Second semester Minor

Macbeth

The character of Lady Macbeth

Lady Macbeth is one of Shakespeare's most famous and frightening female characters. When we first see her, she is already plotting Duncan's murder, and she is stronger, more ruthless, and more ambitious than her husband. She seems fully aware of this and knows that she will have to push Macbeth into committing murder. At one point, she wishes that she were not a woman so that she could do it herself.

This theme of the relationship between gender and power is key to Lady Macbeth's character: her husband implies that she is a masculine soul inhabiting a female body, which seems to link masculinity to ambition and violence. Shakespeare, however, seems to use her, and the witches, to undercut Macbeth's idea that "undaunted mettle should compose / Nothing but males" (1.7.73–74). These crafty women use *female* methods of achieving power—that is, manipulation—to further their supposedly male ambitions. Women, the play implies, can be as ambitious and cruel as men, yet social constraints deny them the means to pursue these ambitions on their own.
Lady Macbeth manipulates her husband with remarkable effectiveness, overriding all his objections; when he hesitates to murder, she repeatedly questions his manhood until he feels that he must commit murder to prove himself. Lady Macbeth's remarkable strength of will persists through the murder of the king—it is she who steadies her husband's nerves immediately after the crime has been perpetrated.

Afterward, however, Lady Macbeth begins a slow slide into madness—just as ambition affects her more strongly than Macbeth before the crime, so does guilt plague her more strongly afterward. By the close of the play, she has been reduced to sleepwalking through the castle, desperately trying to wash away an invisible bloodstain. Once the sense of guilt comes home to roost, Lady Macbeth's sensitivity becomes a weakness, and she is unable to cope. Significantly, she (apparently) kills herself, signaling her total inability to deal with the legacy of their crimes.

The sleepwalking scene

Act 5, Scene 1, better known as the **sleepwalking scene**, is a critically celebrated scene from William Shakespeare's tragedy *Macbeth* (1606). It deals with the guilt and madness experienced by Lady Macbeth, one of the main themes of the play.

Carrying a taper (candlestick), Lady Macbeth enters sleepwalking. The Doctor and the Gentlewoman stand aside to observe. The Doctor asks how Lady Macbeth came to have the light. The Gentlewoman replies she has ordered a light be beside her at all times (she is now afraid of the dark, having committed her crimes under its cover). Lady Macbeth rubs her hands in a washing motion. With

anguish, she recalls the deaths of King Duncan, Lady Macduff, and Banquo, then leaves. The Gentlewoman and the bewildered Doctor exeunt, realizing these are the symptoms of a guilt-ridden mind. The Doctor feels Lady Macbeth is beyond his help, saying she has more need of "the divine than the physician". He orders the Gentlewoman to remove from Lady Macbeth the "means of all annoyance", anticipating she might commit suicide. Despite his warning, the audience is informed in Act 5, Scene 5, that Lady Macbeth has managed to commit suicide off-stage.

Summary of Macbeth

Act I

On a bleak Scottish moorland, Macbeth and Banquo, two of King Duncan's generals, discover three strange women (witches). The witches prophesy that Macbeth will be promoted twice: to Thane of Cawdor (a rank of the aristocracy bestowed by grateful kings) and King of Scotland. Banquo's descendants will be kings, but Banquo isn't promised any kingdom himself. The generals want to hear more, but the "weird sisters" disappear.

Soon afterwards, King Duncan names Macbeth Thane of Cawdor as a reward for his success in the recent battles. The promotion seems to support the prophecy. The King then proposes to make a brief visit that night to Macbeth's castle at Inverness. Lady Macbeth receives news from her husband about the prophecy and his new title. She vows to help him become king by whatever means are necessary (*ominous music*).

Is this a dagger which I see before me?

— MACBETH, ACT 2 SCENE 1

Macbeth with Henry Irving Programme, 1889

Act II

Macbeth returns to his castle, followed almost immediately by King Duncan. The Macbeths plot together to kill Duncan and wait until everyone is asleep. At the appointed time, Lady Macbeth gives the guards drugged wine so Macbeth can enter and kill the King. He regrets this almost immediately, but his wife reassures him. She leaves the bloody daggers by the dead king just before Macduff, a nobleman, arrives. When Macduff discovers the murder, Macbeth kills the drunken guards in a show of rage and retribution. Duncan's sons, Malcolm and Donalbain, flee, fearing for their own lives; but they are, nevertheless, blamed for the murder.

Act III

Macbeth becomes King of Scotland but is plagued by feelings of insecurity. He remembers the prophecy that Banquo's descendants will inherit the throne and arranges for Banquo and his son

Fleance to be killed. In the darkness, Banquo is murdered, but his son escapes the assassins. At his state banquet that night, Macbeth sees the ghost of Banquo and worries the courtiers with his mad response. Lady Macbeth dismisses the court and unsuccessfully tries to calm her husband.

Act IV

Macbeth seeks out the witches who say that he will be safe until a local wood, Birnam Wood, marches into battle against him. He also need not fear anyone born of woman (that sounds secure, no loop-holes here). They also prophesy that the Scottish succession will still come from Banquo's son. Macbeth embarks on a reign of terror, slaughtering many, including Macduff's family. Macduff had gone to seek Malcolm (one of Duncan's sons who fled) at the court of the English king. Malcolm is young and unsure of himself, but Macduff, pained with grief, persuades him to lead an army against Macbeth.

By the pricking of my thumbs, something wicked this way comes

— MACBETH, ACT 4 SCENE 1

Royal Shakespeare Company, 1967

Act V

Macbeth feels safe in his remote castle at Dunsinane until he is told that Birnam Wood is moving towards him. Malcolm's army is carrying branches from the forest as camouflage for their assault on Macbeth's stronghold. Meanwhile, an overwrought and conscience-ridden Lady Macbeth walks in her sleep and tells her secrets to her doctor. She commits suicide. As the final battle commences, Macbeth hears of Lady Macbeth's suicide and mourns.

Out, damned spot!

— MACBETH, ACT 5 SCENE 1

George Skillan as Macbeth, 1920

In the midst of a losing battle, Macduff challenges Macbeth. Macbeth learns Macduff is the child of a caesarean birth (loophole!), realises he is doomed, and submits to his enemy. Macduff triumphs and brings the head of the traitor Macbeth to Malcolm. Malcolm declares peace and goes to Scone to be crowned king.

Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow

— MACBETH, ACT 5 SCENE 5

MACBETH AS A REVENGE PLAY

1. Introduction

As Macbeth and his spouse become power hungry, Macbeth creates plans to murder King Duncan. Lady Macbeth soon forces him to kill the king, and this ultimately leads to Macbeth's despair. At this point, the resentment and hatred between characters creates an even more profound feeling with many different aspects including the need for revenge and secret longings. evaluate Lady Macbeth in accordance with her husband's controversy and demonstrate Macbeth's overall suffering in the story. Macbeth schemes to murder the king in his bed and begins to reveal his murderous wishes through hallucinations and nightmares. Macbeth seems to imply that his bitterness and unspeakable desires are only justified by his wife's angry exchange. Of course, the witches spurred this discourse against her, but the act of trying on the crown and circuit, which gave Lady Macbeth her only joy, ultimately consumes the lives and ambitions of Macbeth and his spouse. The despair and guilt experienced at the beginning of the account now become intense.

1.1. Background of Macbeth

William Shakespeare's Macbeth was written in about 1606. Shakespeare was writing at a time when revenge plays were first being introduced to the stage (performance houses) in England. It is a dark, brooding, violent play that some audiences have found very convincing. Macbeth explores why people make such evil decisions, what leads them to them, and how difficult it is to escape them. The play concerns evil, revenge, betrayal, and power, which are essentially related to one another. The play's power-laden society, that is, kings, noblemen, and so on, is full of fear and suspicion, and leaves the characters, including Macbeth, feeling either threatened or threatening others. The only recognized method allowed for personal advancement and vengeance is through the violence of a duel. The play speaks of a disorder, a breaking down of social norms and values that had become unchallenged for many years. One response was to write laws that gave quick and rough justice, but the most enduring social actions are left to an unemotional, abstract, and seemingly uncaring principle of justice, under which making beastly decisions had already been taken. The concepts of revenge provide the motive for the activity of Macbeth, thereby producing a powerful effect on all characters in the play.

2. Understanding Revenge in Macbeth

Revenge is often seen as a wild, uncontrollable emotion. It is seen as bringing widely felt destruction to so many involved in the action. Because of these overwhelming issues, people often wonder what would cause one individual to act in such a way. Revenge is an emotion of giving back tit for tat. William Shakespeare's tragedy "Macbeth" is a tale of a man who can barely resist his temptation for evil and is eventually driven to his destruction by such desire and want for power. Throughout the play, the characters' revenge is seen taking a role in their lives. Understanding this is the stepping stone in trying to understand why these characters are an unavoidable force in many lives. It is seen as a force with enough supernatural power to destroy reason in those who feel it and power enough to cause a mob of people to justify and carry out a

violent act to help right the wrong. It is thought that in Macbeth's times, letting a serious wrong go unpunished was never thought of as an option. A vengeful eye for an eye style feeling was always felt towards solving very bad problems. As one can see, there were many forms of it on several different levels. It was one for crime, for payment due on a loan, for rescuing someone, for keeping a lifelong oath, for surviving after a public attack, and many more minor problems could all result in revenge being enacted. People were also seen as feeling the need to help others repay a wrong after seeing that a horrible crime was committed against them. There would have been many reasons as to why revenge was enforced with such a heavy hand. Revenge was seen as a way to help settle the score, and in the end, it would help clear a person's mind. In Macbeth, viewers can see that some of the characters live their entire lives for the revenge of others.

2.1. Definition and Forms of Revenge

Revenge, which is defined as a harmful action against a person or group in response to a real or perceived grievance, is also a basic underlying motif in the drama of early periods. The Greeks called the ensuing conflict between the two characters "Drimaticon," which later became the arena of Tragedy. It was also one of the leading genres of Romanticism in the 19th century and recreated kind of revenge in modern society. Especially a literary text can be a suitable platform for an individual's self-expression about revenge. Revenge may occur on account of several reasons such as gaining a higher position, breaking the class hierarchy, love, and circumstance. Avenging oneself from others is a way of gaining control at a given time. It can be an easily tempted action to control the circumstances. In specifying oneself, an individual needs someone to measure oneself against in deeds, to feel superior, which makes revenge a favorable action for individuals in society. This might also be defined as gaining higher positions and breaking class hierarchy. Different social rank's characters can represent the reduplicative role. Thus, leaving someone by arranging the events or performing a provocative behavior loses the meaning of the reduplicative role for the absolute redress helper. However, one of the most relevant reasons for revenge is the perception of unfairness. Before self-interest, the unfair action evokes the desire for revenge in everyone, according to area determination by Festinger in the foundation of 1954. After establishing why it is essential to speak, it is time to move to the purpose of our interest.

