0 4 ***The Woman in Black***

You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this question.

You should use the extract below and your knowledge of the whole novel to answer this question.

Write about how Susan Hill creates fear and tension at different points in the novel.

In your response you should:

- refer to the extract and the novel as a whole
- show your understanding of characters and events in the novel [40]

5 of this question's marks are allocated for accuracy in spelling, punctuation and the use of vocabulary and sentence structures.

They had chided me with being a spoilsport, tried to encourage me to tell them the one ghost story I must surely, like any other man, have it in me to tell. And they were right. Yes, I had a story, a true story, a story of haunting and evil, fear and confusion, horror and tragedy. But it was not a story to be told for casual entertainment, around the fireside upon Christmas Eve.

I had always known in my heart that the experience would never leave me, that it was now woven into my very fibres, an inextricable part of my past, but I had hoped never to have to recollect it, consciously, and in full, ever again. Like an old wound, it gave off a faint twinge now and again, but less and less often, less and less painfully, as the years went on and my happiness, sanity and equilibrium were assured. Of late, it had been like the outermost ripple on a pool, merely the faint memory of a memory.

Now, tonight, it again filled my mind to the exclusion of all else. I knew that I should have no rest from it, that I should lie awake in a chill of sweat, going over that time, those events, those places. So it had been night after night for years.

I got up and began to walk about again. Tomorrow was Christmas Day. Could I not be free of it at least for that blessed time, was there no way of keeping the memory, and the effects it had upon me, at bay, as an analgesic or a balm will stave off the pain of a wound, at least temporarily? And then, standing among the trunks of the fruit trees, silver-grey in the moonlight, I recalled that the way to banish an old ghost that continues its hauntings is to exorcise it. Well then, mine should be exorcised. I should tell my tale, not aloud, by the fireside, not as a diversion for idle listeners — it was too solemn, and too real, for that. But I should set it down on paper, with every care and in every detail. I would write my own ghost story. Then perhaps I should finally be free of it for whatever life remained for me to enjoy.

I decided at once that it should be, at least during my lifetime, a story for my eyes only. I was the one who had been haunted and who had suffered — not the only one, no, but surely, I thought, the only one left alive, I was the one who, to judge by my agitation of this evening, was still affected by it deeply, it was from me alone that the ghost must be driven.

I glanced up at the moon, and at the bright, bright Pole star. Christmas Eve. And then I prayed, a heart-felt, simple prayer for peace of mind, and for strength and steadfastness to endure while I completed what would be the most agonizing task, and I prayed for a blessing upon my family, and for quiet rest to us all that night. For, although I was in control of my emotions now, I dreaded the hours of darkness that lay ahead.

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0 4 ***The Woman in Black***

You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this question.

You should use the extract below and your knowledge of the whole novel to answer this question.

Write about Arthur Kipps and how he is presented at different points in the novel.

In your response you should:

- refer to the extract and the novel as a whole
- show your understanding of characters and events in the novel [40]

5 of this question's marks are allocated for accuracy in spelling, punctuation and the use of vocabulary and sentence structures.

It was the woman who moved. She slipped behind the gravestone and, keeping close to the shadow of the wall, went through one of the broken gaps and out of sight.

The very second that she had gone, my nerve and the power of speech and movement, my very sense of life itself, came flooding back through me, my head cleared and, all at once, I was angry, yes, *angry*, with her for the emotion she had aroused in me, for causing me to experience such fear, and the anger led at once to determination, to follow her and stop her, and then to ask some questions and receive proper replies, to get to the bottom of it all.

I ran quickly and lightly over the short stretch of rough grass between the graves towards the gap in the wall, and came out almost on the edge of the estuary. At my feet, the grass gave way within a yard or two to sand, then shallow water. All around me the marshes and the flat salt dunes stretched away until they merged with the rising tide. I could see for miles. There was no sign at all of the woman in black, nor any place in which she could have concealed herself.

Who she was–or *what*–and how she had vanished, such questions I did not ask myself. I tried not to think about the matter at all but, with the very last of the energy that I could already feel draining out of me rapidly, I turned and began to run, to flee from the graveyard and the ruins and to put the woman at as great a distance behind as I possibly could. I concentrated everything upon my running, hearing only the thud of my own body on the grass, the escape of my own breath. And I did not look back.

