in her academic field of specialisation, entitled *Heterogeneous Catalysis: Principles and Application* is in the pipeline. ■

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# MELOR IN PERSPECTIVE

Che Husna Azhari

FURADA PUBLISHING HOUSE

**I: MARIAH**

I T was seven in the morning on a typical day in the small village town of Molio. The main trunk road from Pasir Puteh to Kota Bharu was already choked with the bicycle traffic from school children wending their way to the three main schools in the village. Long past *subuh* time, the mosque was empty. The hub of activity was now the market square where men congregated to have breakfast. Breakfast could be the various *nasi, roti canai* or the myriad Kelantan breakfast *tempung*.

That particular morning, though, most of the men were not eating their breakfasts but instead their gaze was fixed on the main entrance to the square. Seven a.m. was a bit late for breakfast; already the first slant of sunlight was filtering through the eaves of the blinds in the market. The men were getting restless. They were definitely waiting for something to appear. Very soon after, however, there was much excitement. All eyes were transfixed on a figure coming through the entrance. It was the figure of a woman. She was delicately balancing two huge *basins* on her head. Her hips swaying gently to and fro with the rhythm of the balancing. That particular gyrating seemed to mesmerize the men and give them to their places.

There was much to mesmerize as far as Mariah was concerned, for that was the name of the lady with the two *basins* on her head. Mariah was a *nasi* seller in Molio, in fact the *nasi* seller in Molio. Every morning at seven sharp she would walk past the market entrance into the village square and mesmerize the men with her swaying hips as well as her *nasi: nasi kerabu, nasi belauk* and *nasi dagang*. Rumour had it (started by the women folk) that her *nasi* weren't swaying as well as her easy smile that made all Mariah's swaying to the village square. Many a *nasi belauk* the men flock to the village square. Many a *nasi belauk* breakfast remained cold and uneaten in the houses as men ignored their wives' cooking and paid tribute to Mariah's instead.

Mariah also had another asset. She was without a husband. Note that I didn't say either divorced or widowed. It would not have mattered either way in Kelantan. The most important thing was she was not with a husband. This was not to imply that she was not decorous in her manners ... on the contrary, she was very much so ... but men seem to want to partake of her *nasi* more because of her unmarried state.

Mariah had been married once, but her husband had passed away soon after. There had been many suitors after her husband's untimely demise, but Mariah had seemed singularly uninterested. Rumour too (also spread by the menfolk) had it that it was our Mariah who never dove her husband to an early grave. This rumour was never corroborated by medical evidence, so we will never be able to confirm this allegation. Fifteen years after her husband's death, which would make her fortyish, Mariah could easily pass for a beauty in her late twenties. Mariah was tall and well-proportioned and moved gracefully. No, not gracefully, but sensuously. Her face was unlined, her complexion fair and her very dark, very black eyes appeared to glow. Mariah always had on a short *kebaya* which accentuated her well-proportioned curves. As a concession to propriety she used to cover her head and part of her torso with a *kain lapas*, a two-meter traditional head and body cover much favoured by the working womenfolk of Kelantan. The Kota Bharu Nannies or the more modern women prefer either a silver of a scarf or go bare-headed, but in Molio one does not go about without a *kain lapas*. To do so would be to incur the wrath of the village Imam, who was the guardian of modesty and propriety and enforcer of stringent mores.

On that particular morning, the Imam was with the men, falling on Mariah's *nasi belauk* with much relish. His wife's own *nasi belauk* was still waiting for him on his kitchen table under the *tumpang* seat, getting very cold indeed. The Imam's wife was pottering about in her spiced kitchen, muttering about the Imam's lazelessness for breakfast. It wasn't like the Imam at all to be late for breakfast. The Imam liked his *nasi belauk*, and his wife took great care in its preparation. Her culinary skills were not her only attribute;

MELOR IN PERSPECTIVE

"Who do you mean, Cik Gu Nab?" Cik Yam asked, "or ... this troublemaker?", wondering what this meddling Cik Gu Nab was leading up to. Cik Gu Nab was known to favour a touch of melodrama and to use it to maximum effect always.

"Why, Cik Yam, we mean Mariah, of course, the *nasi* seller! Don't tell me you don't know what she's been up to!" Cik Gu Nab looked peered at Cik Yam's ignorance of important village matters.

What can Mariah possibly be up to, thought Cik Yam. Mariah was apt to go around in her short and loud *kebaya*. If she hadn't been so, the Imam would have reminded Cik Yam to pay her a visit. So it couldn't have been the *kain lapas*. "No, I don't know, Cik Gu Nab. What has she been up to?" Cik Yam smiled sweetly. Cik Yam knew about most village matters, but not quite enough, it would seem. She was always too busy with housework to gossip. Besides, it was not considered proper for the Imam's wife to be caught gossiping.

"Cik Yam," continued Cik Gu Nab, "Mariah has been enticing our men to abandon their homes for her *kedai* *merpati*. You know her *nasi* cannot be that special. Why, I am sure for one she cannot beat your *nasi* men seem hell. Yam readily agreed. "But why do all these men seem hell bent on eating breakfast at her place? I reckon, I mean we reckon she has put 'something' (Cik Gu Nab put heavy emphasis on the word something) in her *nasi*." Cik Gu Nab paused for breath.

"I can't believe that, Cik Gu Nab! God forbid!" Cik Yam considered her next words carefully. "We cannot accuse Mariah of something so grave without any concrete evidence. That's terribly unfair, you know, Cik Gu Nab. Perhaps that 'something' you alleged she put in the *nasi* is just plain skill, Allah knows."

Cik Gu Nab started. She felt she was being reproached. She did not like this allusion to her cooking skills either. Certainly, it was not her forte, still Cik Yam need not have referred to it in such a manner. Cik Yam was being very malicious, she thought.

her housekeeping was also a model to be followed by other womenfolk in the village. One could always call at the Imam's house at any time of the day, guaranteed to be greeted by a well-turned-out wife, hot *tempung* and fragrant surroundings. The Imam's wife was somewhat assisted in this respect by not having grubby children who would mess things up. It was the only flaw in an otherwise perfect marriage.

Quarrelsome couples who called at the Imam's place for arbitration would be sobered by the domestic serenity of the Imam's abode. They would all gaze enviously at the attentively to the Imam's sermon and exhortations to peace, but hands and bade the visitor in. They were unexpected but was a teacher at a local primary school. Cik Yam wiped her own *tempung*. In fact we are very happy if each one of us goes about doing her own thing. As we often say, each woman to their own *tempung*. In fact, we feel very bad about having to come to you. We don't like to backbite our own sister."

Cik Gu Nab cleared her throat and looked at the others for assent. Having got it in the form of gravelly nodding heads, Cik Gu Nab continued. "Cik Yam, the problem now is that one of our own sisters is not doing her own thing at all, but instead meddling with other people's."

The Imam's wife Cik Yam listened attentively.

MARIAH

## MARIAH

"I didn't say 'it' enticed all the men, Cik Yam. My Cik Gu Leh (Cik Gu Nab's husband), for instance, would never dream of having breakfast anywhere but at home. Some men do get easily enticed, some don't. Speaking of which, I saw the *sainted* Tok Imam himself having breakfast at Mariah's." Having delivered this stinging repartee, Cik Gu Nab stood and left in a huff. In a pointed rebuff, she did not even say a proper farewell.

Cik Yam went a deep shade of crimson. Cik Gu Nab's last retort was as good as a slap on the face. Cik Yam, incidentally, was a seasoned politician. The words stung her, surely, but she did not flinch. She was unnerved, but she quickly regained enough composure to smile at the rest of the delegates, served them her beautiful *tepung* and indulged in the social niceties required. Replete with Cik Yam's *tepung* and fortified with the latest gossip, the ladies then left. Only then did Cik Yam sit down to think of a way to settle the issue with the Imam. He was not going to escape unscathed, that she was going to make sure of!

The Imam went about his usual business and came home at 12:30 to have his lunch. Cik Yam was there to greet him; she took off his *kuffiyah* and gave him a clean *sarong* to change into. The Imam looked at his wife with obvious pride. There was not a living man in Molo who did not envy him for having such a devoted wife. But then, quick as lightning, as always he would look around at his empty house and let out a sigh. Why couldn't his wife bear children like other women? Some women, it seemed, have the fecundity of rabbits, but not his wife. Like all men of his generation, it never occurred to him he could be the culprit in his wife's supposed inability to bear children. As far as he was concerned, bearing children was a woman's job, and if she didn't there was something wrong with her. Fertility had nothing to do with men.

"Is lunch ready, Yam?" asked the Imam.