3. Revenge as a Motive in Macbeth

Revenge takes on a constant and dynamic role throughout the play Macbeth. It's a fascinating motive for the murderers we are first introduced to, as they try to shift from stoicism to stoicism which represents the constant recurrence of violence and revenge in the following acts. In Macbeth, the witches plant the first of these seeds in his head. As Banquo listens in on what the three old hags are saying, he asks them about his own coming fortune. This causes Macbeth to feel that since they spoke of Banquo's offspring as "kings," or at least being so to Banquo, yet Banquo expressed some doubt in the witches' words, perhaps Banquo would stand in Macbeth's way. Macbeth had convinced himself that he would be succeeded by his descendants, yet after pushing Banquo to the side and ridding himself of any rival - he attempted to annihilate Banquo even after death, as he thanked his murderers by asking that they go after Fleance as well. On the other hand, is the revenge of Lady Macbeth. The witches speaking to Macbeth about Banquo's offspring are her

source of revenge, as the witches were completely responsible for all of Lady Macbeth's misfortune. Lady Macbeth becomes power-hungry and yet, at the same time, she sets out to win that power through Macbeth. But consider that, even before the appearance of the witches, Lady Macbeth had made plans of some sort to take the throne. After Macbeth arrives in Scotland in Act I, for instance, Lady Macbeth begins in earnest to skew Macbeth's decisions about killing the king towards a definite and suitable end. So, some measure of motive lies in Lady Macbeth's intense hounding of Macbeth in the first three acts. Lady Macbeth is thus not so much about what someone would do with power as she is about what someone would do to gain that power in the first place. Lady Macbeth's evocation of revenge is an opportunistic one.

3.1. Macbeth's Motivation for Revenge

Human response to loss, and in particular the message that revenge leads to ruin, not only for the avenger but even for the innocent, is one of the most enduring themes in literature. It is treated masterfully by Shakespeare in one of his most famous works, Macbeth. Macbeth is a figure who undergoes a transformation from a military hero to a murderer. His myth of greatness then descends into terror and torment. Nevertheless, in modern society, there remains admiration for the man who stands up for his rights and, if necessary, avenges himself. This potential for greatness in a character also brings with it an offering of freedom from anguish. In his original state, Macbeth is a true hero. The evidence of this transformation is seen in his correspondence with his wife. Only after his relative success on the battlefield, being judged fit to become Thane of Cawdor, does his wife's letter arrive. The style of her letter assumes a certain pre-eminence attached to her and an intimate knowledge of her husband. Only a figure demonstrating various strengths could condescend to these too. Furthermore, the original Macbeth describes the witches as one of the fantastical objects adorning his future wife's thoughts and actions, revealing his understanding of his wife. This understanding is reciprocated by forward gleanings of his life and by a commentary that implies the lack of guile in her husband.

4. Consequences of Revenge in Macbeth

Macbeth's decision to kill Macduff's family is supported by his claim, "But I will also cause that to be most wretched upon your lineage. That is how I'll achieve peace and quiet from my hate." This description simply means that he wishes one of Banquo's descendants to be more miserable and wretched than he is himself. Yet he himself has already murdered Banquo and given orders for the murders of Lady Macduff and her children, as though their miseries are not to be compared to his own feelings. The well-being of almost all the play's characters is destroyed as a result of the revenge that all of them take. Macduff, like Macbeth, wails and mourns over the bodies of his wife and child, and seems anxious and willing to express with his limited vocabulary and means his whole soul and the depth of his pain. Every single character has some harm come to them. Malcolm becomes "king and calls the dead to come to life so that they can be unhappy." If these are the results of revenge, it is not worth taking. The description is interesting from a dramatic point of view, but it is painful and has a depressing effect on the audience. The consequences of revenge provide a profoundly anti-revenge statement. The consequences of pursuing it are not only negative (the word "insane" is the only way we can think of to describe Macbeth), but rootless and irrational.

4.1. Tragic Endings

It's difficult to know how to feel about Macbeth, although he is responsible for so many terrible things. The Witches predicted that Macbeth would first become Thane of Cawdor and then become King, but then his lineage would end under Banquo's kids. Macbeth probably thinks that he's doing the right thing for his lineage by taking out Banquo and his sons, despite the fact that he's already king by this point. But, is he really in it for his kids, or is Macbeth in his own fight for power up to his eyes? Macbeth also decides to kill Macduff's family, even though Macduff has great things to say about Malcolm's rule of Scotland. If Macbeth would have just let things be, he might have even been a Thane again instead of being killed, but that's not what happened. Macduff wants to kill Macbeth in a non-vengeful but heroic way to avenge his family, while Macbeth believes he can't be killed. In the end, Macbeth gets what's coming to him at the hands of Macduff, and Malcolm is restored to the throne. And, in Scotland, all is right again. The vengeful killings helped the good people win – this time. Other times, rage and revenge lead the good people to do the very wrong things.

5. Conclusion

To an extent, it can be said that revenge is a pivotal theme of the play, as the actions of Macbeth, Lady Macbeth, and other central characters only occur significantly, or indeed at all, as a consequence of acts of revenge or the desire to revenge. Revenge suggests the need for retaliation due to the damage or offense inflicted, often without much thought about the consequences of their actions. On another level, one of the reasons why revenge plays such a major role in the play and the action of the characters is because they mainly consist of flawed and fearful personalities. For instance, Macbeth acts to revenge his own insecurity and personal worthlessness, driven to extreme measures to apparently protect himself from existence and maintain his power. However, for all Macbeth's apparent determination and Lady Macbeth's manipulative skills, fear and guilt eventually overcome them both, leading to their downfall and tragedies, underpinning the pervasive theme of revenge within William Shakespeare's Macbeth. Therefore, the limits to the importance of the theme of revenge must be remembered. Macbeth's reign of tyranny is stopped with the avenging force of Macduff's army and Malcolm's revenge for his family's deaths, but there has been widespread suffering of many others. The last line of the play remains enigmatically appropriate, as it is strikingly unjust for the many families sucked up in Macbeth's downfall.

Minor & Discipline Specific Course (DSC)

Topic: Arms and the Man by George Bernard Shaw

1. Introduction to George Bernard Shaw

Life and Career

George Bernard Shaw (1856–1950) was an Irish playwright, critic, polemicist, and political activist. A leading figure in modern British drama, Shaw combined wit with social critique.

Philosophy and Themes

Shaw was influenced by Fabian socialism. His plays interrogate issues like class, war, marriage, and gender roles, aiming to provoke audiences into questioning societal conventions.

2. Publication and Performance History of Arms and the Man

Written in 1894 and first performed on 21 April 1894 at the Avenue Theatre, Londoyn.

The title derives from the opening line of Virgil's Aeneid ("Arma virumque cano"), but Shaw subverts the heroic tone by mocking romanticised notions of war.

3. Plot Overview

Act I

Raina Petkoff romanticises her fiancé, Major Sergius. Captain Bluntschli, a Swiss mercenary, escapes into Raina's bedroom. Raina hides him.

Act II

Sergius returns, disillusioned. Bluntschli visits to return a coat, revealing his identity.

Act III

Raina recognises her admiration for Bluntschli's honesty. The play ends with their engagement.

4. Major Characters

Raina Petkoff: Romantic but matures into a realist.

Captain Bluntschli: Pragmatic Swiss mercenary.

Major Sergius Saranoff: Brave but vain and romantic.

Catherine & Major Petkoff: Raina's parents, comical figures.

Louka & Nicola: Servants symbolising class mobility.

5. Themes

Anti-Romanticism and Realism

Bernard Shaw's Arms and the Man is well known for its sharp contrast between romantic idealism and the realistic outlook on life, war, and love. Throughout the play, Shaw challenges the false ideas promoted by romantic literature and society, replacing them with a more practical and truthful view of human affairs. Anti-romanticism and realism appear in the depiction of war, the treatment of love and marriage, and the exposure of social pretensions.

The portrayal of war in Arms and the Man strongly criticises the romantic glorification of military heroism. At the start of the play, Raina and her mother proudly admire Sergius's cavalry charge, believing it to be a noble and heroic act. However, Captain Bluntschli, the professional soldier, quickly shatters this illusion. Bluntschli speaks honestly about the actual conditions of warfare. He explains how cavalry charges are foolish and that soldiers prefer to carry chocolates instead of cartridges to survive. His statement, "Nine soldiers out of ten are born fools," directly attacks the myth of war as a noble adventure. Bluntschli's calm, practical attitude towards war stands in contrast to the exaggerated patriotism and empty glory associated with it. Through this, Shaw forces the audience to reconsider their traditional views of military honour.

Shaw also applies anti-romanticism and realism to the theme of love and marriage. Raina begins the play with a romantic image of love, seeing Sergius as a "hero" who matches the idealised lovers in novels. However, Sergius is soon revealed to be vain, flirtatious, and insincere. His secret affair with Louka proves that he is not the perfect man Raina believes him to be. On the other hand, Bluntschli, who makes no grand declarations of love and is straightforward in his conversation, slowly earns Raina's respect and affection. Their relationship is based on mutual understanding and truth rather than false admiration and social expectation. The eventual pairing of Raina and Bluntschli shows Shaw's belief in realistic relationships where honesty and practicality are more valuable than romantic fantasy.

Social class and social pretensions also undergo criticism through the realistic approach of the play. The Petkoff family takes pride in their wealth and status, often making exaggerated claims about their modern house and important position in society. Catherine Petkoff is particularly concerned about appearances and maintaining social superiority. However, Louka, the maidservant, challenges this hierarchy by openly criticising the behaviour of her masters and aiming to marry Sergius, a man of higher class. Shaw shows that class divisions are artificial and that personal qualities matter more than social rank. Louka's ambition and eventual success in marrying Sergius demonstrate a realistic understanding of social mobility, which contrasts with the rigid and outdated social structures celebrated in romantic narratives.

