EXCERPTS FROM BLOSSOMS OF THE SAVANNAH

1. Read the extract below and answer the questions that follow.

"No Joseph," she said in an **infantile** whimper. "Ican't bear that we can't express the love that we have for one another because of some **primitive** culture. If by loving you, I offend the sensibilities of Nasila then let me offend and face the consequences of doing so!"

"I also love you very much," Joseph Parmuat responded finally. "I loved you the moment I saw you during your father's homecoming ceremony. But then the clan matter came to separate us. It is true we have no blood relation. But Nasila culture dictates who are related and who are not. We are slotted among those who cannot marry."

"No, it can't be, I cannot accept its verdict," she said **petulantly** her words agonised. "No way, never!" She stopped, confused and angry with herself at her inarticulate outburst. She took several long steadying breaths and then said, "I cannot accept that a culture that does not feed,clothe or house me comes to control my life. Our lives belong to us, Joseph. The **destiny** of our lives is in our own hands. We should guard it jealously."At last they drew a little a part .His eyes were open, honest and steady upon her face.

1. What happens before this excerpt?
(3mks)

2. For both Joseph and Taiyo, give and illustrate two character traits.
(4mks)

3. How is dialogue significant in this excerpt?
(4mks)

4. Explain any two thematic concerns addressed in the excerpt.
(4mks)

5. From elsewhere in the novel, how does Joseph sacrifice for his love for Taiyo?(4mks)

6. Explain the meaning of the following vocabulary as used in the excerpt.
(4mks)

a) destiny

b) infantile

c) petulantly

d) primitive

7. What happens immediately after this extract?
(2mks)

2. Read the excerpt below and answer the questions that follow

You are **mad**!" Resian screamed at him. You are stark mad if you think I am your wife. I can only be your wife over my dead body. Yes, you and my father can kill me and carry my dead body to your **palatial** home."

He was stunned by those harsh words. He winced as if he had been struck. Then already harsh line of his mouth tightened and he stood tense for a moment. Then he relaxed and watched her mockingly. "You can never escape Resian," he repeated quietly, smiling. The very normality of his voice as he spoke those monstrous words was most shocking and disturbing to her. Whether you scream your heart out, or jump into the deep sea, Resian,

you are mine. You are my wife from now henceforth”

“Iwant to go now.” Resian announced angrily shuddering with **disgust** and terror.

“You want to go?” he asked, the contemptuous quiet of his voice a menace by itself.” Go! You want to be persuaded, coaxed and **pampered** to marry Oloisudori Lonkiyaa? Sorry I will not do that! If you want to go, please yourself. You may opt to go, but when you are mine, you will do as I please. No one plays games with Oloisudori. Ask your father, he will tell you.”

“Stop it! Stop it! Resian screamed excruciatingly pained by the disdainful remarks of Oloisudori. Putting her hands over her ears, she made a dash for the door. He made no effort to stop her but she flung it open and turned to glare at him with tearful eyes

You are mad! She screamed again sobbingly. “You are stark mad! You hear me? You are nothing but ol-ushuushi.” She walked away and as she did so, she heard his soft laughter behind her.

1. Say what happens before this excerpt. (3mks)

2. How is Oloisudori portrayed in this excerpt? (4mks)

3. Describe the feeling of Resian in this excerpt (3mks)

4. From other areas of the novel, state other crimes that are practiced by Oloisudori. (3mks).

5. How does the writer utilize irony in this excerpt? (3mks)

6. “You are my wife from now henceforth” Rewrite in the reported speech.

(1mk)

7. Explain the meaning of the following words (4mks)

a) Pampered

b) Disgust

c) Mad

d) Palatial

7. What happens immediately after this extract?
(3mks)

3. Read the following excerpt and answer the questions that follow.

They were silent as they climbed the hill on their way back from Nasila river to draw water. The water containers that they carried on their backs were now heavy. The straps that supported the containers pressed down their heads with a painful exhaustion.

As they walked, each one of them allowed her mind to fleetingly roam the fanciful land of wishful thinking.

Resian thought how wonderful it would be, had she had a chance to enroll at the Egerton University and after graduation had a chance to work with her role model, Minik ene Nkoitoi, the Emakererei at the sheep ranch that she managed. She imagined herself already there driving a large flock of sheep. And when she thought of sheep, her mind flew back to fifteen years or so earlier and **reminisced** the first time she saw a sheep. It was a childhood memory, a memorable picture from the swirling scene around

her which had been captured and preserved by her mind when she and Taiyo accompanied their father to the Nakuru Agricultural Show. She could still see in her mind a group of big, docile, tawny woolly animals that stood panting drowsily in a green pasture, with the sun beaming down brightly from a clear blue sky. She had then admired the white long overcoats that the handlers wore.