"Why, yes, *Abang*, it's under the *tudung saji*," replied Cik Yam. The Imam picked up the *tudung saji* for his lunch, but much to his surprise it turned out to be the morning's *nasi belauk*. He was stunned into silence for a good few minutes. Cik Yam took the opportunity to confront him.

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## MELOR IN PERSPECTIVE

"I thought you would still like to finish off my *nasi belauk* after you breakfasted at Mariah's. After all, I have to prove that my *nasi belauk* is still edible compared to Mariah's, especially since the whole village saw you eating away, behaving as if your wife has never prepared *nasi belauk* for you! And *Abang*, I had to learn of it through someone else too!"

Cik Yam threw the *tudung saji* on the floor, narrowly missing the Imam's foot, then ran sobbing to their bedroom. What the hell is happening, thought the Imam. How did she know I had breakfast at Mariah's. It must have been one of the womenfolk.

"Oh ... women! They are so impossible; why do they have to go around making life difficult for men? Beats the hell out of me," muttered the Imam in vexation.

It was the only time he had ever gone to Mariah's. And he had done so only at that Cik Gu Leh's insistence. Cik Gu Leh had been extolling the virtues of Mariah's *nasi belauk*, but really Cik Gu Leh is no authority on the subject as his wife Cik Gu Nab, as everybody knew, was a hopeless cook. The Imam begged to be excused, but Cik Gu Leh was most persistent. So finally, the Imam relented. The *nasi belauk* was, as he had expected, passable, but no more. It did not surprise him in the least. The thing that did surprise him was Mariah herself. At the thought of Mariah the Imam smiled dreamily to himself. What a woman she is! The Imam became transported to another time, his youth....

When the Imam was a young man of fifteen his father had voiced his wish for his son to be sent to Pattani in Southern Thailand to learn under the tutelage of a well-known Sheikh. His father had spent a few years there himself but had not progressed very much. He had always nursed a secret ambition for his son to be the scholar he could not be and in doing so exculpate himself. The Imam had protested, full of other plans. He had no stamina for the arduous task of being a scholar. He feigned indelicate health, but his father had decreed. The Imam, under protest and under duress, was sent to Pattani. The Imam was miserable in Pattani, moping for his mother and his friends

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## MARIAH

rather than studying. But Allah is great and the Imam's misery was soon alleviated.

One day when he had been in Pattani about three months, the Imam took his water pot to go to the communal well for his ablutions. It was around two or three in the afternoon when there were not many people about. The Imam saw from a distance a young lady drawing water from the well. Perhaps she thought there was no one about so her head was not covered. The Imam saw her tresses in their full silken glory. The white of her skin on her bare throat was blinding. The Imam stopped in his tracks, then took full flight. He ran trembling to his hut, panting and breathless. He took a drink of water and reflected upon the event. Who could that beautiful creature be? "I love her," he said to himself. "I love her and I shall make her mine. I want no one else," he vowed. He felt his head. It was throbbing as hard as his heart, as hot and feverish as his passion. Then he learnt that the object of his ardour was the daughter of the Sheikh himself.

The Imam kept the burning secret to himself. Even his housemates never knew of this love. The Imam's behaviour was nothing but exemplary. His manners were extremely correct, especially to the ladies. He was punctilious in the performance of his duties. If the Imam was consumed with love, the Sheikh was the last person to know. The Sheikh thought that the Imam stayed for the love of the Deen. It is true that as the years passed the Imam grew to love the Deen and the Sheikh, but so too did his love for the Sheikh's daughter grow. In the Imam's final year, the Sheikh was entrusting more and more of his duties to his model pupil, the Imam. The Imam was conducting kulliyahs, performing prayers and sometimes even paying courtesy calls on the Sheikh's behalf.

He is grooming me to take his place and to be his son-in-law, thought the Imam. How full of hope he was! How sweet were the days as they passed for the Imam! How he patiently waited for the day when the Sheikh would broach the subject to him but it was not to be. The Sheikh did broach the subject of his daughter to him but only to invite him to his daughter's wedding to a cousin. The Imam was

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## MELOR IN PERSPECTIVE

shattered. His world crashed around him. Pattani was nothing but a cauldron of smouldering embers. The Imam packed his books and bade good-bye to his Sheikh. He was really very fond of the old man and also very grateful for the tutelage, but he had to go. The Sheikh begged him to stay to look after his mosque for him, but the Imam gently refused. If it were not for the agony of having to see his beloved as somebody else's wife, he would have stayed.

The Imam came home grieving to Kelantan. His mother understood the grieving and in a few months found him Cik Yam. Cik Yam, though no raving beauty, was an accomplished cook as well as being modest and extremely virtuous. She had been an obedient and excellent wife, but she was not the Sheikh's daughter. The Imam had been happy with Cik Yam and gradually as he grew older the hurt had eased. He had not thought again of the Sheikh's daughter for a long time ... that is, until that morning, when, by the fate of God, Cik Gu Leh had dragged him to Mariah's *kedai merpati*....

"Oh Mariah..." sighed the Imam. "Why do you have to be so like her ... my long-lost love, the Passion of My Youth? Oh Mariah, why do you have to look like her from your toes right up to your eyebrows! It's a test. By Allah! it's a test."

The Imam became very frightened. He left the table, took his ablutions and quickly went to the mosque.

"Let me find refuge there," he thought. "Save me, O God."

What had his Sheikh always said in times like this? He quickly recollected.

Abase Yourself  
to the One You Love.  
Passion is Not Easy.

Indeed, passion is not easy. "I have dispensed with thee, O Passion. I have divorced thee thrice."

The Imam kept repeating this litany as if in prayer. After the afternoon prayer the Imam stayed long in prostration. He dallied in the mosque. He came out but went in again.

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Finally he went in and fell into a troubled sleep, something which he had never done before. The days passed. Things appeared normal. The Imam was punctual in his prayers and diligent in his duties, but his heart was in turmoil. He remembered a verse from his Paratani days...

O lady of excess who strips away my acts of devotion in every state. There is no kindness in my wound either it is by abasement and it is attached to passion, or it is by If you're in your immunity, it protects us and if you're in the sea, you come in the boat.

It was either from Fuzus Al-Hakam, or the Knowledge of Man, the Imam could not be certain, but it certainly seemed apt now. The Imam tried to go home to Cik Yam after *subah* prayers, but every time somehow, in spite of himself, he would be by Cik Gu Leh's side going to Mariah's for breakfast. Mariah saw nothing amiss. She treated the Imam with reverence and courtesy, betting his station and stature. She served him the choicest morsels on her best cutlery. He was, after all, the village Imam.

His gaze from the plate in accordance with the Quranic injunction for men to lower their gazes. He would tremble slightly, but the men in the *kedat menpahi* attributed that to extreme modesty. "The Imam is an extremely modest man," thought the other men, "not used to the company of women." Every time he took the *nasit beklak* from Mariah he would feel a pang of guilt, remembering his wife's *nasit beklak* under the *ludang saku*. "Forgive me, oh God, for men are weak," supplicated the Imam silently, spooning *nasit beklak* into his mouth. After a cup of coffee with Cik Gu Leh. At least, that was how it looked

Cik Yam jumped up as if struck by a bolt of lightning. Can that dreaded thing meet feared by women be real, happening to her? Please God, let it not be true, she prayed. Why couldn't it have happened to that lazy Cik Gu Nab, who couldn't even try an egg properly? Why her? The loving devoted wife, the model housewife? Why? Why? Despair and humiliation all came and passed through Cik Yam's piteously. "O wretched, wretched self!"

By then Cik Yam was wracked by despairing sobs. The Imam tried to hold her, but she pushed him away. Finally the Imam managed to capture her in his embrace and devolved. "I love you and will always love you," Yam. Nothing can change that. I will always be your husband. I will care for you, Yam." ... said in between kisses on Cik Yam's forehead. Hands and finally, in the final act of submission, on Cik Yam's feet. Thus the night passed and in the morning with the first rays of sunlight, Cik Yam said "Yes" to the Imam's request, on condition of equality. The Imam had breakfast *beklak* into Cik Yam's mouth. Three days after this event, the whole town of Molo was rife with speculations. Word got around the village that the Imam was taking a second wife, and that person was none other than Mariah!