The language and dialogue of the play also reflect realism. Shaw avoids poetic speeches and flowery language. Instead, he gives his characters sharp, witty, and natural dialogue that reflects how people actually speak. Bluntschli's blunt and

humorous remarks break the artificial tone often found in romantic dramas. His casual manner makes the audience see how unrealistic and theatrical the behaviour of characters like Raina and Sergius can be. This stylistic choice reinforces Shaw's anti-romantic purpose and grounds the play in the realities of everyday life.

War and Heroism

Bernard Shaw's Arms and the Man offers a sharp criticism of conventional ideas of war and heroism that were popular in both literature and society during his time. Through his witty dialogue and realistic characters, Shaw exposes the false glorification of war and challenges the traditional image of the heroic soldier. The play presents war not as a grand and noble adventure, but as a dangerous, foolish, and often absurd activity driven by mistakes and accidents.

Sergius Saranoff is introduced as the model of romantic heroism. He has led a cavalry charge that is considered brave and glorious by Raina and her family. To them, Sergius is the perfect example of a military hero. Raina calls him her "hero of the cavalry charge," and Catherine speaks proudly of his victory. However, as the play progresses, Shaw gradually undermines Sergius's image. It is revealed that Sergius's charge succeeded only because the enemy had the wrong ammunition and could not defend themselves properly. This fact exposes the emptiness of so-called heroism, as the success was not due to skill or courage, but to pure luck and enemy incompetence.

Captain Bluntschli, in contrast to Sergius, represents Shaw's realistic view of war. Bluntschli is a professional soldier who understands the brutal and foolish nature of warfare. His matter-of-fact attitude and ironic remarks strip away the romantic illusions of battle. He tells Raina that cavalry charges are "the most laughable thing in the world," and admits that he carries chocolates instead of cartridges to keep his energy up. His famous line about soldiers — "Nine soldiers out of ten are born fools" — directly attacks the popular image of brave and honourable warriors. Bluntschli's practical and honest attitude shows that survival and efficiency, not glory and heroism, are what really matter in war.

Shaw uses humour and irony to strengthen his argument. The fact that Bluntschli survives the war and prospers while Sergius, the so-called hero, is shown as vain, uncertain, and even ridiculous, highlights the weakness of romantic notions of war. Sergius himself begins to feel disillusioned when he says, "Soldiering is the coward's art of attacking mercilessly when you are strong, and keeping out of harm's way when you are weak." His confession shows that even he recognises the gap between the reality of military life and the ideals he pretended to follow.

The idea of heroism is also criticised in personal relationships. Sergius, despite being praised as a war hero, behaves dishonourably by flirting with Louka, betraying his engagement to Raina. Bluntschli, who never claims to be a hero, behaves with more honesty and integrity throughout the play. By contrasting these two men, Shaw suggests that real heroism lies not in dramatic gestures on the battlefield, but in truthfulness, rationality, and respect for others.

Shaw's anti-romantic approach to war and heroism also extends to the way the characters talk about military leadership and strategy. Major Petkoff, supposedly a senior officer, is confused about basic military matters and struggles with simple things like folding a coat. His ignorance and laziness further show how military leaders are often unqualified and concerned more with comfort and appearances than with competence. Through such comic moments, Shaw criticises not only individual ideas of heroism but also the institutions that celebrate and reward them.

Gender Roles and Feminism

In Arms and the Man, Bernard Shaw challenges the traditional gender roles of 19th-century European society and presents progressive ideas that anticipate modern feminist thought. Through his female characters—Raina, Catherine, and Louka—Shaw questions the expectations placed upon women and highlights their capacity for independence, intelligence, and social mobility.

Raina, at first, seems to fit the conventional image of the romantic, upper-class woman. She sees herself as the delicate and idealistic fiancée of a heroic soldier. However, her encounter with Captain Bluntschli begins to break down these illusions. Bluntschli treats her not as a fragile figure but as a capable individual, and their honest conversation allows Raina to move beyond the artificial role that society expects her to play. Gradually, Raina shows wit, curiosity, and a desire for truth, rejecting the false ideals of romantic love and hero worship. By the end of the play, her decision to marry Bluntschli, a practical man of the middle class, instead of the aristocratic Sergius, reflects her independence of mind and her willingness to step outside traditional gender expectations.

Catherine Petkoff, Raina's mother, at first glance appears to be a typical matron concerned with family honour and social status. However, she also displays qualities of strong-mindedness and authority within the household. She manages affairs with confidence and often directs her husband, Major Petkoff, who is portrayed as less competent. Her admiration for Sergius's military achievements and her pride in the family's wealth reflect her internalisation of social values, but Shaw gives her enough intelligence and control to suggest that women, even within conventional roles, exercise considerable influence.

The character of Louka provides the most direct challenge to traditional gender and class roles. As a maidservant, Louka is expected to be obedient and humble. However, she is bold, outspoken, and ambitious. She openly criticises her masters and refuses to accept the limits imposed on her because of her gender and class. Her refusal to be treated as inferior and her determination to rise socially through her relationship with Sergius make her a powerful figure of resistance. Unlike Nicola, who accepts his servant status, Louka fights for recognition and equality. Her eventual success in forcing Sergius to marry her can be seen as a victory against both gender and class oppression. Through Louka, Shaw highlights the idea that women, regardless of their position in society, have the right to assert themselves and seek better lives.

Sergius's treatment of women also exposes the double standards of patriarchal society. While publicly engaged to Raina, he privately flirts with Louka, showing that men often expect women to follow rules that they themselves break. Louka's sharp remarks reveal this hypocrisy, and her victory over Sergius underlines Shaw's criticism of male dominance and romanticised views of women's roles.

Shaw's presentation of gender roles is further emphasised by his realistic and direct dialogue, which avoids sentimentalism. His female characters are not passive or purely decorative figures; they are intelligent, active

participants in shaping their own destinies. By giving women strong voices and allowing them to defy expectations, Shaw anticipates the arguments of later feminist thinkers who called for equality, self-respect, and social reform.

6. Language, Style, and Structure

Wit and Satire, Problem Play, Realistic Dialogue, Three-Act Structure

7. Critical Interpretations

Shaw critiques Victorian ideals, Comedy of Ideas

8. Important Quotations (For Examination)

“What use are cartridges in battle? I always carry chocolate instead.” — Bluntschli

“I think we two have found the higher love.” — Sergius

“Soldiering is the coward’s art.” — Bluntschli

“I want to be treated as a woman.” — Louka

“You hero! You chocolate-cream soldier!” — Raina

9. Arms and the Man in Context

Fabian Influence and European Politics context

10. Examination-Oriented Key Points

Shaw’s philosophy: Fabian socialism; realism

Character of Bluntschli: Rational, humane

Themes: Anti-romanticism, war, class, gender

Setting: Bulgaria, Serbo-Bulgarian War

Language & Style: Satire, irony, wit

Raina’s development: Romantic to realist

11. Suggested Long Questions

Discuss Arms and the Man as an anti-romantic comedy.

Analyse Bluntschli's role in challenging romantic notions of war.

Examine Shaw's treatment of social class and gender roles.

Evaluate the significance of the title Arms and the Man.

12. Suggested Short Questions

How does Bluntschli differ from Sergius?

Why is Bluntschli called a "chocolate-cream soldier"?

What is the role of Louka?

How does Shaw use humour to criticise romantic ideals?

Captain Bluntschli

Captain Bluntschli is arguably the central figure in George Bernard Shaw's Arms and the Man, serving as the primary vehicle through which Shaw deconstructs the romantic illusions surrounding war and heroism. A Swiss professional soldier fighting as a mercenary for the Serbian army, Bluntschli introduces a pragmatic and anti-romantic worldview that sharply contrasts with the idealistic characters around him. His famous declaration that he carries chocolates instead of cartridges exposes the absurdity of conventional notions of military glory.

Bluntschli's realism is a conscious choice shaped by his experiences of warfare. He believes that survival and rationality, not flamboyant bravado, define a good soldier. This stance unsettles Raina Petkoff, who has been steeped in romantic fantasies about war and heroism. However, it is precisely Bluntschli's honesty, intelligence, and grounded nature that eventually captivate her. Through his interaction with the Petkoff family and Sergius, Bluntschli's views on competence, class, and love challenge both military and social pretensions.

Bluntschli is also significant as a symbol of cosmopolitan rationalism, transcending nationalistic fervor. His neutral Swiss identity reflects Shaw's own Fabian socialist belief in rational, cross-border solutions to human problems. Bluntschli's practicality extends beyond the battlefield to civil life; his inheritance of a hotel business at the play's end signifies his rootedness in reality and competence.

In summary, Captain Bluntschli is a modern realist hero who shatters traditional notions of war, romance, and social hierarchy, embodying Shaw's rationalist ideals and providing the intellectual backbone of the play.

Major Sergius Saranoff

Major Sergius Saranoff is a complex figure in Arms and the Man, representing the archetypal romantic hero whose grandeur is steadily undermined by the realities of human folly and Shaw's incisive wit. As a Bulgarian officer and Raina Petkoff's fiancé, Sergius initially appears as a gallant and dashing figure, admired for his reckless charge that wins a battle. However, Shaw quickly reveals that Sergius's victory was more accidental than skilful, exposing the disconnect between appearance and reality.

Sergius embodies a romantic idealism that manifests both in his approach to war and in his understanding of love. He views courtship and honour in theatrical terms, striving to live up to outdated codes of chivalry and masculinity. Yet, as the play progresses, Sergius grows disillusioned. He realises that military honour is hollow and that societal expectations, particularly regarding class and marriage, are constraining.

His flirtation with Louka, a servant, highlights his internal contradictions. While publicly bound to Raina and aristocratic decorum, he is attracted to Louka's assertiveness and disregard for class boundaries. This subplot reveals Sergius's yearning for authenticity, which contrasts sharply with his superficial romantic gestures.

Sergius ultimately represents the transition from obsolete romantic heroism to a more self-aware modernity. His decision to pursue Louka and relinquish Raina indicates his acceptance of personal truth over social performance. Shaw uses Sergius both to critique romanticised ideals and to suggest the potential for individuals to grow beyond their social conditioning.