Taiyo also thought of Emakererei. She would ask Joseph Parmuat, to assist her compose a song in her praise. She had already put words to a tune she had composed to ridicule the three women who she thought **collaborated** with men to oppress the women folk. They were Nasila's three blind mice who, she thought, did not seem to know that the world was changing. Those were the *enkasakutoni,* who threatened to curse *intoiye nemengalana* and ensured they did not get husbands nor children: the midwife Enkaitoyoni who threatened to spy on the young women as they gave birth to ensure that any who was still among *intoiye-nemengalana* had her status altered there and then; and the **dreaded***Enkamuratani,* who would never tire of wielding her olmurunya **menacingly.**

1. Place the excerpt in its immediate context.
   (4Mks)

2. Identify and illustrate two aspects of style in this excerpt.
   (4Mks)

3. Discuss two themes evident in the excerpt.
   (4Mks)

4. Discuss one character trait of Resian and Taiyo in the excerpt.

(4Mks)

5. The straps that supported the containers pressed down their heads with a painful exhaustion. Rewrite beginning: with……(1Mk)

6. How do Resian's thoughts now come to be fulfilled in future? Briefly explain. (4Mks)

7. Explain the meaning of the following words as used in the excerpt. (4Mks)

(i) Reminisced

(ii) Collaborated

(iii) Dreaded

(iv) Menacingly

4. Read the following excerpt and answer the questions that follow

"Yes, Papaai," Resian said **apprehensively**. "I am here. Taiyo tells me you are calling me?"

"Yes, yes," her father replied. "Please take a seat."

"Yes, *Papaai,*" Resian repeated as she sat on a chair far away from her father.

"Come nearer…child," her father said pleasantly.

"Why do you **sit a mile away**? Come nearer."

Resian moved her chair hardly an inch from where it was and then she

looked up into her

father's face with eager expectation.

"If I do remember well," her father began in a low even tone, "you will be nineteen in September this year, am I right"

"You are quite right, *Papaai.*" Resian answered eyeing him curiously. His face was unusually kind. His eyes held hers as he smiled broadly. That's it!' she thought triumphantly. "That must be it!

"You and I have not discussed important issues for a long time," he said with a friendly chuckle that was intended to bring her closer to him. "I thought today would be the best day to break the news. Your future is very important to me, my dear child."

Resian thought the concern in her father's voice, rang false. She hesitated, but could not holdherself any more. The anxiety was too great.

"Papaai, is it Yeiyo or Taiyo who spoke to you?" she asked sensationally, thinking she was stating the obvious. But seeing her father's face cloud, she added quickly.

"Who between them spoke to you about our enrolment at the Egerton University?"

"What are you talking about, child? Her father, who seemed dumbfounded, asked after a long and uncomfortable silence.

"Both Yeiyo and Taiyo promised to talk to you about it, and I thought she had."

“What, in the name of God are you talking about, child?” he repeated, this time **agitated** and shaking his head vigorously. “No, I have never spoken to anybody about any of you enrolling at the university. Never! When I said I wanted us to discuss your future, that isn’t what I meant at all. Of course not!” Resian looked at her father’s face enquiringly.

1. What has happened before the excerpt?
(3mks)

2. What is so ironical in this passage? Explain your answer referring to elsewhere in the novel.
(3mks)

3. “Your future is very important to me, my dear child” From elsewhere in the novel, explain why Ole Kaelo tells his daughter so.
(3Mks)

4. Discuss two aspects of character in Resian in this excerpt.
(4Mks)

5. What major issue is addressed in this excerpt?
(2Mks)

6. Explain what happens after this excerpt.
(3Mks)

7. “Who between them spoke to you about our enrolment at the Egerton university? “Rewrite in the direct speech.
(1Mk)

8. A part from irony, discuss any other aspect of style evident in

the excerpt. (2Mks)

9. Explain the meaning of the following words and expressions used in the excerpt. (4 Mks)

(i). Apprehensively

(ii). Sit a mile away

(iii). Hold herself

(iv). Agitated

ANSWERS TO SAMPLE EXTRACTS

Sample excerpt 1

1. Taiyo visits Joseph's bachelor house. She expresses her infatuation. Joseph feels infatuated too. She sobs uncontrollably

2. Joseph is responsible. He has self-control aimed at preventing the duo from messing up.

He is patriotic. He chooses to take sides with the Nasila culture. He feels they should not break the norms

Taiyo is loving. She has strong feelings for Joseph.

