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# **TEXT INTERPRETATION**

**МЕТОДИЧЕСКОЕ ПОСОБИЕ ПО ИНТЕРПРЕТАЦИИ ТЕКСТА**

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Методическое пособие включает тексты и задания по интерпретации текста для студентов IV и V курса очного и заочного отделения. Материалы могут быть использованы на аудиторных занятиях и при самостоятельной работе по данному предмету.

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Коллеге, наставнику,  
Учителю

Это учебное пособие – дань уважения и памяти Наталии Алексеевны Постоловской, одному из старейших, бессменных преподавателей института иностранных языков УрГПУ, ученице И. В. Арнольд. Н. А. Постоловской не стало в 2013 г., но она продолжает быть нашим соавтором и мерилom качества преподавания интерпретации текста. Многие ее приемы, формы работы и материалы продолжают использоваться при подготовке будущих учителей английского языка. Это пособие подготовлено ее бывшими учениками.

Студенты одного из выпусков ин. язa не без юмора писали:

....Мозги заплетены в косички мелкие,  
Но текст анализируем мы смело.  
Спасибо Вам, Наталия Алексеевна,  
Что Вы в нас зерна разума посеяли.

Спасибо Вам, Наталия Алексеевна!

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## Пояснительная записка

Пособие по дисциплине «Интерпретация текста» для студентов 4 и 5 курса английского отделения содержит дополнительный материал для аудиторной и самостоятельной работы по указанному предмету и призвано продолжать формировать лингвистическую и коммуникативную компетенцию будущих учителей английского языка.

Пособие рассчитано на 30 часов занятий. Каждый из его трех основных разделов включает тексты и задания, направленные на распознавание и анализ функционирования отдельных стилистических приемов и выразительных средств языка, а также на характеристику идейного содержания и проблематики всего предложенного отрывка. Данные задания являются подготовительным этапом, после которого студенты переходят к выполнению полного анализа текста по одному из трех вариантов:

1) стилистический анализ по абзацам (см. Е. Г. Сошальская, В. И. Прохорова. *Stylistic Analysis*. – М.: ВШ, 1976);

2) анализ по тематической сетке (см. И. В. Арнольд. *Стилистика современного английского языка*. – М.: Флинта, Наука, 2009);

3) комментирование (см. И. В. Арнольд, Н. Я. Дьяконова. *Analytical Reading*. – М.: Альянс, 2011).

Четвертый и заключительный раздел пособия включает дополнительные тексты для анализа по любой из трех вышеперечисленных схем (по выбору студента).

Тексты, содержащиеся в пособии, взяты из художественных произведений, принадлежащих широко известным и популярным авторам Великобритании, Канады и США. Предложены отрывки как из современной литературы, так и из литературы рубежа XIX–XX вв.

Работа над текстами предваряется упражнением на повторение и систематизацию знаний студентов об основных стилистических приемах и выразительных средствах языка. Материал таблицы этого упражнения послужит в дальнейшем справочным материалом при интерпретации художественной литературы.

## REVISION

Match the expressive means or stylistic devices in **A** with their definitions in **B**:

<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
1. Alliteration	a) a word, phrase or clause which is used <i>attributively</i> and which discloses an individual, emotionally coloured attitude of the author towards the object described;
2. Assonance	b) avoidance of conjunctions;
3. Onomatopoeia	c) weakening the emotional effect by adding unexpectedly weaker elements to the strong ones mentioned above;
4. Simile	d) transference of names based on the associated likeness between two objects;
5. Metaphor	e) a semantic opposition of two homogeneous words or parallel syntactical structures;
6. Metonymy	f) repetition in the initial position of a word from the final position of the preceding line or utterance;
7. Epithet	g) the use of a proper name for a common one;
8. Zeugma	h) a marked repetition of conjunctions before each parallel phrase;
9. Hyperbole	i) a figure of speech where one and the same verb is connected with two semantically incompatible subjects or objects, or one adjective with two semantically incompatible nouns; the resultant effect is humorous or ironical;
10. Understatement	j) a statement concerning the similarity, the affinity of two notions, where the comparison is expressed by a special connective;
11. Litotes	k) break in the narrative, leaving an utterance unfinished;
12. Antonomasia	l) reversed syntactic repetition, by which the order of the words in the first structure is reversed in the second;
13. Climax (gradation)	m) a repetition of the same consonant at the beginning of neighbouring words;
14. Anti-climax	n) an arrangement of ideas in which what precedes is inferior to what follows;
15. Antithesis	o) the repetition of similar vowels, usually in stressed syllables;
16. Oxymoron	
17. Anadiplosis	
18. Asyndeton	
19. Polysyndeton	
20. Ellipsis	
21. Aposiopesis	
22. Parallel structures	

23. Chiasmus	p) a deliberate overstatement;
24. Parenthesis	q) grouping several stylistic devices round a notion, each setting off some of its features;
25. Detachment	r) ascribing a property to an object incompatible, inconsistent with that property;
26. Convergence	s) an explanatory or qualifying comment inserted into the midst of a passage, without being grammatically connected with it, and marked off by brackets, commas or dashes; t) lessening, reducing the real quantity of the object of speech; u) transference of names based on contiguity (nearness) of objects or phenomena; v) omission of one or both principal parts of the sentence; w) isolation of different members of the sentence by punctuation marks – commas, dashes, dots (suspension points), or their unusual placement in a sentence for the purpose of emphasis; x) a specific variety of understatement consisting in expressing the lessened degree of quantity of a thing by means of negation of the antonym; y) syntactic repetition of structures proximate in a text, with similar syntactic patterns, but different or partially different lexically; z) the use of words whose sounds imitate those of the signified object or action.

## UNIT 1. Paragraph Analysis

### Explanatory Notes

Interpreting the text from various points of view undoubtedly helps a student, and any person in general, understand it deeper and more clearly

Interpretation as a subject of the program approaches this from another point: what should a student able to present, to prove to the listeners. In the opinion of more practically oriented teachers it is the following:

1) ability to use the language one has studied for 4 or 5 years in a more difficult situation than conversation, that is, not for reproducing once



remembered facts, but for showing the ability to create a new material being encumbered by the time limit (the preparation at any exam is not very long);

2) ability to show that theoretical courses are remembered and can be applied to a previously unknown text.

