



A-level

DRAMA AND THEATRE

Component 1 Drama and theatre

Insert

Question 15

Lorca: *Yerma*

From Act One, Scene One

YERMA:	You are so lucky!	
MARIA:	But you know so much more than me.	
YERMA:	For all the good it does!	
MARIA:	But why is that? You married along with the rest, but you are the only one...	5
YERMA:	Yes, but there's still time. Elena waited for three years, and some of the older women from my mother's time, even longer. But, yes, two years and twenty days... it's far too long! It's not fair to be wasting away. Some nights I go out to the patio in my bare feet just to feel the earth. I don't know why. If I go on like this, I'll make myself ill.	10
MARIA:	Come here to me! You talk as if you were old already. As far as I can see, there's not much point complaining. One of my mother's sisters waited fourteen years. The boy was perfect!	15
YERMA:	<i>(eagerly)</i> . Tell me!	
MARIA:	He cried as loud as a young bull, like a thousand crickets singing at once, and he'd pee on us and pull our hair. By the time he was four months old, he used to scratch our faces.	20
YERMA:	<i>(laughing)</i> . Things like that don't hurt.	
MARIA:	Believe me!	
YERMA:	Look! I've watched my sister feeding her child, and her breast was scratched and sore. But the pain she felt was fresh and good and healthy.	25
MARIA:	People say that children ruin your life.	
YERMA:	Not true! Only weak, complaining women say such things. I can't think why they have them. It's not like getting a bunch of roses. We have to suffer to see them grow up. They draw half our blood from us. But it's good and healthy and beautiful. We women have blood for four or five children. But when they don't come, it turns to poison, like mine's doing now.	30
MARIA:	I don't know what's wrong with me.	
YERMA:	It's a well-known fact. First-time mothers are always frightened.	35
MARIA:	<i>(timidly)</i> . I was wondering... You sew so well...	
YERMA:	<i>(takes the bundle from her)</i> . I'll make two little suits. What's this?	
MARIA:	Oh, that's for nappies.	40
YERMA:	Right. <i>(She sits down.)</i>	
MARIA:	I'd best be going. <i>She goes up to YERMA and YERMA lovingly runs her hands over MARIA's belly.</i>	
YERMA:	Remember, don't run over the stones in the road.	45
MARIA:	Goodbye. <i>She kisses YERMA and leaves.</i>	
YERMA:	Call again soon! <i>YERMA goes back to her sewing. She picks up the scissors and begins to cut the material. Enter VICTOR.</i>	50
VICTOR:	Victor! <i>(serious and solemn)</i> . Is Juan around?	

YERMA:	Out in the fields.	
VICTOR:	What are you making?	
YERMA:	Oh, just some nappies.	55
VICTOR:	<i>(smiling)</i> . I don't believe it!	
YERMA:	<i>(laughing)</i> . I'm going to edge them with lace.	
VICTOR:	If it's a girl, you can name her after yourself.	
YERMA:	<i>(trembling)</i> . What?	
VICTOR:	Congratulations!	60
YERMA:	<i>(almost choking)</i> . No, no! They aren't for me. They are for Maria!	
VICTOR:	Then you can follow her example. This house needs a child.	
YERMA:	<i>(anguished)</i> . Yes, it does!	65
VICTOR:	So just get on with it. Tell your husband to stop working so much. All right, he wants to make money, but who's he going to leave it to? I'm going to see to my sheep. Tell Juan to pick up the two he's bought from me. As for the other thing, tell him to dig deep!	70
	<i>Exit VICTOR, smiling.</i>	
YERMA:	<i>(strongly)</i> . Yes! Dig deep! I tell you, my child, I tell you, For you I shall broken be. Oh, how this waist is aching, To have you cradled inside me. Oh, when will you come, oh child of mine? When your flesh smells of jasmine!	75
	<i>YERMA gets up. Her thoughts are elsewhere. She goes over to the spot where VICTOR has been standing. She breathes deeply, as if breathing in mountain air. She crosses to the other side of the room, as though looking for something, sits once more and picks up her sewing. She starts to sew, her eyes gazing at a fixed point.</i>	80

