



Cambridge Lower Secondary Checkpoint

ENGLISH

0861/02

Paper 2 Fiction

October 2023

INSERT

1 hour 10 minutes

INFORMATION

- This insert contains the reading passages.
- You may annotate this insert and use the blank spaces for planning. **Do not write your answers** on the insert.



This document has **4** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

Text for Section A, an extract from ‘Twilight Robbery’ (known as ‘Fly Trap’ in the US) by Frances Hardinge.

Clent, Mosca and her pet goose called Saracen have travelled to a town called Toll.

After finding an inn, Clent, Mosca and Saracen set off to track down the imperiled heiress. Fortunately, this proved to be relatively easy. The mere mention of ‘the mayor’s daughter’ brought gleaming smiles to the faces of the guards at the Clock Tower.

5

‘Ah, you’ll mean his adopted daughter, Miss Beamabeth Marlebourne! Oh, we all know of her, thank you, sir. She’s the Peach of Toll, the Perfectest Peony. Mayor Marlebourne’s family live in the old judge’s lodgings, up in the castle courtyard. Ask anyone as you go, they’ll all know where to send you.’

10

And indeed they did.

‘Ah, you’re going to speak with Miss Marlebourne? Then I envy you, sir, for she is the finest sight within Toll’s walls.’

‘Miss Beamabeth Marlebourne? Sweetest creature on ten toes. Smile like a spring day. Yes, just take this alley to the end...’

15

Toll was a hill town, and all its streets knew it. By the time Clent and Mosca reached the central plaza, Mosca was out of breath, and completely, utterly out of patience with the catalogue of Beamabeth Marlebourne’s charms. Every time Beamabeth’s name was mentioned, faces lit up as though reflecting some distant radiance.

By the time they reached the castle grounds, the sun was dipping towards the horizon. The judge’s house was attached to the inside of the castle’s perimeter wall and built of the same bristling grey flint.

20

‘At last.’ Clent halted at the oaken door and pulled down the frayed hem of his waistcoat. ‘Now, child, let us bring warning to this poor—’

‘Rich,’ corrected Mosca.

25

‘To this affluent but imperiled girl,’ finished Clent. ‘And do try not to scowl as if you have lemon juice running through your veins, child.’

Mosca settled for stony instead of bitter as Clent rapped the knocker. A few moments later the door opened to reveal two footmen in mustard-coloured livery.

Both footmen subtly craned their necks to read the designs on Clent’s name brooch before deciding how stiffly and respectfully to hold themselves. Mosca and the impatiently champing Saracen merited only the briefest, most disdainful slither of a glance.

30

‘I am Eponymous Clent,’ Clent declared with aplomb, ‘and I need to speak with Miss Beamabeth Marlebourne on a Matter of the Gravest Urgency and Gravity.’ Mosca ground her teeth as both footmen went quite cross-eyed with adoration at the mention of Beamabeth, and then one of them ran inside with the message. In a few moments he returned, surprise lifting his eyebrows so high that they were lost in his wig.

35

‘Miss Beamabeth will see you, sir.’

It's just the name they're all in love with, said the bitter, stinging voice in Mosca's head. *But it'll be all right. You'll see her, and she'll have a squint, and a voice like a peeled gull.*

40

The guard led them along a short hall into a comfortable-looking reception room. A young woman in a green silk dress rose as they entered.

Beamabeth Marlebourne was about sixteen, Mosca realized. Somehow, despite the mention of suitors, she had been half expecting to see someone younger, a girl her own age. Beamabeth had honey-colored hair that had been trained into a shimmering mass of ringlets, but she managed to look natural rather than tortured. Her skin was creamy pale, with two pretty little coffee-coloured freckles just at the corner of one of her dark gold eyebrows. Her blue eyes were large and well spaced, her brow small, her nose short, and her chin daintily pointed in a fashion that made her look a bit like a kitten. She smiled, and her eyebrows rose as if the pleasure of seeing them was almost painful. Her expression was as open as a flower.

45

50

It was hopeless. She was flawless. She was a sunbeam. Mosca gave up and got on with hating her.

'It is very late for visitors,' said Beamabeth, as she looked the new arrivals up and down, her voice soft and carrying more of the local accent than Mosca had expected from anyone in a silk dress. Her tone made her words sound more like an apology than a criticism. 'Usually Father likes to have the house locked up from an hour before dusk till an hour after dawn.'

55

'Rest assured, ma'am, when you understand the urgency—'

'Would you like to sit down?' Beamabeth interrupted Clent without apparently realizing she was doing so. Clent and Mosca obediently sat, Mosca keeping a tight hold on Saracen's leash in case anything in this elegant room appeared edible.

60

'Miss Marlebourne, I must come to the point, and I hope you will forgive me if my tidings distress you. You are, I fear, the target of an odious and felonious scheme. In short, there is a plan afoot to kidnap you...'

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE

BLANK PAGE

Permission to reproduce items where third-party owned material protected by copyright is included has been sought and cleared where possible. Every reasonable effort has been made by the publisher (UCLES) to trace copyright holders, but if any items requiring clearance have unwittingly been included, the publisher will be pleased to make amends at the earliest possible opportunity.

To avoid the issue of disclosure of answer-related information to candidates, all copyright acknowledgements are reproduced online in the Cambridge Assessment International Education Copyright Acknowledgements Booklet. This is produced for each series of examinations and is freely available to download at www.cambridgeinternational.org after the live examination series.

Cambridge Assessment International Education is part of Cambridge Assessment. Cambridge Assessment is the brand name of the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES), which is a department of the University of Cambridge.