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

Friday 23 May 2025

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 Booklet 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, the narrator remembers how the young man she was planning to marry went off to join the navy and fight in the war. She recalls what happened when he returned home unexpectedly.

***Poor Pretty Bobby*: Rhoda Broughton**

Before he went … as we walked in the garden, with our monstrously long shadows stretching before us in the moonlight … somehow, it became clear to us that, if God left him alive, and if the war ever came to an end, he and I should belong to one another. When he went he kissed me, I kissed him back again, most lovingly, with many tears.

Ah! parting. And so Bobby got into a carriage and drove away, and then I wept as one that would not be comforted.

The days passed by and now the corn harvest had come and the sun still shone with broad power.

One night, one hot night, having prayed even more heartily and tearfully, I had lain down to sleep. The windows were left open, that all possible air might reach me from the still and scented garden below. Thinking of Bobby, I had fallen asleep, and he is still mistily in my head, when I seem to wake. The room is full of clear light, but it is not morning: it is only the moon looking right in. I can see my own ghostly figure sitting up in bed, reflected in the looking-glass opposite. I listen: surely I heard some noise: yes—certainly, there can be no doubt of it—someone is knocking loudly at the hall-door. At first I fall into a deadly fear; then reason comes to my aid. If it were a robber, or person with evil intent, would he knock so openly and clamorously*? At worst it is some drunken sailor; at best, it is a messenger with news of our dear ones. At this thought I instantly spring out of bed and hurrying on whatever garments come most quickly to hand, I open my door, and fly down the passages, into which the moon is looking with her ghostly smile.

As I near the door I meet our old butler.

'Who *can* it be, Stephens?' I ask, trembling with excitement and fear.

It seems to me as if the endless bolts would never be drawn—the key never be turned in the stiff lock; but at last the door opens slowly and cautiously. I peep out eagerly, expecting I know not what.

Good heavens! What do I see? No drunken sailor, no messenger, but, oh joy! oh blessedness! my Bobby himself—my beautiful boy-lover! Even *now*, even after all these weary years, I cannot forget the unutterable happiness of that moment.

'Open the door, Stephens, quick!' I cry, stammering with eagerness.

The chain rattles, the door opens wide, and there he stands before me. At once, a feeling of cold disappointment steals unaccountably over me. He makes no movement towards me; he does not catch me in his arms, nor even hold out his hand to me. He stands there still and silent, and though the night is dry, I see that he is dripping wet; the water is running down from his clothes, from his drenched hair, and even from his eyelashes, on to the dry ground at his feet.

'What has happened?' I cry, hurriedly, 'How wet you are!' and as I speak I stretch out my hand and lay it on his coat sleeve. But even as I do it a sensation of intense cold runs up my fingers and my arm. How is it that he is so chilled to the marrow of his bones on

this sultry, breathless, August night? To my extreme surprise he does not answer; he still stands there, dumb and dripping. 'Where have you come from?' I ask. 'How is it that you are so wet?'

'It was cold,' he says, shivering, and speaking in a slow and strangely altered voice, 'bitter cold. I could not stay there.'

'Stay where?' I say, looking in amazement at his face, which, whether owing to the ghastly effect of moonlight or not, seems to me ash white. 'Where have you been? What is it you are talking about?'

But he does not reply.

Glossary

*clamorously** – very noisily

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