Men Should Weep by Ena Lamont Stewart

In this extract, which is from near the end of Act 1, Jenny arrives home late.

**[John comes in holding Jenny by the arm. She is about eighteen, made up boldly (for the**

**nineteen-thirties): her lipstick is spread over her mouth, her coat and blouse undone, her**

**hair tousled.]**

JENNY: Leave me go!

5 **[She shakes herself free and she and John stand glaring at each other. Maggie is watching**

**fearfully.]**

JENNY: Makin a bloomin fool o me in front o ma friend!

JOHN: Where hae you been till this time o night?

JENNY: That’s nane o your business. I’m grown up noo.

10 JOHN: Don’t you speak to me like that. I asked ye where ye’d been.

JENNY: An I tellt ye! Nane o your damned interferin business.

MAGGIE: Jenny! John!

**[John takes Jenny by the shoulders and shakes her.]**

JOHN: Where wis ye? Answer me!

15 JENNY: At the pickshers.

JOHN: The pickchers comes oot at hauf ten. Where wis ye efter?

JENNY: **[sullen]** Wi Nessie Tate an a coupla friends.

**[He lets her go and she flops into a chair, glaringly sullenly at him and rubbing her**

**shoulder.]**

20 JOHN: I don’t approve o yon Nessie Tait.

JENNY: That’s a peety. I dae.

JOHN: Ye impident little bitch! What I ought tae dae is tak ma belt tae ye.

JENNY: Jist you try it!

JOHN: The next time you come in here at this time o night wi yer paint smeared a

25 ower yer face, I wull! Look at yersel!

**[He drags her over to a mirror, then propels her, resisting, to the sink, where, holding her**

**head under his arm, he scrubs off her make-up.]**

JOHN: There! And in the future, you’ll let yer hair grow tae the colour God meant it

tae be an leave it that wey.

**Questions**

8. By referring to lines 1—11, explain what impressions are created of Jenny’s character. 3

9. By referring to lines 13—23, explain how the playwright creates a dramatic conflict between John and

Jenny. 4

10. By referring to lines 24—29, explain how John’s anger is conveyed to the audience. 3

11. By referring to this extract and elsewhere in the play, discuss the role of Jenny in Men Should Weep. 10

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| **Question** | **Expected Response** | **Max Mark** | **Additional Guidance** |
| 1 | Candidates should explain what impressions are created of Jenny’s character.  1 mark for each impression supported by reference.  0 marks for reference/quotation alone | 3 | Possible answers include:  • her appearance (make-up, clothing, hair) suggests someone rather brazen, “loose”, unconcerned with appearances  • “Leave me go” — suggests defiance, aggression, no fear of father  • “shakes herself free” — suggests independence, lack of respect for father  • “glaring at each other” — suggests she is strongwilled, not intimidated by her father • “… in front o ma friend!” — suggests concern for status, lack of concern for father’s point of view, perhaps taunting him with unknown “friend”  • “ I’m grown up noo” — suggests she is assertive, tired of being treated like a child • “An I tellt ye!” — suggests anger in her voice, standing up for herself  • “Nane o your damned interferin business” — suggests prepared to insult, |
| 2 | Candidates should explain how the playwright creates a dramatic conflict between John and Jenny.  1 mark for each relevant point supported by reference.  0 marks for reference/quotation alone. | 4 | Possible answers include:  • the fact that all the speeches in these lines are short and aggressive, frequently indicated by use of exclamation marks  • John grabs her — physical hostility  • the aggression in “Where wis ye? Answer me!” — harsh question and command  • Jenny’s sullen, minimal response “At the pickshers.”  • John’s relentless demand for more information (to begin with he wanted to know where she was, now it’s where she was after that)  • her behaviour when he lets her go — “flops” suggesting lack of respect; “glaring sullenly” showing her antagonism; “rubbing her shoulder” to remind John (and the audience) of his manhandling of her  • John, with both questions answered, presses on with dismissive comment about her friend — “yon” sounds contemptuous  • Jenny’s provocative response “That’s a peety. I dae.”  • John resorts to insulting language: “Ye impudent little bitch”  • the open threat of more violence: “Tak ma belt tae ye.”  • Jenny’s dismissive, sneering, challenging, defiant “Jist you try it!” |
| 3 | Candidates should explain how John’s anger is conveyed to the audience.  1 mark for each reference and comment.  0 marks for reference/quotation alone. | 3 | Possible answers include:  • “paint smeared” — he belittles her appearance; “paint” instead of “make-up”, “smeared” suggesting something messy, unattractive  • “a ower yer face” — as if she has applied it randomly, made herself look hideous  • “Look at yersel!” — antagonistic exclamation, implying she looks a mess  • “drags … propels … holding … scrubs” — violent, aggressive actions suggesting his temper  • “There!” — a sort of triumphant declaration of his victory  • “the colour God meant it tae be” — self righteous, pompous moralising |
| 4 | Candidates should discuss the role of Jenny in the play and should refer to appropriate textual evidence to support their discussion.  0 marks for reference/quotation alone. | 10 | In comments on the rest of the play, possible references include:  • Jenny as rebel, independent spirit  • prepared to do anything to escape her family and its poverty  • the showdown with her father at the end  Many other references are possible. |