**In the last couple of years, time seemed to be moving very fast, seemed almost to be accelerating, and the more she tried to hold on to it, the less of it there was to hold. This was a frightening feeling, a feeling she tried over and over to analyze. On this particular Monday evening, a light rain was falling. She could hear the gentle sound of the drops against the trees outside her window.**

**This morning the rain made her happy, since it reminded her of her childhood in the Philippines, when the yellowish glow from the low-watt bulbs made the rooms look unearthly, and everything in them blurred, as though she were looking at her surroundings from underwater. She remembered sitting at the round table in the kitchen, which was her favorite room in the house, where she sat surrounded by the bustling maids, the sound of people entering and leaving.**

**All day the question had been inside her, waiting.**

Pls. guess the meaning of the underlined words from the context of the passage provided.

1.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Filipinos once had an ancient written language.  If I were to show you what the marks look like on a piece of paper, they would look like a series of waves, more like Egyptian hieroglyphics, like the eye of the Pharaoh I saw in my old high school history books.**

**The language was written on tree bark.  Epics were probably written in this language, but I don’t know what they are.  Nor could my mother relate them to me. Few have seen the language, let alone understood it. It is the invisible backdrop of my culture, whose ancestors are shadowy people.  Shadows spawned by the dimmest light.**

Pls. guess the meaning of the underlined words from the context of the passage provided.

1.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Her son turned six that year. She realized that, for weeks, she had been expecting something to happen. Driving him to school, a feeling would come over her and she would slow down and look furtively right and left, right and left. When they arrived at the school without mishap, she would be surprised and thankful, though she didn’t know who she should be thankful to, she wasn’t the praying sort. Dela would ease her unsteady legs out of the car, call to her son with some measure of confidence, and push herself through the rest of her day. Like that.**

Pls. guess the meaning of the underlined words from the context of the passage provided.

1.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Aling Saturnina used to live in the last house on the left, the one behind the santol tree. But last year, she and her married daughter were taken to San Pablo in a military jeep, and since then no one has seen or heard from them. The villagers don’t like to talk about the events that led to Aling Saturnina’s disappearance. When asked, they cross themselves and their eyes slide sideways and perhaps one or two will invoke the name of the town’s patron saint or other holy person, as though the saying of it had the power to protect them from all harm. If the questioner becomes too persistent–as lately some of these newspapermen from San Pablo have been–they escape to the rice fields, and wait there till nightfall before returning to their homes. They are simple folk and don’t bother with things they cannot understand.**

\* \* \*

Pls. guess the meaning of the underlined words from the context of the passage provided.

1.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Before Tina got married, her mother took her out to lunch with a friend she knew only as Tita Fely. Tita Fely had a loud voice. She had hair cut short like a man’s. She was married to a handsome tennis instructor and had a beautiful house in Monterey and was raising four sons. Tita Fely looked at her and said, “Don’t let your husband push you around. Don’t be too good. Make him work for your affections and appreciate your labors. Men will take things for granted that are too freely proffered.” Tita pushed back her chair with an air of satisfaction, crossed her legs the way men do and lit a cigarette. She seemed to be under the impression that she had just spoken words of the utmost significance. And you know what? She had. After years of marriage, Tina would proudly relate this tale to her friends, always starting with the preface, “It was a woman named Tita that saved my marriage.”**

Pls. guess the meaning of the underlined words from the context of the passage provided.

1.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

If ever a person’s name matched their disposition, it was Laughter. Born into a destitute family that barely grew enough maize to feed themselves, her parents, devout Christians, named her after the greatest treasure they possessed: the ability to laugh in the face of any circumstance. Naturally, this blessing was also conferred upon Laughter who was undaunted by any twist in life’s winding road. For example, when her family told her that they could never pay for any of her schooling, she proclaimed, “Well than I better get myself a sugar daddy.” And not just any sugar daddy…. As soon as she saved enough money knitting socks, she caught the next transport to town to visit her affluent uncle, Chitika, the owner of a small sugar plantation. She refused to leave until he promised – in writing – to put her through to university, provided of course, that she knitted him a new pair of woolen socks every month.

Pls. guess the meaning of the underlined words from the context of the passage provided.

1.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_