Raina Petkoff

Raina Petkoff, the heroine of Bernard Shaw's Arms and the Man, is a young woman from a wealthy Bulgarian family. Her character plays a central role in exploring Shaw's themes of romantic idealism, realism, and social hypocrisy. Through Raina's journey from naïve romanticism to mature understanding, Shaw not only criticises the false ideals of war and love but also shows the growth of a woman who is capable of questioning social conventions.

At the beginning of the play, Raina appears as a typical romantic heroine. She is deeply influenced by the ideals of love and bravery that she has read in novels and heard from her social surroundings. Her engagement to Sergius Saranoff, a man who has just led a successful cavalry charge, feeds her fantasies about heroic soldiers and noble battles. When she says, “My hero! My hero!”, it is clear that she admires Sergius not as a real person but as a symbol of the perfect romantic hero she dreams about. Shaw uses Raina’s character here to represent the upper-class people of the time who had false, exaggerated ideas about war and romance.

However, Raina’s character begins to change when Captain Bluntschli, a professional Swiss soldier, enters her bedroom seeking shelter. Bluntschli, unlike Sergius, speaks practically and honestly about the harsh realities of war. He tells her that soldiers often carry chocolates instead of cartridges and that war is not as glorious as people think. Although Raina is shocked at first, she also becomes curious and gradually realises that her ideas about war and heroism are childish. This moment marks the beginning of her transformation from an idealist to a realist.

Raina also undergoes a personal transformation in terms of her views on love and relationships. Her relationship with Sergius, though socially approved, lacks depth and honesty. Sergius’s flirtation with her maid Louka further exposes his flaws and shakes Raina’s belief in romantic perfection. In contrast, her growing friendship with Bluntschli is based on truthfulness and mutual respect. Bluntschli does not flatter her like Sergius; instead, he treats her as an equal and challenges her to think critically. This allows Raina to drop her false airs and become more genuine. By the end of the play, she chooses Bluntschli over Sergius, symbolising her rejection of shallow romantic ideals in favour of a more realistic and fulfilling relationship.

Another important aspect of Raina’s character is her intelligence and independence. Even though she starts as a dreamer, she is not afraid to make bold decisions. She shelters an enemy soldier, lies to protect him, and finally decides to marry a man outside her social class. These actions show that Raina is not just a passive character but someone who has the courage to follow her heart and challenge societal expectations.

In conclusion, Raina Petkoff is a well-rounded character whose personal journey reflects Shaw’s criticism of romantic idealism and social pretensions. Through her interactions with Bluntschli, she moves from naïve fantasies to a mature understanding of life and love. Raina’s character teaches readers and audiences the importance of honesty, realism, and personal growth. She represents Shaw’s modern heroine—intelligent, independent, and capable of shaping her own destiny.

Minor Characters

Catherine Petkoff

Catherine Petkoff, Raina's mother, is a typical upper-class Bulgarian woman. Like her daughter, she is impressed by the romantic ideas of war and nobility. She proudly speaks about the Petkoff family's wealth and their modern house with a library and an electric bell. Catherine represents the social pretensions of the upper class, who often exaggerate their sophistication and importance. Her excitement about Sergius's military victory and her concern for social status show how deeply she believes in appearances. However, Shaw portrays her with humour and irony, making the audience aware of her limited understanding of the real world. Catherine's character helps to expose the false pride and shallow values of the aristocratic class.

Louka

Louka, the maidservant, is one of the most significant minor characters because she challenges the rigid class system. Unlike Nicola, who accepts his lower position, Louka is bold and ambitious. She openly criticises the hypocrisy of the upper class and dreams of rising above her social status. Her relationship with Sergius, though scandalous, highlights the gap between social appearance and private behaviour. Sergius, a nobleman, flirts with Louka even while being engaged to Raina, exposing his own double standards. Louka's intelligence, confidence, and defiance make her an important character who questions the established social order. By the end of the play, she succeeds in forcing Sergius to marry her, which represents a symbolic victory over class barriers.

Nicola

Nicola, the manservant, is a contrast to Louka. He is practical, obedient, and careful not to offend his masters. Nicola believes that servants should stay in their place and behave respectfully, even if they are treated unfairly. He advises Louka to control her ambition and avoid attracting trouble. Nicola's character reflects the traditional view of social hierarchy, where people are expected to accept their position in society. However, Shaw presents him not as a fool but as a shrewd man who understands how to survive within the system. His plan to open a shop with the money he earns shows his quiet ambition and business sense. Nicola adds to the realism of the play by representing the voice of common sense and social convention.

Major Paul Petkoff

Major Paul Petkoff, Raina's father, adds humour and lightness to the play. He is a good-natured but somewhat lazy and simple man, who is more interested in comfort than in military matters. His confusion about how to fold a coat and his surprise at modern inventions like an electric bell provide comic relief. Like Catherine, Major Petkoff takes pride in his family's status, but he is less pretentious and more easy-going. His interactions with Bluntschli reveal his lack of

understanding of military strategy, which further emphasises Shaw's criticism of incompetent leaders. Major Petkoff's character highlights the gap between social reputation and actual ability, a key theme in the play.

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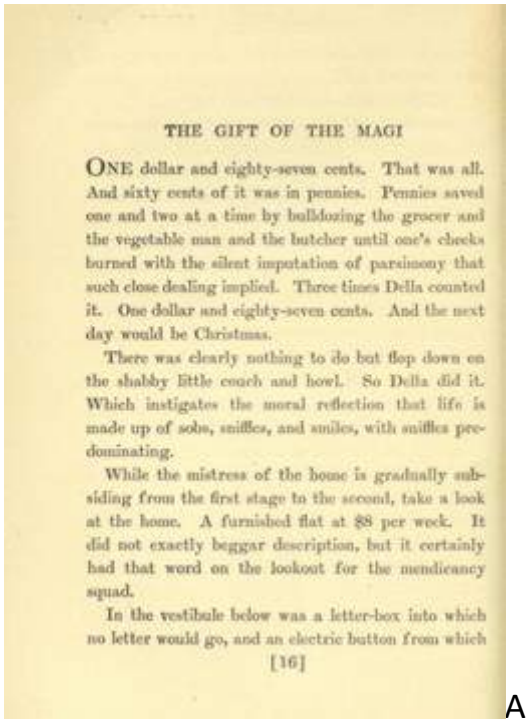
Second Semester LCC

The Gift of the Magi-O'Henry

Plot



THE GIFT OF THE MAGI

ONE dollar and eighty-seven cents. That was all. And sixty cents of it was in pennies. Pennies saved one and two at a time by bulldozing the grocer and the vegetable man and the butcher until one's cheeks burned with the silent imputation of parsimony that such close dealing implied. Three times Della counted it. One dollar and eighty-seven cents. And the next day would be Christmas.

There was clearly nothing to do but flop down on the shabby little couch and howl. So Della did it. Which instigates the moral reflection that life is made up of sobs, sniffles, and smiles, with sniffles predominating.

While the mistress of the house is gradually subsiding from the first stage to the second, take a look at the home. A furnished flat at $8 per week. It did not exactly beggar description, but it certainly had that word on the lookout for the mendicancy squad.

In the vestibule below was a letter-box into which no letter would go, and an electric button from which

[16]

Appearance in the 1906 anthology *The Four Million*, page 16

On Christmas Eve, a woman named Della Dillingham Young discovers that she has only $1.87 (equivalent to about $70 in 2025) to buy a present for her husband James, also known as Jim. Despite being poor, the Dillingham Youngs love each other and possess two items they value as treasures: Della's knee-length brown hair that would depreciate the Queen of Sheba's jewels, and Jim's gold pocket watch, a family heirloom that would make King Solomon envy him.

Della dresses warmly and visits the nearby shop of a wig maker, Madame Sofronie, who buys Della's hair for $20 (about $785 in 2025). Della then uses the money to buy a platinum fob chain to go with Jim's watch, which he has attached with a worn leather strap. When Jim comes home from work that evening, Della admits that she sold her hair to buy him the chain. Jim gives Della her present, a set of ornamental combs, which she cannot use until her hair grows back out. Della gives Jim the watch chain, and he tells her that he sold his watch to buy the combs. While they know the gifts they gave each other cannot be used for a while, Jim and Della realize how far they went to show each other

their love and how invaluable it truly is. The story ends with the narrator declaring that those who sacrifice their material possessions for the people they love are as wise as the magi.

The Ending of the gift of the magi

O. Henry is known for his "twist endings," and the ending of "The Gift of the Magi" is probably the most famous of them all. At the end of the story Della cuts and sells her hair to buy Jim a chain for his watch, and Jim sells his watch to buy Della combs for her hair. Here we have a classic case of *irony*. The determination to find the perfect gift leads each character to make a sacrifice; that sacrifice makes each gift useless. The result is the exact opposite of what Jim and Della intended. What makes this ending so bittersweet is that it only comes about *because* they acted on their intentions: their gifts wouldn't have been useless if they hadn't given up their prize possessions. And since we follow only Della in the story, we don't know what has happened until the very end, during the exchange itself. It's the sudden, unexpected irony, which only strikes at the very end that makes the ending a *twist*.

Now that we've talked about what makes the ending a twist, let's ask another question: how do we *feel* about the ending? From one perspective, it's disastrous. Jim and Della seem much better off before the gift exchange. At the end, they have exchanged their most prized possessions to buy each other gifts that are now useless. Their original possessions – the watch and the hair – were valuable on their own. Not only that, their original possessions seem more precious because they were *theirs* – Jim's watch was a family heirloom passed down from his granddad, and Della's hair was literally a part of Della. Their gifts, on the other hand, are just new store-bought things that have no special connection to either person. Since each person wanted to buy the other the perfect gift, this means they have both failed colossally.

But then there's the narrator's perspective in that last paragraph, according to which the gifts they've given each other are the "wisest" gifts of all, the "gifts of the magi." If we agree, then of course they've succeeded in what they wanted to do. Both Jim and Della have shown that they're willing to sacrifice the most valuable thing they have to give something to the other. That makes their "useless" gifts incredibly valuable after all: the selfless love each feels for the other is embodied in those gifts. As long as they have the gifts, they'll be able to remember it. That kind of thing can't be bought. And it makes the gifts even more special and personal than what they replaced.

Which leads us to another point. Before the exchange, Jim and Della each had one prize possession. Each possession was valuable on its own and belonged to each person individually. The watch was Jim's, and the hair was Della's. Both possessions are sacrificed. In the exchange, each gains something new, which doesn't have any sentimental value as a token of their love for each other. That love isn't

something they have as individuals, it's something they share *together*. So in the gift exchange, the two of them come closer together in a very concrete way.

