

BACCALAURÉAT GÉNÉRAL

SESSION 2010

ANGLAIS LV1

Séries ES/S

Durée : 3 heures – coefficient 3

L'usage des calculatrices et de tout dictionnaire est interdit.

Barème appliqué pour la correction

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| <i>Compréhension</i> | <i>10 points</i> |
| <i>Expression</i> | <i>10 points</i> |

Dès que le sujet est remis, assurez-vous qu'il est complet.

Ce sujet comporte 4 pages numérotées de 1/4 à 4/4

The jaunts¹ in Europe hadn't done it, the experience of India had. By degrees she had been moved farther and farther from the life she'd known into a new mode of existence, as though soaring upward and finally, after some buffeting², moving with certainty onward, alone, no longer disturbed, in an orbit of her own, freed from her past, her unreliable friend, even her family, and liking the idea that the future would be like this - stimulated by the random lyricism of chance events, of good days and bad days.

Not a journey then anymore, not an outing or an interlude, but seeing the world; not taking a trip, not travel with a start and a finish, but living her life. Life was movement.

How had it happened? She guessed that it had come about by being alone, the circumstance Stella had forced upon her. She did not depend on anyone, certainly not a man. By earning the money she'd needed and, oddly, by being exploited, like most working people on earth; by being disappointed, abandoned, taken for granted, she had become strong. The elephant was an example, chained because he was powerful; becoming more powerful because he was chained. Released from that chain he would flap his ears and fly.

Her illnesses had given her heart. Needing a tooth pulled on her way through Turkey she'd found a woman dentist, and after a period of recovery the problem was solved. She did not tell her family until afterwards. The flu she'd picked up in Tblisi, the twisted ankle in Baku, and the bumpy flight to Tashkent, the plane's germ-laden air, the clammy days in Bukhara, and at last the flight to India - even Stella's illnesses, which she'd ministered to - all these had given her confidence, because she'd overcome them. You fell sick, you got well, then healthier afterwards. You didn't go home or call Mom because you'd caught a cold: You paused and cured yourself and continued on your way, stronger than before.

This is my life, Alice thought on the train to Madras - a good life, of my own making, all the decisions are mine. And here is my journey - a five-dollar seat, a ten-dollar hotel, a one-dollar meal - at this rate I can live for a month without working again.

The man with the narrow pushcart sold her lunch: rice, a chapatti, some dhal and green beans in a plastic dish, a pot of yogurt, some curried potato - perfect. Thirty rupees, which was seventy-five cents. And eating it, studying her thrift, she smiled and thought, I can go on and on.

She had enough money; the country was poor, the cost of living low. I'll be fine. She made a mental note to write a postcard home - not a letter, but just a few sentences, to say hello and to give no information, to show she did not need them.

This was what travel meant, another way of living your life and being free.

She began to read another Indian novel, much praised, by an Indian woman who lived in the States. Was this merely sentimentality? The book did not speak to her; the problem with it and the others she'd read was that they did not describe the India she had encountered, or the people she met. Where were these families? The novels described a tidier India, full of ambitions, not the India of pleading beggars or weirdly comic salesmen, or people so pompous they were like parodies.

As she was reading, the man in the adjoining seat started a conversation, interrupting her, but he was friendly, a Jain, he said, who would not eat a potato because they were crawling with living creatures.

'Full of germs and organisms,' he said.

'Not good to eat,' she said, trying to be helpful.

'No - good. But I must not take lives.'

Didn't want to kill the germs! Where was the book in which he appeared?

'So what do you eat?'

¹ jaunts = trips

² buffeting = receiving blows, being shaken

'Pulses. Beans. Curd. Also greens.'

'I get it,' she said.

55 'And later, when I am a bit older, I shall renounce the world and go hither and thither, barefoot, as my father did, in his dotage. Just wandering with no possessions, eschewing the material world.'

'I think I'm doing that now,' Alice said.

60 The man was corpselike, almost skeletal, a faster and an abstainer, even now mortifying his flesh. He smiled with too many teeth, a skull's smile. He didn't believe her, but that didn't matter. Another aspect of her freedom was that she didn't feel a need to explain her life or justify what she'd done.

Paul Theroux, *The Elephanta Suite*, Penguin Fiction, 2008.

I. COMPREHENSION

1. Name the countries or continents Alice has been through. What do you think her nationality is?
2. Say what we learn about her living conditions concentrating on lodgings, food, job and money.
3. Does the social and economic reality that Alice discovers in this country correspond to what she has read in books? Justify (two different ideas).
4. Explain how Alice has gradually become **freer** and **stronger**, concentrating on:
 - the difficulties she encountered in terms of health;
 - her attitude to money;
 - her relationship with her family.
5. At the end of the text, Alice meets a Jain, a sort of philosopher. What does he refuse to eat and why?
6. a)

"And later, when I am a bit older, I shall renounce the world and go hither and thither, barefoot, as my father did, in his dotage. Just wandering with no possessions, eschewing the material world."

From this sentence, deduce the meaning of the verb 'to eschew'.
- b) Compare the man's philosophy of life and the **NEW** independent Alice (3 ideas).
7. Show that this extract gives a clue to understand the title of the book.

II. EXPRESSION

Vous traiterez les deux sujets.

- 1) Alice meets a young Indian woman planning to go and live in a Western country. Imagine their conversation. (150 words)
- 2) What is your definition of "freedom"? (150 words)