



Shrewsbury
School

SHREWSBURY SCHOOL

SIXTH FORM ENTRANCE EXAMINATION
2023 ENTRY

DRAMA AND THEATRE

(1 Hour)

Instructions to candidates:

Read the extract from *Snake in the Grass* by Alan Ayckbourne. Answer all of the following questions on lined paper.

The garden of a large suburban house. Leaves underfoot. Birdsong. A tennis court. ANNABEL is looking round the garden, lost in memories.

ALICE: Mrs Morton?

ANNABEL: Yes?

ALICE: You're Mrs Morton?

ANNABEL: No. I was.

ALICE: Oh.

ANNABEL: Not any more. I'm Annabel Chester.

ALICE: Right.

ANNABEL: Who did you say you were?

ALICE: I'm Alice Moody.

ANNABEL: Do I know you?

ALICE: I'm – I was – your father's nurse. At one time. I don't know if your sister mentioned me at all...

ANNABEL: Alice. Alice Moody. Just a moment, aren't you the one my sister got rid of?

ALICE: Technically speaking, yes.

ANNABEL: Hardly technically. She fired you, didn't she?

ALICE: She chose to dispense with my nursing services, yes.

ANNABEL: Then what are you still doing here?

ALICE: I needed to have a –

ANNABEL: Not back to nurse my father, I trust?

ALICE: No, of course not, I was –

ANNABEL: Because I've got bad news if you have, he died three weeks ago.

ANNABEL laughs. ALICE doesn't.

ALICE: I'm well aware that your father's deceased, Ms Chester.

ANNABEL: Then why are you here? If my sister got rid of you, there's obviously –

ALICE: If you'd let me explain –

ANNABEL: Where is my sister, anyway?

ALICE: I believe she's currently at the shops.

ANNABEL: The shops?

ALICE: Shopping. She doesn't know I'm here, you see.

ANNABEL: She doesn't?

ALICE: I came to see you, Ms Chester.

ANNABEL: Me? How did you even know I'd be here? I've only just got off the plane and here you are in wait for me –

ALICE: I knew you'd be home sooner or later. I was familiar with the terms of your father's will, you see. I felt certain you'd be here.

ANNABEL: If you're claiming wrongful dismissal or somesuch, I should take it up with the Royal College of Nursing or whatever –

ALICE: No, it's not about that.

ANNABEL:because there's no point speaking to me about it. If I remember correctly, according to my sister, she dismissed you because you were unreliable, unpunctual, neglectful and unprofessional.

ALICE: Is that what she called me?

ANNABEL: So far as I remember. I may have them in the wrong order.

ALICE: I don't know why you're being so hostile, Ms Chester.

ANNABEL: Because I've had an extremely long flight, I'm very jet lagged, and from what I've heard from my sister, you're not somebody she'd particularly welcome in her garden.

ALICE: Your garden.

ANNABEL: What?

ALICE: I mean, if we're being strictly accurate – technically – I understood that under the terms of the will you own this house. And the garden. And the bulk of the estate.

ANNABEL: I don't know how you obtained this information –

ALICE: I obtained it because your father wrote to me a few days before he died and told me that was what he was doing.

ANNABEL: What?

ALICE: Altering the will in your favour. He also said he was certain your sister was trying to kill him.

Pause.

ANNABEL: I beg your pardon?

ALICE: That was what he believed.

ANNABEL: Miriam? My sister, Miriam?

ALICE: I've got the letter. (*She produces it.*) It's alright, you can keep it. It's a photocopy. It's perfectly genuine. Definitely your father's handwriting. A little bit shaky, but then, he was very ill. He must have dragged himself all the way out to the postbox. On his own. While your sister was out. That must have taken a fair bit of doing. He was very weak, even when I was here to care for him. After I went, with the dosages your sister was giving him, God knows what state he was in. Amazing he could stand up at all, really.

ANNABEL: What do you want?

ALICE: I've already told your sister what I want.

ANNABEL: Then why are you talking to me?

ALICE: Because you're the one who now has all the money. No point asking her for anything. Poor cow hasn't even got a decent coat to her back. He kept her on a short chain, your father –

ANNABEL: Now, you listen to me. I want you to leave now, do you hear? I will talk to my sister –

ALICE: Yes, you'll need to talk to her –

ANNABEL: But I must say my instinct at present, Miss Moody, is to call the police and have you arrested for extortion and blackmail.

ALICE: You could give it a go if you like. It'll all come out then. Depends how much you care about your sister, I suppose. I'll let you sleep on it, shall I. Get over your jet lag. I'll come back around the same time tomorrow, shall I? Don't bother seeing me out, I know the way.

End of Extract. Please turn over for questions.

ANSWER ALL THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

Section A

Choose FIVE lines spoken by Annabel. As the actor playing Annabel, explain how you would deliver each of these lines to create your intended effects for the audience. For each line, you should explain how you would use:

- Vocal skills (accent, pitch, pace, pause, volume, intonation)
- Physical skills (facial expression, posture, gesture, gait)
- Proxemics
- Interaction with props and set. [20]

Section B

Sketch and annotate a costume design for Alice. You should consider:

- her age and character; and
- her profession. [10]

30 marks