Question 16 Williams: *The Glass Menagerie*

From Scene Two and beginning of Scene Three

AMANDA:	Laura, where have you been going when you've gone out pretending that you were going to business college?	
LAURA:	I've just been going out walking.	
AMANDA:	That's not true.	
LAURA:	It is. I just went walking.	5
AMANDA:	Walking? Walking? In winter? Deliberately courting pneumonia in that light coat? Where did you walk to, Laura?	
LAURA:	All sorts of places — mostly in the park.	
AMANDA:	Even after you'd started catching that cold?	
LAURA:	It was the lesser of two evils, Mother. [<i>Screen image: Winter scene in a park.</i>]	10
AMANDA:	I couldn't go back there. I — threw up — on the floor! From half past seven till after five every day you mean to tell me you walked around in the park, because you wanted to make me think that you were still going to Rubican's Business College?	15
LAURA:	It wasn't as bad as it sounds. I went inside places to get warmed up.	
AMANDA:	Inside where?	
LAURA:	I went in the art museum and the bird houses at the Zoo. I visited the penguins every day! Sometimes I did without lunch and went to the movies. Lately I've been spending most of my afternoons in the Jewel Box, that big glass house where they raise the tropical flowers.	20
AMANDA:	You did all this to deceive me, just for deception? [<i>Laura looks down.</i>] Why?	
LAURA:	Mother, when you're disappointed, you get that awful suffering look on your face, like the picture of Jesus' mother in the museum!	25
AMANDA:	Hush!	
LAURA:	I couldn't face it. [<i>There is a pause. A whisper of strings is heard. Legend on screen: 'The Crust of Humility.'</i>]	
AMANDA:	[<i>hopelessly fingering the huge pocketbook</i>]: So what are we going to do the rest of our lives? Stay home and watch the parades go by? Amuse ourselves with the glass menagerie, darling? Eternally play those worn-out phonograph records your father left as a painful reminder of him? We won't have a business career — we've given that up because it gave us nervous indigestion! [<i>She laughs wearily.</i>] What is there left but dependency all our lives? I know so well what becomes of unmarried women who aren't prepared to occupy a position. I've seen such pitiful cases in the South — barely tolerated spinsters living upon the grudging patron-age of sister's husband or brother's wife! — stuck away in some little mouse-trap of a room — encouraged by one in-law to visit another — little birdlike women without any nest — eating the crust of humility all their life!	30
	Is that the future that we've mapped out for ourselves? I swear it's the only alternative I can think of! [<i>She pauses.</i>] It isn't a very pleasant alternative, is it? [<i>She pauses again.</i>] Of course — some girls <i>do</i> marry. [<i>Laura twists her hands nervously.</i>]	35
	Haven't you ever liked some boy?	40
LAURA:	Yes. I liked one once. [<i>She rises.</i>] I came across his picture a while ago.	45
AMANDA:	[<i>with some interest</i>]: He gave you his picture?	
LAURA:	No, it's in the yearbook.	50