There exist various approaches to text interpretation (analysis) but some considerations are common: any analysis is subjective, depending on the thesaurus, age of the person and time, and no analysis may be considered either complete (it is a so-called open multitude) or ideal.

In the process of working it was found that the optimal variant of the analysis at the exam is the analysis of a separate paragraph. But that type of analysis includes several stages: 1) the summary; 2) justification of the choice of the part for analysis; 3) analysis proper including quoting and discussing each sentence; 4) conclusion, connected with the beginning of the summary and point 2, that is showing the value of the extracted information for text assessment; 5) personal impression is also welcome. And this is the shortest type of analysis – in our opinion – and most concrete.

## A PRIVATE VIEW

*By Anita Brookner  
London, 1994*

5 George Bland, in the sun, reflected that now was the moment to take  
stock. Nice, a town which he had not visited since his first holiday abroad,  
some forty years earlier, spread its noise and its light and its air about him,  
making him feel cautious; he was not up to this, he reckoned, having become  
unused to leisure. He had been here for four days and had found nothing to do,  
10 although there was much to occupy his thoughts, most of them, indeed all of  
them, proving unwelcome. Nice had been an unwise choice, though in truth  
hardly a choice at all; it had been more of a flight from those same thoughts,  
which faithfully continued to attend him here. He had sought a restorative,  
conventional enough, after the death of an old friend, Michael Putnam, who  
15 had inconveniently succumbed to cancer just when they were enabled, by pro-  
cess of evolution, or by that of virtue rewarded, more prosaically by the fact of  
their simultaneous retirement, to take their ease, to explore the world together,  
as had been their intention. They had waited for too long, and the result was  
this hiatus, and the reflection that time and patience may bring poor rewards,  
20 that time itself, if not confronted at the appropriate juncture, can play sly  
tricks, and, more significantly, that those who do not act are not infrequently  
acted upon.

His friend Putnam, whom he sorely missed, had left him a quite respect-  
able sum of money, which, added to his own capital, made of him a fairly  
wealthy man. The irony of this did not escape him, for he had started out poor,

25 and poverty was imprinted on his mind and no doubt in his heart. If he were  
spending freely now it was in an effort to get rid of some of his money and in  
so doing to allay the pain of Putnam's death. Yet the incongruity displeased  
him. Seated in an expensive restaurant - as it might be Le Chantecler - all he  
30 could remember was his last sight of Putnam, skeletal hand clutching the latest  
of a series of Get Well cards from former colleagues, great eyes turning to the  
window in shock and doubt, then turning back to his friend with a look that  
was timid, wistful, almost eager, for he had trusted in life right up to the end.  
That the look had to be met, sustained; this was not easy. In lime it had proved  
almost unbearable, but the effort was made, day after day, until, at the end of a  
35 mere three weeks, the eyes had closed forever.

Bland was shaken by his death, had sought comfort in late out-of-season  
sunshine, which now struck him as garish. No one, he thought, could under-  
stand their friendship, as they themselves had understood it. Both unmarried,  
they somehow did not impress the outside world as lovers, yet their closeness  
40 was remarked upon, puzzled over. In fact, what they had in common was their  
origin in shabby beginnings and their slow upward rise to middle-class afflu-  
ence. This was their gleeful rueful secret. Lunching together on a Sunday at  
the club, or at one of the better London hotels, they might test each other with  
a brand name with which to conjure the past. Both appreciated sweet food and  
45 strong tea. Both, before making a purchase, had the same instinctive reaction:  
Is this allowed?

Sharing the past, any past, but particularly their own, made it more com-  
fortable. Now that he was alone Bland found the present irksome, shot through  
with a sadness he had not previously suspected. And this was not merely the  
50 sadness of Putnam's death, for that was more properly grief, but a sadness for  
the life they had lived through together, keeping up each other's spirits, ap-  
plauding in each other the middle-class virtues which, to their surprise, had  
come to them quite naturally, so that from an initial bedrock of misgiving and  
55 suspicion had flowered charity and judicious  
benevolence and a hard-won fair-mindedness. He had loved Putnam; now that  
Putnam was dead, he, George Bland, felt half dead himself.

### A Sample of Analysis

The text (2 pages) is the initial portion of the novel "A Private View" by Anita Brookner (London, 1994). In most cases this is the only information students get. But they are free and welcome to come out with their suppositions. Upon reading the two pages attentively the following might be said:

A. Brookner, judging by the time and place of publication, is a modern British authoress ("Anita" can hardly be a man), not young, since she is

really interested in fortunes of two elderly sufficiently successful clerks. One can suppose that only a mature person may be sympathetic not only to a beautiful young girl in love. But this is only an opinion. The characters are sixtyish (think of the usual time of retirement for men), one of them died of cancer just on the eve of long looked-for happy leisure-time leaving the only friend with money (his legacy) but alone. From the text one learns of the last days of the unfortunate one and the fortunate one trying (in vain) to get rid of his money, though both started their life poor.

The text consists of 4 paragraphs. The first, the biggest may be viewed upon as an exposition. It allows to get acquainted not only with the place (France, Nice), time (after the friend's death), the main character (a retired clerk, maybe previously connected with finance or law) and with the attitude of the authoress toward him – a restrained, not demonstrative sympathy. The latter, besides, reminds one of Galsworthy.

The text is narrative, third person narration. The author's language is sometimes imperceptibly merged with the unuttered represented speech of the character. But to draw a distinct border-line between them is difficult: as it was supposed, the age of the author and the character might be more or less the same and the character is evidently sufficiently well-educated (judging by the vocabulary). But this is questionable, a moot point.

Passing over to the paragraph analysis proper, it should be remarked that the first sentence – occupying the initial strong position – sets pace, determines the mood, on the one hand, and determines the message/content, on the other.