Old Man at the Bridge: Hemingway

In “Old Man at the Bridge,” the **narrator**—a soldier in the Spanish Civil War—tries to convince an **old man** sitting on the side of the road to get himself to safety before the fighting arrives. While the narrator clearly worries that the old man will die if he stays there, the old man isn’t worried about his own safety; instead, he worries aloud about the **animals** he left behind when he fled his hometown. Both the old man and the narrator, then, are concerned with the survival of others (the old man about the animals, and the narrator about the old man). However, for both men, this concern is futile—after all, the animals have been abandoned, and the narrator walks away from the old man at the end of the story because there was “nothing to do about him.” In this way, Hemingway shows the horror of war without even depicting any bloodshed. War takes lives ravenously and senselessly, even those not directly involved in the fighting, and it leaves people devaluing life, unable to perform even the simplest acts of salvation.

From the outset, Hemingway is clear that the war—while still somewhat distant—is ominously approaching. In the opening scene, for instance, many exhausted people are fleeing across the pontoon bridge. The “carts, trucks, and men, women and children” are “stagger[ing]” and “plodd[ing] along in the ankle deep dust,” all of them “heading out of it all.” If there’s any doubt as to what they’re fleeing, the narrator quickly notes that his job is crossing the bridge to “find out to what point the enemy had advanced,” making it clear that the violence of war has not yet arrived, but it is coming. While the narrator gives no emotional commentary about this approaching violence, the atmosphere is one of anxiety and dread, and his concern for the old man—his repeated urging that the man continue on to safety—betrays that he believes the man will die if he remains there.

For the old man, however, the cost of war is not simply his life, since by the time the story begins, the war has already taken what matters most to him. When the old man tells the narrator the name of his hometown, “it gave him pleasure to mention it and he smiled.” This is the only time that the story depicts a positive emotion, and it is associated with the memory of the town the old man has since fled (presumably for good) due to artillery fire. Therefore, even this small moment of happiness is merely

an indication of what the man has lost. Furthermore, when he fled his hometown, the old man had to leave behind the animals for which he had been caring: two goats, a cat, and four pairs of pigeons. It's clear that this duty was important to him, because he was "the last one to leave" once the town was evacuated. Presumably, he stayed to care for the animals long past the moment when it was wise to flee. The other emotion that Hemingway flags in the story is the old man's anxiety over the animals—he says to himself that, "There is no need to be unquiet about the cat. But the others. Now what do you think about the others?" Clearly, the man is "unquiet" about all of these animals. The danger they're in torments him, and he worries about them more than he worries about his own life, which is endangered by his decision to sit by the road instead of fleeing. To him, though, the weight of what he has lost seems more important than what he might lose—his life—by remaining by the bridge.

While the narrator does try to get the old man to safety, his efforts and sympathy are much less than the old man's acute concern for the animals. This begins to suggest the dehumanizing aspects of being involved in war. For example, the narrator doesn't seem to take the old man's concern for the animals seriously. When he tries to comfort the old man that the animals will "come through it all right," the old man asks, "You think so?" and the narrator's blasé and insincere response is, "Why not." Clearly, in the face of war, the narrator finds himself unable to relate to a concern for animal life. Furthermore, the whole time the narrator is speaking with the old man, he doesn't seem to be listening. Twice in a row the narrator asks the man what animals he left, and while the repetition might be because the man was vague in his first response, the narrator is explicitly thinking about the approaching battle while the old man speaks, which makes it plausible that he simply hasn't heard the man respond. Even while asking emotionally fraught questions, the narrator's mind is elsewhere: "'And you have no family?' I asked, watching the far end of the bridge where a few last carts were hurrying down the slope of the bank." Therefore, even though the narrator is earnestly trying to get the man to move, he is not relating to him as a person, which is perhaps why he gives up on the man quickly, stating that there was "nothing to do about him." Tragically, it seems that proximity to war has also made the old man devalue his own life, while the narrator—a soldier whose job is to kill the enemy—has seemingly begun to disregard the lives of others.

Hemingway notes at the end of the story that the day is Easter Sunday—the day of Christ's resurrection, which evokes the possibility of eternal salvation for mankind. By contrast, while these two men both clearly desire to save lives (whether animal or human), the circumstances of war make them unable to succeed in even simple acts of salvation: caring for animals or making an old man cross a bridge. If Christ gave his life for mankind, while these men have begun to devalue life itself, then Hemingway suggests that the battlefield is a place without humanity or redemption.

The animals of the old man at the Bridge

On returning to the bridge the narrator meets an old man, the last person to leave the town ahead. The seventy-six year old man says that he was forced to leave his animals - two goats, a cat, and four pairs of pigeons. The old man keeps returning to the fate of his animals.

The character of the old man in old man at the Bridge

The old man, the story's central character, has fled his hometown to escape the encroaching violence of the Spanish Civil War. Throughout the story, he is sitting by the side of the road, exhausted from attempting to travel to safety and feeling that he can no longer go on. When the narrator (a soldier) stops to try to convince him to move along to a safer place, the old man reveals that he was reluctant to leave his hometown (the very mention of which is the only thing in the story that makes him happy) because he was the caretaker for a number of **animals** who might not survive without him. While at first he risked his life to stay and care for them, he evidently valued his own life enough to leave them behind when a captain ordered him to evacuate because of artillery fire. The old man says that he has no family, doesn't know anyone in Barcelona (where the fleeing masses are heading), and has no politics, and therefore no stake in the war. Without his animals, he has no great reason to live, and he tries and fails to walk again when the narrator urges him to keep moving towards safety. Feeling that he cannot help the man, the narrator moves on, concluding that the only luck the old man would ever have was that his cat, at least, was likely to survive, and that the enemy planes were grounded for the moment. Presumably, the old man is left to die.

A Telephone Call-Dorothy Parker

"The Telephone Call" Introduction

"The Telephone Call" appears in Fleur Adcock's collection *The Incident Book* (1986). It describes a mysterious phone call from "Universal Lotteries," an organization claiming that the speaker has won their grand prize. When the callers finally admit the speaker hasn't won any money, they claim the true "prize" was the memorable "experience" of the call itself. The poem can be read as a miniature fable about ordinary disappointment, suggesting that human experience always falls short of our wildest

hopes. **Metaphorically** speaking, we never win the lottery; at best, we get to entertain the fantasy for a while.

“The Telephone Call” Summary

A group identifying themselves as "Universal Lotteries" calls the speaker's phone and asks if they're sitting down (i.e., ready to hear major news). The callers claim the speaker has won the "Special" grand prize in their "Global" lottery. The callers ask how the speaker might spend the prize, which is a million British pounds. They clarify that it's *over* a million pounds, noting with amusement that the distinction doesn't matter much when the amount of money is so huge.

The callers ask if the speaker is feeling all right and if they're still on the phone. They urge the speaker to share their emotions. The speaker stammers that they're in disbelief. The callers say that everyone reacts that way and urges them to continue. The speaker says they're as lightheaded as if the crown of their head has flown off through the window, spinning like a spaceship.

The callers note that this is a strange feeling and ask the speaker to continue. The speaker says that they're getting choked up, that they have dry mouth, and that their nose itches as if they're about to sneeze or burst into tears. The callers assure the speaker that they shouldn't be embarrassed to let their feelings show; after all, it's rare to hear that you're about to become a millionaire.

The callers urge the speaker to let their tears flow for a minute. But the speaker tells them to wait, objects that it's been years since they entered a lottery, and skeptically asks the callers to repeat the name of their organization. Amused, the callers say it doesn't matter that the speaker hasn't entered a lottery lately. Their organization's name is "Universal," and they use a retroactive system ("Module").

Most people have entered a lottery at some point, and they're all eligible for Universal's prize, because Universal purchases all past lottery entries and uses a computer program to draw a winner from them. The speaker expresses wonderment but says they won't fully believe their luck until they've received their prize check.

The callers say they won't be sending any prize check. When the speaker asks about the monetary award, the callers say their lottery doesn't actually hand out money: it hands out "Experiences." The callers claim the phone call itself has been an incredible, thrilling, memorable experience; that's what the speaker has won. The callers congratulate the speaker, add a pleasant goodbye, and hang up.

“The Telephone Call” Themes

Hope and Disappointment

In "The Telephone Call," a group of mysterious callers claims that the speaker has won the lottery and become a millionaire. The speaker is skeptical, since they haven't entered a lottery recently, but they display some joy and hope even as they question the callers. Eventually, the callers admit it's all a hoax; instead of "money," they explain, they provide "Experiences," and they've given the speaker a memorable one. By this time, the speaker has fallen for the fantasy just enough to make the reality a bitter anticlimax. The poem illustrates, then, how easy it is to give into unrealistic hopes—and how doing so can make inevitable disappointment all the more crushing.

Even though the speaker suspects their amazing luck is too good to be true, they get partly swept up in hope—and correspondingly disappointed. On hearing that they've won "the top prize" in the lottery, the speaker's first response is, "I just… I can't believe it!" The stammering exclamation suggests they're already feeling happy, even if skepticism prevents them from being overjoyed. When the callers urge the speaker to "giv[e] way to your emotions," the speaker gets choked up and feels as if they might "cry." Throughout the call, the speaker remains a little doubtful—"I'll believe it when I see the cheque"—so when there turns out to be no cheque, they're at least partly prepared. Yet joy has started to overtake their rational doubts. The fact that they indulge in *some* irrational hope shows that even skeptics are liable to do so.

The poem casts this cycle of guarded hope and predictable disappointment as universal: part of the "experience" all humans share. When the speaker's initial reaction is "I can't believe it!" the callers reply, "That's what they all say." This might suggest that it's common to distrust amazing news, since most people know firsthand that such news is often false. But "I can't believe it!" is also a joyous exclamation that betrays some *desire* to believe—and this, too, is part of human nature.

Similarly, the hoaxers claim that the speaker must have entered a lottery *some*time: "Nearly everyone's bought a ticket / In some lottery or another, / Once at least." **Metaphorically**, this claim implies that we all indulge wild hopes at some point, and can feel stung by their failure to come true even when we're no longer young and optimistic. The company's name, "Universal Lotteries," hints at this same idea. The callers even say, "We're Universal," as if implying that everyone goes through the roller coaster of hope at some point.

