

PROVA (Testo letterario)

PART 1 – COMPREHENSION AND INTERPRETATION

Read the text below.

Zeitoun

TUESDAY AUGUST 30

Zeitoun opened his eyes again. He was home, in his daughter Nademah's room, looking through the window at a dirty white sky. The sound continued, something like running water. But there was no rain, no leaks. He thought a pipe might have broken, but that
5 couldn't be it; the sound wasn't right. This was more like a river, the movement of great volumes of water.

He sat up and looked down through the window that faced the backyard. He saw water, a wide sea of it. It was coming from the north. It flowed into the yard, under the house, rising quickly.

10 He couldn't make sense of it. The day before, the water had receded, as he had expected it to, but now it had returned, far stronger. And this water was different from the murky rainwater of the day before. This water was green and clear. This was lake water. At that moment, Zeitoun knew that the levees had been overtopped or compromised. There could be no doubt. The city would soon be underwater. If the water was here, he
15 knew, it was already covering most of New Orleans. He knew it would keep coming, would likely rise eight feet or more in his neighborhood, and more elsewhere. He knew the recovery would take months or years. He knew the flood had come.

He called Kathy.

"The water's coming," he said.

20 "What? No, no," she said. "Levees broke?"

"I think so."

"I can't believe it."

He heard her stifle a sob.

"I better go," he said.

25 He hung up and went to work.

Elevate, he thought. *Elevate, elevate*. Everything had to be brought to the second floor.

He recalled the worst of the predictions before the storm: if the levees broke, there would be ten, fifteen feet of water in some places. Methodically, he began to prepare.

Everything of value had to be brought higher. The work was simply work, and he went
30 about it calmly and quickly.

He took the TV, the DVD player, the stereo, all the electronics upstairs. He gathered the kids' games and books and encyclopedias and carried those up next. [...]

Kathy called Zeitoun from the road.

"My jewelry box!" she said.

35 He found that, and the good china, and he brought it all upstairs. He emptied the refrigerator, he left the freezer full. He put all the chairs on top of the dining room table. Unable to carry a heavy chest, he put it on a mattress and dragged it up the stairs. He placed one couch on top of another, sacrificing one to save the other. Then he got more books. He saved all books.

- 40 Kathy called again. "I told you not to cancel the property insurance," she said. She was right. Just three weeks before, he had chosen not to renew the part of their flood insurance that covered their furniture, everything in the house. He hadn't wanted to spend the money. He admitted she was right, and knew she would remind him of it for years to come.
- 45 "Can we talk about it later?" he asked.

Zeitoun went outside, the air humid and gusty. He tied the canoe to the back porch. [...] Back inside, he continued to move everything of value upward. As he did, he watched the water erase the floor and climb the walls. In another hour there were three feet of water indoors. And his house was three feet above street level.

Dave Eggers (1970-), *Zeitoun* (2009)

Read the following statements and say whether each one is True (T), False (F) or Not Stated (NS). Put a cross in the correct box.

- 1 Zeitoun immediately realises that the water comes from the nearby river.
☐ T ☐ F ☐ NS
- 2 Zeitoun "can't make sense of it" (line 10) because he had been away for a long time.
☐ T ☐ F ☐ NS
- 3 The water had already covered most of New Orleans.
☐ T ☐ F ☐ NS
- 4 Zeitoun called Kathy to make sure she was safe.
☐ T ☐ F ☐ NS
- 5 Zeitoun and Kathy are brother and sister.
☐ T ☐ F ☐ NS

Answer the questions below. Use complete sentences and your own words.

- 6 Why will this flood be more dangerous?
- 7 How high does the water rise while Zeitoun is moving his family's possessions?
- 8 How would you describe Zeitoun's reaction to the situation? Justify your answers by referring to the text.

PART 2 – WRITTEN PRODUCTION

In an interview with the British journalist Simon Hattenstone, the British director and activist Ken Loach (b. 1936) said:

One lesson to learn is that the press and the broadcasters are not neutral. And it seems we have to learn it each time there is a dispute: they are actually committed to one side.

Discuss the quotation in a 300-word essay. Support your ideas by referring to your reading and/or to your personal experience. You can reflect on the importance of standing for the ideals you believe in and the need to take personal responsibilities in everyday life.