*“George Bland, in the sun, reflected that now was the moment to take stock.”*

It is a complex sentence with an object clause. It is rather laconic for a complex sentence, and this fact allows to suppose that the information is of some importance. Both clauses seem neutral. The structure of the principal clause which may be supposed to convey the essence of the message, is peculiar: the detached construction “in the sun” is evidently an elliptical participle construction giving some secondary, additional information. It carries the first hint at some incongruity of the situation: instead of “enjoying, basking, lying etc.” it is followed by the verb that, so-to-say, does not require sunshine. The subordinate clause intensifies a business-like attitude in G.B. Thus the possible conclusion is that G.B. did not experience the emotion of an ordinary Britisher – enjoying sunshine, so infrequent at home.

The next sentence supplies quite a lot of details and is, as it may be expected, much longer.

*“Nice, a town which he had not visited since his first holiday abroad, some forty years earlier, spread its noise and its light and its air about him.”*

making him feel cautious; he was not up to this, he reckoned, having become unused to leisure.”

One sees the juxtaposition of two bits of information – Nice and G.B.’s life. These cause opposing emotions – either of the character or of the author. The French town is not presented as anything desirable: the choice of homogeneous objects “noise, ...” which become contextual synonyms – speak for it. Moreover they are intensified by anaphoric parallelism, and the repetition of the possessive pronoun “its” makes the emotion obvious – it is rejection, hostility mingled with contempt for a world of famous beauty of the south. The attitude to G.B. is different. If in his youth (40 years earlier) G.B. had his holiday abroad (possibly thanks to his parents) later he had become not only unused to having a rest, but also somewhat afraid of it. The adjective “cautious” may have various interpretations. The choice of the word “reckoned” and the combination “was not up to this” stresses it. Attention should be paid to the morphological aspect of the participle “unused” (for further consideration).

One can also trace a connection with the first sentence due to the words dealing with time: “now” vs. “forty years earlier”, which will continue through the paragraph and the whole text, and will stress another apposition (now – then).

The next sentence continues to detailize the fact of not enjoying leisure.

“He had been here for four days and had found nothing to do, although there was much to occupy his thoughts, most of them, indeed all of them, proving unwelcome.”

The sentence is linked with the previous ones through the synonym to the word “leisure” – “nothing to do” and through developing the theme of thought: “reflected”, “reckoned”, “thoughts”. The significance of the sentence is mostly emotive, since not much new information is added. The emotional character becomes evident due to a climatic repetition “most of them, indeed all of them” intensified by the epiphora in its background function and the intensifier “indeed”. Attention should be paid to the word in the final strong position – “unwelcome”. It might be considered a typical, for an elderly Britisher, desire not to be too categorical, a habitual modesty of expression. Juxtapose it with “unused” in the previous sentence. Past Perfect at the beginning stresses the finality of decision for which four days were enough. The theme is further enriched.

The next sentence is again more emotional than informative.

“Nice had been an unwise choice, though in truth hardly a choice at all; it had been more of a flight from those same thoughts, which faithfully continued to attend him here.”

The new information concerns a very urgent desire to get rid of the unwelcome thoughts. The urgency is emotionally stressed: the word “flight”; another case of repetition (simple lexical in this case) of the word “choice”, the subordinate clause of concession (though...), the synonymous pronouns “those same” and the end of the sentence which might be considered a case of personifying the thoughts (though the traditional capitalization of the personified element is missing – possible this is a modern tendency). The attribute of the predicative “unwise” continues the line of “un“-words, intensifying the effect of modesty of expression.

The following very complicated structurally and very long sentence is mostly informative and very emotional at the same time.

*“He had sought a restorative, conventional enough, after the death of an old friend, Michael Putnam, who had inconveniently succumbed to cancer just when they were enabled, by process of evolution, or by that of virtue rewarded, more prosaically by the fact of their simultaneous retirement, to take their ease, to explore the world together, as had been their intention.”*

The explanation of the preceding is given, the reason of unwelcome thoughts, inability to enjoy life. Another emotional aspect becomes obvious – bitter irony the target of which is G.B. himself. The sentence might be considered the character’s inner speech. The modesty of expression is felt in the periphrasis; the homogeneous prepositional objects (by...) are presented as parallel periphrases which sound as bitter jokes at one’s hopes to enjoy leisure (take their ease) at last.

The final sentence of the paragraph, unlike the previous ones, evidently belongs to the author’s narrative, the more so that the second clause of the compound sentence presents a philosophical digression (attention should be paid to the shift from Past and Past Perfect to the Present).

*“They had waited for too long and the result was this hiatus, and the reflection that time and patience may bring poor rewards, that time itself, if not confronted at the appropriate juncture, can play sly tricks, and, more significantly, that those who do not act are not infrequently acted upon.”*

As befits a philosophical utterance which is supposed to teach some moral the digression sounds rhythmical due to 3 homogeneous clauses introduced by anaphoric “that”. The first subordinate clause is remarkable thanks to a paradoxical assertion: time and patience are not rewarded. In the second subordinate clause the notion of time is intensified by a personification (note that “time” has already been mentioned in this discussion). In the third clause “time” is implicitly the doer of the action in the passive construction. Returning to the principal clause of this complex sentence attention is attracted by the homogeneous predicatives “hiatus” and “reflection”.

The first might be approximately interpreted as a “pause”. In this case the two would be synonymous and connected with the process of thinking. But it (hiatus) might also be understood as “gap”, then it would be connected with G.B.’s life.

The first clause of this long compound sentence is the answer, result of “taking stock” of the beginning. This one allows to consider the paragraph under analysis balanced: since in a balanced paragraph there is a sure connection between the initial and the final sentences, be it repetition, detailization, opposition/denial or, as in this case, an answer to the question implied in “to take stock”. The character of the paragraph once more proves a certain link between the author of the end of the XX c. and those of the beginning (Galsworthy, Mansfield) or even Dickens.

The impression produced by the paragraph is strong. The tragic situation is enhanced by a studied reticence and modesty of expression: by the number of “un”-words concluded by the litotes in the last clause, almost the final strong position and sad irony.

After this has been said a kind of resume if necessary.