AMANDA:	[<i>disappointed</i>]: Oh — a high school boy. [<i>Screen image</i> : Jim as the high school hero bearing a silver cup.]	
LAURA:	Yes. His name was Jim. [<i>She lifts the heavy annual from the clawfoot table.</i>] Here he is in <i>The Pirates of Penzance</i> .	
AMANDA:	[<i>absently</i>]: The what?	55
LAURA:	The operetta the senior class put on. He had a wonderful voice and we sat across the aisle from each other Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays in the Aud. Here he is with the silver cup for debating! See his grin?	
AMANDA:	[<i>absently</i>]: He must have had a jolly disposition.	
LAURA:	He used to call me — Blue Roses. [<i>Screen image</i> : Blue roses.]	60
AMANDA:	Why did he call you such a name as that?	
LAURA:	When I had that attack of pleurosis — he asked me what was the matter when I came back. I said pleurosis — he thought that I said Blue Roses! So that's what he always called me after that. Whenever he saw me, he'd holler, 'Hello, Blue Roses!' I didn't care for the girl that he went out with. Emily Meisenbach. Emily was the best-dressed girl at Soldan. She never struck me, though, as being sincere... It says in the Personal Section — they're engaged. That's — six years ago! They must be married by now.	65
AMANDA:	Girls that aren't cut out for business careers usually wind up married to some nice man. [<i>She gets up with a spark of revival.</i>] Sister, that's what you'll do! [<i>Laura utters a startled, doubtful laugh. She reaches quickly for a piece of glass.</i>]	70
LAURA:	But, Mother —	75
AMANDA:	Yes? [<i>She goes over to the photograph.</i>]	
LAURA:	[<i>in a tone of frightened apology</i>]: I'm — crippled!	
AMANDA:	Nonsense! Laura, I've told you never, never to use that word. Why, you're not crippled, you just have a little defect — hardly noticeable, even! When people have some slight disadvantage like that, they cultivate other things to make up for it — develop charm — and vivacity — and — <i>charm!</i> That's all you have to do! [<i>She turns again to the photograph.</i>] One thing your father had plenty of — was charm! [<i>The scene fades out with music.</i>]	80
	<i>Scene Three</i>	85
	<i>Legend on screen: 'After the fiasco —'</i> <i>Tom speaks from the fire-escape landing.</i>	
TOM:	After the fiasco at Rubicam's Business College, the idea of getting a gentleman caller for Laura began to play a more and more important part in Mother's calculations. It became an obsession. Like some archetype of the universal unconscious, the image of the gentleman caller haunted our small apartment... [<i>Screen image</i> : A young man at the door of a house with flowers.]	90
	An evening at home rarely passed without some allusion to this image, this specter, this hope...	95

Question 17

Berkoff: *Metamorphosis*

From 'Next Scene — Evening'

Next Scene — Evening

Lights come up downstage... FAMILY in last positions.

- MRS. S: For a few moments that morning I thought I was dreaming but the dream stayed.
- GREGOR: What a quiet life our family has been leading, and as he sat there motionless, staring into the darkness, he felt great pride he'd been able to provide for his parents and sister in such a fine flat. 5
- GRETA: They'll think Gregor's deserted them, they'll worry.
[*Live scratch.*]
- GREGOR: But what if all the quiet, the comfort, the contentment were to end in horror? 10
- MR. S: If only we could have sat down quietly and worked out a solution — the Chief Clerk created the panic.
- GREGOR: I must keep moving, crawl up and down my room.
- MR. S: Sssh! Listen! 15
[*They both come into the FATHER who is in the centre and form a protective triangle.*]
[*Image — FAMILY security bound by fear.*]
- GRETA: What?
- MR. S: You hear — he's moving about. 20
[*Move here to stool. They sit silently hearing his scratching up and down the room. Takes his stool upstage, sits.*]
He must have woken up.
- MRS. S: Poor Gregor! He must be thirsty — he's had nothing to drink all day — I'll give him some milk — he likes milk in the evening. [*Forgetting for a moment his insect state.*] Oh no! [*Starts weeping.*] 25
- GRETA: Mother, that doesn't help, it doesn't help us to be upset — it'll only make him upset too if he hears you.
- MRS. S: Yes — you're right — I must be strong — must — be — strong. He'll be hungry too. What do you think he eats? 30
[*MR SAMSA shakes his head in helplessness.*]
Well give him the milk.
[*She mimes bowl of milk — hands it over to FATHER who hands it to GRETA — GRETA moves a step upstage and freezes in her tracks.*]
- MR. S: Gregor. 35
[*GRETA unable to go further.*]
- MRS. S: Father! Father, don't let her go in there — take it to him!
- MR. S: [*looks sheepish, hating the idea*] Oh, well...
- GRETA: [*sitting again*] It's all right — I'll do it — just give me a minute more.
- MRS. S: How can you sit there and let your daughter go in there? 40
- MR. S: You go in there then — you've been crying over him — he's still your beloved son.
- MRS. S: Our son!
- MR. S: Our son! You can't call him our son any more — not that thing in there! Our son's left us. 45
- MRS. S: Don't say that, he's coming back to us — we can't desert him now — he probably needs us more than ever. He's so alone — what can he be thinking in there, that we find him disgusting — we mustn't show him that.
- GRETA: We mustn't feel that. 50

