Vikram’s English Academy (ICSE)

**Assignment: Michelangelo**

1. **Why was Rome beginning to bore Michelangelo? Where was he before arriving at Rome?**

**Ans:** Rome was already beginning to bore Michelangelo because he couldn’t find variety of faces in Rome. He grumbled that there was not character in the face and everyone looked alike. Before arriving at Rome four years ago, Michelangelo was at Florence.

1. **What did the Pope ask Michelangelo in jest? How is the artist mentioned here? How did he reply?**

**Ans:** Pope asked Michelangelo in jest what Michelangelo had found in his face. The artist that is Michelangelo spontaneously replied that he looked like ‘a burning candle’.

1. **Why did it take a minute for the Pope to understand Michelangelo’s words? How were his words described?**

**Ans:** It took a minute for the Pope to understand Michelangelo’s words as he was quite shocked by the answer. Michelangelo’s words are described to be ‘barbed’.

1. **How was the answer given by Michelangelo interpreted by the Pope?**

**Ans:** When Michelangelo said that the Pope resembles a burning candle, the Pope interpreted that he was just another candle that burns alongside other thousands of candles.

1. **What dilemma had arisen in Pope’s mind regarding Michelangelo’s arrival four years ago and Judas’ face?**

**Ans:** The Pope wondered that Michelangelo had been unsuccessful in looking for a model for Judas’s face for four years. He believed that in the vast universe that the Lord has created where there no two faces are alike, how Michelangelo had not found anyone.

1. **What special task had the Pope assigned to Michelangelo? Which remained? Why?**

**Ans:** Pope Julius had commissioned Michelangelo for a special task which was to paint frescoes of important events from the Bible on the walls of the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in St Peter’s Basilica. Only ‘The Last Supper’ remained because Michelangelo had not been able to get any model for Judas.

1. **Why did the Pope not react when Michelangelo walked out all of a sudden? What does ‘this stage’ mean?**

**Ans:** The Pope didn’t want any unpleasantness between him and Michelangelo and so he doesn’t react to Michelangelo’s sudden walking out. ‘This stage’ means at the last minute when the frescoes were near completion.

1. **What had the Pope not forgotten?**

**Ans:** The Pope had not forgotten the time when Michelangelo was carving the Crucifixion- in wood- for the Church of the Holy Spirit and he had come excitedly to Julius saying he had found just the right model. The model was a dead man whose funeral had to be held up for twelve hours.

1. **Who was Bramante? What did he proclaim? Was his proclamation true?**

**Ans:** Bramante was a great painter like Michelangelo. He proclaimed that he conjured faces from his imagination. No, his proclamation wasn’t true.

1. **Who all were against Bramante’s proclamation? What was their opinion? What was the end result of it?**

**Ans:** Not only the Pope but also the Medici were against Bramante’s proclamation. Pope had to admit that the characters Bramante would sketch looked as though they emerged from a common mould. And according to the Medici family, all Bramante’s characters bore a strong family resemblance. Ultimately, Pope Julius had no choice but to dismiss Bramante and approach Michelangelo.

1. **What would Michelangelo do when he had started painting the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel?**

**Ans:** Michelangelo would lie for hours beneath the dome of the Sistine Chapel and stare and mutter something to himself.

1. **Which faces was Michelangelo trying to search? What was he successful in?**

**Ans:** Michelangelo was trying to search faces of Jesus, Virgin Mary and Judas. He was able to see their flesh and blood forms but the faces eluded him as the faces were buried deep in the verses of the Bible.

1. **What was the effect of Michelangelo’s strange behaviour on the Pope? What explanation did he offer?**

**Ans:** Due to Michelangelo’s strange behaviour, the Pope had begun to doubt Michelangelo’s sanity. Once when the Pope overheard Michelangelo repeating passages from the Bible, he asked what he had been doing. To which Michelangelo answered that he was trying to unravel the verses from the Bible. Maybe then he would be able to find the faces.

1. **What did the Pope ask Michelangelo about Gabriel and what answer did he get?**

**Ans:** The Pope asked Michelangelo how he was able to see Gabriel as even he didn’t belong to this world either. Michelangelo answered that he heard Gabriel’s voice in the Old Testament.

1. **What was the Pope sure about Michelangelo despite his strange behaviour? Why?**

**Ans:** Michelangelo’s words were terse and abrupt. He was also eccentric in nature. However, the Pope had known without the shadow of a doubt that he had chosen the right man for the task. The Pope knew that Michelangelo was doing his work sincerely and was extremely dedicated to his work and he was the only one who could paint the Sistine Chapel.

