



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

Monday 5 May 2008 (morning)
Lundi 5 mai 2008 (matin)
Lunes 5 de mayo de 2008 (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. (a)

Household Gods

“I mirrored their breaking lives, I saw their pale
Distraught coming and going, lined despair,
His shaken bulk, her calm pose in the doorway—
I saw them. I was there.”

5 “I have so long been silent, even now
Hardly at all remember how her slim
Long fingers once caressed me—was that how
At one time she touched him?”

10 “His lips on mine in the morning, or, in darkness,
After a happy embrace, warmed my clay.
Where is the firm mouth now, where the kiss?
Broken and swept away.”

15 “They lay me down to serve their steady feet,
How many times they strode over my pile!
Of late those steps were tentative. Now, a street
For strangers, I am so much jute and wool.”

20 “Bit by bit they painted my walls, the ceiling,
Made me in terms of their vision—I was glad.
But signs of time flake down, the walls are peeling,
What is a house when occupants are fled?”

“My hands repeat themselves, so does not time.
The climactical moment is past, whoever will come.
I gather myself to cough one cautious chime,
But the works are rusted. Henceforth I am dumb.”

25 “I mirrored their coming here, I see their going,
Together once, now separately. Their outer
Semblance concerns me. I have no way of knowing
Their motives, or their reasons for departure.”

30 “Dust settles in the fireplace, and the curtains
Hang without a purpose in neat folds.
The books are stacked, chairs not to be sat on
Grouped over-nicely in a house grown cold.”

“I see no more. Their life gave our lives meaning,
But broken homes will not set again.
35 Their parting was our dissolution, they
Will never know their household gods are slain.”

Philip Hobsbaum, *The Pattern of Poetry* (1962)
Rosemary Hobsbaum c/o Dr David Sutton, WATCH copyright project

1. (b)

At last I came to the crossroads by the little Wesleyan chapel where I had to turn to the left under the beech trees. I ought to be seeing the lights from Ransom’s windows by now—or was it past blackout time? My watch had stopped, and I didn’t know. It was dark enough but that might be due to the fog and the trees. It wasn’t the dark I was afraid of, you understand. We have all
 5 known times when inanimate objects seemed to have almost a facial expression, and it was the expression of this bit of road which I did not like. “It’s not true,” said my mind, “that people who are really going mad never think they’re going mad.” Suppose that real insanity had chosen this place in which to begin? In that case, of course, the black enmity of those dripping trees—their horrible expectancy—would be a hallucination. But that did not make it any better. To think that
 10 the spectre you see is an illusion does not rob him of his terrors: it simply adds the further terror of madness itself—and then on top of that the horrible surmise that those whom the rest call mad have, all along, been the only people who see the world as it really is.

...

Surely that was the cottage. It was very well blacked-out. A childish, whining thought
 15 arose on my mind: why was he not out at the gate to welcome me? An even more childish thought followed. Perhaps he *was* in the garden waiting for me, hiding. Perhaps he would jump on me from behind. Perhaps I should see a figure that looked like Ransom standing with its back to me and when I spoke to it, it would turn round and show a face that was not human at all...

I have naturally no wish to enlarge on this phase of my story. The state of mind I was in was
 20 one which I look back on with humiliation. I would have passed it over if I did not think that some account of it was necessary for a full understanding of what follows—and, perhaps, of some other things as well. At all events, I *can’t* really describe how I reached the front door of the cottage. Somehow or other, despite the loathing and dismay that pulled me back and a sort of invisible wall of resistance that met me in the face, fighting for each step, and almost shrieking as a harmless
 25 spray of the hedge touched my face, I managed to get through the gate and up the little path. And there I was, drumming on the door and wringing the handle and shouting to him to let me in as if my life depended on it.

There was no reply—not a sound except the echo of the sounds I had been making myself. There was only something white fluttering on the knocker. I guessed, of course, that it was
 30 a note. In striking a match to read it by, I discovered how very shaky my hands had become; and when the match went out I realised how dark the evening had grown. After several attempts I read the thing. “Sorry. Had to go up to Cambridge. Shan’t be back till the late train. Eatables in larder and bed made up in your usual room. Don’t wait supper for me unless you feel like it—E.R.” And immediately the impulse to retreat, which had already assailed me several times,
 35 leaped upon me with a sort of demoniac violence. Here was my retreat left open, positively inviting me. Now was my chance. If anyone expected me to go into that house and sit there alone for several hours, they were mistaken! But then, as the thought of the return journey began to take shape in my mind, I faltered. The idea of setting out to traverse the avenue of beech trees again (it was really dark now) with this house behind me (one had the absurd feeling that it could follow one)
 40 was not attractive. And then, I hope, something better came into my mind—some rag of sanity and some reluctance to let Ransom down. At least I could try the door to see if it were really unlocked. I did. And it was. Next moment, I hardly know how, I found myself inside and let it slam behind me.

Perelandra by C. S. Lewis © C. S. Lewis Pte Ltd. 1944