By the time I reached the house again I was in a lather of sweat, from exertion and from the extremes of my emotions, and as I fumbled with the key my hand shook, so that I dropped it twice upon the step before managing at last to open the front door. Once inside, I slammed it shut behind me. The noise of it boomed through the house but, when the last reverberation had faded away, the place seemed to settle back into itself again and there was a great, seething silence. For a long time, I did not move from the dark, wood-panelled hall. I wanted company, and I had none, lights and warmth and a strong drink inside me, I needed reassurance. But, more than anything else, I needed an *explanation*. It is remarkable how powerful a force simple curiosity can be. I had never realized that before now. In spite of my intense fear and sense of shock, I was consumed with the desire to find out exactly who it was that I had seen, and how, I could not rest until I had settled the business, for all that, while out there, I had not dared to stay and make any investigations.

0 4 ***The Woman in Black***

You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this question.

You should use the extract below and your knowledge of the whole novel to answer this question.

Write about some of the places and locations described in *The Woman in Black*. How are they important to the novel as a whole?

In your response you should:

- refer to the extract and the novel as a whole
- show your understanding of characters and events in the novel [40]

5 of this question's marks are allocated for accuracy in spelling, punctuation and the use of vocabulary and sentence structures.

The only sounds I could hear above the trotting of the pony's hooves, the rumble of the wheels and the creak of the cart, were sudden, harsh, weird cries from birds near and far. We had travelled perhaps three miles, and passed no farm or cottage, no kind of dwelling house at all, all was emptiness. Then, the hedgerows petered out, and we seemed to be driving towards the very edge of the world. Ahead, the water gleamed like metal and I began to make out a track, rather like the line left by the wake of a boat, that ran across it. As we drew nearer, I saw that the water was lying only shallowly over the rippling sand on either side of us, and that the line was in fact a narrow track leading directly ahead, as if into the estuary itself. As we slipped on to it, I realized that this must be the Nine Lives Causeway – this and nothing more – and saw how, when the tide came in, it would quickly be quite submerged and untraceable.

At first the pony and then the trap met the sandy path, the smart noise we had been making ceased, and we went on almost in silence save for a hissing, silky sort of sound. Here and there were clumps of reeds, bleached bone-pale, and now and again the faintest of winds caused them to rattle dryly. The sun at our backs reflected in the water all around so that everything shone and glistened like the surface of a mirror, and the sky had taken on a faint pinkish tinge at the edges, and this in turn became reflected in the marsh and the water. Then, as it was so bright that it hurt my eyes to go on staring at it, I looked up ahead and saw, as if rising out of the water itself, a tall, gaunt house of grey stone with a slate roof, that now gleamed steelily in the light. It stood like some lighthouse or beacon or Martello tower, facing the whole, wide expanse of marsh and estuary, the most astonishingly situated house I had ever seen or could ever conceivably have imagined, isolated, uncompromising but also, I thought, handsome. As we neared it, I saw the land on which it stood was raised up a little, surrounding it on every side for perhaps three or four hundred yards, of plain, salt-bleached grass, and then gravel. This little island extended in a southerly direction across an area of scrub and field towards what looked like the fragmentary ruins of some old church or chapel.

There was a rough scraping, as the cart came onto the stones, and then pulled up. We had arrived at Eel Marsh House.

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0 4 ***The Woman in Black***

You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this question.

You should use the extract below and your knowledge of the whole novel to answer this question.

Arthur Kipps says, "I did not believe in ghosts". Write about some of the events in the novel which cause Arthur to change his mind and how they are presented.

In your response you should:

- refer to the extract and the novel as a whole
- show your understanding of characters and events in the novel [40]

5 of this question's marks are allocated for accuracy in spelling, punctuation and the use of vocabulary and sentence structures.

I was breathing fast as I ran to the corner and my heart seemed to be leaping about madly within me. But, if I had been afraid at what had happened in this house so far, when I reached the end of the short corridor and saw what I did see now, my fear reached a new height, until for a minute I thought I would die of it, *was* dying, for I could not conceive of a man's being able to endure such shocks and starts and remain alive, let alone in his right senses.

The door of the room from which the noise came, the door which had been securely locked, so that I had not been able to break it down, the door to which there could not be a key − that door was now standing open. Wide open.

Beyond it lay a room, in complete darkness, save for the first yard or two immediately at the entrance, where the dim light from the bulb on the landing outside fell onto some shining, brown floor-covering. Within, I could hear both the noise − louder now because the door was open − and the sound of the dog, pattering anxiously about and sniffing and snuffling as she went.

I do not know how long I stood there in fear and trembling and in dreadful bewilderment. I lost all sense of time and ordinary reality. Through my head went a tumbling confusion of half-thoughts and emotions, visions of spectres and of real fleshy intruders, ideas of murder and violence, and all manner of odd, distorted fears. And, all the time, the door stood wide open and the rocking continued. Rocking.

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0 4 ***The Woman in Black***

You have one hour to answer this question.

You should use the extract below and your knowledge of the whole novel to answer this question.