1) The material of the analysis presented contains three parts having a different significance: the summary, choice of a paragraph, the interpretation proper and the conclusion. The first and the third are unquestionably recommended for a student, they are indispensable. The second and the longest part is just an example of what could but certainly but should be given at the exam, for instance. As it has been previously indicated not even a very detailed analysis can be considered complete. For instance, this one could be further complemented by the discussion of the Voice opposition in the final sentence. Now what can a student have the time to do? Limit himself with the discussion of one-two points in each sentence or a more detailed discussion of the beginning, skipping over the details of the middle and, again, two-three points commented on in the conclusive sentence, since it is a logical link with the obligatory conclusion.

What points should be discussed and what better not? Beginning with the end: any indication of size, syntactical aspect and enumeration of the recognized phenomena without any connection with the significance for the text and the effect produced. Desirable for commenting are any language facts – grammatical, lexicological, stylistic, phono-stylistic – preceded by stating the above mentioned effect. One should bear in mind that any language fact, so-called “expressive means” has in the text one of the possible (for this fact) messages. This message, effect should be stated and discussed. Stylistics (stylistic devices) does play its role but any interpretation of the text is not an exercise of discovering and simple mentioning, enumerating stylistic devices. Any lucky “discovery” of a stylistic device should – in the

analysis – come only after the value of it for the text understanding was made clear.

## JUST MORGAN

*By Susan Beth Pfeffer  
New York, 1970*

My parents died in early May of my ninth-grade year at Fairfield. I was called into the headmistress's office that afternoon, without knowing why. Mrs. Baines told me herself, interspersing it with "my poor child" and "my dear Morgan," which struck me as being  
5 even odder than the news. I felt nothing at the time, not even fear at what was to become of me; I suppose it was because their deaths were so unexpected. It had been in an accident of some sort, while they were in Rome. Mrs. Baines didn't have all the details, and I never chose to ask anybody, so I still don't know exactly what happened.  
10 While I sat there trying to understand everything, with Mrs. Baines offering me smelling salts and some aspirin (I think she was disappointed at my lack of histrionics), my uncle called the school to find out whether I would be able to miss a few days for the funeral. "Certainly, certainly," the headmistress clucked. Their bodies, it seemed,  
15 were being flown in, and the funeral would be that Saturday. I asked if it would be all right for me to finish out that week in school before going to New York, and staring at me Mrs. Baines whispered something to my uncle about my being in a state of shock. It was decided therefore that I would leave the next day for New York by train and  
20 that either my uncle or his secretary, or both, would be at the station to pick me up. Mrs. Baines assured me that I did not have to return to classes that day; instead, she recommended, I should go back to my room and try to sleep. If I wanted to speak to a minister of my faith, she said, she would call one up. I thanked her, said it wasn't necessary,  
25 thanked her again, and walked the distance to my room, with my thoughts alternating between "Dead?" and "What about the history test on Friday?"

Sitting on my bed, torn between the desire to tell my roommate, who was in class, what had happened, and a sense of guilt that all I  
30 felt was the desire to tell her, I was hit by the enormity of my parents' death for the first time. I was an orphan. The school had a number of them and they all seemed perfectly normal and happy, so I couldn't see worrying about a life filled with doom and despair. Nor could I really mourn 'my parents' death the way Mrs. Baines had expected me  
35 to. For one thing, I scarcely knew them. During the school year I went

to Fairfield, and in the summers I was sent to different camps. My encounters with Mother and Father had occurred mostly during winter recesses, when I would fly to wherever they were located that year, or, less frequently, they would fly to America and I would join them in New York. Such visits were more embarrassing than anything else, with my parents showering me with useless gifts and loosely aimed kisses on my cheeks, and me reciprocating with handmade Christmas cards I had knocked off one period in Creative Arts, that generally started off *Joyeux Noel* and ended up with *Love, Morgan* since I assumed it was expected of me to say it. They made a great fuss about showing off the cards at all the parties they went to, much to my embarrassment, and those friends of theirs that I met nearly always came up to me saying, "So you're the little girl who made that fine Christmas card for your mommy and daddy." I hated their friends and their parties and the visits, and if I didn't hate them it was only because I saw them so little. Other than that, our exchanges were by mail, or very infrequently by transatlantic phone calls, on ceremonial occasions like my birthday. I didn't think I would miss them very much.

#### Tasks:

- a) Give a summary of the text.
- b) Give your reasons for selecting either of the two paragraphs for detailed discussion.
- c) Dwell on the significance of the first and final sentences of the text.
- d) Point out the ways the presence of the young and adult narrators may be traced in the text (on the lexical level and the assessment of facts).
- e) Comment on the first sentence of the first paragraph (strong positions); find another sentence in this paragraph which may lead to the same conclusions (pay attention to the order of the homogenous objects).
- f) Find in the text and point out at least 2 points deserving attention in the sentences containing these words:  
*accident, histrionics, bodies, faith, still, normal, encounter, reciprocating, embarrassment, ceremonial.*
- g) Speak of the effect produced by the most laconic sentence in the text not being given a paragraph prominence.
- h) In the conclusive part of the discussion assess the situation from a professional point of view and connect it with your suppositions concerning the authoress.



# THE CAPTAIN AND THE ENEMY

By *Graham Greene*  
London, 1988

## Chapter I

I am now in my twenty-second year and yet the only birthday which I can clearly distinguish among all the rest is my twelfth, for it was on that damp and misty day in September I met the Captain for the first time. I can still remember the wetness of the gravel under my  
5 gym shoes in the school quad and how the blown leaves made the cloisters by the chapel slippery as I ran recklessly to escape from my enemies between one class and the next. I slithered and came to an abrupt halt while my pursuers went whistling away, because there in the middle of the quad stood our formidable headmaster talking to a  
10 tall man in a bowler hat, a rare sight already at that date, so that he looked a little like an actor in costume – an impression not so far wrong, for I never saw him in a bowler hat again. He carried a walking stick over his shoulder at the slope like a soldier with a rifle. I had no idea who he might be, nor, of course, did I know how he had won  
15 me the previous night, or so he was to claim, in a backgammon game with my father.

I slid so far that I landed on my knees at the two men's feet, and when I picked myself up the headmaster was glaring at me from under his heavy eyebrows. I heard him say, 'I *think* this is the one you  
20 want – Baxter Three. Are you Baxter Three?'

'Yes, sir,' I said.