1. **How did Michelangelo find Mary?**

**Ans:** Michelangelo had found Mary quite easily. He saw his mother carrying two pots of water strung from a bamboo stick on her shoulder. He thought that the woman who had borne Christ in her womb would have been like his mother, just as thin and frail. He remembered watching his mother with unblinking eyes as she warmed the water for his father’s birth. Her face reflected the warmth of the roaring fire-flushed- burning like molten gold.

1. **What happened at an eatery at Bologna, one day?**

**Ans:** One day at Bologna, at an eatery, Michelangelo sat outside on a bench while his father was inside eating. Michelangelo would buy hot peanuts from a nearby vendor and would notice how every time the man weighed them out, a few would fall to the ground. A naked urchin would scurry across the street, pick the nuts and give them to the vendor, quietly popping one into his mouth. One peanut for every time he helped the peanut seller and then he would wait for the next customer.

1. **What was the effect of the mentioned episode at Bologna on Michelangelo?**

**Ans:** The sight of the urchin smartly picking up peanuts and popping up one in his mouth fascinated Michelangelo. He drew several sketches of the child. Many years later, while carving the Madonna of Bruges, he had used those sketches to make the little Jesus, small and naked.

1. **When the Pope asked Michelangelo to paint the Sistine Chapel, what was his reaction? Why?**

**Ans:** After Michelangelo had finished carving the Madonna of Bruges, the Pope had asked him to paint the frescoes for the Sistine Chapel Michelangelo refused first telling the Pope point blank that he was a sculptor and not a painter.

1. **Why did Michelangelo accept the Pope’s offer? What was the offer?**

**Ans:** Michelangelo accepted the Pope’s offer to paint the Sistine Chapel because it was the one creation that could ensure him a place in history. Not that immortality could be reason enough for Michelangelo. He had other immediate needs in the ephemeral life and most of all, he needed money to buy marble.

1. **When Michelangelo reminded the Pope about his money, what answer did he give? What was Michelangelo’s reaction to his question?**

**Ans:** When Michelangelo reminded the Pope about his money, the Pope asked him testily why he loved stone much and why not canvas and colours. Michelangelo answered that the colours lose their identity and mix with others unlike marble.

1. **Give reasons why Michelangelo was bored with colours and Rome.**

**Ans:** Michelangelo was bored with colours as they mix and lose their identity unlike marble. In Rome, he was not able to find a right model for Judas and so was bored of Rome.

1. **How is the man found in the dingy eatery described?**

**Ans:** The man had unusually bright and beady eyes. He was brimming with restless energy and spat here and there. He was prematurely bald and when he talked the words tumbled out fast like coins from a torn pocket.

1. **What trick was the man using to get what he wanted?**

**Ans:** The man sidled up to Angelo asking for a change for a florin and ended up sharing his food. Later Michelangelo saw the beady-eyes man at it again. He was asking someone else for change for a florin. The man tricked people for food. He would ask someone for change for a florin as an excuse for sharing their food.

1. **What did Michelangelo realise about the man’s nature?**

**Ans:** Michelangelo realised that he was fit to be Judas as he cheated people easily and convincingly.

1. **What was not difficult for Michelangelo? Why?**

**Ans:** It was not difficult for Michelangelo to persuade the beady-eyed man to accompany him to the chapel. It was because the man was extremely poor and would go to any extent for money and food.

1. **How did the man react after Michelangelo lifted the sheets covering the wall and the ceiling?**

**Ans:** The man gaped awestruck after Michelangelo lifted the sheets covering the wall and the ceiling. He recovered enough to ask for a tidy sum and Michelangelo agreed as he desperately wanted the model.

1. **What happened when the beady-eyed man was browsing through a pile of old sketches?**

**Ans:** When the beady-eyed man was browsing through a pile of old sketches, he paused at the picture of the urchin from Bologna. He asked Michelangelo who the child was. Michelangelo answered that the urchin used to live in Bologna many years ago and his face was given to the face of little Jesus.

1. **What was the urchin’s name? What was unusual about him?**

**Ans:** The urchin’s name was Marsolini whose face was given to little Jesus. And later, the same was given to Judas.

1. **What is the central idea of the story?**

**Ans:** The story expresses a fact that people’s circumstances change. The urchin whose innocent face was given to baby Jesus, the same face is given to deceitful Judas.