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Translation Department

Third Year
Second Term

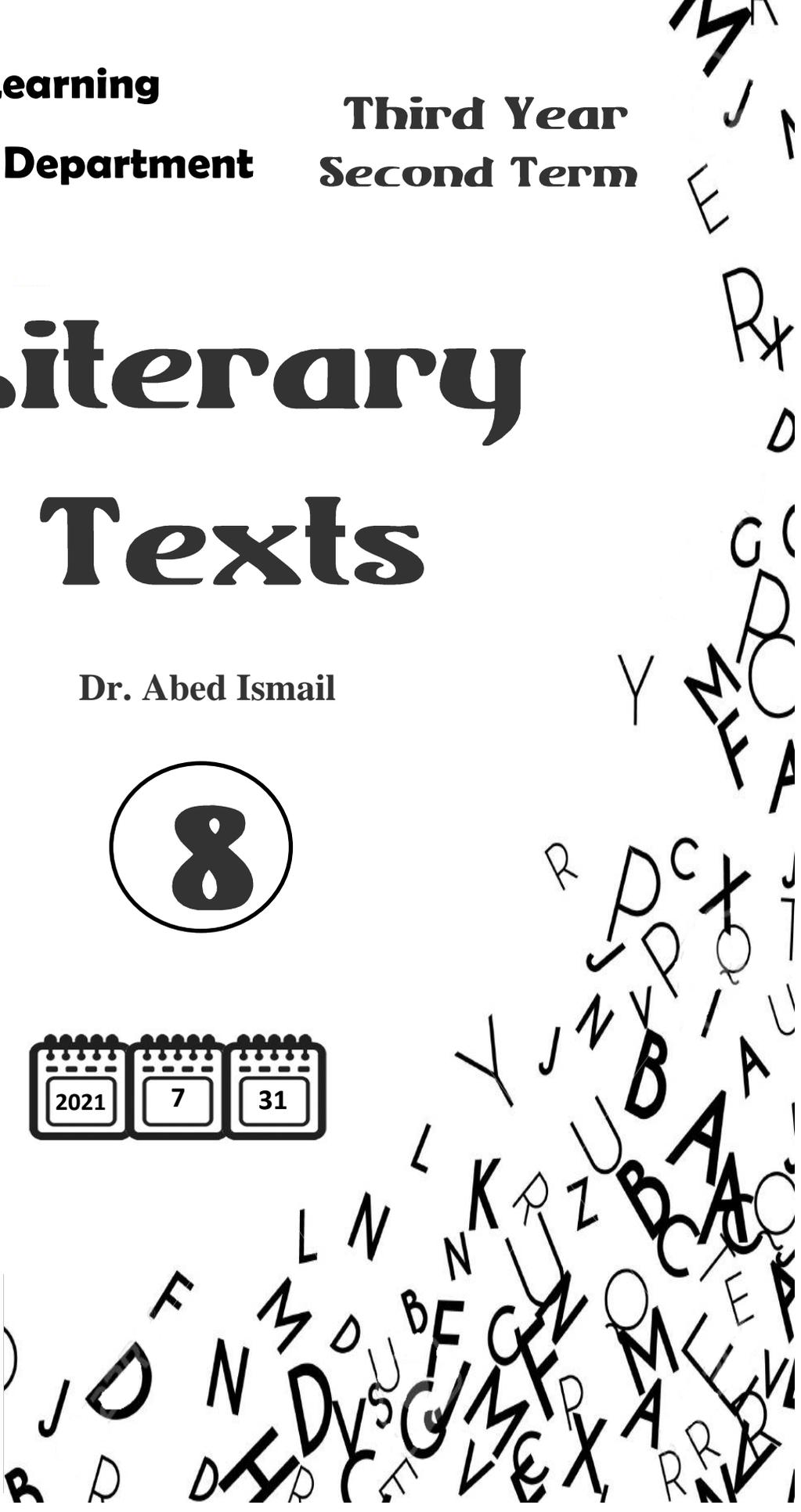
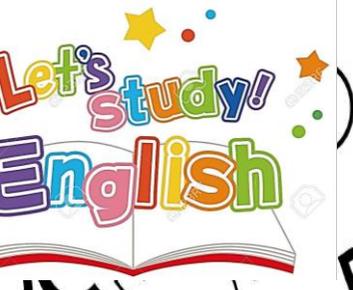
Literary Texts

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Good morning!

The First Confession

Today, we will finish the story, and I will speak a little bit about **symbolism** (الرمزية), which is used by the writer in the story.