MRS. S:	No, never! [Scratching noises.]	
GRETA:	Listen, Mother — he's probably starving.	
MR. S:	[rising determined] We'll go... with you.	
GRETA:	[calls gently through door] Gregor? [Scratching stops.]	55
	Here's some milk for you. [They have all walked upstairs to watch GRETA perform the action of opening the door and shoving the saucer in — a hard top light illuminates his room. This scene dissolves into his mind's eye. He leaves his cage — sliding down and becomes 'normal'. He has returned as GREGOR, stimulated by the reminder of gentle and past reminders of milk.]	60
GREGOR:	I like milk in the morning — it's my favourite drink — Mother leaves it for me every morning at four a.m. to catch the five a.m. train — daily. [FAMILY waving goodbye.]	65
MR. S:	Sell lots, lad.	
GREGOR:	Goodbye, Father.	
GRETA:	Good luck, Gregor.	
GREGOR:	Goodbye, Greta.	70
MRS. S:	Don't forget to drink your milk.	
GREGOR:	No, Mother.	
MRS. S:	Nice basin of fresh milk with little white sops of bread in it. [GREGOR mimes glass, it turns into a basin, he drinks it and spits it out in revulsion — his body changes back into insect stance (reminded by bowl).]	75
MRS. S:	Why isn't he drinking it? [She is now in the present.]	
MR. S:	Come on, son — drink it up.	
GRETA:	Oh Gregor — you know you like it.	
MRS. S:	It's your favourite drink.	80
GRETA:	He's probably ashamed to drink it with us listening to him — let's go away. [They tiptoe downstage and continue moving during next speech which marks distance and time. GREGOR has left the normal state that the milk association first drew him to and is back to beetle state.]	85
GREGOR:	I don't like milk any more — it's revolting to me — bring me something more to my taste — you don't have to look at me, Greta — I'll hide under the bed — but I desperately need some food — I'm starving to death!	