Assertive. She is ready to offend sensibilities of Nasila culture for love.

Sacrificing. She is ready to risk herself for love.

3. It brings out Taiyo's interrogative nature. She skeptically questions the enslaving nature of Nasila culture. "I cannot accept culture that does not feed me." She poses that culture should be beneficial.

4. He accepts to be the contact man in the mission of rescuing Taiyo. He makes her captors drunk leading to her escape. The captors later kill him.

5.Love. Taiyo and Joseph express their views towards love. She feels it should be let to grow while he feels culture should restrain love feelings.

Culture. Their love relationship is held at ransom by culture that objects love between people of the same clan.

6. a) Fate

b)Childish/ immature

c) Grudgingly

d) Fate

7. Joseph says he is ready to face any eventuality that may arise out of love. Taiyo appreciates the new stance of Joseph. She sheds tears.

Sample excerpt 2

1. Oloisudori informs Resian of the benefits she will get for marrying him. Resian gets very annoyed and speechless. Resian learns that her father has already received dowry for her marriage to Oloisudori. He reports to her that their fate is sealed.

2. Contemptuous.“He asked, the contemptuous quiet of his voice a menace by itself.”

Proud. He feels superior and egocentric.“No one plays games with Oloisudori. Asked your father, he will tell you.”

3. She is feeling disappointed and desperate of her father's action of receiving dowry with an aim of sealing her marriage with Oloisudori. She feels really betrayed.

4. Extortion, assassinations shadowy businesses, sexual immorality,robber, smuggler, poacher

5. It is ironical that Oloisudori who is older than Resian's father plans to marry Resian a young girl even after he is told her wish is to study at the university. It is also ironical that Kaelo has already picked dowry from Oloisudori and has never bothered to inform Resian of it.

6. He told her that she was her wife from then henceforth.

7. a) Insane

b) Grand/ like a palace

c) Strong loathe

d) Treat with excessive care

8. Resian rans blindly knocking a chair and a table and disappears past Oloisudori's driver. She goes to her father's shop. She is raving mad with indignation. She becomes very disappointed with her father.

Sample excerpt 3

1. Before the excerpt, Taiyo and Resian go to the River to fetch water. They remember their discussion with their aunt and admire Minik's fight against women oppression by men. They muse that men must be very angry with her for snatching five hundred girls from her. After the excerpt, Taiyo sings the song she has composed about three women whom she refers as mice

silently in her heart. One of those women is the *enkamuratani* chasing a woman with a knife.

2. Flashback- Resian recalls fifteen years back when she and Taiyo accompanied their father to the Nakuru agricultural show and she saw sheep the first time.

Vivid description-The sheep are vividly described as big, docile tawny wooly animals.

Metaphors-She calls the three women who collaborated with men to oppress women as Nasila's three blind mice.

3. Theme of Determination or optimism. Resian is full of optimism that one day she would join Egerton university.

Women as their own enemies. The three Nasila women collaborated with men to oppress women.

Negative cultural practices. The three women propagate negative cultural practices against women such as F.G.M.

4. Resian is visionary. She thought how wonderful it would be, had she a chance to enroll at the Egerton University. She dreams of going to university.

Taiyo-critical-she wants to compose a song ridiculing three Nasilian women who collaborated with men to oppress women.

5. With a painful exhaustion, the straps that supported the containers pressed down their heads.

6. Later, she is rescued from a planned marriage by Nabaru and is taken to Minik's ranch. There, she is given a house and a job. Minik also helps in securing their admission at Egerton University. She also gives a scholarship. The novel ends when she and Taiyo are going to University.

7. Recall/Recalled

Worked together

Feared

Threateningly

Sample Excerpt 4

1.Ole Kaelo sends Taiyo to call Resian for him. Resian feels hopeful and excited that she is being called to be informed about admission to the university. She thinks that it is her mother or sister who has talked to her father about the matter.

2. It is ironical for Resian to think that her father is going to tell her about her dream wish of joining Egerton University but he has plans to marry her off to his friend Oloisudori. This is even as he says "your future is very important to me"

3. He says this because he has plans to marry her to his friend Oloisudori. If this succeeds, his business would be saved because Oloisudori had helped him establish the business and even building his house in Nasila.

4. Ignorant- she thinks that her father has good news about joining university which is not the case. She says, "That's it!" She thought triumphantly. "Is it Yeiyo or Taiyo who spoke to you?"

Apprehensive. She replies to her father apprehensively.

Fearful- she is in fear of her father. She sits on a chair far from her father.

