

B.A. 3rd Year English Hons.

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Paper 6, Modernist Period Unit 6

The Araby by James Joyce

Page1:- Araby is one of the earlier stories of James Augustine Aloysius Joyce and deals with his childhood . It was published in *Dubliners* in 1914. James Joyce was an Irish novelist , poet, and playwright. Araby is the name of the Grand Oriental Fete held in Dublin from 14th to 19th May, 1894. For the central character of the story, the young boy, Araby symbolized a fair from where he would buy a gift as a token of his love . It is a story of human predicament, the aspiration of idealized love shattered by the realism of modern day life . the unnamed boy lived in North Richmond Street along with his uncle and aunty. In front of their house lived his playmate Mangan . This little boy loves and likes Mangan's sister whose name is not mentioned. The story runs on the theme of relation between dreams and reality. The central character is presented as pining for romance and beauty. In this short story we find the hints of Irish freedom struggle and the turmoil situations of Irish during the movement. In this short story the name of the famous 19th century freedom fighter O' Donovan Rossa is mentioned. The Freemason Society which was a secret society and it gained prominence in the later half of the 19th Century is mentioned. This society dealt with supernatural and occult practices. The boy hero's aunt expresses her disgust for such an organization as it is Anti Catholic. The story deals with various themes as coming of age , the loss of innocence, the life of the mind versus poverty, the danger of idealization. These themes build on one another to create network of meaning . Mangan's sister is an image, an ideal, an ethereal dream for him and he raises her to the level of divinity and rapturous reverence.

“ But my body was like a harp, and her words and gestures were like fingers running upon the wires. O love! O love!”

Page2: The first time the girl spoke to him and asked him whether he would go to the Araby. She was sorry she could not go there on account of a retreat to be observed that week in her school. The boy said if he went he would bring something for her. He compares his beloved to the Chalice, the consecrated cup of wine of the Eucharist feast from which Jesus Christ drank. He announced he would go to Araby on Saturday Night. His uncle gave him permission. After a tedium, troublesome struggle he reached the fair ground when it was ten minutes to ten. The sales girl was involved in loose banter with two men on a drab subject when she very casually and in a mechanical style asked the boy hero whether he wanted to buy something. According to him, her attitude made him lose interest in buying anything from the stall. A voice announced that it was time for the light to be out. Immediately the upper part of the hall was plunged in total darkness. Looking up at he had the realization that it was his vanity that made him come here and that the same turned him into a laughing stock. This realization also caused his eyes to burn with great pain for his frustration and humbling and anger at his helplessness and dependence on others.

Assignments (Any Two) 10x2=20

- 1. What does Araby signify? Bring out the significance of the title.**
- 2. Describe the journey of the Boy-Hero? what effect did it produce on his mind?**
- 3. “ Gazing up into the darkness I saw myself as a creature driven and derided by vanity, and my eyes burned with anguish and anger.” Bring out the significance of the line.**
- 4. What is retreat? What effect did it have upon Mangan's sister?**

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The Fly by Katherine Mansfield

Page3:- *The Fly* is a famous short story written by Katherine Mansfield. It was published in *The Nation & Athenaeum* in 1922, March. The short story was later published in *The Dove's Nest and Other Stories*. There is ample proof that this short story was written during or after World War I. It is an undeniable fact that the memory of her brother Leslie broods over the story. Katherine loved her brother very much and he was unfortunately killed in the war. The story consists of three parts. The first part deals with old Woodfield who came to the boss's office and informed him of his daughter's travel to Belgium and they had seen that the grave of the boss's son lying close by the grave of their own brother. The second part deals with the boss's reaction about his dead son. The third and final part deals with a fly that accidentally fell into the boss's inkpot. *The Fly* is a wonderful psychological short story based on a single theme and woven by a neat structure. It presents the great sorrow felt by a bereaved father and dwells on the psychological workings of his mind. It is remarkably brief and shows unity of theme blended with a finely working symbolism. The boss looks at his son's photograph present in the office and then notices a fly that was struggling to get out of his inkpot. The boy helps it out of the inkpot and observes how the fly dries itself, with some amount of admiration. Then an idea flashed in his mind. He dropped a blot of ink on the new cleaned fly. This went on three times. William Shakespeare also used the famous line in his *King Lear* from Katherine Mansfield's *The Fly*-

Page4:- "As flies to wanton boys are we to the Gods; / They kill us for their sport." The Story can be distinguished by its psychological

interest for it presents the theme of a profound sorrow of a father at the loss of his only son, though the sorrow hurts him a lot, with the passage of time, he is slightly overcome it through the tenacity of work and diversions. The Fly episode brings out the desolation and desperation of the father. When the fly gets struck in the ink, the man is enchanted by its stamina and desire for life and helps it get out. The second time, and the fly overcomes the danger. One should not easily give way to death but tackle it with endeavour and courage. The fly again finished the laborious task of cleaning itself. The boss shook Ink for the third and final time. The fly became weak and timid. The fly fell on the soaked blotting paper without any movement. Its hind legs got fixed to the body while its front legs got fixed to the body while its front legs were not to be seen. The boss stirred the fly with his pen. The fly lay there dead. The title *The Fly* is very appropriate as it narrates the unsuccessful attempts of a fly to survive after being drowned in an inkpot and the wretchedness of the central character, the boss. Being reminded of the untimely death of his son, the boss plays with the fly and assumes the role of destiny for it.

Assignments (Any Two) 10x2= 20

1. 'The horrible danger was over'' what is the danger referred to here? What was the feeling of the Boss after the death of the fly at the end of the story?
2. Discuss the aptness of the title *The Fly*.
3. Briefly comment on the character of Mr. Woodfield and the Boss.
4. Analyze *The Fly* as a short Story.

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