"Isn't that rather odd?" gossiped the villagers. "The Imam and Cik Yam have been married for fifteen years and Cik Yam is a model of virtue." "Then of course Cik Yam is childless..." voices trailed away. The men in the village were all excitedly handling this issue in their own ways. They had all at some time or other in their lives fantasized about having second wives, but sadly, neither their wives nor their budgets were accommodating enough. Cik Yam became a paragon of virtue. Women wondered how she could have easily succumbed to the whole arrangement. The men, on the other hand,

on the surface. That was the time the Imam would use to steal long lingering glances at Mariah. His heart ached with the pent-up longing for the Sheikh's daughter. Oh Mariah! ... Thing would never be the same again for the Imam. He spent the nights in supplication, asking God for succour. He was frightened of the emotions stirred up by his unintentional meeting with Mariah. It was too colossal for him to handle. And yet he felt elated. He believed it was fated, a part of a grand design by God to heal his heart, but on the account of a woman? Can a beautiful alluring woman be a part of a healing process? It seemed so profane to the Imam. But why should a woman be more profane than a man? Did not the Prophet himself say that three things are pleasing to him, prayers, women and perfume? There you are! Proof, exoneration for the Imam. He felt resolved to do what he had to do, Cik Gu Leh would be his emissary.

The Imam chose the occasion well. It had to be on a Thursday night, the eve of Friday. After prayers and long supplication, the Imam went to his bedroom. Cik Yam was sitting on the bed waiting for him to finish. He knelt by the bed and kissed Cik Yam's hands. Cik Yam was surprised by this reverent show of affection but did not say anything. Cik Yam waited. The Imam kissed Cik Yam's knees and then placed his head on Cik Yam's lap. Cik Yam stroked his head lovingly. Immediately as if released by a valve the Imam's hot tears fell on Cik Yam's *serong*. Cik Yam felt the hot tears on her skin as it seeped through the *serong*. Cik Yam lifted the Imam's head and looked at him questioning. Fifteen years of marital bliss had left its mark. Love and understanding shone through Cik Yam's also tear-filled eyes. "Tell me what grieves you, my husband, and I will make it better for you," Cik Yam whispered to the Imam. At these words the Imam felt himself choke, but he steered himself. He told Cik Yam of his pain and longing. He then daughter. He told Cik Yam of his unrequited love for the Sheikh's man, thought the other men, "not used to the company of women." Every time he took the *nasit beklak* from Mariah he would feel a pang of guilt, remembering his wife's *nasit beklak* under the *ludang saku*.

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Wondered what Quranic ayats the Imam blew on Cik Yam's face to subdue her. Perhaps he knew something they didn't. It was difficult for everyone to agree upon one common reason. There was, however, something that everybody definitely agreed upon and that was ... Cik Yam would certainly be found abetting in the shade of the Umbrella of Siti Fatimah (the Prophet's daughter) on the Day of Judgement. "Maahillah!" they all whispered reverently in awe of Cik Yam's virtue and steadfastness, would that they were as strong as Cik Yam!

But what of Mariah, the object of all this commotion? She continued, serenely unaffected, with her *nasit beklak* selling until the very day she married the Imam. When Cik Gu Leh, the Imam's emissary, came to her house asking for her hand, she had been surprised, to say the least. The Imam was not on her list of prospective suitors. Initially, she had thought Cik Gu Leh had come on his own behalf. Cik Gu Leh had been most partial to her *nasit beklak*. Cik Nab had even begun sending threatening messages. But Cik Gu Leh had come for the Imam. Mariah only differed for a day, then said "Yes". The Imam was the man who would be the only person worth marrying after all those years of self-imposed celibacy. She wondered why the Imam had ever considered marrying her. Cik Yam was a model wife. Mariah was, in fact, slightly in awe of the pious Cik Yam. Mariah felt like a harlot in her short orange *kebaya*, sitting beside the robed Cik Yam. Cik Yam was an angel, to willingly share her husband with her, Mariah the blousy lady, untutored in religion, in fact untutored in everything except *nasit beklak* selling!

It's all Allah's decree," sighed Mariah. "So be it." Mariah's wedding surpassed even her own expectations. Her relatives, in deference to the stature of the new husband-to-be, organized the wedding with particular zeal. She looked out her savings from *nasit beklak* selling and prepared a bridal chamber grander than that of her first wedding. In an uncharacteristic show of flamboyance and extravagance, Mariah had her wedding

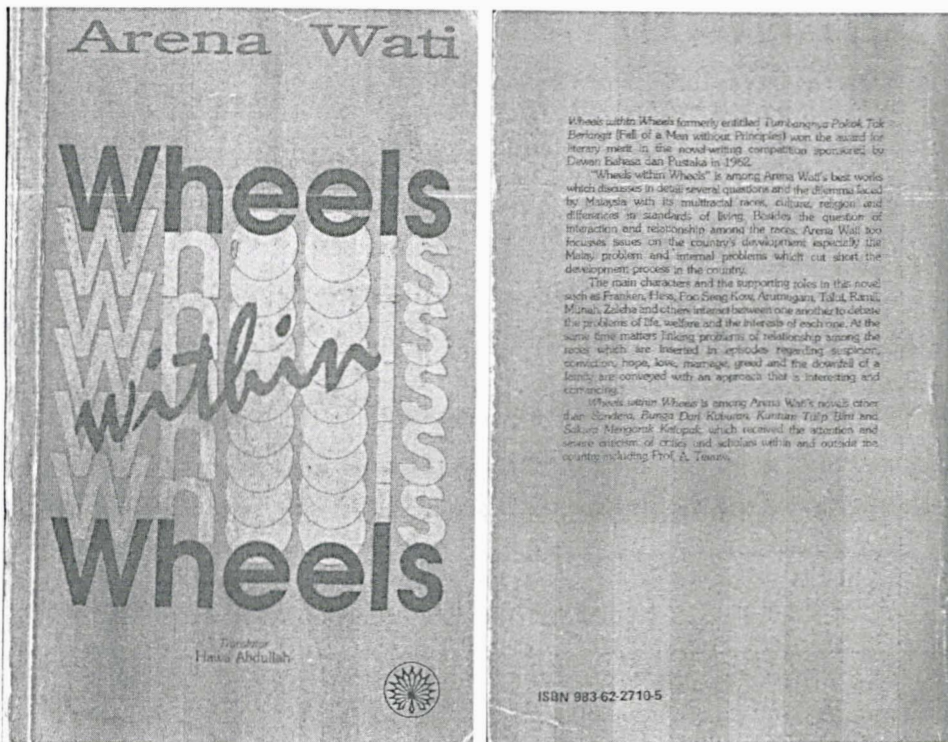
MELOR IN PERSPECTIVE

## MARIAH

finery tailored in Kota Bharu, no less. Her first husband had not been an Imam, there had been no need for such fuss. Guests streamed into the house compound from sunrise till sundown, heaping compliments upon her and congratulating her.

"Well, at least they harbour no ill feelings towards me," she noted.

After *isha'* prayers, with the guests finally departed, she sighed with obvious relief that it was all over. Mariah found herself alone in the bridal chamber, ready to again begin life anew as a married woman. The Imam saluted at the door, and she replied, giving him permission to enter. The Imam was dressed in a white *jubah* and white *serban*, looking resplendent. Mariah noticed that the *serban* was held in place with the ends fashionably tied back. She suddenly realised how physically attractive the Imam was: tall, well-built and with measured movements. Mariah quickly averted her eyes from his piercing gaze and looked demurely at her hennaed hand. He came forward, took Mariah's hand in his own and kissed it fervently and long, inhaling the heady scent of Mariah's Tabu perfume. His eyes closed, his dream realised, the Imam managed a hoarse "Thank You, God, for Your Bounty," before Mariah's perfume completely enveloped him and his senses.

3. Unit 3 (Cover page: Excerpt of *Wheels Within Wheels* by Arenawati-trans by Hawa Abdullah)

### Unit 3 : Characteristics, Techniques and Language of Fiction

#### Activities / Exercises, No. 2

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#### Chapter 8

RAMLİ sat rightaway at his place then sighed, "Where's Hess gone?"

He was hoping Hess would turn up. But he also knew that Hess had not arranged to meet him in the saloon.

A number of passengers in casual dress passed by. Every passenger passing by looked at Ramli. Then they would raise their shoulders, smile to themselves and continue on their way.

But Ramli was not aware and did not pay attention to what was happening around him. He did not realise that people were laughing at him, still in his dinner dress and now sitting all by himself in the saloon so late into the night.

The land breeze from the north had long been blowing, but the biting night winds were generally oblivious to him. Ramli felt warm in his dinner clothes and the whisky he had drunk gave his body warmth.

"Whatever did they play for?" he asked himself slowly.

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#### WHEELS WITHIN WHEELS

A passenger passed behind Ramli. This fellow thought that Ramli was drunk so he quickly removed himself from the saloon.

"Why on earth did they play?" he repeated. "Three days and four nights and this wasn't easy. But then how come it ended with cheerful laughter from them? What was all that about?"

Ramli was confused looking for the reason. "Can these people be trusted? How sincere is their friendship?"

