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| EAE 0422 A | | Sujet Jury | Sujet Candidat | | Code Sujet | CLG 11 |
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Your commentary should be focused on *IT*.

What else do I recall from that evening? The cold, the air standing up against us like something solid, thoughts and feelings passing through me like a desert wind, my eyes running, my dry mouth. Huddling next to Ade under a sack, I thought about the night of his beating, how afterwards I had let myself into his bedroom and taken him in my arms, how I had moved my hand under his pyjama trousers then passed my fingers over the welts. And when I thought of this, I drew myself closer with one hand, and with the other I searched for the cord of his shorts. But the way he withdrew from my touch, not hurriedly but with a stony sort of dip of his head, I knew that this – my – privilege was gone. Once or twice in the night we heard a truck slipping along in the dark, and now and then its lights came sliding across our blind vista. I mention this only because light was the exception, it being pitch-dark and the harmattan.

It was somewhere towards morning when I opened my eyes. The sun was big and orange, its surface stained with black marks that appeared to spread like broken clouds of ink. Was it this that prompted us to try to leave the building? Was it as we climbed down the stairs that Ade fell over the edge? It was so sudden. I didn't even hear his cry. And I did not alter my course but carried on descending towards the square. As I walked via the foundations and peeled back the wooden fence, my thoughts darkened. What had happened to Ade? He had fallen. But where? How far? Later, I discovered that Ade had survived. In that moment, however, as I made my way out of the building, I neither knew nor cared. Hadn't he mocked me almost continually these past weeks? Hadn't he tried to ruin my self-belief? Yes, I thought, he had put himself on the right side of truth and wished me gone.

I felt light. It was astonishing, the way I felt light, so suddenly. Out in the open I started to walk in the direction of the wind. Progress was difficult. I hardly thought of Ade, but when I did I thought how good it was that this had happened. I had come near to losing my confidence, and my faith in my powers of listening, also in the silent world. I started to run. It was all the same to me if Ade lay broken and dead, lost in the storm. My mind was black. My thoughts circled like ravens around a kill. I thought no more about going back. As I ran I told myself I would embrace darkness and silence, because that was what was in my nature, which was blacker than Ade's, and wicked, I thought; and love and friendship was not in my line. So I ran through the harmattan towards the silent world.

When the dust lifted next I had a glimpse of the water. Then the air thickened, and it was as if a red curtain had suddenly come down. I stopped to listen. The silent world was getting close. It was no longer a whisper but a swift wind or snow sliding, and my heart opened to its pull and storm-silence. The further I walked, the deeper it became, until, scrambling over rocks, I felt a force drawing in all the sounds, swallowing them towards its centre. I walked on, scared, more than half-willing, not caring, I thought, if I lived or died. I was tired. The thought of Ade was starting to weigh on my stomach. I pushed these thoughts away. Soon I found myself by the water's edge. The sky had lightened to a raw pink. I sensed a crack in the earth. I walked up to it and now I was standing before a chasm extending like a tram track to my left and right as far as I could see.