Jackie, who is just seven years old, compares himself to *Adam*. He says, “When I went to the church to make my first confession, I felt like I am the last *Adam*.” He refers to *Adam* before the fall. We know that Adam fell from paradise (heaven).

يقارن جاكى نفسه ب آدم قبل السقوط من الجنة.

So, for *Jackie*, the fall is actually to go to church to make the confession. Why is it a fall? It is because he was a child before he made the confession; he was innocent, and he did not know much about life, but remember that *Adam* committed a sin, and that is why he was punished by God; he was expelled (تم نفيه) from paradise. So, *Jackie* said to himself, “I am just like *Adam*.” The point is that Jackie did not make an intentional sin; he did not hate his grandmother because he was evil, but he was just acting innocently like a child.

So, this is symbolism when we say that he is like *Adam*. *Jackie's* journey is from **innocence to experience** because to make the confession is to get in touch with the world of experience. This is his first experience.

هذا مثال عن الرمزية عندما نقول أن جاكى مثل آدم. رحلة جاكى تنتقل من البراءة الى الخبرة/التجربة لأن تأدية الاعتراف يعني الاتصال بعالم الخبرة.

Another symbol is about **darkness and light**. We have the opposite here; *Adam* considered paradise to be light, and he came to earth (darkness), but *Jackie* said that before he entered the church, it was all dark around him, and that is because he was ignorant. So, darkness is a symbol of ignorance. However, after he made the confession, he gained experience and became somebody who knows, which means that when he made the confession and left, the priest was

happy. So, darkness represents fear and ignorance whereas light represents peace, knowledge, and comfort.

هناك مثال آخر عن الرمزية يتعلق بالظلام والضوء. قبل الاعتراف كان جاكى يعيش بالظلام الذي يمثل الخوف والجهل، أما بعد الاعتراف انتقل جاكى الى الضوء الذي يمثل السلام والمعرفة.

Now, we will meet the last character in the story, which is the **nameless priest**. He stands for the true faith. He is very cheerful, kind, lovable, sympathetic (عطوف), and he has a sense of humor (حس الدعابة). On the other hand, *Mrs. Ryan* lacks sympathy. She is extreme (متطرفة), conservative (محافظة), militant (متعصبة), uncompromising (متصلبة), intolerant (جدية), tough, rough, and always serious (غير متسامحة). Children are scared to death when she comes to lecture them because she always speaks about hell and punishment. So, the nameless priest is the opposite of Mrs. Ryan.

Let us read on page 90 the dialogue between *Jackie* and the priest. Now, we are going to listen to *Jackie* making confession.

The next time, the priest steered me into the confession box himself

This means that he almost carried him.

and left the shutter back, the way I could see him get in and sit down at the further side of the grille from me.

How does the confession happen in church? The priest is sitting, and the other guy who wants to make a confession is sitting in front of him.

"Well, now," he said, "what do they call you?"

What is your name?

"Jackie, father," said I.

The word "father" has a religious status here. It does not mean daddy.

"And what's a-trouble to you, Jackie?"

What is wrong with you, Jackie? Why did you come here?

"Father," I said, feeling I might as well get it over while I had him in good humor,

So, he met him in good humor. The priest was in a good mood. Jackie sees Mrs. Ryan always in a bad mood. When Jackie saw him like that, he was surprised. Jackie was terrified that he might be punished no matter what he says because the things he is going to confess are all related to attempt to kill; for example, his grandmother. He was scared to speak about his attempt to stab his sister with a knife.

He immediately began to speak about his intention to kill his grandmother.

"I had it all arranged to kill my grandmother."

He seemed a bit shaken by that, all right, because he said nothing for quite a while.

At the beginning, the priest did not say a word.

"My goodness," he said at last, "that'd be a shocking thing to do. What put that into your head?"

Notice that the priest said that this is a shocking thing. He did not tell Jackie that he is a criminal, a murderer, or a sinner; rather he just mentioned that killing someone is a horrible thing to do.

Then, he says, "Why are you going to do that?"

"Father," I said, feeling very sorry for myself, "she's an awful woman."

So, he is being innocent here when he says that he does not like her, and that is why he wants to kill her.

"Is she?" he asked. "What way is she awful?"

The priest wants to understand. So, true religion is to understand.

"She takes porter, father," I said, knowing well from the way Mother talked of it that this was a mortal sin, and hoping it would make the priest take a more favorable view of my case.

She takes porter means that she drinks.

"Oh, my!" he said, and I could see he was impressed.

The priest was listening with interest.