These words he was not willing to utter, they merely whirled in his imagination.

Ramli recollected that the chessboard was he himself, physically and spiritually. And the game played was his fate.

Later because he saw himself crushed and his soul disturbed and confused on the chessboard, not knowing from where he derived the energy to manage it all, he realised how as a person, his fate, his situation was very small compared to the principle issue and events in this chess game.


For that, Ramli likened his own country infected with struggles between two abstract forms - forms that would determine the position of at least one of the two descendant groups of human beings as was Hess's own opinion.

Ramli had become more and more immersed in very confused thoughts.

This matter overwhelmed and overawed his life. Then Ramli longed for soft music, felt some regret because every time the music played at dinner time, he never for once paid full attention to it.

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4. Unit 3 (Cover page: *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe) 1 page




**CHINUA ACHEBE** is among the most powerful and original voices in English Language fiction today. *Things Fall Apart*, his first novel, was published in 1958. It has now sold over 3 million copies and been translated into 30 languages. It was followed by *No Longer at Ease*, *Arrow of God* and *A Man of the People*. His latest novel, *Anthills of the Savannah* was short listed for the Booker McConnell prize in 1987. He has also written short stories, poetry and essays.

*Things Fall Apart Students' Edition*, has been specially prepared for students, with an introduction and notes.


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# Things Fall Apart



**CHINUA ACHEBE**

WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES BY AIGBOJE HIGO

5. Unit 3 (Cover page: Excerpt of *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe) 1 page

nearly two years ago. It is a poor soil and that is why the tubers are so small.'

Okonkwo never did things by halves. When his wife Ekwefi protested that two goats were sufficient for the feast he told her that it was not her affair.

'I am calling a feast because I have the wherewithal. I cannot live on the bank of a river and wash my hands with spittle. My mother's people have been good to me and I must show my gratitude.'

And so three goats were slaughtered and a number of fowls. It was like a wedding feast. There was foo-foo and yam pottage, egusi soup and bitter-leaf soup and pots and pots of palm-wine.

All the *umunna* were invited to the feast, all the descendants of Okolo, who had lived about two hundred years before. The oldest member of this extensive family was Okonkwo's uncle, Uchendu. The kola nut was given to him to break, and he prayed to the ancestors. He asked them for health and children. 'We do not ask for wealth because he that has health and children will also have wealth. We do not pray to have more money but to have more kinsmen. We are better than animals because we have kinsmen. An animal rubs its aching flank against a tree, a man asks his kinsman to scratch him.' He prayed especially for Okonkwo and his family. He then broke the kola nut and threw one of the lobes on the ground for the ancestors.

As the broken kola nuts were passed round, Okonkwo's wives and children and those who came to help them with the cooking began to bring out the food. His sons brought out the pots of palm-wine. There was so much food and drink that many kinsmen whistled in surprise. When all was laid out, Okonkwo rose to speak.

'I beg you to accept this little kola,' he said. 'It is not to pay you back for all you did for me in these seven years. A child cannot pay for its mother's milk, I have only called you together because it is good for kinsmen to meet.'

Yam pottage was served first because it was lighter than foo-foo and because yam always came first. Then the foo-foo was served. Some kinsmen ate it with egusi soup and others with bitter-leaf soup. The meat was then shared so that every member of the

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*umunna* had a portion. Every man rose in order of years and took a share. Even the few kinsmen who had not been able to come had their shares taken out for them in due turn.

As the palm-wine was drunk one of the oldest members of the *umunna* rose to thank Okonkwo:

'If I say that we did not expect such a big feast I will be suggesting that we did not know how open-handed our son, Okonkwo is. We all know him, and we expected a big feast. But it turned out to be even bigger than we expected. Thank you. May all you took out return again tenfold. It is good in these days when the younger generation consider themselves wiser than their sires to see a man doing things in the grand, old way. A man who calls his kinsmen to a feast does not do so to save them from starving. They all have food in their own homes. When we gather together in the moonlit village ground it is not because of the moon. Every man can see it in his own compound. We come together because it is good for kinsmen to do so. You may ask why I am saying all this. I say it because I fear for the younger generation, for you people.' He waved his arm where most of the young men sat, 'As for me, I have only a short while to live, and so have Uchendu and Umachukwu and Emefo. But I fear for you young people because you do not understand how strong is the bond of kinship. You do not know what it is to speak with one voice. And what is the result? An abominable religion has settled among you. A man can now leave his father and his brothers. He can curse the gods of his fathers and his ancestors, like a hunter's dog that suddenly goes mad and turns on his master. I fear for you; I fear for the clan.' He turned again to Okonkwo and said, 'Thank you for calling us together.'

Unit 3 : Characteristics, Techniques and Language of Fiction  
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6. Unit 4 (Short story: *A Rose for Emily* by William Faulkner) 7 pages

**A Rose for Emily**  
by William Faulkner

I

When Miss Emily Grierson died, our whole town went to her funeral: the men through a sort of respectful affection for a fallen monument, the women mostly out of curiosity to see the inside of her house, which no one save an old manservant—a combined gardener and cook had seen in at least ten years.

It was a big, squarish frame house that had once been white, decorated with cupolas and spires and scrolled balconies in the heavily lightsome style of the seventies, set on what had once been our most select street. But garages and cotton gins had encroached and obliterated even the august names of that neighbourhood; only Miss Emily's house was left, lifting its stubborn and coquettish decay above the cotton wagons and the gasoline pumps—an eyesore among eyesores. And now Miss Emily had gone to join the representatives of those august names where they lay in the cedar-bemused cemetery among the ranked and anonymous graves of Union and Confederate soldiers who fell at the battle of Jefferson.

Alive, Miss Emily had been a tradition, a duty, and a care; a sort of hereditary obligation upon the town, dating from that day in 1894 when Colonel Sartoris, the mayor—he who fathered the edict that no Negro woman should appear on the streets without an apron—remitted her taxes, the dispensation dating from the death of her father on into perpetuity. Not that Miss Emily would have accepted charity. Colonel Sartoris invented an involved tale to the effect that Miss Emily's father had loaned money to the town, which the town, as a matter of business, preferred this way of repaying. Only a man of Colonel Sartoris' generation and thought could have invented it, and only a woman could have believed it.

When the next generation, with its more modern ideas, became mayors and aldermen, this arrangement created some little dissatisfaction. On the first of the year they mailed her tax notice. February came, and there was no reply. They wrote her a formal letter, asking her to call at the sheriff's office at her convenience. A week later the mayor wrote her himself, offering to call or to send his car for her, and received in reply a note on paper of an archaic shape, in a thin, flowing calligraphy in faded ink, to the effect that she no longer went out at all.

The tax notice was also enclosed, without comment.

They called a special meeting of the Board of Aldermen. A deputation waited upon her, knocked at the door through which no visitor had passed since she ceased giving china-painting lessons eight or ten years earlier. They were admitted by the old Negro into a dim hall from which a staircase mounted into still more shadow. It smelled of dust and disuse—a close, dank smell. The Negro led them into the parlour. It was furnished in heavy, leather-covered furniture. When the Negro opened the blinds of one window, they could see that the leather was cracked; and when they sat down, a faint dust rose sluggishly about their thighs, spinning with slow motes in the single sunray. On a tarnished gilt easel before the fireplace stood a crayon portrait of Miss Emily's father.

They rose when she entered—a small, fat woman in black, with a thin gold chain descending to her waist and vanishing into her belt, leaning on an ebony cane with a tarnished gold head. Her skeleton was small and spare; perhaps that was why what would have been merely plumpness in another was obesity in her. She looked bloated, like a body long submerged in motionless water, and of that pallid hue. Her eyes, lost in the fatty ridges of her face, looked like two small pieces of coal pressed into a lump of dough as they moved from one face to another while the visitors stated their errand.

She did not ask them to sit. She just stood in the door and listened quietly until the spokesman came to a stumbling halt. Then they could hear the invisible watch ticking at the end of the gold chain.

Her voice was dry and cold. "I have no taxes in Jefferson. Colonel Sartoris explained to me. Perhaps one of you can gain access to the city records and satisfy yourselves."

1

"But we have. We are the city authorities. Miss Emily. Didn't you get notice from the sheriff, signed by him?"

"I received a paper, yes," Miss Emily said. "Perhaps he considers he self the sheriff... I have no taxes in Jefferson."

"But there is nothing on the books to show that, you see. We must go, by the—"

"See Colonel Sartoris. I have no taxes in Jefferson."

"But, Miss Emily..."

"See Colonel Sartoris, (Colonel Sartoris had been dead almost ten years.) I have no taxes in Jefferson. Tobe!" The Negro appeared. "Show these gentlemen out."

