

**STELLA MARIS COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS) CHENNAI 600 086**  
**(For candidates admitted during the academic year 2017–18 and thereafter)**

**B.Voc. DEGREE EXAMINATION, APRIL 2024**  
**FOURTH SEMESTER**

**COURSE** : FOUNDATION CORE  
**PAPER** : ENGLISH FOR COMMUNICATION – IV  
**SUBJECT CODE** : 17EL/FC/EC44  
**TIME** : 3 HOURS **MAX. MARKS: 100**

**SECTION A**

**I. Read the following short story and answer the questions that follow. (30 marks)**

**The Overcoat**  
**RUSKIN BOND**

It was clear frosty weather, and as the moon came up over the Himalayan peaks, I could see that patches of snow still lay on the roads of the hill-station. I would have been quite happy in bed, with a book and a hot-water bottle at my side, but I'd promised the Kapadias that I'd go to their party, and I felt it would be churlish of me to stay away. I put on two sweaters, an old football scarf, and an overcoat, and set off down the moonlit road.

It was a walk of just over a mile to the Kapadias' house, and I had covered about half the distance when I saw a girl standing in the middle of the road.

She must have been sixteen or seventeen. She looked rather old-fashioned – long hair, hanging to her waist, and a flummoxy sequined dress, pink and lavender, that reminded me of the photos in my grandmother's family album. When I went closer, I noticed that she had lovely eyes and a winning smile.

'Good evening,' I said. 'It's a cold night to be out.'

'Are you going to the party?' she asked.

'That's right. And I can see from your lovely dress that you're going too. Come along, we're nearly there.'

She fell into step beside me and we soon saw lights from the Kapadias' house shining brightly through the deodars. The girl told me her name was Julie. I hadn't seen her before, but I'd only been in the hill-station a few months.

There was quite a crowd at the party, and no one seemed to know Julie. Everyone thought she was a friend of mine. I did not deny it. Obviously she was someone who was feeling lonely and wanted to be friendly with people. And she was certainly enjoying herself. I did not see her do much eating or drinking, but she flitted about from one group to another, talking, listening, laughing; and when the music began, she was dancing almost continuously, alone or with partners, it didn't matter which, she was completely wrapped up in the music.

It was almost midnight when I got up to go. I had drunk a fair amount of punch, and I was ready for bed. As I was saying goodnight to my hosts and wishing everyone a merry Christmas, Julie slipped her arm into mine and said she'd be going home too.

When we were outside, I said, 'Where do you live, Julie?'

'At Wolfsburn,' she said. 'Right at the top of the hill.'

'There's a cold wind,' I said. 'And although your dress is beautiful, it doesn't look very warm. Here, you'd better wear my overcoat. I've plenty of protection.'

She did not protest, and allowed me to slip my overcoat over her shoulders. Then we started out on the walk home. But I did not have to escort her all the way. At about the spot where we had met, she said, 'There's a short cut from here. I'll just scramble up the hillside.'

‘Do you know it well?’ I asked. ‘It’s a very narrow path.’

‘Oh, I know every stone on the path. I use it all the time. And besides, it’s a really bright night.’

‘Well, keep the coat on,’ I said. ‘I can collect it tomorrow.’

She hesitated for a moment, then smiled and nodded. She then disappeared up the hill, and I went home alone.

The next day I walked up to Wolfsburn. I crossed a little brook, from which the house had probably got its name, and entered an open iron gate. But of the house itself, little remained. Just a roofless ruin, a pile of stones, a shattered chimney, a few Doric pillars where a veranda had once stood.

Had Julie played a joke on me? Or had I found the wrong house?

I walked around the hill, to the mission house where the Taylors lived and asked old Mrs Taylor if she knew a girl called Julie.

‘No, I don’t think so,’ she said. ‘Where does she live?’

‘At Wolfsburn, I was told. But the house is just a ruin.’

‘Nobody has lived at Wolfsburn for over forty years. The Mackinnons lived there. One of the old families who settled here. But when their girl died...’ She stopped and gave me a queer look. ‘I think her name was Julie... Anyway, when she died, they sold the house and went away. No one ever lived in it again, and it fell into decay. But it couldn’t be the same Julie you’re looking for. She died of consumption – there wasn’t much you could do about it in those days. Her grave is in the cemetery, just down the road.’

I thanked Mrs Taylor and walked slowly down the road to the cemetery; not really wanting to know any more, but propelled forward almost against my will.

