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**English A: literature – Higher level – Paper 1**  
**Anglais A : littérature – Niveau supérieur – Épreuve 1**  
**Inglés A: literatura – Nivel superior – Prueba 1**

Thursday 16 May 2019 (afternoon)

Jeudi 16 mai 2019 (après-midi)

Jueves 16 de mayo de 2019 (tarde)

2 hours / 2 heures / 2 horas

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**Instructions to candidates**

- Do not open this examination paper until instructed to do so.
- Write a literary commentary on one passage only.
- The maximum mark for this examination paper is **[20 marks]**.

**Instructions destinées aux candidats**

- N'ouvrez pas cette épreuve avant d'y être autorisé(e).
- Rédigez un commentaire littéraire sur un seul des passages.
- Le nombre maximum de points pour cette épreuve d'examen est de **[20 points]**.

**Instrucciones para los alumnos**

- No abra esta prueba hasta que se lo autoricen.
- Escriba un comentario literario sobre un solo pasaje.
- La puntuación máxima para esta prueba de examen es **[20 puntos]**.

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

1.

Annabel was now in demand for small parts in films, always of the same type: she was called for wherever a little slip of a thing was needed – the typist who just happened to return to the office for the parcel she had forgotten when the fatal argument was in progress in the boss’s room next door, the little housemaid whose unforeseen amorous exchanges with the delivery  
5 boy waylaid the flight plans of the kidnappers, the waif on the underground railway who was one of those who never got home to her lodgings at Poplar; and then she played a more prominent part as the nurse wrongfully accused of stealing drugs, and who woke up by and by in a private room of a hospital in Bangkok, under the watchful eyes of a ‘nurse’ whom she recognized as a former patient of hers; and she played many other parts. Her eyes were not large, but on the  
10 screen they came out so, by some mystery. By some deeper, more involved mystery, another ten years were to pass before Luigi Leopardi, whom many of his friends called ‘V’ – pronounced ‘Voo’ – because his real name was Vincenzo, the Italian producer, transformed her eyes, on picture-screens, into those of a Cat-Tiger. (The film company’s press secretary first described her as ‘The Cat-Tiger’ in the publicity that preceded the film *The House on the Piazza* with  
15 which she made her first big success. But before her film was released Luigi had changed this to ‘English Lady-Tiger’, as she was henceforth described on the billing and many other places.)

But in those earlier times when she began to be in demand in English films, she had no means of knowing that she was, in fact, stupid, for, after all, it is the deep core of stupidity that it thrives on the absence of a looking-glass. Her husband, when she was in his company with his  
20 men friends, and especially with Billy O’Brien, tolerantly and quite affectionately insinuated the fact of her stupidity, and she accepted this without resentment for as long as it did not convey to her any sense of contempt. The fact that she was earning more and more money than her husband seemed to her at that time a simple proof that he did not want to work. The thought of his laziness nagged her against all contrary evidence and emerged in unpleasant forms,  
25 unforeseen moments, embarrassing, sometimes in public, from her sharp little teeth:

‘Sorry, I’ve got to go home to bed. I’m the worker of the family.’

And more and more, Frederick stayed at home all day in their Kensington flat, living on her money, reading book after book – all the books he had never had leisure to read before. He had craved for this contribution to his life. There were few parts suited to his acting talents, so far  
30 as talent, continually unapplied, can be said to exist. Frederick, however, held to a theory that a random collision of the natal genes had determined in him a bent for acting only substantial parts in plays by Strindberg, Ibsen, Marlowe and Chekov (but not Shakespeare); and so far as that went he was right, everything being drably right in the sphere of hypotheses, nothing being measurably or redeemably wrong. In fact, his decision about what parts he was suited to  
35 perform on the stage of the theatre did not matter; he was never considered for any parts in the plays he wanted to act in.

Muriel Spark, *The Public Image*, Virago Press

2.

**[March]**

Eight months on, grief burns itself out,  
leaves quiet, smearing ash. A face,  
a spit-damp rag. A blackened field  
in rain. My smile's willed

5 and brief. All right then, I insist—  
a productive day. And schedule  
carefully: work, tea with a friend,  
a run. I will pretend

10 a busy breathlessness, which is,  
I'm sure, its own reward. And do  
all—headlong, a little grim—  
but later at home

15 recall only chatter as limp  
as boiled food. Its own reward?  
Well, the other option's sitting tight,  
trusting summer heat

20 will coax some movement out of me,  
asleep, cold-blooded on a rock.  
Is grief's aftermath also grief—  
a latter, deadened trough,

a kind of char that's part of burning?  
If so, fire ephemerals—blooms  
that follow forest fires—ought  
to flare shortly. If not,

25 this ash-dark face is mine, not grief's—  
is, in fact, me. And you? All but  
gone. Transcribed in scorch. A wound  
the new bark curls around.

From *An Elegy* by Benjamin Grossman, 2016 Jacar Press

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