II

So she vanquished them, horse and foot, just as she had vanquished their fathers thirty years before about the smell. That was two years after her father's death and a short time after her sweetheart—the one we believe would marry her—had deserted her. After her father's death she went out very little; after her sweetheart went away, people hardly saw her at an. A few of the ladies had the temerity to call, but were not received, and th4 only sign of life about the place was the Negro man—then—going in and out with a market basket.

"Just as if a man—any man—could keep a kitchen property," the ladies said; so they were not surprised when the smell developed. It was another link between the gross, teeming world and the high and mighty Griersons. A neighbour, a woman complained to the mayor, judge Stevens, eighty years old.

"But what will you have me do about it, madam?" he said.

"Why, send her word to stop it," the woman said. "Isn't there a law?"

"I'm sure that won't be necessary," judge Stevens said. "It's probably just a snake or a rat that nigger of hers killed in the yard. I'll speak to him about it."

The next day he received two more complaints, one from a man who came in diffident deprecation. "We really must do something about it judge. I'd be the last one in the world to bother Miss Emily, but we've got to do something." That night the Board of Aldermen met—three grey-beard and one younger man, a member of the rising generation.

"It's simple enough," he said. "Send her word to have her place cleaned up. Give her a certain time to do it in, and if she don't..."

"Dammit, sir," judge Stevens said, "will you accuse a lady to her face of smelling bad?"

So the next night, after midnight, four men crossed Miss Emily's lawn and slunk about the house like burglars, sniffing along the base of the brickwork and at the cellar openings while one of them performed a regular sowing motion with his hand out of a sack stung from his shoulder. They broke open the cellar door and sprinkled lime there, and in all the outbuildings. As they recrossed the lawn, a window that had been dark was lighted and Miss Emily sat in it, the light behind her, and her upright torso motionless as that of an idol. They crept quietly across the lawn and into the shadow of the locusts that lined the street. After a week or two the smell went away.

That was when people had begun to feel really sorry for her. People in our town, remembering how old lady Wyatt, her great-aunt, had gone completely crazy at last, believed that the Griersons held themselves a little too high for what they really were. None of the young men were quite good enough for Miss Emily and such. We had long thought of them as a tableau; Miss Emily a slender figure in white in the background, her father a spraddled silhouette in the foreground, his back to her and clutching a horsewhip, the two of them framed by the back-flung front door. So when she got to be thirty and was still single, we were not pleased exactly, but vindicated; even with insanity in the family she wouldn't have turned down all of her chances if they had really materialized.

When her father died, it got about that the house was all that was left to her; and in a way, people were glad. At last they could pity Miss Emily. Being left alone, and a pauper, she had become humanized. Now she too would know the old thrill and the old despair of a penny more or less.

2

The day after his death all the ladies prepared to call at the house and offer condolence and aid, as is our custom. Miss Emily met them at the door, dressed as usual and with no trace of grief on her face. She told them that her father was not dead. She did that for three days, with the ministers calling on her, and the doctors, trying to persuade her to let them dispose of the body, just as they were about to resort to law and force, she broke down, and they buried her father quickly.

We did not say she was crazy then. We believed she had to do that. We remembered all the young men her father had driven away, and we knew that with nothing left, she would have to cling to that which had robbed her, as people will.

III

She was sick for a long time. When we saw her again, her hair was cut short, making her look like a girl, with a vague resemblance to those angels in colored church windows—of tragic and serene.

The town had just let the contracts for paving the sidewalks, and in the summer after her father's death they began the work. The construction company came with niggers and mules and machinery, and a foreman named Homer Barron, a Yankee—a big, dark, ready man with a big voice and eyes lighter than his face. The little boys would follow in groups to hear him cuss the niggers, and the niggers singing in time to the rise and fall of picks. Pretty soon he knew everybody in town.

Whenever you heard a lot of laughing anywhere about the square, Homer Barron would be in the centre of the group. Presently we began to see him and Miss Emily on Sunday afternoons driving in the yellow-wheeled buggy and the matched team of bays from the livery stable.

At first we were glad that Miss Emily would have an interest, because the ladies all said, "Of course a Grierson would not think seriously of a Northerner, a day labourer." But there were still others, older people, who said that even grief could not cause a real lady to forget noble obligations without calling it noble obligations. They just said, "Poor Emily. Her kinsfolk should come to her." She had some kin in Alabama; but years ago her father had fallen out with them over the estate of old lady Wyatt, the crazy woman, and there was no communication between the two families. They had not even been represented at the funeral.

And as soon as the old people said, "Poor Emily," the whispering began. "Do you suppose it's really so?" they said to one another. "Of course it is. What else could...?" This behind their hands; rustling of craned silk and satin behind jalousies closed upon the sun of Sunday afternoon as the swift clomp-clomp of the matched team passed. "Poor Emily."

She carried her head high enough—even when we believed that she was fallen. It was as if she demanded more than ever the recognition of her dignity as the last Grierson; as if she had wanted that touch of earthiness to her imperviousness. Like when she bought the rat poison, the arsenic. That was over a year after they had begun to say "Poor Emily," and while the two female cousins were visiting her.

"I want some poison," she said to the druggist. She was over thirty then, still a slight woman, though thinner than usual, with cold, haughty black eyes in a face the flesh of which was strained across the temples and about the eye sockets as you imagine a lighthouse keeper's face ought to look. "I want some poison," she said.

"Yes, Miss Emily. What kind? For rats and such? I'd recom—"

"I want the best you have. I don't care what kind."

The druggist named several. "They'll kill anything up to an elephant."

But what you want is—"

"Arsenic," Miss Emily said. "Is that a good one?"

"Is... arsenic? Yes, ma'am. But what you want—"

"I want arsenic."

The druggist looked down at her. She looked back at him, erect, her face like a strained flag. "Why, of course," the druggist said. "If that's what you want. But the law requires you to tell what you are going to use it for."

3

upon the last one and remained closed for good. When the town got free postal delivery, Miss Emily alone refused to let them fasten the metal numbers above her door and attach a mailbox to it. She would not listen to them.

Daily, monthly, yearly we watched the Negro grow greyer and more stooped, going in and out with the market basket. Each December we sent her a tax notice, which would be returned by the post office a week later, unclaimed. Now and then we would see her in one of the downstairs windows—she had evidently shut up the top floor of the house like the carved torso of an idol in a niche, looking or not looking at us, we could never tell which. Thus she passed from generation to generation—dear, inescapable, impervious, tranquil, and perverse.

And so she died. Fell in the house filled with dust and shadows, with only a doddering Negro man to wait on her. We did not even know she was sick; we had long since given up trying to get any information from the Negro. He talked to no one, probably not even to her, for his voice had grown harsh and rusty, as if from disuse.

She died in one of the downstairs rooms, in a heavy walnut bed with a curtain, her gray head propped on a pillow yellow and moldy with age and lack of sunlight.

V

The Negro met the first of the ladies at the front door and let them in, with their hushed, sibilant voices and their quick, curious glances, and then disappeared. He walked right through the house and out the back and was not seen again.

The two female cousins came at once. They held the funeral on the second day, with the town coming to look at Miss Emily beneath a mass of bought flowers, with the crayon face of her father musing profoundly above the bier and the ladies sibilant and macabre; and the very old men—some in their brushed Confederate uniforms—on the porch and the lawn, talking of Miss Emily as if she had been a contemporary of theirs, believing that they had danced with her and courted her perhaps, confusing time with its mathematical progression, as the old do, to whom

all the past is not a diminishing road but, instead, a huge meadow which no winter ever quite touches, divided from them now by the narrow bottleneck of the most recent decade of years.

Already, we knew that there was one room in that region above stairs which no one had seen in forty years, and which would have to be forced. They waited until Miss Emily was decently in the ground before they opened it.

The violence of breaking down the door seemed to fill this room with pervading dust. A thin, acrid pall as of the tomb seemed to lie everywhere upon this room decked and furnished as for a bridal: upon the valance curtains of faded rose colour, upon the rose-shaded lights, upon the dressing table, upon the delicate array of crystal and the man's toilet things backed with tarnished silver, silver so tarnished that the monogram was obscured. Among them lay collar and tie, as if they had just been removed, which, lifted, left upon the surface a pale crescent in the dust. Upon a chair hung the suit, carefully folded; beneath it the two mule shoes and the discarded socks. The man himself lay in the bed.

For a long while we just stood there, looking down at the profound and fleshless grin. The body had apparently once lain in the attitude of an embrace, but now the long sleep that outlasts love, that conquers even the grimace of love, had cuckolded him. What was left of him, rotted beneath what was left of the nightshirt, had become inextricable from the bed in which he lay; and upon him and upon the pillow beside him lay that even coating of the patient and biding dust.