Then, Jackie says:

"And snuff, father," said I.

She smokes also.

"That's a bad case, sure enough, Jackie," he said.

Both of them he means; they are two awful things.

"And she goes round in her bare feet, father,"

She walks around not wearing shoes.

I went on in a rush of self-pity,

This means that I tried to make him pity me and feel sympathy with me.

"and she knows I don't like her,

So, she knows.

Remember that the dialogue is interlocked with age; we may not have necessarily correct grammatical sentences, as Jackie speaks like a child.

and she gives pennies to Nora and none to me,

The grandmother gives money to his sister, but not to him.

and my da sides with her

His true biological father sides with *Nora*.

and flakes me,

And punishes me.

and one night I was so heart-scalded I made up my mind I'd have to kill her."

So, he is confessing and mentioning the reasons why he wants to kill his own grandmother.

"And what would you do with the body?" he asked with great interest.

He says, "When you kill her, what are you going to do with her corpse (جثة)?"

"I was thinking I could chop that up and carry it away in a barrow I have," I said.

A barrow: a one-wheel carriage used by farmers (عربة ذات عجلة واحدة).

The whole dialogue is very funny. *Jackie* is saying that when he kills her, he will cut the body to pieces and take it away in a barrow.

"Begor, Jackie," he said, "do you know you're a terrible child?"

"I know, father," I said, for I was just thinking the same thing myself. "I tried to kill Nora too with a bread-knife under the table, only I missed her."

So, he continues and says that he did not only want to kill his grandmother, but also *Nora*.

"Is that the little girl that was beating you just now?" he asked.

His sister was beating him.

"Tis, father."

It is, father.

Here is the sense of humor:

"Someone will go for her with a bread-knife one day, and he won't miss her," he said rather cryptically.

So, maybe he did not hit her with the knife, but somebody

else will because she is a bad girl.

"You must have great courage. Between ourselves, there's a lot of people I'd like to do the same to, but I'd never have the nerve."

The priest says that he also wants to kill so many people, but he is not a brave man. Why? It is not because he is not courageous to kill, but he is afraid of punishment.

"Hanging is an awful death."

He does not want to be hanged. That is why he would not kill people.

So, this is the way he is talking to a child. You do not judge the child; rather you listen to him. He is trying to tell him that to kill someone is to be punished by the end of the day, and the punishment is very awful and ugly, like hanging.

"Is it, father?" I asked with the deepest interest-I was always very keen on hanging.

"I was always very keen on hanging" means that I always wanted to know what it means to be hanged. This is because he was just a child. Notice here that he is beginning to acquire experience and to learn about life, as he begins to know what hanging meant.

"Did you ever see a fellow hanged?"

He is asking the priest.

"Dozens of them," he said solemnly.

The priest says that he saw many of them.

"And they all died roaring."

Roaring: uttering ugly sounds.

So, the hanged people make these ugly sounds when they are dying.

"Jay!" I said.

Jay means *Jesus*.

"Oh, a horrible death!" he said with great satisfaction.

"Lots of the fellows I saw killed their grandmothers too, but they all said 'twas never worth it."

They regret it (ندموا على فعلتهم).

So, instead of saying that what you are thinking about will make a criminal who deserves to be punished, the priest is trying to teach the child that if you violate the rules of law, you are going to be punished. So, it is never worth it.

He had me there for a full ten minutes talking, and then walked out the chapel yard with me.

They finished.

I was genuinely sorry to part with him,

To part: to abandon, to leave.

Jackie was sad because he did not want to leave the priest. He liked him, unlike *Mrs. Ryan*.

because he was the most entertaining character I'd ever met in the religious line. Outside, after the shadow of the church, the sunlight was like the roaring of waves on a beach;

Before he entered the church, it was all dark, but after he made the confession, the sunlight was there. This is symbolism.

it dazzled me; and when the frozen silence melted

Before, there was a frozen silence or a frozen atmosphere. After he made the confession, silence itself melted like ice. So, he compares silence with ice.

and I heard the screech of trams on the road, my heart soared.

Soared: to fly.

At the beginning, his heart was sad. When he left, it was soared; it was happy.

I knew now I wouldn't die in the night and come back, leaving marks on my mother's furniture. It would be a great worry to her, and the poor soul had enough.

This is the conclusion or the result. He says, "Now, I know that I am not going to die and burn the furniture of my own mother."

So, he made a good confession, and the priest was happy.

Nora was sitting on the railing, waiting for me, and she put on a very sour puss when she saw the priest with me.