Question 18

Wertebaker: *Our Country's Good*

From Act One, Scenes Nine and Ten

RALPH:	I'm not a convict: I don't sin.	
KETCH:	To be sure. Forgive me, sir. But if we're in God's power, then surely he makes us sin. I was given a guardian angel when I was born, like all good Catholics, why didn't my guardian angel look after me better? But I think he must've stayed in Ireland. I think the devil tempted my mother to London and both our guardian angels stayed behind. Have you ever been to Ireland, sir? It's a beautiful country. If I'd been an angel I wouldn't have left it either. And when we came within six fields of Westminster, the devils took over. But it's God's judgement I'm frightened of. And the women's. They're so hard. Why is that?	5
RALPH:	Why have you come here?	10
KETCH:	I'm coming to that, sir.	
RALPH:	Hurry up, then.	
KETCH:	I'm speaking as fast as I can, sir —	
RALPH:	Ketch —	15
KETCH:	James, sir, James, Daniel, Patrick, after my three uncles. Good men they were too, didn't go to London. If my mother hadn't brought us to London, may God give peace to her soul and breathe pity into the hearts of hard women — because the docks are in London and if I hadn't worked on the docks, on that day, May 23rd, 1785, do you remember it, Sir? Shadwell Dock. If only we hadn't left, then I wouldn't have been there, then nothing would have happened, I wouldn't have become a coal heaver on Shadwell Dock and been there on the 23rd of May when we refused to unload because they were paying us so badly, Sir. I wasn't even near the sailor who got killed. He shouldn't have done the unloading, that was wrong of the sailors, but I didn't kill him, maybe one blow, not to look stupid, you know, just to show I was with the lads, even if I wasn't, but I didn't kill him. And they caught five at random, Sir, and I was among the five, and they found the cudgel, but I just had that to look good, that's all, and when they said to me later you can hang or you can give the names, what was I to do, what would you have done, Sir?	20
RALPH:	I wouldn't have been in that situation, Freeman.	25
KETCH:	To be sure, forgive me, Sir. I only told on the ones I saw, I didn't tell anything that wasn't true, death is a horrible thing, that poor sailor.	30
RALPH:	Freeman, I'm going to go to bed now —	
KETCH:	I understand, Sir, I understand. And when it happened again, here. And I had hopes of making a good life here. It's because I'm so friendly, see, so I go along, and then I'm the one who gets caught. That theft, I didn't do it, I was just there, keeping a look out, just to help some friends, you know. But when they say to you, hang or be hanged, what do you do? Someone has to do it. I try to do it well. God had mercy on the whore, the thief, the lame, surely he'll forgive the hang — it's the women — they're without mercy — not like you and me, Sir, men. What I wanted to say, Sir, is that I heard them talking about the play.	40
	<i>Pause.</i>	
	Some players came into our village once. They were loved like the angels, Lieutenant, like the angels. And the way the women watched them — the light of a spring dawn in their eyes.	45
	Lieutenant — I want to be an actor.	50

Scene Ten

WISEHAMMER AND MARY BRENHAM EXCHANGE WORDS

Mary is copying The Recruiting Officer in the afternoon light.

John Wisehammer is carrying bricks and piling them to one side.

He begins to hover over her.

55

MARY: 'I would rather counsel than command; I don't propose this with the authority of a parent, but as the advice of your friend' —

WISEHAMMER: Friend. That's a good word. Short, but full of promise.

60

MARY: 'That you would take the coach this moment and go into the country.'

WISEHAMMER: Country can mean opposite things. It renews you with trees and grass, you go rest in the country, or it crushes you with power: you die for your country, your country doesn't want you, you're thrown out of your country.

65

Pause.

I like words.

Pause.

My father cleared the houses of the dead to sell the old clothes to the poorhouses by the Thames. He found a dictionary — Johnson's dictionary — it was as big as a Bible. It went from 'A' to 'L'. I started with the A's. Abecedarian: someone who teaches the alphabet or rudiments of literature. Abject: a man without hope.

70

MARY: What does indulgent mean?

75

WISEHAMMER: How is it used?

MARY: (*reads*) 'You have been so careful, so indulgent to me.'

WISEHAMMER: It means ready to overlook faults.

Pause.

You have to be careful with words that begin with 'in'. It can turn everything upside down. Injustice. Most of that word is taken up with justice, but the 'in' twists it inside out and makes it the ugliest word in the English language.

80

MARY: Guilty is an uglier word.

WISEHAMMER: Innocent ought to be a beautiful word, but it isn't, it's full of sorrow.

85

Anguish.

Mary goes back to her copying.

MARY: I don't have much time. We start this in a few days.

Wisehammer looks over her shoulder.

I have the biggest part.

90

WISEHAMMER: You have a beautiful hand.

MARY: There is so much to copy. So many words.

WISEHAMMER: I can write.

MARY: Why don't you tell Lieutenant Clark? He's doing it.

WISEHAMMER: No... no... I'm —

95

MARY: Afraid?

WISEHAMMER: Diffident.

MARY: I'll tell him. Well, I won't. My friend Dabby will. She's —

WISEHAMMER: Bold.

Pause.

Shy is not a bad word, it's soft.

100

MARY: But shame is a hard one.

WISEHAMMER: Words with two L's are the worst. Lonely, loveless.

MARY: Love is a good word.

WISEHAMMER: That's because it only has one L. I like words with one L: Luck.

