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南洋女子中學校
NANYANG GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL
SECONDARY THREE BLOCK TEST 2

12TH JULY 2012

0745 - 0845 (1 Hour)

Thursday

Advanced Literature (HP)

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

1. Write your name on your answer script.
2. Use **dark blue or black pen**.
3. Do not use correction fluid / tape.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

1. There is one question only. Answer with reference to both extracts (i) and (ii).
2. You are reminded of the need for good English and legible handwriting.

Setter: SB

This document consists of 3 printed pages.

NANYANG GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL

[Turn over]

SET TEXT – *The Turn of the Screw*, Henry James

Compare and contrast the extract from The Turn of the Screw (i) with extract (ii) below and answer the question that follows.

(i)

There was an alien object in view—a figure whose right of presence I instantly and passionately questioned. I recollect counting over perfectly the possibilities, reminding myself that nothing was more natural for instance than the appearance of one of the men about the place, or even of a messenger, a postman or a tradesman's boy, from the village. That reminder had as little effect on my practical certitude as I was conscious—still even without looking—of its having upon the character and attitude of our visitor. Nothing was more natural than that these things should be the other things that they absolutely were not.

Of the positive identity of the apparition I would assure myself as soon as the small clock of my courage should have ticked out the right second; meanwhile, with an effort that was already sharp enough, I transferred my eyes straight to little Flora, who, at the moment, was about ten yards away. My heart had stood still for an instant with the wonder and terror of the question whether she too would see; and I held my breath while I waited for what a cry from her, what some sudden innocent sign either of interest or of alarm, would tell me. I waited, but nothing came; then, in the first place—and there is something more dire in this, I feel, than in anything I have to relate—I was determined by a sense that within a minute all spontaneous sounds from her had dropped; and in the second by the circumstance that also within the minute she had, in her play, turned her back to the water. This was her attitude when I at last looked at her—looked with the confirmed conviction that we were still, together, under direct personal notice. She had picked up a small flat piece of wood which happened to have in it a little hole that had evidently suggested to her the idea of sticking in another fragment that might figure as a mast and make the thing a boat. This second morsel, as I watched her, she was very markedly and intently attempting to tighten in its place. My apprehension of what she was doing sustained me so that after some seconds I felt I was ready for more. Then I again shifted my eyes—I faced what I had to face.

The Turn of the Screw, Henry James (Chapter VI)

(ii)

I moved forward slowly over old damp flagstones, my stubby candle held before me, and giving me only walls of brick and stone. A vast deep brooding silence suffused this desolate subterranean place, but like all vast deep brooding silences after some minutes it betrayed to the ear a host of small sounds which together constituted that silence, and as I edged uncertainly forward I now became aware of a symphony of furtive scrapings, distant creaks and timbered wheezings, vague throbs which vanished when I brought my senses to bear upon them and which might well have issued from within my own bodily edifice. What large old house is not an asylum for myriad species of bird, mammal and insect life: the delicate twilight pipistrelles in the attic, the sparrows and martins, the rats, mice, moths, beetles, weevils, lice, mites, fleas, earwigs and spiders – oh, many many spiders – not to say, in this wet place, toads, natterjack toads, all these the house supported as its two old men and a number of elderly feral cats dedicated to gluttony and sloth rather than any useful predatory work. Given this organic fibre in the very walls and beams, floors and chimneys, attics and drains of Drogo Hall, then any silence one heard at dead of night was in reality alive with discreet activity, and my ear soon became attuned to it. That noisy silence was then shattered by a huge muffled distant *thump*.

I froze. I was aware of a sort of tremor briefly running through the building around me, transmitted beam by beam and stone by stone in an instant and then gone, followed by a silence that was for some seconds absolute – before the scratchings and scamperings, the borings and chewings and throbblings resumed. Rigid, petrified, I watched my candle flame tremble in the cold air and then burn steady again. The sound was not repeated. I dared not move. Surely a great beam had fallen? Some vast solid piece of timbered furniture come down upon a planked floor in a remote chamber? A block of stone toppled from the battlements, to plunge to a courtyard below?

I began to move forward once more, a sick sensation of fluids in disorder churning within me, my hand unsteady and my hair prickling upon my scalp, as I summoned every last part of courage my heart would furnish me for this suddenly parlous undertaking.

Martha Peake, Patrick McGrath

Which extract is the more effective in conveying a sense of tension and suspense? Answer with reference to narrative voice, imagery, and development.

[30m]

END OF PAPER