The man, whom I would never come to know by any more permanent name than the Captain, said, 'What does Three indicate?'

'He is the youngest of three Baxters,' the headmaster said, 'but  
25 not one of them is related by blood.'

'That puts me in a bit of a quandary,' the Captain said. 'For which of them is the Baxter I want? The Christian name, unlikely as it may sound, is Victor. Victor Baxter – the names don't pair very well.'

'We have little occasion here for Christian names. Are you called  
30 Victor Baxter?' the headmaster inquired of me sharply.

'Yes, sir,' I said after some hesitation, for I was reluctant to admit to a name which I had tried unsuccessfully to conceal from my fellows. I knew very well that Victor for some obscure reason was one of the unacceptable names, like Vincent or Marmaduke.

'Well then, I suppose that this is the Baxter you want, sir. Your  
35 face needs washing, boy.'

The stern morality of the school prevented me from telling the

headmaster that it had been quite clean until my enemies had splashed  
it with ink. I saw the Captain regarding me with brown, friendly and  
40 what I came to learn later from hearsay, unreliable eyes. He had such  
deep black hair that it might well have been dyed and a long thin nose  
which reminded me of a pair of scissors left partly ajar, as though his  
nose was preparing to trim the military moustache just below it. I  
thought that he winked at me, but I could hardly believe it. In my ex-  
45 perience grown-ups did not wink, except at each other.

'This gentleman is an old boy, Baxter,' the headmaster said, 'a  
contemporary of your father's he tells me.'

'Yes, sir.'

'He has asked permission to take you out this afternoon. He has  
50 brought me a note from your father, and as today is a half-holiday, I  
see no reason why I shouldn't give my consent, but you must be back  
at your house by six. He understands that.'

'Yes, sir.'

'You can go now.'

55 I turned my back and began to make for the classroom where I  
was overdue.

'I meant go with this gentleman, Baxter Three. What class do  
you miss?'

'Divvers, sir.'

60 'He means Divinity,' the headmaster told the Captain. He glared  
at the door across the quad from which wild sounds were emerging,  
and he swept his black gown back over his shoulder. 'From what I can  
hear you will miss little by not attending.' He began to make great  
muffled strides towards the door. His boots – he always wore boots –  
65 made no more sound than carpet slippers.

'What's going on in there?' the Captain asked.

'I think they are slaying the Amalekitcs,' I said.

'Are you an Amalekite?'

'Yes.'

70 'Then we'd better be off.'

He was a stranger, but I felt no fear of him at all. Strangers were  
not dangerous. They had no such power as the headmaster or my fel-  
low pupils. A stranger is not a permanency. One can easily shed a  
stranger. My mother had died a few years back – I could not even  
75 then have said how long before; time treads at quite a different pace  
when one is a child. I had seen her on her deathbed, pale and calm,  
like a figure on a tomb, and when she hadn't responded to my formal  
kiss on her forehead, I realized with no great shock of grief that she

80 had gone to join the angels. At that time, before I went to school, my only fear was of my father who, according to what my mother told me, had long since attached himself to the opposing party up there where she had gone. 'Your father is a devil,' she was very fond of telling me, and her eyes would lose their habitual boredom and light suddenly up for a moment like a gas cooker.

85 My father, I do remember that, came to the funeral dressed top to toe in black; he had a beard which went well with the suit, and I looked for the tail under his coat, but I couldn't perceive one, although this did little to reassure me. I had not seen him very often before the day of the funeral, nor after, for he seldom came to my home, if you could call the flat in a semidetached house named The Laurels near Richmond Park where I began to live after my mother's death, a home. It was at the buffet party, which followed the funeral that I now believe he plied my mother's sister with sherry until she promised to provide a shelter for me during the school holidays.

95 My aunt was quite an agreeable but very boring woman and understandably she had never married. She too referred to my father as the Devil on the few occasions when she spoke of him, and I began to feel a distinct respect for him, even though I feared him, for to have a devil in the family was after all a kind of distinction. An angel one had to take on trust, but the Devil in the words of my prayer book 'roamed the world like a raging lion', which made me think that perhaps it was for that reason my father spent so much more time in Africa than in Richmond. Now after so many years have passed I begin to wonder whether he was not quite a good man in his own way, something which I would hesitate to say of the Captain who had won me from him at backgammon, or so he said.

### Tasks:

- a) Give a summary of the text.
- b) Give your reasons for choosing one of the four narrative paragraphs for discussion.
- c) Discussing the chosen paragraph show which narrator – the young or the adult – predominates: the vocabulary choice, assessing people, the size of sentences.
- d) Find a seemingly illogical structure in the paragraph concerning strangers, fill in a gap in the sentences.
- e) Analyse the dialogue part according to the scheme:
  - 1) its being linked with the narration, plot development;

- 2) the degree the plane of the personages (direct speech) is intertwined with the plane of the author – the author’s commenting on the way phrases sounded, what reactions accompanied them, reactions of the interlocutors to what was said by others, their habits, appearance, the author’s digressions, reminiscences, etc;
- 3) the way the speech sounds: if it is lifelike or not and if it is or it is not appropriate for the personage;
- 4) the contribution of each participant to the conversation (this should be commented on).

## **DEATH BEFORE BEDTIME**

*By Edgar Box*

Mrs. Goldmountain was a small woman of automatic vivacity, very dark, ageless, with exquisite skin carefully painted and preserved. I recognized her from afar; her picture was always in the magazines smiling up into the President's face or the Vice President's face or into her dog's face, a celebrated white poodle which was served its meals at its own table beside hers on all state occasions: "Because Hermione loves interesting people," so the newspapers had quoted her as saying. Whether Hermione Poodle liked famous people or not, we shall never know; that Mrs. Goldmountain did, however, is one of the essential facts about Washington, and famous people certainly liked *her* because she made a fuss over them, gave rich parties where they met other celebrities. One of the laws of nature is that celebrities adore one another ... are, in fact, more impressed by the idea of celebrity than the average indifferent citizen who never sees a movie star and seldom bothers to see his Congressman, presuming he knows what a Congressman is. I looked about me for the poodle but she was nowhere in sight: the dream no doubt of a press agent. Mrs. Goldmountain retained several.