105

Latitudinarian.

Mary laughs.

WISEHAMMER: Laughter.

Question 19

Churchill: *Cloud Nine*

From Act One, Scene One

Low bright sun. Verandah. Flagpole with union jack. The Family
— CLIVE, BETTY, EDWARD, VICTORIA, MAUD, ELLEN,
JOSHUA

ALL:	[<i>sing.</i>] Come gather, sons of England, come gather in your pride. Now meet the world united, now face it side by side; Ye who the earth's wide corners, from veldt to prairie, roam. From bush and jungle muster all who call old England 'home'. Then gather round for England, Rally to the flag, From North and South and East and West Come one and all for England!	5 10
CLIVE:	This is my family. Though far from home We serve the Queen wherever we may roam I am a father to the natives here, And father to my family so dear. [<i>He presents BETTY. She is played by a man.</i>] My wife is all I dreamt a wife should be, And everything she is she owes to me.	15
BETTY:	I live for Clive. The whole aim of my life Is to be what he looks for in a wife. I am a man's creation as you see, And what men want is what I want to be. [<i>CLIVE presents JOSHUA. He is played by a white.</i>]	20
CLIVE:	My boy's a jewel. Really has the knack. You'd hardly notice that the fellow's black.	25
JOSHUA:	My skin is black but oh my soul is white. I hate my tribe. My master is my light. I only live for him. As you can see, What white men want is what I want to be. [<i>CLIVE presents EDWARD. He is played by a woman.</i>]	30
CLIVE:	My son is young. I'm doing all I can To teach him to grow up to be a man.	
EDWARD:	What father wants I'd dearly like to be. I find it rather hard as you can see. [<i>CLIVE presents VICTORIA, who is a dummy, MAUD, and ELLEN.</i>]	35
CLIVE:	No need for any speeches by the rest. My daughter, mother-in-law, and governess.	
ALL:	[<i>sing.</i>] O'er countless numbers she, our Queen, Victoria reigns supreme; O'er Afric's sunny plains, and o'er Canadian frozen stream; The forge of war shall weld the chains of brotherhood secure; So to all time in ev'ry clime our Empire shall endure. Then gather round for England, Rally to the flag, From North and South and East and West Come one and all for England!	40 45
BETTY:	[<i>All go except BETTY. CLIVE comes.</i>] Clive?	50

CLIVE:	Betty. Joshua!	
	[JOSHUA comes with a drink for CLIVE.]	
BETTY:	I thought you would never come. The day's so long without you.	
CLIVE:	Long ride in the bush.	
BETTY:	Is anything wrong? I heard drums.	55
CLIVE:	Nothing serious. Beauty is a damned good mare. I must get some new boots sent from home. These ones have never been right. I have a blister.	
BETTY:	My poor dear foot.	
CLIVE:	It's nothing.	60
BETTY:	Oh but it's sore.	
CLIVE:	We are not in this country to enjoy ourselves. Must have ridden fifty miles. Spoke to three different headmen who would all gladly chop off each other's heads and wear them round their waists.	
BETTY:	Clive!	65
CLIVE:	Don't be squeamish, Betty, let me have my joke. And what has my little dove done today?	
BETTY:	I've read a little.	
CLIVE:	Good. Is it good?	
BETTY:	It's poetry.	70
CLIVE:	You're so delicate and sensitive.	
BETTY:	And I played the piano. Shall I send for the children?	
CLIVE:	Yes, in a minute. I've a piece of news for you.	
BETTY:	Good news?	
CLIVE:	You'll certainly think it's good. A visitor.	75
BETTY:	From home?	
CLIVE:	No. Well of course originally from home.	
BETTY:	Man or woman?	
CLIVE:	Man.	
BETTY:	I can't imagine.	80
CLIVE:	Something of an explorer. Bit of a poet. Odd chap but brave as a lion. And a great admirer of yours.	
BETTY:	What do you mean? Whoever can it be?	
CLIVE:	With an H and a B. And does conjuring tricks for little Edward.	
BETTY:	That sounds like Mr Bagley.	85
CLIVE:	Harry Bagley.	
BETTY:	He certainly doesn't admire me, Clive, what a thing to say. How could I possibly guess from that. He's hardly explored anything at all, he's just been up a river, he's done nothing at all compared to what you do. You should have said a heavy drinker and a bit of a bore.	90
CLIVE:	But you like him well enough. You don't mind him coming?	
BETTY:	Anyone at all to break the monotony.	
CLIVE:	But you have your mother. You have Ellen.	
BETTY:	Ellen is a governess. My mother is my mother.	95
CLIVE:	I hoped when she came to visit she would be company for you.	
BETTY:	I don't think mother is on a visit. I think she lives with us.	
CLIVE:	I think she does.	
BETTY:	Clive you are so good.	
CLIVE:	But are you bored my love?	100
BETTY:	It's just that I miss you when you're away. We're not in this country to enjoy ourselves. If I lack society that is my form of service.	
CLIVE:	That's a brave girl. So today has been all right? No fainting? No hysteria?	
BETTY:	I have been very tranquil.	105
CLIVE:	Ah what a haven of peace to come home to. The coolth, the calm, the beauty.	