Then we noticed that in the second pillow was the indentation of a head. One of us lifted something from it, and leaving forward, that faint and invisible dust dry and acrid in the nostrils, we saw a long strand of iron-grey hair.

3

Miss Emily just stared at him, her head tilted back in order to look him eye for eye, until he looked away and went and got the arsenic and wrapped it up. The Negro delivery boy brought her the package; the druggist didn't come back. When she opened the package at home there was written on the box under the skull and bones: "For rats."

IV

So the next day we all said, "She will kill herself"; and we said it would be the best thing.

When she had first begun to be seen with Homer Barron, we had said, "She will marry him."

Then we said, "She will persuade him yet," because Homer himself had remarked—he liked men, and it was known that he drank with the younger men in the Elks' Club—that he was not a marrying man. Later we said, "Poor Emily" behind the jalousies as they passed on Sunday afternoon in the glittering buggy, Miss Emily with her head high and Homer Barron with his hat cocked and a cigar in his teeth, reins and whip in a yellow glove.

Then some of the ladies began to say that it was a disgrace to the town and a bad example to the young people. The men did not want to interfere, but at last the ladies forced the Baptist minister—Miss Emily's people were Episcopal—to call upon her. He would never divulge what happened during that interview, but he refused to go back again. The next Sunday they again drove about the streets, and the following day the minister's wife wrote to Miss Emily's relations in Alabama.

So she had blood-kin under her roof again and we sat back to watch developments. At first nothing happened. Then we were sure that they were to be married. We learned that Miss Emily had been to the jeweller's and ordered a man's toilet set in silver, with the letters H. B. on each piece. Two days later we learned that she had bought a complete outfit of men's clothing, including a nightshirt, and we said, "They are married." We were really glad. We were glad because the two female cousins were even more Grierson than Miss Emily had ever been.

So we were surprised when Homer Barron—the streets had been finished some time since—was gone. We were a little disappointed that there was not a public blowing-off, but we believed that he had gone on to prepare for Miss Emily's coming, or to give her a chance to get rid of the cousins. (By that time it was a cabal, and we were all Miss Emily's allies to help circumvent the cousins.) Sure enough, after another week they departed. And, as we had expected all along, within three days Homer Barron was back in town. A neighbour saw the Negro man admit him at the kitchen door at dusk one evening.

And that was the last we saw of Homer Barron. And of Miss Emily for some time. The Negro man went in and out with the market basket, but the front door remained closed. Now and then we would see her at a window for a moment, as the men did that night when they sprinkled the lime, but for almost six months she did not appear on the streets. Then we knew that this was to be expected too; as if that quality of her father which had thwarted her woman's life so many times had been too virulent and too furious to die.

When we next saw Miss Emily, she had grown fat and her hair was turning grey. During the next few years it grew greyer and greyer until it attained an even pepper-and-salt iron-grey when it ceased turning. Up to the day of her death at seventy-four it was still that vigorous iron-grey, like the hair of an active man.

From that time on her front door remained closed, save for a period of six or seven years, when she was about forty, during which she gave lessons in china-painting. She fitted up a studio in one of the downstairs rooms, where the daughters and grand-daughters of Colonel Sartoris' contemporaries were sent to her with the same regularity and in the same spirit that they were sent to church on Sundays with a twenty-five-cent piece for the collection plate. Meanwhile her taxes had been remitted.

Then the newer generation became the backbone and the spirit of the town, and the painting pupils grew up and fell away and did not send their children to her with boxes of colour and tedious brushes and pictures cut from the ladies' magazines. The front door closed

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"A Rose for Emily" – William Faulkner

Questions

1. Does this story contain elements that you associate with Gothic traditions in horror stories or mystery stories? What makes it an example of Southern Gothic fiction?
2. When you first read the story, when did you realize how it would end? What is your response to the end?
3. After you read the ending, did your view of earlier scenes change, such as the parts about buying poison and the odour? In retrospect, where are there hints about the plot?
4. What is the conflict in this story? If Miss Emily is the protagonist, who is the antagonist (a character or force that acts against the protagonist, denying his or her desires)?
5. In the beginning, Miss Emily receives a deputation from the Board of Aldermen. We already know her attitude toward taxes before this. If this anecdote does not advance the plot or offer a clue to the eventual story of Emily and her lover, what function does it serve in the story?
6. Does your view of the narrator affect your reception of the story? Why does Faulkner use this particular narrator? What do you know about him? Can you list his "values," and if so, are they shared by the town? Is this narrator reliable? Does the fact he is male matter?
7. In paragraphs 1 and 2, the author speaks of buildings and structures, describing Miss Emily as a fallen monument. Where else do related images occur? If Miss Emily is a fallen monument, to what is she a monument?
8. Notice references to the Civil War in this story. Where do they occur? How does that war play a role in the story?
9. In this story, an aristocratic Southerner murders a Yankee carpetbagger. Is the story about the triumph of a defeated South over a supposedly triumphant North? What is this story really about?
10. See question 4. If you are tempted to think of Homer Barron as antagonist, does it matter that the story continues thirty years after his death? (Remember that conflict in stories does not necessarily occur between individuals.)
11. In paragraph 15, what do horse and foot mean? To what or to whom is Miss Emily being compared here?
12. What is the significance of sidewalks?
13. What do you think happened when the Baptist minister called on Miss Emily? Is it important that you think you understand what happened?
14. Why are we not surprised when Homer disappears? How does the storyteller ensure that we are not surprised?
15. After reading, reconstruct the sequence of events. When did Homer Barron die? How did he die? Why is the story structured in the way that it is?
16. It has been said of this story that "Miss Emily has a shadow, and by this shadow we tell the time of her life." What is her shadow?

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Henrik Ibsen

## A Doll's House

by

Henrik Ibsen

A DOLL'S  
HOUSE

ACT I

## DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Torvald Helmer.  
 Nora, his wife.  
 Doctor Rank.  
 Mrs. Linde.  
 Nils Krogstad.  
 Helmer's three young children.  
 Anne, their nurse.  
 A Housemaid.  
 A Porter.

*The action takes place in Helmer's house.*

(SCENE.—A room furnished comfortably and tastefully, but not extravagantly. At the back, a door to the right leads to the entrance-hall, another to the left leads to Helmer's study. Between the doors stands a piano. In the middle of the left-hand wall is a door, and beyond it a window. Near the window are a round table, arm-chairs and a small sofa. In the right-hand wall, at the farther end, another door; and on the same side, nearer the footlights, a stove, two easy chairs and a rocking-chair; between the stove and the door, a small table. Engravings on the walls; a cabinet with china and other small objects; a small book-case with well-bound books. The floors are carpeted, and a fire burns in the stove. It is winter.

A bell rings in the hall; shortly afterwards the door is heard to open. Enter **NORA**, humming a tune and in high spirits. She is in outdoor dress and carries a number of parcels; these she lays on the table to the right. She leaves the outer door open after her, and through it is seen a **PORTER** who is

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## A Doll's House

carrying a Christmas Tree and a basket, which he gives to the **MAID** who has opened the door.)

**Nora.** Hide the Christmas Tree carefully, Helen. Be sure the children do not see it until this evening, when it is dressed. (*To the PORTER, taking out her purse.*) How much?

**Porter.** Sixpence.

**Nora.** There is a shilling. No, keep the change. (*The PORTER thanks her, and goes out. NORA shuts the door. She is laughing to herself, as she takes off her hat and coat. She takes a packet of macaroons from her pocket and eats one or two; then goes cautiously to her husband's door and listens.*) Yes, he is in. (*Still humming, she goes to the table on the right.*)

**Helmer** (*calls out from his room*). Is that my little lark twittering out there?

**Nora** (*busy opening some of the parcels*). Yes, it is!

**Helmer.** Is it my little squirrel bustling about?

**Nora.** Yes!

**Helmer.** When did my squirrel come home?

**Nora.** Just now. (*Putt the bag of macaroons into her pocket and wipes her mouth.*) Come in here, Torvald, and see what I have bought.

**Helmer.** Don't disturb me. (*A little later, he opens the door and looks into the room, pen in hand.*) Bought, did you say? All these things? Has my little spendthrift been wasting money again?

**Nora.** Yes but, Torvald, this year we really can let ourselves go a little. This is the first Christmas that we have not needed to economise.

**Helmer.** Still, you know, we can't spend money recklessly.

**Nora.** Yes, Torvald, we may be a wee bit more reckless now, mayn't we? Just a tiny wee bit! You are going to have a big salary and earn lots and lots of money.

