Pearson Edexcel International GCSE

English Language B

Paper 1

Thursday 22 May 2014 – Morning
Extracts Booklet

Paper Reference
4EB0/01

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PEARSON

Text One

Refugee Boy

'Welcome to England, Mr Kelo,' said the immigration officer as he handed back the passports to Alem's father.

After changing some traveller's cheques, they headed outside for a taxi. It was a damp and chilly October day, and the sky over Heathrow was grey.

'It will rain, Father,' said Alem as he pointed to the sky.

His father smiled. 'You haven't been here for one hour yet, but you have become English already; the English always talk about the weather. No, young man, those are not rain clouds, those are just English clouds. You will get used to them.'

They approached a waiting taxi and Alem's father handed a card to the driver. Alem's eyes explored the black taxi's interior. Even the back of the taxi was a source of wonder for Alem.

After a while his attention turned to the road outside, the M4. It was so straight and wide; the ride was so smooth, no potholes, no wild bends, just the sound of the engine and the tyres on the road.

They had travelled for only about seven miles when they turned off the motorway. It suddenly went quiet. There were very few cars on the road and no farms to be seen, just a few empty fields. As they neared the village, Alem looked for any sign of life. He could see the houses but where were the people? All the houses had cars in their driveways, usually two, and many had cats in the windows, but no people.

When they entered the village, things became a little busier but still remained very orderly. Now Alem began to see animals; they were only dogs that people had on leads but he was sure that he would soon see the local goats and chickens.

The taxi pulled up outside the hotel.

They spent the evening in the hotel room. Alem watched television. Alem thought it was all very bizarre. He was trying his best to understand what was being said but most of the time he just couldn't keep up with the pace of people's speech. From the moment that he landed he noticed that the English that he was hearing was very different from the English he had been taught at school. Everyone seemed to have his or her own accent. When Alem couldn't take it any longer, he switched off the television.

'What will we do tomorrow, Father?'

'We will get a train into London and you will see all those famous places that you have seen in the books.'

And so it was. In central London they boarded a sightseeing bus that took them to all the places they had seen in the books: Marble Arch, Piccadilly Circus, Buckingham Palace, Trafalgar Square, the Houses of Parliament and the Tower of London. After a visit to the British Museum they wandered down Charing Cross Road and found themselves in Leicester Square.

Back home Alem had lived only in small cities or towns and although he had been to the Ethiopian capital, he had never seen anything like London. Cities back home were busy with cars racing everywhere, but here it was so busy that the cars were standing

still in traffic jams most of the time. The fumes emitted by the cars made Alem cough. He wondered why everyone else wasn't coughing until he got used to it and stopped. What he really liked about the city was the way the old and the new stood side by side.

The rush home seemed desperate but Alem loved the excitement of being out so late. As the village clock struck midnight, they were just getting into bed. 'Father, can you hear that?' he said, turning his ear towards the window. 'Can you hear the nothing, Father? There are no animal noises – no birds, no donkeys, no hyenas, nothing.'

After a long, peaceful sleep, Alem woke up late. For a moment he forgot where he was. For the second time in his life he was waking up outside Africa, to the strange smell of English breakfasts being cooked below.

by Benjamin Zephaniah

Text Two

Ru

When I saw my first snow banks through the porthole of the plane at Mirabel Airport, I felt naked, if not stripped bare. In spite of my short-sleeved orange pullover purchased at the refugee camp in Malaysia before we left for Canada, in spite of my loose-knit brown sweater made by Vietnamese women, I felt cold. Several of us on the plane made a dash for the windows, our mouths wide, our expressions stunned. A landscape so white, so pure, could only dazzle us, blind us, intoxicate us.

In the airport, I was surprised by all the unfamiliar sounds that greeted us and the strange food, yet I knew that this was a place of delights.

Later at school, my first teacher in Canada walked with us, the seven youngest in the group of Vietnamese. Like a mother duck, she walked ahead of us, asking us to follow her to the haven where we would be children again, simply children, surrounded by colours, drawings, trivia. When she bent down to me, placing her hands on mine to tell me, "My name is Marie-France, what's yours?" I repeated each of her syllables without blinking. I hadn't understood a word she'd said, only the melody of her voice, but it was enough. More than enough. Unfortunately, from all the mornings with this English teacher, I remembered only one sentence: my boat number is KG0338. It turned out to be totally useless because I never had a chance to say it. My mother wanted me to learn French as fast as possible, English too, because my mother tongue had become useless.

I have a photo of my father being embraced by our sponsors, a family of volunteers to whom we'd been assigned. They often invited us to their white house with its perfectly mown lawn and flowers lining the entrance and a carpet in every room. They were the personification of our American dream. Their daughter passed on to me her dresses that had become too small, one of them a blue cotton sundress with tiny white flowers and two straps that tied on the shoulder. I wore it during the summer, but also in winter over a white sweater. During our first winters, we didn't know that every garment had its season, that we mustn't simply wear all the clothes we owned. When we were cold, without discriminating, without knowing the different categories, we would put one garment over another, layer by layer, like the homeless.

The town of Granby sheltered us during our first year in Canada. The pupils in my school lined up to invite us home for lunch so that each of our noon hours was reserved by a family. And every time, we went back to school with nearly empty stomachs because we didn't know how to use a fork to eat rice that wasn't sticky. We didn't know how to tell them that this food was strange to us. We could neither talk to nor understand them. But that wasn't the main thing. There was generosity and gratitude in every grain of the rice left on our plates. By the dozen they showed up at our doors to give us warm clothes, toys, invitations, dreams.

My friend Johanne held out her hand to me in the same way. She liked me even though I wore a hat with a McDonald's logo. Johanne also took me to the movies, even though I was wearing a shirt bought on sale for eighty-eight cents, with a hole near one of the seams. After the film *Fame* she taught me how to sing the theme song in English, although I didn't understand the words, or her conversations with her sister and her parents around their fireplace.

For a whole year, Granby represented heaven on earth. I couldn't imagine a better place in the world.

by Kim Thuy