Question 20

Teale: *Brontë*

From Act One

The stage looks like a rehearsal room towards the end of rehearsals. Objects from the world of the play silted up around the room along with various pieces of Victorian furniture. Everywhere there are books. Some old. Some modern books about the Brontës.

While the audience enters the actors are already onstage wearing modern rehearsal clothes. They will change into Victorian costumes during the Prologue.

They are sitting at a table studying books about the Brontës.

EMILY: How did it happen?

ANNE: How was it possible?

CHARLOTTE: Three Victorian spinsters living in isolation on the Yorkshire moors.

EMILY: *(examining a picture in a book).* It's hard to believe that they really dressed like this, for walking on the moors, carrying in coal, scrubbing floors.

ANNE: Writing books.

CHARLOTTE: Here's the painting done by their brother Branwell, now hanging in the National Portrait Gallery.

She takes a biography from the actor playing BRANWELL BRONTË and looks at the cover, on which is BRANWELL's painting of the sisters.

There is a smudge in the middle where he has painted himself out. She looks too fat.

The actors peer at the portrait.

ANNE: Too miserable.

EMILY: Too pinched.

CHARLOTTE: Not that they were pretty. Not at all.

ANNE: Their lives would have been different if they had been. They would have married.

EMILY: Died in childbirth.

CHARLOTTE: Or had lots of children and never written another word.

ANNE: Perhaps the odd recipe, a letter here and there, but nothing we — *(To the audience.)* would know about.

CHARLOTTE: They would be gone.

ANNE: Lost.

CHARLOTTE: Sunk without trace.

EMILY: In the deep dark river that claims us all.

Beat.

ANNE: We have no mother. Can none of us remember her. That's why our books are peopled by orphans. Children abandoned.

EMILY: Lost.

CHARLOTTE: Alone.

ANNE: We cannot imagine what it would have been like to have kisses and cuddles. A woman's soft touch. Her warmth and forgiveness.

CHARLOTTE: Perhaps that is why we're so uncommonly close. So uneasy with strangers.

ANNE: Perhaps that is why we have little patience with children. Why we are utterly ill-suited to the only job available to us.

ALL: Governess.

ANNE: There are stories about our mother, things we've been told. A bird was once trapped in the house. It flew again and again at the window.

Broke its wing, its beak, its leg. She kept it and nursed it back to life.

