



OUNDLE

School

Academic Scholarship 2014

English

Time Allowed: **Two Hours**

Instructions:

- It is important that you plan properly so that you give sufficient time and thought to the different parts of the paper.
- Spend approximately **60 minutes** on each section.

Section A

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions which follow. The novel is set in 1923, in Oakland, a city in California.

5 Carter walked Baby without a leash. There was no real point in having one. Instead, he used voice commands to keep the lion in sight. They had walked together for twelve years, all over the world, in cities and villages, on sea-shores and mountain trails. In the last two years, Baby had increasingly preferred to stroll and sit, and listen to the wind coming through the woods rather than stalk squirrels or race after shadows. Baby trotted between the two weathered stone lions that flanked the entrance paying them no attention (though Carter was always hoping for some kind of recognition). Instead, Baby was intent, as ever, on trotting to the lake's nearest lip and peering over the edge. A breeze caught the water, and ripples played against the reflection of thousands of tiny outdoor lights that hung between the street lamps.

10 Carter, who'd never seen a ghost, nonetheless found the idea of them wonderful. Who wouldn't want to see a ghost? Whenever he visited the park at night he saw nothing. On weekend afternoons he detoured through its rambles on the way to the ferry, watching the boaters, the Sunday painters, the wild and frantic children, and he thought how odd it was that the same joyful places, minus the sunlight, became frightening.

15 Which brought him back to ghosts, as his first fresh idea for a trick in nine years was a type of highly realistic spirit manifestation. Twenty-five minutes of his recent show 'The Levitation of Madame Zorah' had involved a séance with disembodied moans, a rapping spirit hand and the floating medium who made predictions and answered the audience's intimate questions. Carter had never been comfortable with this act, but all of his peers presented such illusions – they were popular. He hoped his show would show that spiritulism was just a gag, and yet, inevitably, each performance resulted in several letters reaching Carter's hotel, desperately worded petitions to bring a loved one back from the grave. On some days, these letters depressed Carter – the authors were never clever – but on others they simply broke his heart.

25 He sympathized. There was a thin line between pulling rabbits out of hats and turning water into wine. No one really knew what was possible anymore. Carter had noted how strictly physical explanations, like X-rays showing the skeleton were ultimately a disappointment. What the public wanted was to marvel twice, once at what they had seen, and then again at progress, in which they had faith, could still be trumped by the hand of God. How could his new effect be as spectacular as he imagined and yet not be cruel to the believers in his audience?

30 *Is the ghost here?* Carter said to himself, pointing stage right and imagining a quick manifestation within a crystal ball, or *here?* Stage left, the ghost transporting into another crystal instantly. The idea of it promising answers to those in need troubled him. Perhaps he wouldn't call it a ghost, but an imp. A pixie. Or what? Now doubt erupted from fertile ground. Was this an admirable illusion?

35 Suddenly, Baby's body went rigid, golden teardrop at the end of his tail flicking, and he was off like a shot, disappearing into the undergrowth. Carter clicked his tongue disapprovingly. He could hear the crunch of breaking twigs. He whistled, and the sounds stopped. The lion did not return.

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Baby had gone deeper into the park. If Baby were after a robber, his master would not mind – and might even enjoy it a little. He stood silently by the edge of the lake, peering into the woods, hoping of a sound to give Baby’s game away. There was a brief outline of the lion as he ducked, belly to the ground, out of one bush and into another. But where was he going? The necklace of lights was not bright enough to see clearly. A quick gust of wind jangled the lights, and in horror, Carter saw, outlined under a streetlamp, the wide hat and slender figure of a solitary woman sitting on a park bench. Baby was hunting her.

There was not time for Carter to cry out; in less than a second, Baby had vaulted the back of the bench, and landed with a thud, paws outstretched, back arched, teeth bared. Carter ran towards the scene with his heart in his mouth.

Then he saw something that stopped him dead: the woman was passing Baby a bite from her sandwich. The woman tugged on another piece of meat, unimpressed that a lion was nuzzling the ground by her ankles. With Carter a dozen yards behind her, the woman said loudly, over her shoulder, ‘I hope it’s all right that I feed him roast beef.’

After clearing the rocks from his throat, he answered, ‘Yes, Yes, he likes roast beef.’ What a cool customer.

‘Good. I am wondering what sort of dog he is, exactly.’

Carter laughed. A very cool customer. ‘He’s a schnauzer.’

‘You are teasing me,’ she said. ‘I happen to know that schnauzers are much smaller. What is his name?’

‘Baby.’

‘And what sort of dog is he?’

‘All right, if he isn’t a schnauzer, then he is a lion.’

‘Now I know you are teasing me,’ she said tossing another piece of roast beef

‘He’s not a mountain lion, either. He’s a lion from Africa.’

She said nothing, and Carter was disappointed. When she held out the next piece of roast beef, and Baby advanced towards it, she slowly pulled it out of reach, making Baby pass by her. She ran her hands down his mane to the bulb of hair at the end of his tail.

‘My God,’ she shrieked, stumbling from the bench, and turning, under the lights, Carter saw her face, now a bloodless white, her lips obscured as she brought her hands to her mouth. She was shaking. Her glasses were painted black, matte black, across both lenses.

‘Oh,’ he said without thinking, ‘you’re blind.’

‘It’s a lion,’ she cried.

Adapted from Carter Beats the Devil by Glen David Gold

1. How appropriate a pet is baby? Explain your answer fully (3 marks)

2. Explain what these phrases mean in the passage:
 - a) "Carter was always hoping for some kind of recognition" (line 7) (2 marks)
 - b) "Could still be trumped by the hand of God" (line 30) (2 marks)
 - c) "After clearing the rocks from his throat" (line 56) (2 marks)

3. Looking at lines 43 to 53. Using quotations, explain how the author builds tension in the passage?

(6 marks)

4. What impression do you have of Carter from this passage?
You may wish to consider:
 - What he does for a living and in the passage
 - How he views what he does and the effects it has on his audience
 - The ways in which he reacts to and speaks to the woman on the bench(10 marks)

Section B

Choose **one** of the following.

"The less we understand of the world, the more we enjoy it." How far do you agree with this statement?

OR

Write an imaginative account of the unlikely meeting of two people.

(25 marks)