5. Determination/optimism. Resian is very much determined to join Egerton University. She thinks it is the reason why her father has called her. “Who between them spoke to you about our enrollment at the Egerton University.”

6. After the excerpt, Ole Kaelo hesitates telling Resian what he wanted to tell her and tells her to go to the kitchen. He tells her to tell her mother to come.

7. She asked him who between them had spoken to him about their enrollment at the Egerton University.

8. Suspense. The reader is left in suspense wanting to know why Ole Kaelo had called his daughter.

Dialogue- there is dialogue between Resian and her father. It reveals the strained relationship between daughter and father.

Nervously/worriedly/fearfully

Sit far away

Control herself

Troubled/disturbed

PRACTICE EXCERPTS

1. Read the following excerpt and answer the questions that follow

However, the notion that he was about to hand over his own daughter to a gangster continued to **gnaw** at the conscience of Ole Kaelo relentlessly.

He felt guilty, especially when he recalled the atrocities that were known to have been committed by Oloisudori over the years. But another voice told him quietly that he was being foolish and unreasonable to question his own conscience over the matter of Oloisudori, for he was just one among many who were enjoying the fruits of their labour. And it was hardly anybody's business to know how honest that labour was. After all, the small voice reassured him tauntingly, those who committed bigger crimes such as Goldenberg and Anglo-leasing, were still enjoying the 'fruits of their labour.' Had they not invested the yields of their ill-gotten money in housing estates, in shares, in import and exports in tourism, in transport and in other trades, just as Oloisudori had done?

When he went to bed later that evening, he remained awake for many hours **pondering** over those disturbing thoughts that went through his mind fleetingly, like water that churned violently in a turbulent sea. He thought of Oloisudori's **impending visit** and his intended marriage to Resian. He knew the success of failure of the event would determine the fate of his business. Even his continued ownership of that house where he and his family lived, depended on the outcomes of that event. Should Oloisudori fail to get Resian and recall the loan he had extended to him to buy that house, **he was done**. And knowing Oloisudori, he could very easily draw the rug from beneath his feet, leaving him vulnerable to all kinds of vagaries. And the thoughts gave him anxious moments.

At dawn when sleep overtook him, Ole Kaelo had a pleasant dream. Resian had consented to Oloisudori's proposal. After Oloisudori reported that to him, he was greatly pleased and relieved. His wife was rapturous.

Although they were astonished at the turn of events, they were relieved to know that they would not have to live with the guilt of having forced their daughter to get married. What a wise child his once hardheaded daughter had turned to be after all! And how devious! After all those years of sullenness, awkwardness and tactlessness, she had finally brought relief to their life and ushered in a period of peace and tranquility. But then, it was just that. A dream!

1. Place the excerpt in its immediate context. (4Mks)

2. Discuss three major issues in this excerpt. (6Mks)

3. Discuss two character traits of Ole Kaelo in this excerpt. (4Mks)

4. "And the thoughts gave him anxious moments" Add a question tag. (1Mk)

5. Discuss any three aspects of style in this excerpt. (6Mks)

6. Explain the meaning of the following expressions from the excerpt. (4Mks)

(i). Gnaw

(ii). Pondering

(iii). Impending visit

(iv). He was done.

2. Read the following excerpt and answer the questions that follow.

Her dream was rudely and violently interrupted by a thunderous bang and a loud roar of laughter. She woke up with a start, jumped up to her feet and stared at the door with wide panic-stricken eyes. For a moment she could not figure out her surroundings and called out the name of her sister Taiyo. She was terrified. The door flung open and Olarinkoi staggered in. He was stone drunk. Resian stared at him **unblinkingly** as he walked towards her and she backed off terrified, squeezing herself flatly against the wall. He followed her there and got hold of her shoulders and shook her violently glaring at her with his glittering eyes.

"You silly thing," he thundered angrily. "I tell you to prepare food and you refuse to do so, eh? Today you will know who is the owner of this home. If you are still in doubt, let me tell you frankly that from today on you are my wife, hear that, eh? You are my wife. For a long time you have been sneering at me, showing how highly educated you are. Today we shall see how educated your body is! Yes, we shall see!''

He got hold of her hand and began dragging her into the other room. At first she did not understand his intention until he began unfastening her buttons with his rough trembling hands. Then the truth came, and with it, terror and panic. She tried to get away from him, but he held her **effortlessly** as he brutally continued fumbling with her dress, trying to loosen it. She screamed as loudly as she could while she pushed him away and thrashed frantically about. But that did not deter him and he totally ignored her screams holding her more firmly with his strong arms. Against

her loud protest, he tore her garments and began to push her towards the bed.