CHARLOTTE:	No mother. Can't remember. Not a word, not a look. Not a smile.	
EMILY:	We were lucky.	
CHARLOTTE:	Lucky?	
ANNE:	How so?	55
EMILY:	She was not there to criticise. To insist on ladylike manners, pretty clothes and gentle speech. To organise tea parties with eligible men. We were allowed to read whatever we found. Whatever we could get hold of.	
	<i>The actor playing PATRICK BRONTË brings a pile of books and places them on the table. Leaves. CHARLOTTE, EMILY and ANNE read the spines.</i>	60
	Milton. Byron. Shelley.	
CHARLOTTE:	Scott. Homer. Shakespeare. Brontë. Patrick Brontë... Yes. (Pause.) Our name printed on the spine in beautiful curling letters. PATRICK joins them.	65
ANNE:	Our father, born Brunty, an Irish peasant, had himself published, at some expense, a volume of poems and a book of sermons that sit alongside the rest.	
PATRICK:	The word. It is this alone which separates us from animals. The power not only to live but to <i>know</i> that we are living. That is to think. To shape ourselves. To make of our lives what we would. To inspire others with what we say, what we believe. Look to God, to the great men of history. Look to art, to literature.	70
ANNE:	(<i>looking through the pile of books</i>). Horace, Bunyan, Johnson.	75
CHARLOTTE:	Thackeray. William Makepeace Thackeray.	
EMILY:	It did not occur to us that these books were written by men. Not yet.	
ANNE:	We did not know that we too would be remembered. We could never have imagined, never have dreamed —	
CHARLOTTE:	Or perhaps I could. Perhaps I was always waiting. Preparing. The thousands of pages covered with words. The letters, the diaries, the books. Who were they for if not for you. (<i>To the audience.</i>) You who know me better than any who ever saw my face.	80
ANNE:	I am not so interesting to you. (<i>To the audience.</i>) Or only as a sister. My books will be read as background to their great works.	85
EMILY:	You are fascinated by me but I am the hardest to find out about. My book is like a chained door that will only give enough to let you glimpse inside and wonder what it might be like to enter. There are no letters. No diary. My sister Charlotte, after my death, rewrote my poems and burned my second novel.	90
CHARLOTTE:	We don't know that for certain.	
EMILY:	I had been writing all that summer. There are letters from my publisher urging me not to hurry the ending.	
CHARLOTTE:	It is not proven.	
EMILY:	It was written.	95
CHARLOTTE:	(<i>suddenly angry</i>). Emily. Do you know what they said about you? Can you imagine what it was like?	
	<i>Beat. CHARLOTTE and EMILY stare at one another.</i>	
	Our home, the parsonage, came with the job. If our father were to lose it we would be homeless. Where would we go?	100
ANNE:	Who would we be?	
EMILY:	We cannot imagine. This house. This place. This is our world.	
ANNE:	Our books are covered in flour and spatters of gravy. The library have complained.	
CHARLOTTE:	Not to us. We are not allowed to go there. Fathers and sons only.	105

EMILY:	But our brother tells us that a carrot peeling was found, lying like a bookmark, by the librarian.	
CHARLOTTE:	Upstairs, Branwell has his own study. We three girls sleep together.	
EMILY:	There is a tiny room at the top of the stairs, little more than a cupboard, which I have made my own.	110
CHARLOTTE:	That is to say that although there is no lock on the door we do not go in there, ever.	
ANNE:	Immediately in front of the house lies the graveyard, then church and then the town. Five thousand inhabitants working mostly in the textile mills in the valley below. Sanitary conditions are poor. Nearly half of all children die before their sixth birthday. The average age of death for a labourer, just twenty-six. Our father is kept very busy.	115
	<i>PATRICK is heard conducting the funeral service.</i>	
PATRICK:	Man that is born of woman has but a short time to live... (<i>Etc. He continues on under the following lines.</i>)	120
EMILY:	Some days there are four, five people buried.	
CHARLOTTE:	Among them our mother and two older sisters.	
ANNE:	I run my fingers over the letters on the gravestone.	
EMILY:	You can hear the sound of shovels from our house. And Father's voice. We know these words by heart as do most of his congregation.	125
CHARLOTTE:	Few people can read. Even fewer write.	
	<i>Beat.</i>	
EMILY:	Beyond the house is the moor.	

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