Joyous hope followed by a letdown may not be "Exciting," as the callers claim, but the poem suggests that it *is* a kind of universal "prize." It's something we're all dealt as players in the game of life.

Illusions vs. Experience

After revealing that the speaker hasn't won any money in the lottery, the callers in "The Telephone Call" claim that the real "prize" was "a great experience." This phrase evokes an age-old literary theme: the journey from ignorance, innocence, or illusion to *experience*, as in hard-won wisdom. In this case, however, experience is such an obviously anticlimatic "prize" (compared to the riches originally promised) that the poem ends up mocking its value. Experience, the poem implies, isn't inherently "great"; some illusions are even preferable to harsh lessons and painful memories.

Although the speaker never quite falls for the illusory lottery news, even their cautious hope clearly improves their mood. When asked to describe their emotions, the speaker feels as if their head has flown off "like a flying saucer," and the callers reply, "That's unusual." The news makes the speaker feel something remarkable, even if it's not full-blown euphoria. The callers then encourage the speaker to emote more, explaining: "It isn't every day you hear / You're going to get a million pounds." The speaker won't be getting that money, but just "hear[ing]" they will—just the brief illusion—has the power to produce an emotional high. In fact, while the speaker's better judgement continues to nag at them, they start to feel some giddiness ("that's incredible [...] It's marvelous") mixed in with their doubts.

By contrast, the "experience" the speaker wins as a "prize" is sourly anticlimactic—and reminiscent of more familiar forms of disappointment. After revealing their hoax, the callers ask: "You've had a great experience, right? / Exciting? Something you'll remember? / That's your prize."

The **irony** is clear: whatever innocent "Excit[ement]" the speaker may have felt has now been ruined by reality. And no one actually enjoys "remember[ing]" a major letdown! The "prize" of "experience" is not only far worse than a million pounds, it's worse than the speaker's unassuming pre-phone-call state. Rather than share their feelings about their supposed prize, the speaker says nothing to the callers, then flatly reports, "the line went dead." **Metaphorically**, this detail may suggest that their *emotions* have gone dead: whatever happiness they were feeling has evaporated. Experience hasn't left them happier or wiser, just numb and silent (the poem ends here).

Cruel as the letdown is, it's also, in a sense, perfectly ordinary. The disappointed speaker is no worse off financially than they were before the phone call and no worse off than millions of lottery losers. For most people, not winning the lottery—literally or metaphorically—*is* an "every day" event, even if they

don't get the news via telephone! In that sense, the speaker's harsh "experience" is just a heightened or **allegorical** version of normal human experience.

In short, the poem's closing ironies show that "experience" has no inherent positive value. Though the callers chirp, "Have a nice day!" it's clear that the speaker's day would have been better *without* this "experience." If anything, the "Call" calls attention to the relative poverty of a life the speaker had been basically content with. (They mention that they "[hadn't] bought a lottery ticket / for years and years.") Even when experiences are memorable, they can be disappointing and deadening.

How a client was saved----- M K Gandhi

Introduction of How a client was saved

The lesson “How a client was saved” is an excerpt from Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi’s autobiography “My experiments with truth”. In the story we have Parsi Rustomji, Gandhi’s client and co-worker. Despite his illness he would seek Gandhi’s aid.

Once Rustomji got trapped into a very tight corner related to smuggling. He was a large importer of goods from Bombay and Calcutta, and resorted to smuggling. Being on the best terms with the customs officials, no one was inclined to suspect him.

The tight corner

Rustomji immediately rushed to Gandhi and informed him that he had smuggled and he was ill-fated as he would go to jail and be ruined. He seeked help from him to which Gandhi suggested the way to confession.

Being nervous Rustomji asked the proper guidance from Gandhi as he was scared to confess anything. The inquiry revealed that smuggling had been going on for a long period of time and the case would be tried by a jury, and a Natal jury would be the last to acquit an Indian.

Rustomji wanted to be guided by Mr Gandhi’s advice in this case. Gandhi went to Rustomji and advised him to pay the penalty,the authorities fixed, and the odds that would be agreeable because the case laid to Customs Officers.But if they were not, then he must be prepared to go to jail. Gandhi suggested that Imprisonment should be regarded as a penance.

The solution

Gandhi met the Customs Officer and fearlessly informed him of the whole affair. He even assured to place all the books at his disposal and told him how Parsi Rustomji felt.The Customs Officer told that he must be guided by the Attorney General. Gandhi requested them not to insist on dragging Rustomji into the court. He then met with the Attorney- General.

The case against Parsi Rustomji was settled by a compromise by paying a penalty equal to twice the amount he had confessed to having smuggled. Rustomji reduced to writing the facts of the whole case, got the paper framed and hung it up in his office to serve as a everlasting reminder to his heirs and fellow merchants.

Rustomji could not even imagine that what would have happened if he had deceived Gandhi.

The story of How a client was Saved

How a client was saved

The reader, by now, will be quite familiar with Parsi Rustomji's name. He was one who became at once my client and co-worker, or perhaps it would be truer to say that he first became co-worker and then client. I won his confidence to such an extent that he sought and followed my advice also in private domestic matters. Even when he was ill, he would seek my aid, and though there was much difference between our ways of living, he did not hesitate to accept my quack treatment.

This friend once got into a very bad scrape. Though he kept me informed of most of his affairs, he had studiously kept back one thing. He was a large importer of goods from Bombay and Calcutta, and not infrequently he resorted to smuggling. But as he was on the best terms with customs officials, no one was inclined to suspect him. In charging duty, they used to take his invoices on trust. Some might even have connived at the smuggling.

But to use the telling simile of the Gujarati poet Akho, theft like quicksilver won't be suppressed, and Parsi Rustomji's proved no exception. The good friend ran post haste to me, the tears rolling down his cheeks as he said: 'Bhai, I have deceived you. My guilt has been discovered today. I have smuggled and I am doomed. I must go to jail and be ruined. You alone may be able to save me from this predicament. I have kept back nothing else from you, but I thought I ought not to bother you with such tricks of the trade, and so I never told you about this smuggling. But now, how much I repent it!'

I calmed him and said: 'To save or not to save you is in His hands. As to me you know my way. I can but

try to save you by means of confession.'

The good Parsi felt deeply mortified.

'But is not my confession before you enough?' he asked.

'You have wronged not me but Government. How will the confession made before me avail you?' I replied gently.

'Of course I will do just as you advise, but will you not consult with my old counsel Mr. _____? He is a friend too,' said Parsi Rustomji.

Inquiry revealed that the smuggling had been going on for a long time, but the actual offence detected involved a trifling sum. We went to his counsel. He perused the papers, and said: 'The case will be tried by a jury, and a Natal jury will be the last to acquit an Indian. But I will not give up hope.'

I did not know this counsel intimately. Parsi Rustomji intercepted: 'I thank you, but I should like to be guided by Mr. Gandhi's advice in this case. He knows me intimately. Of course you will advise him whenever necessary.'

Having thus shelved the counsel's question, we went to Parsi Rustomji's shop.

And now explaining my view I said to him: 'I don't think this case should be taken to court at all. It rests with the Customs Officer to prosecute you or to let you go, and he in turn will have to be guided by the Attorney General. I am prepared to meet both. I propose that you should offer to pay the penalty they fix, and the odds are that they will be agreeable. But if they are not, you must be prepared to go to jail. I am of opinion that the shame lies not so much in going to jail as in committing the offence. The deed of shame has already been done. Imprisonment you should regard as a penance. The real penance lies in resolving never to smuggle again.'

I cannot say that Parsi Rustomji took all this quite well. He was a brave man, but his courage failed him for the moment. His name and fame were at stake, and where would he be if the edifice he had reared with such care and labour should go to pieces?

'Well, I have told you,' he said, 'that I am entirely in your hands. You may do just as you like.'

I brought to bear on this case all my powers of persuasion. I met the Customs Officer and fearlessly apprised him of the whole affair. I also promised to place all the books at his disposal and told him how penitent Parsi Rustomji was feeling.

The Customs Officer said: 'I like the old Parsi. I am sorry he has made a fool of himself. You know where my duty lies. I must be guided by the Attorney General and so I would advise you to use all your persuasion with him.'

'I shall be thankful,' said I, 'if you do not insist on dragging him into court.'

Having got him to promise this, I entered into correspondence with the Attorney General and also met him. I am glad to say that he appreciated my complete frankness and was convinced that I had kept

back nothing.

I now forget whether it was in connection with this or with some other case that my persistence and frankness extorted from him the remark: 'I see you will never take a no for an answer.'

The case against Parsi Rustomji was compromised. He was to pay a penalty equal to twice the amount he had confessed to having smuggled. Rustomji reduced to writing the facts of the whole case, got the paper framed and hung it up in his office to serve as a perpetual reminder to his heirs and fellow merchants.

These friends of Rustomji warned me not to be taken in by this transitory contrition. When I told Rustomji about this warning he said: 'What would be my fate if I deceived you?'

Some specimen Paragraphs for AEC (LCC):

1. The Importance of Reading Literature:

Reading literature plays a vital role in shaping a person's imagination, empathy, and critical thinking. Through stories, poems, and plays, readers gain insight into diverse cultures, historical periods, and human emotions. Literature encourages us to question norms, reflect on moral dilemmas, and connect with characters whose lives may be very different from our own. It provides not only entertainment but also ethical education, helping readers understand the complexity of human nature. In academic settings, literature sharpens analytical skills, while in personal life, it offers comfort, inspiration, and perspective.

2. Gender Discrimination in Society:

Gender discrimination remains a pervasive issue in many societies, affecting access to education, employment, and equal rights. Rooted in long-standing cultural and social norms, it often manifests in subtle ways, such as wage gaps, limited leadership opportunities, and biased expectations in the family. Women and other gender minorities frequently have to work harder to achieve recognition and respect. Literature, film, and art have increasingly highlighted these inequalities, prompting greater

awareness and dialogue. True progress requires not only legal change but also a shift in societal attitudes toward gender roles and identity.

3. Impact of Technology on Modern Life:

Technology has dramatically transformed how we live, work, and communicate. From smartphones to artificial intelligence, it has brought efficiency, convenience, and innovation. However, this progress also has downsides—such as increased screen time, reduced face-to-face interaction, and privacy concerns. In education, technology facilitates online learning and access to resources, but it can also widen the digital divide. While technological advancement is inevitable, it must be guided by ethical considerations and a focus on human well-being to ensure that it enhances rather than diminishes the quality of life.