Then desperately she took the last chance of self defense and self-preservation. **Mustering** all her strength, she thrust his thumb into her mouth; sunk her teeth into the flesh like a ferocious animal and tenaciously held onto it, tugging at it fiercely like a lioness. She could feel the flesh tearing and she tasted the salt of his blood as it filled her mouth but she clung unto the thumb as Olarinkoi **howled** with pain.

1. Make notes on the contents of Resian's dream.
(4Mks)

2. Discuss one character traits of Resian in this excerpt.
(2Mks)

3. What has greatly changed in Olarinkoi in this excerpt compared to his earlier conduct in the novel?
(3Mks)

4. Identify and illustrate two aspects of style in this excerpt.
(4Mks)

5. Explain two major issues raised in the excerpt.
(4Mks)

6. Explain what happens immediately after the excerpt.
(3Mks)

7. "Today we shall see how educated your body is" Rewrite in reported speech. (1Mk)

8. Explain the meaning of the following expressions in the passage. (4 Mks)

(i). Unblinkingly

(ii). Effortlessly

(iii). Mustering

(iv). Howled

3. Read the excerpt below and answer the questions that follow

"Nothing is wrong with me," Resian **retorted** furiously. And pointing at the living room, with her figure, she fiercely charged," I have no quarrel with my father for whom, I have tremendous respect. It is the likes of Olarinkoi I am mad at, and all those other males who come here ordering us to do that or the other for them, simply because they are males. When women visit us, they give us the **leeway** to respond to their requests. But as we burn our fingers here Mr.Olarinkoi is dozing off comfortably in our living room waiting for his lunch and possibly a little angry and impatient with us for delaying it.'

"It is enough," cried Yeiyo – Botorr viciously. She instantly abandoned the peeling of potatoes and threw the knife into the pail that held the peeled potatoes. Supporting herself by holding onto a nearby wall, she painfully lifted a large, heavy body. "My enkaini, I agree with you that something is wrong with our child, and I think I know what ails her. Come along with me and I will tell you what I think ails her. "I am not sick… " Resian was saying that when she was cut short by Taiyo." Even if you are not sick, you cannot

argue with Yeiyo Botorr," Taiyo told her **sternly** as soon as they were out of earshot of their mother and Yeiyo Botorr,"there are things one has to learn on their own. One of them is that you cannot **antagonize** the older people by arguing with them, however, untenable their argument may be. That goes without saying, my dear little sister."

1. What happens before this extract?
(3mks)

2. Comment on any two stylistic devices used in the extract.
(4mks)

3. Explain any issue brought about in this extract.
(3mks)

4. What is the character of Yeiyoo Botorr from this extract?
(4mks)

5. From elsewhere in this text how does Olarinkoi contribute to the plot development of the novel?
(3mks)

6. Re-write and add a question tag.
(1mks)

Nothing is wrong with me.

7. Write the meaning of the following vocabulary.
(4mks)

a) Sternly

b) Antagonize

c) Retorted

d) Leeway

8. What happens immediately after this extract?
(3mks)

4. Read the following excerpt and answer the questions that follow

At seven o'clock in the evening after the lights had been put on, and the traditional esuguroi drink had been served in generous measures, tongues loosened and hearts gladdened. Soon after, the party gathered momentum and voices rose. Within no time, one could hardly be heard over the hubbub of talk and laughter. And as the pleasurable and lively celebration progressed, voices became animated; hands and arms gesticulated vigorously while heads turned more often. Eyes searched out acquaintances within the throng of revelers.

And it was all pomp and gaiety as ivory adorned and bejeweled fingers fluttered; bare shoulders gleamed in the light multicoloured bead ornaments glittered upon elaborately bedecked necks: pendulous *ilmiintoni* of all colours **dangled** loosely down extended ear-lobes: and the bright colours of lesos, kangas, red shukas and multicoloured blankets, all turned the Ole Kaelo living room into a kaleidoscope of shifting light and colour.

1. Place this extract in its immediate context.
(4mks)

2. State and explain two thematic concerns in this context.
(4mks)

3. What is the significance of the use of words like esuguroi, ilmiintoni, lesos, kangas, and shukas?

(3mks)

4. Identify and explain two character traits of ole Kaelo.

(4mks)

5. Eyes searched out acquaintances within the throng of revelers. Rewrite to form a question

(1mk)

6. Which other party has an equal weight from the rest of the novel. What is its significance?

(3mks)

7. Comment on the prevalent mood in the context.

(2mks)

8. Explain the meaning of the following words:

(4mks)

a) Hubbub

b) Gesticulated

c) Gaiety

d) Dangled