Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9–1)

Thursday 23 May 2024

Morning (Time: 1 hour 45 minutes)

Paper reference **1EN0/01**

English Language

PAPER 1: Fiction and Imaginative Writing

Section A: Reading Text Insert

Insert Booklet
Do not return this Insert with the question paper.

Advice

- Read the text before answering the questions in Section A of the question paper.

Turn over ▶

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Read the text below and answer Questions 1–4 on the Question Paper.

In this extract, Hester is looking for Rosamond, a little girl who is lost in the snow at night. Rosamond has been led away into the hills by a strange and ghostly child. Hester is Rosamond's old nursemaid who has cared for her since her mother's death.

The Old Nurse's Story: **Elizabeth Gaskell**

I ran out. I turned the east corner and there a black shadow fell on the snow; but when I came again into the moonlight, there were the little footmarks going up – up to the Fells. It was bitter cold; so cold, that the air almost took the skin off my face as I ran; but I ran on, crying to think how my poor little darling must be perished and frightened. I was within sight of the holly-trees, when I saw a shepherd coming down the hill, bearing something in his arms wrapped in his cloak. He shouted to me, and asked me if I had lost a child; and, when I could not speak for crying, he bore towards me, and I saw my wee one, lying still, and white, and stiff in his arms, as if she had been dead. He told me he had been up the Fells to gather in his sheep, before the deep cold of night came on, and that under the holly-trees (black marks on the hill-side, where no other bush was for miles around) he had found my little lady – my lamb – my queen – my darling – stiff and cold in the terrible sleep which is frost-begotten*.

Oh! the joy and the tears of having her in my arms once again for I would not let him carry her; but took her, cloak and all, into my own arms, and held her near my own warm neck and heart, and felt the life stealing slowly back again into her little gentle limbs. But she was still insensible when we reached the hall, and I had no breath for speech. We went in by the kitchen-door.

"Bring the warming-pan**," said I; and I carried her upstairs, and began undressing her by the nursery fire. I called my little lammie*** all the sweet and playful names I could think of, – even while my eyes were blinded by my tears; and at last, oh! at length she opened her large blue eyes. Then I put her into her warm bed and I made up my mind to sit by my darling's bedside the live-long night. She fell away into a soft sleep as soon as her pretty head had touched the pillow, and I watched by her till morning light; when she wakened up bright and clear – or so I thought at first – and, my dears, so I think now.

She said she saw the snow through the high window falling – falling – soft and steady; but she wanted to see it lying pretty and white on the ground; so she made her way into the great hall: and then, going to the window, she saw it bright and soft upon the drive; but while she stood there, she saw a little girl, not so old as she was, "but so pretty," said my darling; "and this little girl beckoned to me to come out; and oh, she was so pretty and so sweet, I could not choose but go." And then this other little girl had taken her by the hand, and side by side the two had gone.

"Now you are a naughty little girl, and telling stories," said I. "What would your good mamma, who never told a story in her life, say to her little Rosamond, if she heard her telling stories!"

"Indeed, Hester," sobbed out my child, "I'm telling you true. Indeed I am."

"Don't tell me!" said I, very stern. "I tracked you by your foot-marks through the snow; there were only yours to be seen: and if you had had a little girl to go hand-in-hand with you up the hill, don't you think the footprints would have gone along with yours?"

"I can't help it, dear, dear Hester," said she, crying, "if they did not; I never looked at her feet, but she held my hand fast and tight in her little one, and it was very, very cold." 40

*frost-begotten** – sleep caused by the intense cold

*warming-pan*** – like a hot water bottle, to warm the bed

*lammie***– a term of affection meaning 'my little lamb'

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Acknowledgement:

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