### **Questions and tasks:**

1. What information about Mrs. Goldmountain can the reader draw? What is the author's method of characterization?
2. What linguistic means render the idea of Mrs. Goldmountain's artifice in the 1<sup>st</sup> sentence? Comment on the oxymoron "automatic vivacity".
3. Explain the effect of the parallel structures in the 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence. Dwell on the linguistic and extralinguistic means of creating a humorous effect when describing the dog and its owner.
4. Comment on the structure and the punctuation of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and the 4<sup>th</sup> sentences, indicating connotations created by them. Discuss the function of parallelism, parenthesis and detachment in these sentences. Can you find

any graphic expressive means? What else helps to express the ironic attitude to the society?

5. Explain why the narrator is looking for the poodle (the 5<sup>th</sup> sentence). What makes the last laconic sentence so emphatic?
6. Sum up the author's attitude to Mrs. Goldmountain and celebrities as expressed in this short excerpt.
7. Provide a complete analysis of the paragraph according to the plan.

## ANIMAL FARM

*By George Orwell*

**"Animal Farm" (a fairy story) by George Orwell** is about a group of farm animals, who rebel against their farmer. Other subtitles were "*A Satire*" and "*A Contemporary Satire*". It was also often referred to as a dystopian novel and an allegorical novella. Orwell himself firmly believed that the book reflected events leading up to the Russian Revolution of 1917 and then to the Stalinist era.

Old Major, "the prize Middle White boar, had had a strange dream on the previous night and wished to communicate it to the other animals". They met in a big barn and the respected pig delivered his speech.

**Below is a small portion of Major's speech. Read the paragraph taken from Chapter 1 of "Animal Farm" by George Orwell. Do the tasks and analyse the paragraph.**

\* \* \*

The vote was taken at once, and it was agreed by an overwhelming majority that rats were comrades. There were only four dissentients, the three dogs and the cat, who was afterwards discovered to have voted on both sides. Major continued:

"I have little more to say. I merely repeat, remember always your duty of enmity towards Man and all his ways. Whatever goes upon two legs is an enemy. Whatever goes upon four legs, or has wings, is a friend. And remember also that in fighting against Man, we must not come to resemble him. Even when you have conquered him, do not adopt his vices. No animal must ever live in a house, or sleep in a bed, or wear clothes, or drink alcohol, or smoke tobacco, or touch money, or engage in trade. All the habits of Man are evil. And, above all, no animal must ever tyrannise over his own kind. Weak or strong, clever or simple, we are all brothers. No animal must ever kill any other animal. All animals are equal."

### Questions and tasks

1. What kind of vocabulary is used in the extract? Describe the communicative situation. Which words were popular in the Soviet era society?
2. Does the structure and length of the sentences change?
3. What is the aim of the speech?
4. Whose allegorical representation can Old Major be?
5. How would you define the functional style of the extract? Quote the text to prove your point of view.
6. Find all cases of root and word repetition in the paragraph. What for is it used?
7. Find cases of syntactical arrangement of words, phrases, clauses and sentences (inversion, parallelism, antithesis, etc.). State the function of these tropes.
8. How can the instructions and the rules enumerated by the Major be further used or abused?
9. Change the wording of the last sentence so that it becomes a famous quotation. It is known as an “immortal declaration”. Who of the politicians first used it? Is it still significant?  
Can we speak of “allusion” in this case?
10. Sum up your observations and analyse the paragraph.

## THE GOLDFINCH

*By Donna Tartt*

The plot of **Donna Tartt**'s Pulitzer-Prize winning novel “The Goldfinch” is built around a small picture by a Dutch artist Carel Fabritius. The artist was Rembrandt's pupil and Vermeer's teacher. Fabritius died when he was 32 in the explosion of the Delft gunpowder magazine on October 12, 1654, which destroyed a quarter of the city, along with his studio and many of his paintings.

A thirteen-year-old Theo Decker and his mother are in the Metropolitan Museum of Art when a bomb goes off, killing his mother but sparing Theo. Through a misunderstanding he ‘steals’ the picture and has to keep it hidden for many years.

**Below is a paragraph from the very end of the book. Read it, do the tasks and analyse the paragraph.**



**The Goldfinch (1654)**

The bird is chained to the top ring of its feeder that is attached to the wall.

The painting is signed "C FABRITIUS 1654".

But what does the painting say about Fabritius himself? Nothing about religious or romantic or familial devotion; nothing about civic awe or career ambition or respect for wealth and power. There's only a tiny heartbeat and solitude, bright sunny wall and a sense of no escape. Time that doesn't move, time that couldn't be called time. And trapped in the heart of light: the little prisoner, unflinching. I think of something I read about Sargent: how, in portraiture, Sargent always looked for the animal in the sitter (a tendency that, once I knew to look for it, I saw everywhere in his work: in the long foxy noses and pointed ears of Sargent's heiresses, in his rabbit-toothed intellectuals and leonine captains of industry, his plump owl-faced children). And, in this staunch little portrait, it's hard not to see the human in the finch. Dignified, vulnerable. One prisoner looking at another.

### Questions and tasks.

1. What is the composition of the paragraph? Describe the type of narration and arrangement of the paragraph.
2. Whom does the narrator ask a question? Is it an invitation to the dialogue with the reader? How would you answer the question?
3. What kind of vocabulary is used in the extract?
4. Analyse the syntax of the paragraph.
5. Name the tropes in the sentences "*There's only a tiny heartbeat and solitude, bright sunny wall and a sense of no escape*", "*And trapped in the heart of light:...*".
6. Explain what is meant by the phrase "*time that couldn't be called time*".
7. John Singer Sargent was considered the "leading portrait painter of his generation". What for does the author provide a lengthy and detailed description of his style in a small paragraph? How does it characterize the narrator?
8. Note the use of the word '*portrait*' defined as "a pictorial representation of **a person**" in describing a bird. What for is it done? Comment on the use of the epithet '*staunch*'.
9. How do you understand the last sentence?
10. Sum up your observations and analyse the paragraph.

