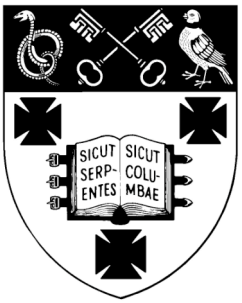
RADLEY COLLEGE

Entrance Scholarships

ENGLISH



March 2009

Time allowed – 2 hours

Section A (50 marks)

You are advised to spend 10 minutes reading, thinking and making notes.
You should then spend 1 hour writing your responses.
Remember to explain your answers using quotations taken from the text.

Section B (30 marks)

You are advised to spend 10 minutes thinking and making notes.
You should then spend 30 minutes writing.

Spelling, punctuation and grammar throughout the paper (20 marks)

You are advised to leave between 5 and 10 minutes at the end of the paper in which to check your work.

Section A

Answer all three questions in this section.

You are advised to spend at least 10 minutes reading, thinking and making notes. You should then spend 1 hour writing your responses.

Read the following passage and answer the questions below.

The following passage is set in a city somewhere in South America, early in the 20th century. Fermina Daza, a young teenage girl from a wealthy family, is exploring the Arcade of the Scribes, the city's market district. Unexpectedly, she bumps into her boyfriend, Florentino Ariz.

Fermina Daza shared with her schoolmates the singular idea that the Arcade of the Scribes was a place of perdition that was forbidden, of course, to decent young ladies. It was an arcaded gallery across from the little plaza where carriages and freight carts drawn by donkeys were for hire, where popular commerce became noisier and more dense. The name dated from colonial times, where the taciturn scribes in their vests and false cuffs first began to sit there, waiting for a poor man's fee to write all sorts of documents: memoranda of complaints or petition, legal testimony, cards of congratulation or condolence, love letters appropriate to any stage in any affair. They, of course, were not the ones who had given that thundering market its bad reputation but more recent peddlers who made illegal sales of all kinds of questionable merchandise smuggled in on European ships, from obscene postcards to aphrodisiac ointments. Fermina Daza, somewhat unskilled in the customs of the street, went through the Arcade without noticing where she was going as she searched for a shady refuge from the fierce eleven o'clock sun.

She sank into the hot clamour of the shoeshine boys and the bird sellers, the hawkers of cheap books and the witch doctors and the sellers of sweets who shouted over the din of the crowds: pineapple sweets for your sweetie, coconut candy is dandy, brown-sugar loaf for your sugar. But, indifferent in the uproar, she was captivated on the spot by a paper seller who was demonstrating magic inks, red inks with an ambience of blood, inks of sad aspect for messages of condolence, phosphorescent inks for reading in the dark, invisible inks that revealed themselves in the light. She wanted all of them so she could amuse Florentino Ariz and astound him with her wit, but after several trials she decided on a bottle of gold ink. Then she went to the candy sellers sitting behind their big round jars and she bought six of each kind, pointing at the glass because she could not make herself heard over all the shouting: six angel hair, six tinned milk, six sesame bars, six cassava pastries, six chocolate bars, six blancmanges, six tidbits of the queen, six of this and six of that,

six of everything, and she tossed them into the maid's baskets with an irresistible grace and a complete detachment from the stormclouds of flies on the syrup, from the continual hullabaloo and the vapour of rancid sweat that reverberated in the deadly heat. She was awakened from the spell by the good-natured black woman with a coloured cloth around her head who was round and handsome and offered her a triangle of pineapple speared on the tip of a butcher's knife. She took it, put it whole into her mouth, she tasted it, and was chewing it as her eyes wandered over the crowd, when a sudden shock rooted her on the spot. Behind her, so close to her ear that only she could hear it in the tumult, she heard his voice:

"This is not the place for a crowned goddess."

She turned her head and saw, a hand's breadth from her eyes, those other glacial eyes, that leaden face, those lips petrified in fear, just as she had seen them in the crowd at Midnight Mass the first time he was so close to her, but now, instead of the commotion of love, she felt the abyss of disenchantment. In an instant the magnitude of her own mistake was revealed to her, and she asked herself, appalled, how she could have nurtured such a chimera* in her heart for so long and with so much ferocity. She just managed to think: My God, poor man! Florentino Ariz smiled, tried to say something, tried to follow her, but she erased him from her life with a wave of her hand.

"No, please," she said to him. "Forget it."

(from *Love in the Time of Cholera*, by Gabriel Garcia Marquez)

*Chimera: a fantastical or grotesque creature, usually the product of an excessive imagination.

You are advised to spend at least 10 minutes reading, thinking and making notes. You should then spend 1 hour writing your responses.

Answer all three questions. Remember to use brief quotations to help you explain your answers.

1. What impression does this extract convey of the Arcade of the Scribes? [10]

2. Read paragraphs 1 and 2. How, in these paragraphs, does the writer convey the character of Fermina Daza? [20]

3. Write about the final section, from line 35 to the end, explaining what you think makes this an effective moment, and how this is achieved. [20]

Section B

You are advised to spend 10 minutes thinking and making notes.
You should then spend at least 30 minutes writing.

Write a descriptive piece about a busy scene. You may write either from memory, or from your imagination, or both. [30]

Your writing should aim to help the reader to share the experience of the scene you describe. Credit will be given especially to writing which achieves this.

You are expected to be able to write accurate, grammatical, well-punctuated prose.

Marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar throughout the paper [20]

Spend between 5 and 10 minutes checking your work for accuracy at the end.

Total [100]