Nora did not like the fact that priest was walking with Jackie. She was mad jealous because a priest had never come out of the church with her.

She was very jealous.

"Well," she asked coldly, after he left me, "what did he give you?"

She was expecting *Jackie* to be punished because she considered him to be a sinner.

"Three Hail Marys," I said.

"Three Hail Marys" is maybe to read a verse from the bible to glorify the *Virgin Mary*.

"Three Hail Marys," she repeated incredulously. "You mustn't have told him anything."

"I told him everything," I said confidently.

He is confident now. Before the confession, he was hesitant, unsure, and uncertain.

"About Gran and all?"

Did you tell him about your attempt to kill *Gran*, your attempt to kill me, and everything?

"About Gran and all."

(All she wanted was to be able to go home and say I'd made a bad confession.)

"Did you tell him you went for me with the bread-knife?" she asked with a frown.

"I did to be sure."

"And he only gave you three Hail Marys?"

"That's all."

She slowly got down from the railing with a baffled air. Clearly, this was beyond her.

She could not get it.

As we mounted the steps back to the main road, she looked at me suspiciously.

"What are you sucking?" she asked.

The priest gave *Jackie* some candy too. The priest was so generous, unlike *Mrs. Ryan*.

"Bullseyes."

The candy is called bullseyes.

"Was it the priest gave them to you? 'Twas."

"Lord God," she wailed bitterly, "some people have all the luck!"

She considers him to be lucky.

"Tis no advantage to anybody trying to be good.

She says that I will never try to be good; I want to be bad just like you so I be rewarded.

I might just as well be a sinner like you."

The story ends with *Nora* complaining. She still thinks of *Jackie* as a sinner. When *Jackie* told the truth, he is no longer a sinner because he made a good confession. So, from her point of view, *Jackie* is still a sinner. However, from the point of view of the church and religion, he was not a sinner because he told the truth; he did not lie. *Nora* is the one who

lied. She is a liar because she is always bothering her brother and teasing him up.

As you see, Jackie emerges triumphant; emerges victorious. So, the truth is victorious.

Student: is giving candy to Jackie a symbolism of reward?

Professor: of course, it is a symbolic act. This is a gesture by the priest to make Jackie understand that whenever you tell the truth, you will be happy, and you will be rewarded. As I said before, there are two versions or copies of religion. Mrs. Ryan believes in punishment, and that is why she keeps speaking about hell, whereas the priest is tolerant, which means that true religion is about sympathy, peace of heart, and it can lead you to tell the truth. So yes, to give candy means to reward.

We have some terms we are going to talk about.

Stream of Consciousness (تيار الوعي)

It is related to the novel. It is when the character's mind is turned into a stage upon which events take place.

إنها مرتبطة بالرواية، و هي عندما يحوّل عقل الشخصية إلى مسرح تجري عليه الأحداث.

This is like Jackie's character. Remember that the whole story was told from Jackie's point of view.

Here, I focus upon the character. When I have a story or a novel that uses the stream of consciousness technique, I try to listen to the character's mind, which means **thinking loudly**.

Aside

It is when the character speaks to itself.

In drama, we call this **interior monologue** (مناجاة داخلية). William Shakespeare is well-known for his monologic dramas.

Suspense

It is when the plot gets vague and the reader cannot guess how it will end. It has to do with anticipation and uncertainty.

عندما تصبح الحكمة غامضة بحيث لا يتمكن القارئ من تخمين كيف ستنتهي. إنها تتعلق بالترقب و عدم اليقين.

For example, there is suspense in *Jackie's* story because we do not know if he is going to make a good or a bad confession.

Mystery

It is this atmosphere of vagueness and unpredictability. It is close to suspense.

هي هذا الجو من الغموض وعدم القدرة على التنبؤ.

Mystery is very common in a type of novel called **detective fiction**.

Defamiliarization

It is to treat familiar objects (e.g. pen, chair, table, etc) in an artistic, poetic, and creative way. Writers use this technique to create a poetic effect.

عندما يتم معاملة أشياء معروفة (مثل القلم والكرسي والطاولة الخ) بطريقة فنية وشعرية وإبداعية. يستخدم الكتاب هذه التقنية بغية خلق تأثير شعري.

For example, a pen is a familiar object. I can defamiliarize it by saying, "The pen is crying." The familiar thing is to say, "I can write a letter with a pen" because the pen is a tool for writing.

There is an example of defamiliarization in our story, specifically in the story within the story. The stranger was talking to the priest, and all of a sudden he was transformed into ashes.

That is all for today
See you next week