## THE LORD OF THE FLIES

*By William Golding*

William Golding's "*Lord of the Flies*" is a novel revealing how people easily turn into savages killing each other.

After a plane crash during the war a group of boys aged 6-13 find themselves on an uninhabited island without adults. They need to make a signal fire to be rescued. The paragraph below is a description of how they made it for the very first time and how it became uncontrollable. The fire becomes a symbol of both hope of rescue and of destruction.

Ironically, it is because of a fire that Jack lights at the end of the novel – in his attempt to hunt and kill Ralph – that the boys are finally rescued.

### **Read the paragraph from chapter 2 and analyse it.**

Smoke was rising here and there among the creepers that festooned the dead or dying trees. As they walked, a flash of fire appeared at the root of one wisp, and then the smoke thickened. Small flames stirred at the trunk of a tree and crawled away through leaves and brushwood, dividing and increasing. One paten touched a tree trunk and scrambled up like a bright squirrel. The smoke increased, sifted, rolled outwards. The squirrel leapt on the wings of the wind and clung to another standing tree, eating downwards. Beneath the dark canopy of leaves and smoke the fire laid hold on the forest and began to gnaw. Acres of black and yellow smoke rolled steadily toward the sea. At the sight of the flames and the irresistible course of the fire, the boys broke into shrill, excited cheering. The flames, as though they were a kind of wild life, crept as a jaguar creeps on its belly toward a line of birch-like saplings that fledged an outcrop of the pink rock. They flapped at the first of the trees, and the branches grew a brief foliage of fire. The heart of flame leapt nimbly across the gap between the trees and then went swinging and flaring along the whole row of them. Beneath the capering boys a quarter of a mile square of forest was savage with smoke and flame. The separate noises of the fire merged into a drum-roll that seemed to shake the mountain.

## FLAUBERT'S PARROT

*By Julian Barnes*

"*Flaubert's Parrot*" by Julian Barnes is a collection of biographical research, literary criticism, and philosophical considerations on the relationship between writers and their works. "*Flaubert's Parrot*" is narrated by Geoffrey Braithwaite, a retired doctor who is about 60 years old and



widowed. His main pastime is traveling around France to collect bits of Flaubert-related memorabilia.

**Read the paragraph from chapter 1 and analyse it.**

I begin with the statue, because that's where I began the whole project. Why does the writing make us chase the writer? Why can't we leave well alone? Why aren't the books enough? Flaubert wanted them to be: few writers believed more in the objectivity of the written text and the insignificance of the writer's personality; yet still we disobediently pursue. The image, the face, the signature; the 93 per cent copper statue and the Nadar photograph; the scrap of clothing and the lock of hair. What makes us randy for relics? Don't we believe the words enough? Do we think the leavings of a life contain some ancillary truth? When Robert Louis Stevenson died, his business-minded Scottish nanny quietly began selling hair which she claimed to have cut from the writer's head forty years earlier. The believers, the seekers, the pursuers bought enough of it to stuff a sofa.

**THE RICH BOY**

*By F.Scott Fitzgerald*

***Read the beginning of this short story. Analyse the paragraph.***

He dominated and attracted her, and at the same time filled her with anxiety. Confused by his mixture of solidity and self-indulgence, of sentiment and cynicism – incongruities which her gentle mind was unable to resolve – Paula grew to think of him as two alternating personalities. When she saw him alone, or at a formal party, or with his casual inferiors, she felt a tremendous pride in his strong, attractive presence, the paternal, understanding stature of his mind. In other company she became uneasy when what had been a fine imperviousness to mere gentility showed its other face. The other face was gross, humorous, reckless of everything but pleasure. It startled her mind temporarily away from him, even led her into a short covert experiment with an old beau, but it was no use – after four months of Anson's enveloping vitality there was an anaemic pallor in all other men.

**A MURDER OF QUALITY**

*John LeCarrè*

*Chapter 1*

**Black Candles**

The greatness of Carne School has been ascribed by common consent to Edward VI, whose educational zeal is ascribed by history to the Duke of Somerset. But Carne prefers the respectability of the

monarch to the questionable politics of his adviser, drawing strength  
from the conviction that Great Schools, like Tudor Kings, were  
5 ordained in Heaven.

And indeed its greatness is little short of miraculous. Founded  
by obscure monks, endowed by a sickly boy king, and dragged from  
oblivion by a Victorian bully, Carne had straightened its collar,  
scrubbed its rustic hands and face and presented itself shining to the  
10 courts of the twentieth century. And in the twinkling of an eye, the  
Dorset bumpkin was London's darling: Dick Whittington had arrived.  
Carne had parchments in Latin, seals in wax, and Lammas Land  
behind the Abbey. Carne had property, cloisters and woodworm, a  
whipping block and a line in the Domesday Book - then what more  
15 did it need to instruct the sons of the rich?

And they came; each Half they came (for terms are not elegant  
things), so that throughout a whole afternoon the trains would unload  
sad groups of black-coated boys on to the station platform. They came  
in great cars that shone with mournful purity. They came to bury poor  
20 King Edward, trundling handcarts over the cobbled streets or carrying  
tuck boxes like little coffins. Some wore gowns, and when they walked  
they looked like crows, or black angels come for the burying. Some  
followed singly like undertakers' mutes, and you could hear the clip of  
their boots as they went. They were always in mourning at Carne; the  
25 small boys because they must stay and the big boys because they must  
leave, the masters because the mourning was respectable, and the wives  
because respectability was underpaid; and now, as the Lent Half (as the  
Easter term was called) drew to its end, the cloud of gloom was as  
firmly settled as ever over the grey towers of Carne.

Gloom and the cold. The cold was crisp and sharp as flint. It  
cut the faces of the boys as they moved slowly from the deserted  
playing fields after the school match. It pierced their black topcoats  
and turned their stiff, pointed collars into icy rings round their necks.  
Frozen, they plodded from the field to the long walled road which led  
35 to the main tuck shop and the town, the line gradually dwindling into  
groups, and the groups into pairs. Two boys who looked even colder  
than the rest crossed the road and made their way along a narrow path  
which led towards a distant but less populated tuck shop.