**Helmer.** Yes, after the New Year; but then it will be a whole quarter before the salary is due.

**Nora.** Pooh! we can borrow until then.

**Helmer.** Nora! (*Goes up to her and takes her playfully by the ear.*) The same little featherhead! Suppose, now, that I borrowed fifty pounds today, and you spent it all in the Christ-

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mas week, and then on New Year's Eve a slate fell on my head and killed me, and—

**Nora** (*putting her hands over his mouth*). Oh! don't say such horrid things.

**Helmer**. Still, suppose that happened,—what then?

**Nora**. If that were to happen, I don't suppose I should care whether I owed money or not.

**Helmer**. Yes, but what about the people who had lent it?

**Nora**. They? Who would bother about them? I should not know who they were.

**Helmer**. That is like a woman! But seriously, Nora, you know what I think about that. No debt, no borrowing. There can be no freedom or beauty about a home life that depends on borrowing and debt. We two have kept bravely on the straight road so far, and we will go on the same way for the short time longer that there need be any struggle.

**Nora** (*moving towards the stove*). As you please, Torvald.

**Helmer** (*following her*). Come, come, my little skylark must not droop her wings. What is this! Is my little squirrel out of

temper? (*Taking out his purse*.) Nora, what do you think I have got here?

**Nora** (*turning round quickly*). Money!

**Helmer**. There you are. (*Gives her some money*.) Do you think I don't know what a lot is wanted for housekeeping at Christmas-time?

**Nora** (*counting*). Ten shillings—a pound—two pounds! Thank you, thank you, Torvald; that will keep me going for a long time.

**Helmer**. Indeed it must.

**Nora**. Yes, yes, it will. But come here and let me show you what I have bought. And all so cheap! Look, here is a new suit for Ivar, and a sword; and a horse and a trumpet for Bob; and a doll and dolly's bedstead for Emmy,—they are very plain, but anyway she will soon break them in pieces. And here are dress-lengths and handkerchiefs for the maids; old Anne ought really to have something better.

**Helmer**. And what is in this parcel?

**Nora** (*crying out*). No, no! you mustn't see that until this evening.

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A Doll's House

**Helmer**. Very well. But now tell me, you extravagant little person, what would you like for yourself?

**Nora**. For myself? Oh, I am sure I don't want anything.

**Helmer**. Yes, but you must. Tell me something reasonable that you would particularly like to have.

**Nora**. No, I really can't think of anything—unless, Torvald—

**Helmer**. Well?

**Nora** (*playing with his coat buttons, and without raising her eyes to his*). If you really want to give me something, you might—you might—

**Helmer**. Well, out with it!

**Nora** (*speaking quickly*). You might give me money, Torvald. Only just as much as you can afford; and then one of these days I will buy something with it.

**Helmer**. But, Nora—Nora. Oh, do! dear Torvald; please, please do! Then I will wrap it up in beautiful gilt paper and hang it on the Christmas Tree. Wouldn't that be fun?

**Helmer**. What are little people called that are always wasting money?

**Nora**. Spendthrifts—I know. Let us do as you suggest, Torvald, and then I shall have time to think what I am most in want of. That is a very sensible plan, isn't it?

**Helmer** (*smiling*). Indeed it is—that is to say, if you were really to save out of the money I give you, and then really buy something for yourself. But if you spend it all on the house-keeping and any number of unnecessary things, then I merely have to pay up again.

**Nora**. Oh but, Torvald—

**Helmer**. You can't deny it, my dear little Nora. (*Puts his arm round her waist*.) It's a sweet little spendthrift, but she uses up a deal of money. One would hardly believe how expensive such little persons are!

**Nora**. It's a shame to say that. I do really save all I can.

**Helmer** (*laughing*). That's very true,—all you can. But you can't save anything!

**Nora** (*smiling quietly and happily*). You haven't any idea how many expenses we skylarks and squirrels have, Torvald.

**Helmer**. You are an odd little soul. Very like your father. You always find some new way of wheedling money out of me,

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and, as soon as you have got it, it seems to melt in your hands. You never know where it has gone. Still, one must take you as you are. It is in the blood; for indeed it is true that you can inherit these things, Nora.

**Nora.** Ah, I wish I had inherited many of papa's qualities.

**Helmer.** And I would not wish you to be anything but just what you are, my sweet little skylark. But, do you know, it strikes me that you are looking rather—what shall I say—rather uneasy today?

**Nora.** Do I?

**Helmer.** You do, really. Look straight at me.

**Nora** (*looks at him*). Well?

**Helmer** (*wagging his finger at her*). Hasn't Miss Sweet Tooth been breaking rules in town today?

**Nora.** No; what makes you think that?

**Helmer.** Hasn't she paid a visit to the confectioner's?

**Nora.** No, I assure you, Torvald—

**Helmer.** Not been nibbling sweets?

**Nora.** No, certainly not.

**Helmer.** Not even taken a bite at a macaroon or two?

**Nora.** No, Torvald. I assure you really—

**Helmer.** There, there, of course I was only joking.

**Nora** (*going to the table on the right*). I should not think of going against your wishes.

**Helmer.** No, I am sure of that; besides, you gave me your word—(*Going up to her*.) Keep your little Christmas secrets to yourself, my darling. They will all be revealed tonight when the Christmas Tree is lit, no doubt.

**Nora.** Did you remember to invite Doctor Rank?

**Helmer.** No. But there is no need; as a matter of course he will come to dinner with us. However, I will ask him when he comes in this morning. I have ordered some good wine. Nora, you can't think how I am looking forward to this evening.

**Nora.** So am I! And how the children will enjoy themselves, Torvald!

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A Doll's House

**Helmer.** It is splendid to feel that one has a perfectly safe appointment, and a big enough income. It's delightful to think of, isn't it?

**Nora.** It's wonderful!

**Helmer.** Do you remember last Christmas? For a full three weeks beforehand you shut yourself up every evening until long after midnight, making ornaments for the Christmas Tree, and all the other fine things that were to be a surprise to us. It was the dulllest three weeks I ever spent!

**Nora.** I didn't find it dull.

**Helmer** (*smiling*). But there was precious little result, Nora.

**Nora.** Oh, you shouldn't tease me about that again. How could I help the cat's going in and tearing everything to pieces?

**Helmer.** Of course you couldn't, poor little girl. You had the best of intentions to please us all, and that's the main thing. But it is a good thing that our hard times are over.

**Nora.** Yes, it is really wonderful.

**Helmer.** This time I needn't sit here and be dull all alone, and you needn't ruin your dear eyes and your pretty little hands—

**Nora** (*clapping her hands*). No, Torvald, I needn't any longer, need I! It's wonderfully lovely to hear you say so! (*Taking his arm*.) Now I will tell you how I have been thinking we ought to arrange things, Torvald. As soon as Christmas is over—(*A bell rings in the hall*.) There's the bell. (*She tidies the room a little*.) There's some one at the door. What a nuisance!

**Helmer.** If it is a caller, remember I am not at home.

**Maid** (*in the doorway*). A lady to see you, ma'am,—a stranger.

**Nora.** Ask her to come in.

**Maid** (*to HELMER*). The doctor came at the same time, sir.

**Helmer.** Did he go straight into my room?

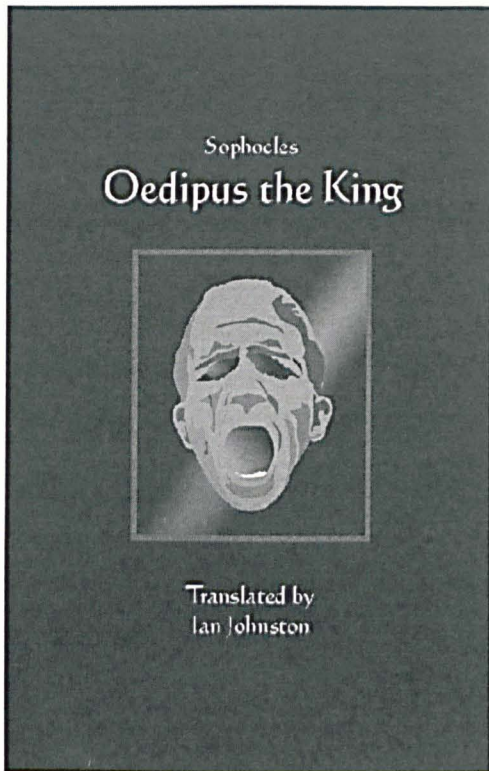
**Maid.** Yes, sir.