4. Environmental Awareness and Responsibility:

The urgency of environmental protection has never been greater. With climate change, deforestation, and pollution threatening ecosystems, individuals and governments alike must act responsibly. Environmental awareness involves understanding our impact on nature and making conscious choices to reduce waste, conserve energy, and support sustainable practices. Literature and media play a crucial role in promoting ecological consciousness. As citizens of a global community, it is our duty to preserve natural resources for future generations, recognizing that human survival depends on the health of the planet.

5. The Role of Youth in Nation-Building:

Youth are the backbone of any nation, representing energy, innovation, and the promise of a better future. Their contributions in fields like science, education, activism, and politics can lead to meaningful societal change. However, for youth to fulfill their potential, they must be empowered with education, values, and opportunities. Literature and history are filled with examples of young people who sparked revolutions, led social movements, and transformed cultures. By encouraging critical thinking, civic responsibility, and leadership, society can harness the power of youth to build a more just and prosperous world.

1. Report on the Tree Plantation Drive at Your College

Heading: *Report on Tree Plantation Drive Organized by XYZ College

By: [Your Name], Environmental Club Secretary

Date: [Insert Date]

Report:

A tree plantation drive was organized on [insert date] by XYZ college as part of the 'Green Earth' initiative. The event began at 9:00 a.m. with an inaugural speech by the Principal highlighting the importance of afforestation. Students from all classes participated with enthusiasm, planting over 150 saplings across the school premises. Species included neem, gulmohar, and mango trees. Environmental awareness posters were also displayed. The drive concluded with a pledge to care for the plants. The event was a great success in promoting ecological responsibility among students.

2. Report on the Annual Sports Day Celebration

Heading: Annual Sports Day Celebration at ABC College

By: [Your Name], Sports Captain

Date: [Insert Date]

Report:

The Annual Sports Day of ABC College was celebrated with great enthusiasm on [insert date]. The Chief Guest, Mr. Rajesh Verma, a national athlete, inaugurated the event. The day began with a

colorful march-past by all four school houses, followed by various events like 100m race, long jump, relay, and tug-of-war. Parents and teachers actively cheered the participants. The Yellow House emerged as the overall champion. The event concluded with prize distribution and a vote of thanks. The day successfully fostered sportsmanship and team spirit among students.

3. Report on a Science Exhibition

Heading: Science Exhibition Held at DEF College

By: [Your Name], Science Club Member

Date: [Insert Date]

Report:

DEF College organized a science exhibition on [insert date] with the theme "Innovations for a Better Tomorrow." Students presented creative models and experiments on topics like renewable energy, water conservation, and robotics. The event was inaugurated by Dr. Anjali Mehta, a noted scientist, who praised the students' innovation. Parents, teachers, and students from neighboring schools visited the exhibition. The highlight was a solar-powered irrigation system designed by Class 10 students. The exhibition was both educational and inspiring for all attendees.

4. Report on a Road Safety Awareness Programme

Heading: Road Safety Awareness Campaign Conducted at GHI College

By: [Your Name], School Reporter

Date: [Insert Date]

Report:

On [insert date], GHI College organized a road safety awareness programme in collaboration with the local traffic police. The event aimed to educate students about traffic rules and safe road behavior. Inspector Ramesh Kumar addressed the students, emphasizing the use of helmets, seatbelts, and pedestrian safety. Posters, skits, and a street play were presented by students to highlight key messages. A quiz on traffic rules was also conducted. The event ended with a pledge to follow road safety norms. It was a meaningful initiative promoting responsible citizenship.

5. Report on a Blood Donation Camp

Heading: Blood Donation Camp Organized at JKL College

By: [Your Name], NSS Volunteer

Date: [Insert Date]

Report:

A blood donation camp was held at JKL College on [insert date], in association with the Red Cross Society. The camp aimed to spread awareness about the importance of donating blood to save lives. Over 80 volunteers, including students and faculty, donated blood. A team of doctors and nurses ensured all procedures were followed safely. Refreshments were provided to donors, and certificates of appreciation were distributed. The Principal thanked the donors and medical staff. The event was highly successful and reflected the students' strong sense of social responsibility.

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(3)

Q No

P-1

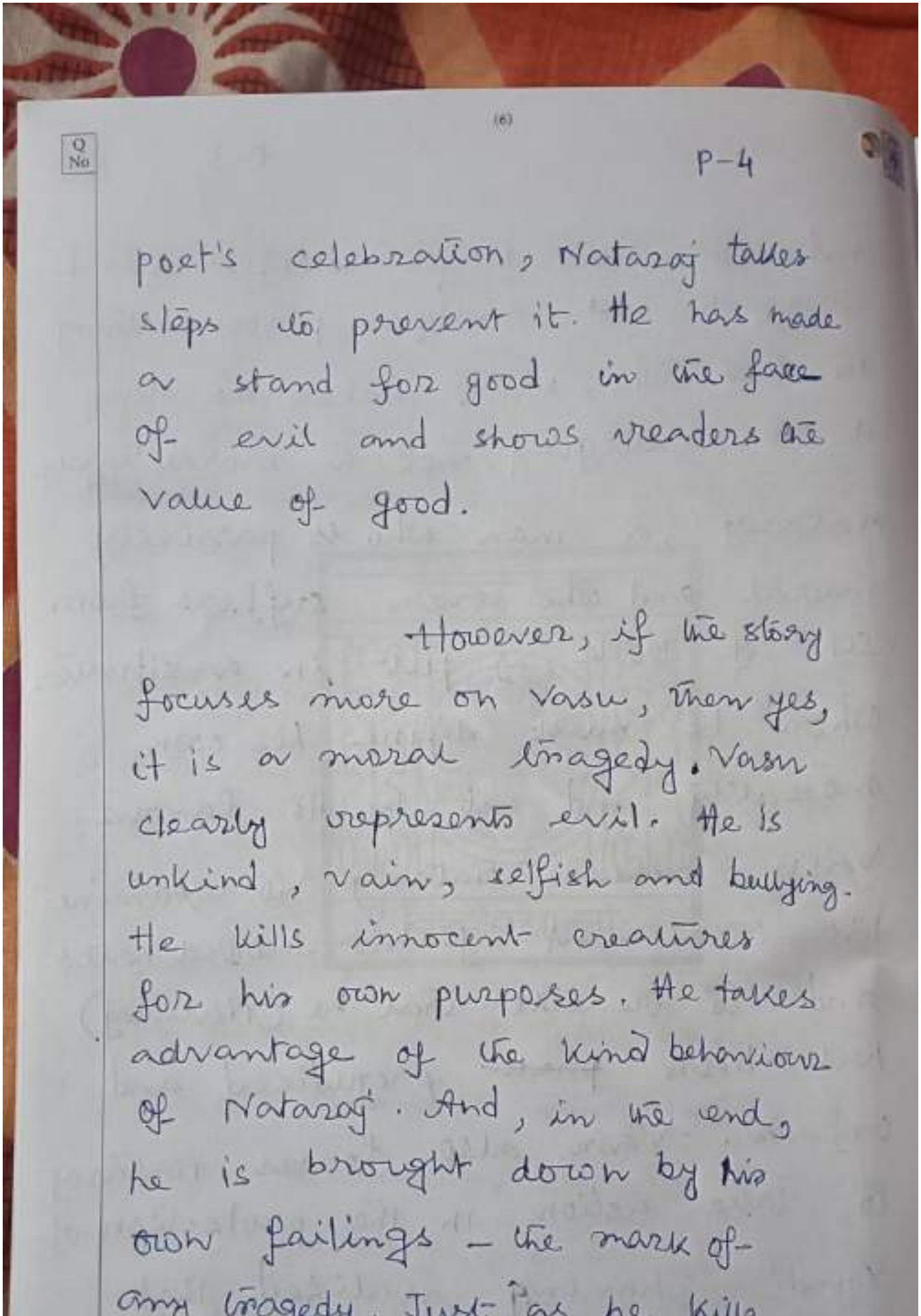
Q. Discuss 'The Man-Eater of Malgudi' as a Moral Tragedy :-

The central theme of The Man Eater of Malgudi is the conflict between good and evil, represented by Nataraj and Vasu. Nataraj embodies traditional, peaceful Indian values, while Vasu symbolizes ruthless materialism and Western commercialism. The novel also explores the concept of karma and self-discipline illustrating how immoral actions lead to self-destruction. Though Vasu's demise, the story underscores

respecting cultural traditions.

'The Man-Eater of Malgudi' can be interpreted as a ~~model~~ moral tragedy depending on the protagonist's perspective. If Nataraj is seen as the protagonist, the story is a moral allegory where he learns to define and act on his morality, opposing Vasu's evil. However, if Vasu is the focus, it becomes a moral tragedy. Vasu 'embodies' evil, and his self-destruction

underscores the tragic downfall of evil. Common ~~of~~ analysis places Nataraj in this role, which makes the story a moral allegory, not a moral tragedy. Nataraj, a man who is passively moral and who even suffers from sin of pride, if put in a situation where he must define his own morality and act in its favour. Vasu forces Nataraj to examine his treatement of his subordinates and to realize that he (Nataraj) has been ~~produ~~ prejudiced and unfair. Vasu also forces Nataraj



poet's celebration, Nataraj takes steps to prevent it. He has made a stand for good in the face of evil and shows readers the value of good.

However, if the story focuses more on Vasu, then yes, it is a moral tragedy. Vasu clearly represents evil. He is unkind, vain, selfish and bullying. He kills innocent creatures for his own purposes. He takes advantage of the kind behaviour of Nataraj. And, in the end, he is brought down by his own failings – the mark of any tragedy. Just as he kills

P-5

to kill a mosquito that has landed on his forehead. (Vasu 'feeds' off the animals deaths, and the mosquito will feed off him — clever symbolism!) However, in trying to kill the mosquito, he actually kills himself. Evil brought down by its own hands.

Overall, R.K. Narayan's creative genius is deeply rooted in Indian culture. Like most of his novels, 'The Man-Eater of Malgudi' incorporates the theme of Karma and self-discipline. Narayan approaches the narrative from a mythological viewpoint.

