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ENGLISH A1 – HIGHER LEVEL – PAPER 1
ANGLAIS A1 – NIVEAU SUPÉRIEUR – ÉPREUVE 1
INGLÉS A1 – NIVEL SUPERIOR – PRUEBA 1

Tuesday 1 November 2011 (morning)
Mardi 1 novembre 2011 (matin)
Martes 1 de noviembre de 2011 (mañana)

2 hours / 2 heures / 2 horas

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

- Do not open this examination paper until instructed to do so.
- Write a commentary on one passage only.

INSTRUCTIONS DESTINÉES AUX CANDIDATS

- N'ouvrez pas cette épreuve avant d'y être autorisé(e).
- Rédigez un commentaire sur un seul des passages.

INSTRUCCIONES PARA LOS ALUMNOS

- No abra esta prueba hasta que se lo autoricen.
- Escriba un comentario sobre un solo fragmento.

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

1.

Mrs Hax waited under the eaves for the rain to abate. It fell for an hour with sodden fury, and then began to slacken into a dispirited drizzle. When it did, she picked her way carefully through the puddles in the garden to where the hoe lay. With it, she broke a basement window and methodically trimmed the glass out of the frame. Then she settled herself onto her haunches and, gasping, wriggled into the opening. She closed her eyes, committed her injuries in advance to Bethge's head, and then let herself drop. She landed on one leg, which buckled, and sent her headlong against the gas furnace, which set every heat vent and duct in the building vibrating with a deep, atonal ringing. Uninjured, she picked herself up from the floor. Her dignity bruised, her authority wounded, she began to edge her way through the basement clutter toward the stairs.

Dieter Bethge woke with a start. Some noise had broken into his dream. It had been a good and happy dream. The dancing bear had been performing for him under no compulsion, a gift freely given. It had been a perfect, graceful dance, performed without a hint of the foppishness or studied concentration that mars the dance of humans. As the bear had danced he had seemed to grow, as if fed by the pure, clear notes of the music. He had grown larger and larger, but Dieter had watched this with a feeling of great peace rather than alarm.

The sun glinted on his cinnamon fur and burnished his coat with red, winking light. And when the music stopped, the bear had opened his arms very wide in a gesture of friendship and welcome. His mouth had opened as if he were about to speak. And that was exactly what Dieter had expected all along. That the bear would confide in him the truth, and prove that under the shagginess that belied it, there was something that only Dieter had recognized.

But then something had broken the spell of the dream.

He was confused. Where was he? His hand reached out and touched something smooth and hard and resisting. He gave a startled grunt. This was wrong. His mind slipped backward and forward, easily and smoothly, from dream to the sharp, troubling present.

He tried to get up. He rose, trembling, swayed, felt the floor shift, and fell, striking his head on a chest of drawers. His mouth filled with something warm and salty. He could hear something moving in the house, then the sound was lost in the tumult of the blood singing in his veins. His pulse beat dimly in his eyelids, his ears, his neck and fingertips.

He managed to struggle to his feet and beat his way into the roar of the shadows which slipped by like surf, and out into the hallway.

And then he saw a form in the muted light, patiently waiting. It was the bear.

"Bear?" he asked, shuffling forward, trailing his leg.

The bear said something he did not understand. He was waiting.

Dieter lifted his arms for the expected embrace, the embrace that should fold him onto the fragrant, brilliant fur; but, curiously, one arm would not rise. It dangled limply like a rag. Dieter felt something strike the side of his face—a numbing blow. His left eyelid fell like a shutter. He tried to speak but his tongue felt swollen and could only batter noiselessly against his teeth. He felt himself fall but the bear reached out and caught him in the warm embrace he desired above all.

And so, Dieter Bethge, dead of a stroke, fell gently, gently, like a leaf, into the waiting arms of Mrs Hax.

Guy Vanderhaeghe, "Dancing Bear", *Man Descending* (1982)
By arrangement with the Cooke Agency Inc

2.

A Music

- I employ the blind mandolin¹ player
in the tunnel of the Métro². I pay him
a coin as hard as his notes,
and maybe he has employed me, and pays me
5 with his playing to hear him play.
- Maybe we're necessary to each other,
and this vacant place has need of us both
—it's vacant, I mean, of dwellers,
is populated by passages and absences.
- 10 By some fate or knack he has chosen
to place his music in this cavity
where there's nothing to look at
and blindness costs him nothing.
Nothing was here before he came.
- 15 His music goes out among the sounds
of footsteps passing. The tunnel is the resonance
and meaning of what he plays.
It's his music, not the place, I go by.
- 20 In this light which is just a fact, like darkness
or the edge or end of what you may be
going toward, he turns his cap up on his knees
and leaves it there to ask and wait, and holds up
his mandolin, the lantern of his world;
- his fingers make their pattern on the wires.
- 25 This is not the pursuing rhythm
of a blind cane pecking in the sun,
but is a singing in a dark place.

Wendell Berry, *The Broken Ground, Collected Poems 1957–1982* (1985)

¹ mandolin: a stringed instrument

² Métro: underground, train station