

Shine Brighter 2^{de}

Snapfile 23 The Train from Rhodesia

Extrait 1 p. 194 – Nouvelle de Nadine Gordimer, “*The Train from Rhodesia*”, 1952.

The train came out of the red horizon and bore down towards them over the single straight track¹. The stationmaster came out of his little brick station with its pointed chalet roof. [...]. A stir of preparedness rippled through the squatting native vendors waiting in the dust; the face of a carved² wooden animal, eternally surprised, stuck out³ of a sack. [...]

The train called out, along the sky; but there was no answer; and the cry hung on: I'm coming...I'm coming... [...]

Creaking, jerking, jostling, gasping, the train filled the station. Here, let me see that one—the young woman curved her body farther out of the corridor window. Missus? smiled the old man, looking at the creatures he held in his hand. From a piece of string on his grey finger hung a tiny woven basket; he lifted it, questioning. No, no, she urged, leaning down towards him, across the height of the train towards the man in the piece of old rug⁴; that one, that one, her hand commanded. It was a lion, carved out of soft, dry wood that looked like spongecake; heraldic, black and white, with impressionistic detail burnt in. The old man held it up to her still smiling, not from the heart, but at the customer. Between its Van Dyke teeth, in the mouth opened in an endless roar too terrible to be heard, it had a black tongue. Look, said the young husband, if you don't mind! And round the neck of the thing, a piece of fur⁵ (rat? rabbit? meerkat?); a real mane⁶, majestic, telling you somehow that the artist had delight in the lion.

Nadine Gordimer, “The Train from Rhodesia”, *The Soft Voice of the Serpent and Other Stories*, 1952

1. voie 2. sculpted 3. dépasser 4. couverture 5. fourrure 6. crinière

Extrait 2 p. 195 – Nouvelle de Nadine Gordimer, “*The Train from Rhodesia*”, 1952.

No, leave it, said the young woman, don't take it... Too expensive, too much, she shook her head and raised her voice to the old man, giving up¹ the lion.

He held it high where she had handed it to him. No, she said, shaking her head.

Three-and-six? insisted her husband, loudly.

Yes baas! laughed the old man.

Three-and-six?—the young man was incredulous. Oh leave it—she said. The young man stopped.

Don't you want it? He said, keeping his face closed to the old man. No, never mind, she said, leave it. The old native kept his head on one side, looking at them sideways², holding the lion. Three-and-six, he murmured, as old people repeat things to themselves.

The young woman drew her head in. She went into the coupe³ and sat down. Out of the window, on the other side, there was nothing; sand and bush; and thorn tree.

Back through the open doorway, past the figure of her husband in the corridor, there was the station, the voices, wooden animals waving⁴, running feet.

Nadine Gordimer, “The Train from Rhodesia”, *The Soft Voice of the Serpent and Other Stories*, 1952

1. abandon 2. regarder de côté 3. compartiment 4. faire signe

Extrait 3 p. 196 – Nouvelle de Nadine Gordimer, “*The Train from Rhodesia*”, 1952.

The blind end of the train was being pulled helplessly out of the station. The young man swung in from the corridor, breathless. He was shaking his head with laughter and triumph. Here! he said. And waggled¹ the lion at her.

One-and-six! What? she said. He laughed. I was arguing with him for fun, bargaining²—when the train had pulled out³ already, he came tearing after... One-and-six Baas! So there's your lion. She was holding it a way from her, the head with the open jaws, the pointed teeth, the black tongue, the wonderful ruff of fur facing her. She was looking at it with an expression of not seeing, of seeing something different.

Her face was drawn up⁴, wryly, like the face of a discomforted child. Her mouth lifted nervously at the corner. Very slowly, cautious, she lifted her finger and touched the mane, where it was joined to the wood. But how could you, she said. He was shocked by the dismay⁵ of her face. Good Lord, he said, what's the matter? If you want the thing, she said, her voice rising and breaking with the shrill impotence of anger, why didn't you buy it in the first place? If you wanted it, why didn't you pay for it? Why didn't you take it decently, when he offered it? Why did you have to wait for him to run after the train with it, and give him one-and-six?

One and six! She was pushing it at him, trying to force him to take the lion. He stood astonished, his hands hanging at his sides. But you wanted it! You liked it so much?—It's a beautiful piece of work, she said fiercely, as if to protect it from him.

Nadine Gordimer, “The Train from Rhodesia”, *The Soft Voice of the Serpent and Other Stories*, 1952

1. remuer 2. marchander 3. leave 4. tendu 5. disappointment and sadness

Extrait 4 p. 195 – Nouvelle de Nadine Gordimer, “*The Train from Rhodesia*”, 1952.

She sat there, sick. A weariness¹, a tastelessness, the discovery of a void² made her hands slacken³ their grip, atrophy emptily, as if the hour was not worth their grasp. She was feeling like this again. She had thought it was something to do with singleness, with being alone and belonging too much to oneself. She sat there not wanting to move or speak, or to look at anything even; so that the mood should be associated with nothing, no object, word, or sight that might recur and so recall the feeling again... Smuts⁴ blew in grittily, settled on her hands. Her back remained at exactly the same angle, turned against the young man sitting with his hands drooping⁵ between his sprawled legs, and the lion, fallen on its side in the corner. The train had cast⁶ the station like a skin. It called out to the sky, I'm coming, I'm coming; and again, there was no answer.

Nadine Gordimer, “The Train from Rhodesia”, *The Soft Voice of the Serpent and Other Stories*, 1952

1. *lassitude* 2. *vide* 3. become looser 4. *poussière de cendre* 5. *tombant* 6. *s'était dépouillé de*

Évaluation de la compréhension de l'oral – Guide pédagogique

Extrait de la nouvelle de Doris Lessing "*No Witchcraft for Sale*"

Teddy was about six years old when he was given a scooter [...]. All day he would fly around the homestead¹, in and out of flowerbeds, scattering squawking chickens and irritated dogs, finishing with a wide dizzying arc into the kitchen door. There he would cry: "Gideon, look at me!" And Gideon would laugh and say: "Very clever, Little Yellow Head." Gideon's youngest son, who was now a herdsboy², came especially up from the compound to see the scooter. He was afraid to come near it, but Teddy showed off³ in front of him.

"Piccanin⁴," shouted Teddy, "get out of my way!" And he raced in circles around the black child until he was frightened, and fled back to the bush.

"Why did you frighten him?" asked Gideon, gravely reproachful. Teddy said defiantly: "He's only a black boy," and laughed.

Then, when Gideon turned away from him without speaking, his face fell. Very soon he slipped into the house and found an orange and brought it to Gideon, saying: "This is for you." He could not bring himself to say he was sorry; but he could not bear to lose Gideon's affection either.

Now Gideon would not let his flesh⁵ touch the flesh of the white child. [...] with Gideon, [Teddy] was polite, and carried himself formally, and if he came into the kitchen to ask for something, it was in the way a white man uses toward a servant, expecting to be obeyed.

Doris Lessing, "No Witchcraft for Sale", 1956

1. propriété **2.** gardien de troupeau **3.** frimer **4.** a derogatory term used to refer to Black children **5.** skin