The answer will serve the purpose for such type of the Question's Answer also :=

⇩

Q. What is the central theme of the Man-Eater of Malgudi?

Discuss or Explain 'Twelfth Night' as a Shakespearean Comedy :=

Comedy surely makes an appeal to man's intellect and it always aims at correction and exhortation. So, we can define comedy as a play which deals with the trivial and insignificant happenings of everyday life and which aims at the reform of society.

While every comedy aims at correction and by appealing to man's reason it helps to get rid of evils. Shakespeare's comedy aims at sheer joy and pleasure. Charlton

Q No

P-2

He wrote tragedies because it was his taste, but he wrote comedies to relieve his mind from the heaviness.

All Shakespeare's comedies are romantic. They are synthesized with the temperament of romantic practicality.

Only the background offers us the romanticism, the plot of the play and the action of the play is directly based upon the facts of life. 'Twelfth Night' the play

and the knight-ship of the Sir Toby and Aguecheek are the romantic elements; yet the main plots as well as the sub-plot are nicely woven love stories having the realistic touch.

Second and the most evident characteristic of Shakespearean comedy is the predominance of women. In Twelfth Night Viola overshadows the passive existance of duke. Woman is always on the front and the males are insignificant

Q No

P-4

are in a fix as to whom to declare the hero of the play. Sebastian cannot be the hero because he stands on the stage for a very little time and Duke's position is also suspect. We are not wrong if we find the hero and the heroine both in Viola herself.

None of the Shakespearean ~~comedy or~~ comedies lacks in humour. Since satire is usually absent, neither the actors nor the spectators suffer any wrinkle upon it.

P-5

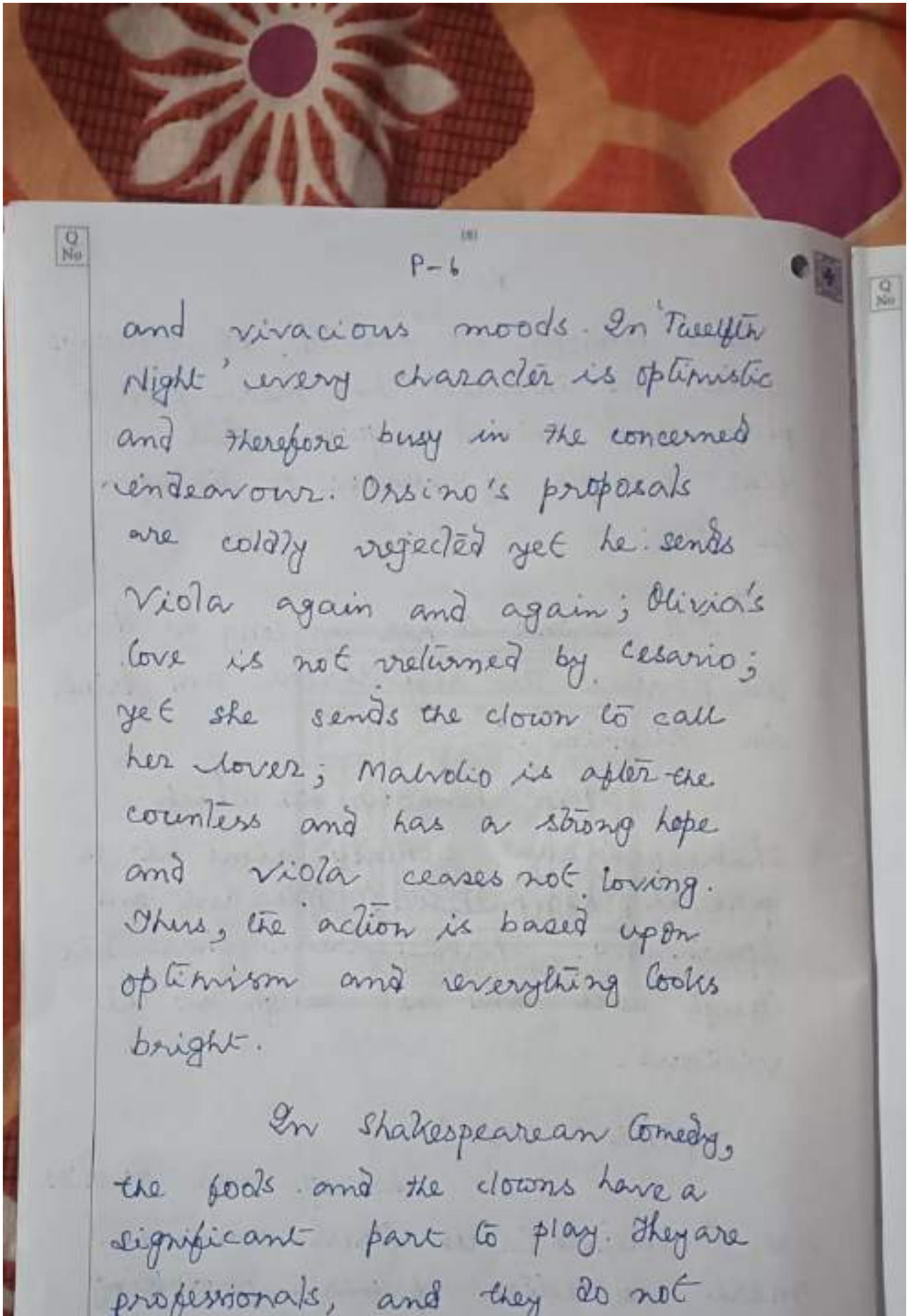
This humour is not absurd, it is always wise and intellect has more part to play than animal vigour. what a fine example of humour of dialogue is it:

"I'll drink to her as long as there is passage in my throat and drink in Illyria."

This humour which Shakespearean comedy aims at is general, sympathetic, tolerant and sparkling. Shakespearean characters laugh with and not laugh at the vicious.

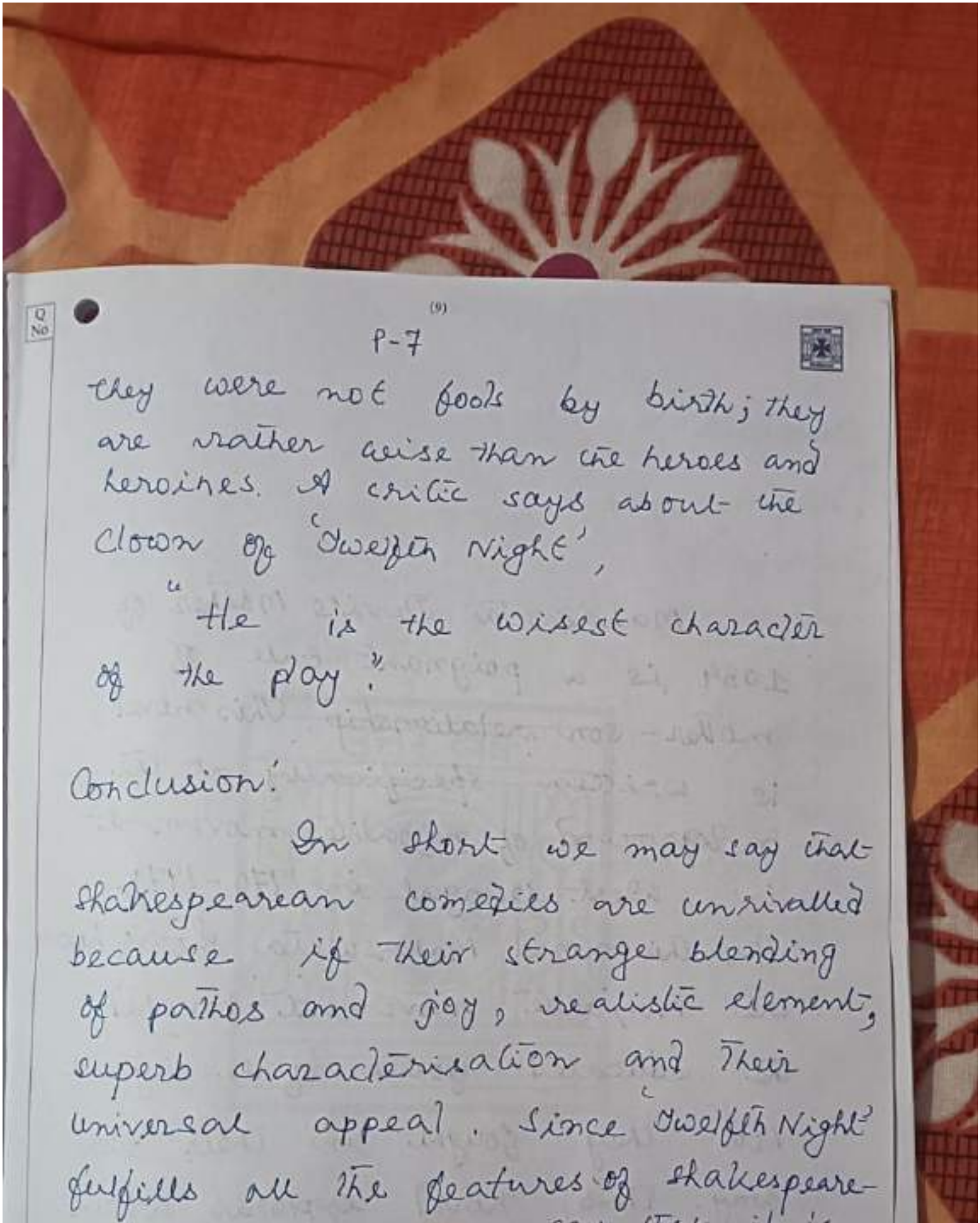
Optimistic Notes:

Shakespearean Comedies



and vivacious moods. In 'Twelfth Night' every character is optimistic and therefore busy in the concerned endeavour. Orsino's proposals are coldly rejected yet he sends Viola again and again; Olivia's love is not returned by Cesario; yet she sends the clown to call her lover; Malvolio is after the countess and has a strong hope and Viola ceases not loving. Thus, the action is based upon optimism and everything looks bright.

In Shakespearean Comedy, the fools and the clowns have a significant part to play. They are professionals, and they do not



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they were not fools by birth; they are rather wise than the heroes and heroines. A critic says about the clown of 'Twelfth Night',

"He is the wisest character of the play."

Conclusion:

In short we may say that Shakespearean comedies are unrivalled because of their strange blending of pathos and joy, realistic element, superb characterisation and their universal appeal. Since 'Twelfth Night' fulfills all the features of Shakespeare-