

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE

English Language B

Paper 1

Wednesday 15 January 2014 – Afternoon

Extracts Booklet

Paper Reference

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PEARSON

Text One

Sole survivor: the woman who fell to earth



Juliane Koepcke revisiting the scene many years later.

On Christmas Eve 1971, half an hour after take-off from Lima Airport, Peru, a passenger plane bound for Pucallpa in the Amazon rainforest flew into a thunderstorm.

The plane started lurching and bumping in the air. Then, in a single, catastrophic moment, a bolt of lightning hit one of the fuel tanks and tore the right wing off.

One minute Juliane Koepcke, 17, was sitting in the window seat next to her mother; the next she was falling through the air, still strapped to her seat, and her mother had vanished. Koepcke remembers falling head first with the seatbelt digging into her stomach and a canopy of trees spiralling towards her. Then she lost consciousness. She woke up the next morning on the floor of the rainforest.

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She had somehow managed to drop two miles through the air and survive with apparently nothing more than concussion, a broken collarbone, a gash on her leg and a small cut on her arm.

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But falling from the sky was only the beginning of her troubles. The forest that had saved her life became her prison. She was now lost in deep uninhabited jungle with danger behind every bush. There were jaguars, scorpions and poisonous snakes camouflaged as leaves, which she couldn't see because she had lost her glasses. Equally unsettling were the rivers with piranhas and alligators. And December in the rainforest is wet. By day Koepcke was covered with the black outlines of a hundred bugs. By night she was lashed with ice-cold rain.

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Koepcke didn't have any tools for survival such as a machete or plastic boots. She was just a girl in a thin cotton minidress with a broken zip and one white sandal (the other was lost in the crash and she decided that one was better than none). She had nothing to sustain her but a bag of boiled sweets (which ran out on day four) and a simple belief that she had to keep going. But 10 days after the plane crashed, on January 3 1972, Koepcke was found by three forest workers.

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Her story gripped the world. There was something powerfully life-affirming in its cocktail of luck, bravery and the invincibility of the human spirit.

Koepcke has often wondered why she didn't drop like a stone through the sky like the others. In the jungle after the crash she found the remains of a bank of three seats, like the one she and her mother were sitting in, although this one was rammed head first about three feet into the soil. 30

So this was luck, and more luck was to follow. Koepcke had landed about 30 miles from Panguana (her home), and she was attuned to the forest here – the animals, bugs and general feel. 'I felt no fear because it was the same environment I knew from home,' she says. 35

She knew instantly that it was important to get out to find help because this was an uninhabited area. She found a stream, in the belief that it would lead to a larger river and people. She knew that piranhas are only dangerous in shallow water, so she floated mid-stream. She knew that much of what grew was poisonous, but the water from the creeks was safe. 40

And she knew exactly what to do when she heard the call of hoatzins, because didn't her mother tell her about these birds? 'You only find hoatzins near larger rivers, open water,' she says. So she left the creek and followed the birdcall through dense thickets until she came out into the open and saw the river. 'I was very proud of myself.'

She was lucky not to step on a stingray; or to get attacked by an alligator; or to catch the poison arrow frog she was so desperate to eat – the poison is normally too weak to kill, but in her state it could have been fatal. What's more, the men who found her only visited their logging camp very rarely. It was pure chance that they came that day. 45

By Sally Williams

Text Two

An interview with Amy Racina, a very experienced solo hiker.

Angels in the Wilderness

Juanita: Thanks for talking with us today, Amy. Please tell the readers about the story you tell in "Angels in the Wilderness."

Amy: Hello, Juanita. It's great to be talking with you too. And it's especially great to be alive. In July of 2003, I was hiking alone in California's Kings Canyon National Park, when a hillside crumbled beneath me, and I suddenly found myself falling. Sixty feet. Onto solid rock. I didn't expect to live through the fall, but there I was. Still alive, completely alone in a remote part of the wilderness, with both legs and my hip broken in several places. I couldn't walk, crawl, or even stand up. I was off-trail in an area where only a few people hiked each season. I survived for four days and nights, dragging myself along with my hands, refusing to give up, and, against all odds, I was found and rescued by my three wilderness "Angels".

Juanita: How did you manage to keep your broken body alive for four days and nights?

Amy: I used basic first-aid: I applied antibiotic ointment and disinfectant to the open wounds, and then bandaged them tightly to stop the bleeding. By that time, I was shaking uncontrollably, and I realized that I was going into shock. I treated myself for shock by drinking hot liquids and wrapping myself up in my sleeping bag – my backpack with all of my gear had mercifully fallen nearby. I had enough water. I had fallen near a stream. I had some food left, although I could hardly eat.

I prayed for help. And I made a plan. Making a plan kept my mind focused on what I could do to help myself, not on the likely end: a painful death alone in the backcountry. My plan was to drag myself, with my hands, down the ravine into which I had fallen, towards a larger trail. I knew where the trail was – it was about a mile and a half away – and I reasoned that I might be found if I could get to the trail.

Juanita: Did you believe you were going to die?

Amy: I knew that death was the probable outcome. The odds were stacked against me. But I didn't let my mind focus too much on that. I focused instead on what I could do to improve my chances of survival. I did the best that I could under the circumstances. The only other option was to give up and die, and I didn't want to do that. I like to think that any of us, if faced with a similar situation, would do the very best that we could. I believe that we all have reserves of inner strength.

Juanita: Tell us a little about your incredible rescue.

Amy: By the end of the third day, I had managed to drag myself to a place where I couldn't go any further. I had been calling out randomly, knowing that very few people hiked in this region. But just as I was calling out, three hikers were on a trail up above where I was stranded, and somehow they heard my distant calls. They were probably the only three hikers who had come by in the time that I had been in the ravine, and they are the "Angels" after whom my book is named. I knew it was a miracle that they had heard me.

We were 20 mountainous miles from the nearest trailhead and mobile phone access, so it took another 24 hours for help to be summoned to the remote place where I was stranded. I was finally airlifted to the hospital, just hours before death.

Juanita: What was the most profound emotion you experienced during the excruciating four days and miraculous rescue?

Amy: Gratitude. When my rescuers found me, when I realized that my prayers had been answered, that I had been given another chance at life, I was incredibly grateful. I still am.

Just a few final thoughts. Love your life. Never give up. And always believe in miracles.

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By Juanita Watson

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