It was a small cemetery under the deodars. You could see the eternal snows of the Himalayas standing out against the pristine blue of the sky. Here lay the bones of forgotten empire-builders – soldiers, merchants, adventurers, their wives and children. It did not take me long to find Julie’s grave. It had a simple headstone with her name clearly outlined on it:

Julie Mackinnon 1923-39

‘With us one moment,

Taken the next,

Gone to her Maker,

Gone to her rest.’

Although many monsoons had swept across the cemetery wearing down the stones, they had not touched this little tombstone.

I was turning to leave when I caught a glimpse of something familiar behind the headstone. I walked round to where it lay. Neatly folded on the grass was my overcoat. No thank-you note. But something soft and invisible brushed against my cheek, and I knew someone was trying to thank me.

1. What is the description provided about the setting of the story? (3 marks)
2. Why is the narrator going out on a cold night? Is he happy about it? (3 marks)
3. How does the narrator describe the girl he meets down the moonlit road? (3 marks)
4. Why does the narrator lend his overcoat to the girl and what is her response? (3 marks)
5. What is the information that the narrator learns after reaching Wolfsburn? (3 marks)
6. What is your opinion about the girl, Julie, in the story? (3 marks)
7. Which part of the story appealed to you the most? Why? (3 marks)
8. Identify the mood and the tone of the story. (3 marks)

9. List out six words/phrases that tell you about the mood and the tone of the story. (3 marks)  
 10. Frame sentences using any three of the following words. Do not copy down sentences from the story.

shattered    protest            old-fashioned            deny            obviously            (3 marks)

**II. Read the poem given below and answer the questions that follow. (10 marks)**

**I Continue to Dream  
LANGSTON HUGHES**

I take my dreams and make of them a bronze vase  
 and a round fountain with a beautiful statue in its center.  
 And a song with a broken heart and I ask you:  
 Do you understand my dreams?  
 Sometimes you say you do,  
 And sometimes you say you don't.  
 Either way it doesn't matter.  
 I continue to dream.

1. What does the speaker make out of his/her dreams? Why do you think he/she feels the need to do so? (3 marks)
2. What do you think the speaker means by the phrase, "a song with a broken heart"? (3 marks)
3. Is the speaker concerned about the listener's opinions about his/her dreams? (2 marks)
4. Do you find the title of the poem appropriate? Give reasons. (2 marks)

**SECTION B**

**III. Answer any one of the following in about 350 words. (1×20 = 20 marks)**

1. Write an opinion piece on your all-time favourite food.
2. Write a review of a film that you enjoyed watching recently.

**IV. Answer any one of the following in about 350 words. (1×20 = 20 marks)**

1. Write a discursive essay comparing and contrasting watching movies and reading novels.
2. Write a persuasive essay about reducing smartphone usage to improve one's mental health.

**SECTION C**

**V. Choose the verb that agrees with the subject. (5×1 = 5 marks)**

1. Each of you \_\_\_\_\_ (have/has) to try your best to win the match.
2. Neither the director nor the actors \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) anxious about the film release.
3. The Indian team \_\_\_\_\_ (enjoy/enjoys) playing on home ground.
4. Most of the students \_\_\_\_\_ (is working/are working) hard for the exam.
5. Rani, as well as her cousins, \_\_\_\_\_ (hold/holds) high-profile jobs.

**VI. Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the verbs using the third conditionals.****(5×1 = 5 marks)**

1. If I \_\_\_\_\_ (win) the prize, I would have felt happy.
2. If Gautam had remembered Mumtaz's birthday, she \_\_\_\_\_ (not, be) upset.
3. If Simran \_\_\_\_\_ (not, book) tickets online, she would have stood in a long queue.
4. If Magizhini had not been forced into Engineering, she \_\_\_\_\_ (study) Fine Arts.
5. If I \_\_\_\_\_ (have) a companion, I would have gone to the party.

**VII. Convert the following sentences from active to passive voice.****(5×1 = 5 marks)**

1. Farhan has over-tipped the waiters.
2. Tom Latham and Tom Blundell gave New Zealand a good start.
3. Thendral loves Jazz music.
4. The girls were playing hockey.
5. The youngest judge of the Supreme Court will take oath tomorrow.

**VIII. Convert the following sentences from passive to active voice.****(5×1 = 5 marks)**

1. A ring was gifted to me by Kavin.
2. Lunch is being prepared by Karthik.
3. Pugazh had been appreciated by his father for winning a scholarship to study abroad.
4. Anirudh's songs are enjoyed by most youngsters.
5. The results will be announced by the judges.

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