(*HELMER goes into his room. The MAID withdraws in Mrs. LINDE, who is in travelling dress, and shuts the door.*)

**Mrs. Linde** (*in a dejected and timid voice*). How do you do, Nora?

**Nora** (*doubtfully*). How do you do—

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8. Unit 8 (Drama: *Oedipus The King* by Sophocles- transl by Ian Johnston) 7 pages

## Translator's Note

In the following text the numbers in square brackets refer to the Greek text; the numbers without brackets refer to the English text. In the line numbering for the translated text a short indented line is normally included with the short line above it.

The translator would like to acknowledge the valuable help provided by Sir Richard Jebb's translation and commentary.

## Background Note

Sophocles (495 BC-405 BC) was a famous and successful Athenian writer of tragedies in his own lifetime. Of his 120 plays, only 7 have survived. *Oedipus the King*, also called *Oedipus Tyrannos* or *Oedipus Rex*, written around 420 BC, has long been regarded not only as his finest play but also as the purest and most powerful expression of Greek tragic drama.

Oedipus, a stranger to Thebes, became king of the city after the murder of king Laius, about fifteen or sixteen years before the start of the play. He was offered the throne because he was successful in saving the city from the Sphinx, an event referred to repeatedly in the text of the play. He married Laius' widow, Jocasta, and had four children with her, two sons, Eteocles and Polyneices, and two daughters, Antigone and Ismene.

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## Oedipus the King

## Dramatis Personae

- OEDIPUS: king of Thebes  
 PRIEST: the high priest of Thebes  
 CREON: Oedipus' brother-in-law  
 CHORUS of Theban elders  
 TEIRESIAS: an old blind prophet  
 BOY: attendant on Teiresias  
 JOCASTA: wife of Oedipus, sister of Creon  
 MESSENGER: an old man  
 SERVANT: an old shepherd  
 SECOND MESSENGER: a servant of Oedipus  
 ANTIGONE: daughter of Oedipus and Jocasta, a child  
 ISMENE: daughter of Oedipus and Jocasta, a child  
 SERVANTS and ATTENDANTS on Oedipus and Jocasta

*[The action takes place in Thebes in front of the royal palace. The main doors are directly facing the audience. There are altars beside the doors. A crowd of citizens carrying branches decorated with laurel garlands and wool and led by the PRIEST has gathered in front of the altars, with some people sitting on the altar steps.]*

*[OEDIPUS enters through the palace doors]*

## OEDIPUS

My children, latest generation born from Cadmus,<sup>1</sup>  
 why are you sitting here with wreathed sticks  
 in supplication to me, while the city  
 fills with incense, chants, and cries of pain?  
 Children, it would not be appropriate for me  
 to learn of this from any other source,

<sup>1</sup>Cadmus: legendary founder of Thebes. Hence, the citizens of Thebes were often called children of Cadmus or Cadmeians.

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so I have come in person—I, Oedipus,  
 whose fame all men acknowledge. But you there,  
 old man, tell me—you seem to be the one  
 who ought to speak for those assembled here. 10 [10]  
 What feeling brings you to me—fear or desire?  
 You can be confident that I will help.  
 I shall assist you willingly in every way.  
 I would be a hard-hearted man indeed,  
 if I did not pity suppliants like these.

## PRIEST

Oedipus, ruler of my native land,  
 you see how people here of every age  
 are crouching down around your altars,  
 some fledglings barely strong enough to fly  
 and others bent by age, with priests as well— 20  
 for I'm priest of Zeus—and these ones here,  
 the pick of all our youth. The other groups  
 sit in the market place with suppliant sticks  
 or else in front of Pallas' two shrines, 20]  
 or where Ismenus prophesies with fire.<sup>1</sup>  
 For our city, as you yourself can see,  
 is badly shaken—she cannot raise her head  
 above the depths of so much surging death.  
 Disease infects fruit blossoms in our land,  
 disease infects our herds of grazing cattle, 30  
 makes women in labour lose their children.  
 And deadly pestilence, that fiery god,  
 swoops down to blast the city, emptying  
 the House of Cadmus, and fills black Hades 30]  
 with groans and howls. These children and myself  
 now sit here by your home, not because we think  
 you're equal to the gods. No. We judge you  
 the first of men in what happens in this life  
 and in our interactions with the gods.  
 For you came here, to our Cadmeian city, 40  
 and freed us from the tribute we were paying  
 to that cruel singer—and yet you knew

<sup>1</sup>Pallas: Pallas Athena. There were two shrines to her in Thebes. Ismenus: A temple to Apollo Ismenios where burnt offerings were the basis for the priest's divination.

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no more than we did and had not been taught.<sup>1</sup>  
 In their stories, the people testify  
 how, with gods' help, you gave us back our lives.  
 So now, Oedipus, our king, most powerful [40]  
 in all men's eyes, we're here as suppliants,  
 all begging you to find some help for us,  
 either by listening to a heavenly voice,  
 or learning from some other human being. 50  
 For, in my view, men of experience  
 provide advice which gives the best results.  
 So now, you best of men, raise up our state.  
 Act to consolidate your fame, for now,  
 thanks to your eagerness in earlier days,  
 the city celebrates you as its saviour.  
 Don't let our memory of your ruling here [50]  
 declare that we were first set right again,  
 and later fell. No. Restore our city,  
 so that it stands secure. In those times past  
 you brought us joy—and with good omens, too. 60  
 Be that same man today. If you're to rule  
 as you are doing now, it's better to be king  
 in a land of men than in a desert.  
 An empty ship or city wall is nothing  
 if no men share your life together there.

OEDIPUS

My poor children, I know why you have come—  
 I am not ignorant of what you yearn for.  
 For I well know that you are ill, and yet, [60]  
 sick as you are, there is not one of you  
 whose illness equals mine. Your agony 70  
 comes to each one of you as his alone,  
 a special pain for him and no one else.  
 But the soul inside me sorrows for myself,

<sup>1</sup>... *cruel singer*: a reference to the Sphinx, a monster with the body of a lion, wings, and the head and torso of a woman. After the death of king Laius, the Sphinx tyrannized Thebes by not letting anyone into or out of the city, unless the person could answer the following riddle: "What walks on four legs in the morning, on two legs at noon, and three legs in the evening?" Those who could not answer were killed and eaten. Oedipus provided the answer (a human being), and thus saved the city. The Sphinx then committed suicide.

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and for the city, and for you—all together.  
 You are not rousing me from a deep sleep.  
 You must know I've been shedding many tears  
 and, in my wandering thoughts, exploring  
 many pathways. After a careful search 80  
 I followed up the one thing I could find  
 and acted on it. So I have sent away  
 my brother-in-law, son of Menoeceus,  
 Creon, to Pythian Apollo's shrine, [70]  
 to learn from him what I might do or say  
 to save our city. But when I count the days—  
 the time he's been away—I now worry  
 what he's doing. For he's been gone too long,  
 well past the time he should have taken.  
 But when he comes, I'll be a wicked man  
 if I do not act on all the god reveals. 90

PRIEST

What you have said is most appropriate,  
 for these men here have just informed me  
 that Creon is approaching.

OEDIPUS

Lord Apollo, [80]  
 as he returns may fine shining fortune,  
 bright as his countenance, attend on him.

PRIEST

It seems the news he brings is good—if not,  
 he would not wear that wreath around his head,  
 a laurel thickly packed with berries.<sup>1</sup>

OEDIPUS

We'll know soon enough—he's within earshot.

[Enter CREON. OEDIPUS calls to him as he approaches]

My royal kinsman, child of Menoeceus, 100  
 what message from the god do you bring us?

CREON

Good news. I tell you even troubles

<sup>1</sup>... *berries*: a suppliant to Apollo's shrine characteristically wore such a garland if he received favourable news.

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difficult to bear will all end happily  
 if events lead to the right conclusion.

OEDIPUS

What is the oracle? So far your words  
 inspire in me no confidence or fear. [90]

CREON

If you wish to hear the news in public,  
 I'm prepared to speak. Or we could step inside.

OEDIPUS

Speak out to everyone. The grief I feel  
 for these citizens is even greater 110  
 than any pain I feel for my own life.

CREON

Then let me report what I heard from the god.  
 Lord Phoebus clearly orders us to drive away  
 the polluting stain this land has harboured—  
 which will not be healed if we keep nursing it.

OEDIPUS

What sort of cleansing? And this disaster—  
 how did it happen?

CREON

By banishment— [100]  
 or atone for murder by shedding blood again.  
 This blood brings on the storm which blasts our state.

OEDIPUS

And the one whose fate the god revealed— 120  
 what sort of man is he?

CREON

Before you came, my lord,  
 to steer our ship of state, Laius ruled this land.

OEDIPUS

I have heard that, but I never saw the man.

CREON

Laius was killed. And now the god is clear:  
 those murderers, he tells us, must be punished,

10





