

English A: literature – Higher level – Paper 1
Anglais A : littérature – Niveau supérieur – Épreuve 1
Inglés A: literatura – Nivel superior – Prueba 1

Thursday 2 November 2017 (afternoon)

Jeudi 2 novembre 2017 (après-midi)

Jueves 2 de noviembre de 2017 (tarde)

2 hours / 2 heures / 2 horas

Instructions to candidates

- Do not open this examination paper until instructed to do so.
- Write a literary commentary on one passage only.
- The maximum mark for this examination paper is **[20 marks]**.

Instructions destinées aux candidats

- N'ouvrez pas cette épreuve avant d'y être autorisé(e).
- Rédigez un commentaire littéraire sur un seul des passages.
- Le nombre maximum de points pour cette épreuve d'examen est de **[20 points]**.

Instrucciones para los alumnos

- No abra esta prueba hasta que se lo autoricen.
- Escriba un comentario literario sobre un solo pasaje.
- La puntuación máxima para esta prueba de examen es **[20 puntos]**.

Write a literary commentary on **one** of the following:

1.

The man who was made of moon shadows was surrounded by boxes. Boxes made of sticks and bound with wire. They lay scattered on the forest floor. First I had eyes only for the strange man: the way his massive feet crushed the foliage beneath them; his hands the size of palm fronds. He was gathering up the boxes, stacking them one on top of the other.
5 Sometimes he paused, wiped his face against his sleeve, another time he used a cloth. Once he stood and gazed up at the sky. While he worked, we watched him. The air was filled with birdsong, the sound of a thousand birds. And I saw that the boxes were not boxes, but cages. And birds were imprisoned inside those cages: sunbirds whose feathers shimmered like oil across the surface of water, bright blue flycatchers, dark-throated warblers, palm swifts as small
10 as your thumb, doves vividly plumed as parrots, and in one cage an owl's black-rimmed eyes watching us from inside a white face.

I seized Alusani's hand and we crept out from between the roots of the tree. We tried to be quiet, but the fear refused to be bound and scattered suddenly. And so we ran. I didn't see him. I didn't dare turn around. At first I didn't even hear him, my heart thrummed in my ears.
15 I felt him. I felt the moon-shadow man look up, begin to come after us. I scraped my shin on a fallen log; my footsteps crashed through the undergrowth; cobwebs snatched at my face as I dragged Alusani after me. But in the end we were helpless as beetles at the mercy of a cat.

He didn't touch us, Alusani and I.

He stepped in front of us.

20 We stopped. We did not move.

We waited.

I looked at him and beyond him, for a way past. He crouched down; he put his hand into the folds of his trousers. From his outstretched hand he offered us a gift. At first I was transfixed by those luminous eyes, such a colour: the colour of water. When I did look down I
25 saw in his hand a peeled egg. The man reached into his pocket and brought out a packet, of paper instead of leaf. He opened it and sprinkled a little of what was inside on to the top of the egg. Salt. Just salt. The man held it out in front of him and uttered a sound like the noise a donkey makes — though not so loud as that. Still, it caused me to jump backwards. He pulled his lips back and showed us his huge teeth: "Hee-ah," he said, "hee-ah!"

30 I tried to warn Alusani. But he was less fearful than I, although I had never once thought so before. He reached out his fingers and he took the egg from the moon-shadow man.

It has been such a long time. In all that time I never spoke to anybody about what happened that day. Except now. Except to you.

35 Sometimes, when I used to remember, when I thought back to the beginning of what happened next, there was only one thing of which I was sure. That everything started with the man whose skin was like the shadows of the moon. The man who was busy filling cages with the souls of children.

2.

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