Write about some of the ghostly experiences described in *The Woman in Black* and how they are important to the novel as a whole.

In your response you should:

- refer to the extract and the novel as a whole
- show your understanding of characters and events in the novel [40]

5 of this question's marks are allocated for accuracy in spelling, punctuation and the use of vocabulary and sentence structures.

After a while, I heard the odd sound again. It seemed to be coming from along the passage to my left, at the far end. But it was still quite impossible to identify. Very cautiously, listening, hardly breathing, I ventured a few steps in that direction. Spider went ahead of me. The passage led only to three other bedrooms on either side and, one by one, regaining my nerve as I went, I opened them and looked inside each one. Nothing, only heavy old furniture and empty unmade beds and, in the rooms at the back of the house, moonlight. Down below me on the ground floor of the house, silence, a seething, blanketing, almost tangible silence, and a musty darkness, thick as felt.

And then I reached the door at the very end of the passage. Spider was there before me and her body, as she sniffed beneath it, went rigid, her growling grew louder. I put my hand on her collar, stroked the rough, short hair, as much for my own reassurance as for hers. I could feel the tension in her limbs and body and it answered to my own.

This was the door without a keyhole, which I had been unable to open on my first visit to Eel Marsh House. I had no idea what was beyond it. Except the sound. It was coming from within that room, not very loud but just to hand, on the other side of that single wooden partition. It was a sound of something bumping gently on the floor, in a rhythmic sort of way, a familiar sort of sound and yet one I still could not exactly place, a sound that seemed to belong to my past, to waken old, half-forgotten memories and associations deep within me, a sound that, in any other place, would not have made me afraid but would, I thought, have been curiously comforting, friendly.

But, at my feet, the dog Spider began to whine, a thin, pitiful, frightened moan, and to back away from the door a little and press against my legs. My throat felt constricted and dry and I had begun to shiver. There was something in that room and I could not get to it, nor would I dare to, if I were able. I told myself it was a rat or a trapped bird, fallen down the chimney into the hearth and unable to get out again. But the sound was not that of some small, panic-stricken creature. Bump bump. Pause. Bump bump. Pause. Bump bump. Bump bump. Bump bump.

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0 4 ***The Woman in Black***

You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this question.

You should use the extract below and your knowledge of the whole novel to answer this question.

Write about how Susan Hill creates sympathy for Arthur Kipps at different points in the novel.

In your response you should:

- refer to the extract and the novel as a whole
- show your understanding of characters and events in the novel. [40]

5 of this question's marks are allocated for accuracy in spelling, punctuation and the use of vocabulary and sentence structures.

I looked directly at her and she at me. There was no mistake. My eyes were not deceiving me. It was she, the woman in black with the wasted face, the ghost of Jennet Humfrye. For a second, I simply stared in incredulity and astonishment, then in cold fear. I was paralysed, rooted to the spot on which I stood, and all the world went dark around me and the shouts and happy cries of all the children faded. I was quite unable to take my eyes away from her. There was no expression on her face and yet I felt all over again the renewed power emanating from her, the malevolence and hatred and passionate bitterness. It pierced me through.

At that same moment, to my intense relief, the pony cart came trotting back down the avenue, through the shaft of sunlight that lay across the grass, with my dear Stella sitting in it and holding up the baby, who was bouncing and calling and waving his little arms with delight. They were almost back, they had almost reached me, I would retrieve them and then we would go, for I didn't want to stay here for a second longer. I made ready. They had almost come to a halt when they passed the tree beside which the woman in black was still standing and, as they did so, she moved quickly, her skirts rustling as if to step into the pony's path. The animal swerved violently and then reared a little, its eyes filled with sudden fright, and then it took off and went careering away through the glade between the trees, whinnying and quite out of control. There was a moment of dreadful confusion, with several people starting off after it, and women and children shrieking. I began to run crazily and then I heard it, the sickening crack and thud as the pony and its cart collided with one of the huge tree trunks. And then silence – a terrible silence which can only have lasted for seconds, and seemed to last for years. As I raced towards where it had fallen, I glanced back over my shoulder. The woman had disappeared.

They lifted Stella gently from the cart. Her body was broken, her neck and legs fractured, though she was still conscious. The pony had only stunned itself but the cart was overturned and its harness tangled, so that it could not move, but lay on the ground whinnying and snorting in fright.

Our baby son had been thrown clear, clear against another tree. He lay crumpled on the grass below it, dead.

This time, there was no merciful loss of consciousness, I was forced to live through it all, every minute and then every day thereafter, for ten long months, until Stella, too, died from her terrible injuries.

I had seen the ghost of Jennet Humfrye and she had had her revenge.

They asked for my story. I have told it. Enough.

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