'I think I shall die if ever I have to watch one of those beastly  
40 rigger games again. The noise is fantastic,' said one. He was tall with  
fair hair, and his name was Caley.

'People only shout because the dons are watching from the  
pavilion,' the other rejoined; 'that's why each house has to stand

45 together. So that the house dons can swank about how loud their houses shout.'

'What about Rode?' asked Caley. 'Why does he stand with us and make us shout, then? He's not a house don, just a bloody usher.'

50 'He's sucking up to house dons all the time. You can see him in the quad between lessons buzzing round the big men. All the junior masters do.' Caley's companion was a cynical red-haired boy called Perkins, Captain of Fielding's house.

'I've been to tea with Rode,' said Caley.

'Rode's hell. He wears brown boots. What was tea like?'

55 'Bleak. Funny how tea gives them away. Mrs Rode's quite decent, though homely in a plebby sort of way: doyleys and china birds. Food's good: Women's Institute, but good.'

'Rode's doing Corps next Half. That'll put the lid on it. He's so keen, bouncing about all the time. You can tell he's not a gentleman. You know where he went to school?'

60 'No.'

'Branxome Grammar. Fielding told my Mama, when she came over from Singapore last Half.'

'God. Where's Branxome?'

65 'On the coast. Near Bournemouth. I haven't been to tea with anyone except Fielding.' Perkins added after a slight pause, 'You get roast chestnuts and crumpets. You're never allowed to thank him, you know. He says emotionalism is only for the lower classes. That's typical of Fielding. He's not like a don at all. I think boys bore him. The whole house goes to tea with him once a Half, he has us in turn, 70 four at a time, and that's about the only time he talks to most men.'

They walked on in silence for a while until Perkins said:

'Fielding's giving another dinner party tonight.'

'He's pushing the boat out these days,' Caley replied, with disapproval. 'Suppose the food in your house is worse than ever?'

75 'It's his last Half before he retires. He's entertaining every don and all the wives separately by the end of the Half. Black candles every evening. For mourning. Hells extravagant.'

'Yes. I suppose it's a sort of gesture.'

'My Pater says he's a queer.'

80 They crossed the road and disappeared into the tuck shop, where they continued to discuss the weighty affairs of Mr Terence Fielding, until Perkins drew their meeting reluctantly to a close. Being a poor hand at science, he was unfortunately obliged to take extra 85 tuition in the subject.

### Questions and tasks

- 1) Give your reasons for choosing one of the first four narrative paragraphs for analysis.
- 2) What effect is achieved by the accumulation of high-flown vocabulary at the beginning of the extract? What other linguistic means contribute to the same effect?
- 3) Comment on the repetition on denotational and connotational levels in the first two paragraphs.
- 4) Point out cases of sarcasm in the extract and comment upon them.
- 5) Analyse the two cases of antithesis that the narrative part of the text contains. What is the effect?
- 6) Analyse the dialogue part. How does the speech of the pupils reveal their class-consciousness?
- 7) Provide a complete analysis of one of the paragraphs according to the plan.

## THE LORD OF THE RINGS

*By J. R. R. Tolkien*

### Task 1.

A deadly sword, a healing hand,  
a back that bent beneath its load;  
a trumpet-voice, a burning brand,  
a weary pilgrim on the road.

(From 'Galadriel's Mirror')

### Tasks to the stanza:

1. Dwell upon syntactical peculiarities of the sentence that comprises the stanza.
2. Agree or disagree (be argumentative): a) the key trope of the convergence is synecdoche; b) the images presented comprise a gradation; c) there is no reason to point out antithesis in this particular excerpt; d) the stanza might be considered a classical example of parallel constructions.
3. Compare the original with the translation: is the convergence fully preserved? Point out 'translator's losses', if any.

Владел мечом, умел целить,  
Сгибал под тяжким грузом спину.  
Мог громом и огнем разить,  
А мог быть просто Пилигримом.

## Task 2.

Then turning south again he beheld Minas Tirith. Far away it seemed, and beautiful: white-walled, many-towered, proud and fair upon its mountain-seat; its battlements glittered with steel, and its turrets were bright with many banners. Hope leaped in his heart. [...]. Then at last his gaze was held: wall upon wall, battlement upon battlement, black, immeasurably strong, mountain of iron, gate of steel, tower of adamant, he saw it: Barad-dûr, Fortress of Sauron. All hope left him.

(From: 'Breaking of the Fellowship')

### Exercises:

1. Compare 1-3 and 2-4 sentences of the excerpt, dwell upon their syntactical peculiarities.

2. Say if the following claims are justified: a) sentence 1-3 and 2-4 are united by semantic equivalency; b) the means of foregrounding is mostly *coupling*; c) the excerpt is stylistically heterogeneous.

3. Compare the original with the translation: is the convergence fully preserved? Point out 'translator's losses', if any.

Фродо опять перевел взгляд на юг и увидел Минас Тирит. Он был очень далек и очень красив: белокаменный многобашенный гордый город на отрогах гор, окруженный мощными стенами. Зубцы стен сверкали металлом, на башнях развевались флаги. В сердце хоббита блеснула надежда. Но как раз напротив Минас Тирита, за горами на востоке высилась другая твердыня, намного больше его и сильнее. И туда против воли потянулся его взгляд. Он увидел Барад-Дур, твердыню Саурона: стена за стеной, уступ за уступом, зубец за зубцом – вероятно мощная гора железа со стальными воротами, черная и абсолютно неприступная, с огромной черной башней. И надежда покинула его.

## Task 3.

It seemed to Frodo then that he heard, quite plainly but far off, voices out of the past:

*What a pity Bilbo did not stab the vile creature, when he had a chance!*

*Pity? It was Pity that stayed his hand. Pity, and Mercy: not to strike without need.*

*I do not feel any pity for Gollum. He deserves death.*

*Deserves death! I daresay he does. Many that live deserve death. And some die that deserve life. Can you give that to them? Then be not too eager to deal out death in the name of justice, fearing for your own safety. Even the wise cannot see all ends.*

‘Very well,’ he answered aloud, lowering his sword. ‘But still I am afraid. And yet, as you see, I will not touch the creature. For now that I see him, I do pity him.’

(From: ‘Taming of Smeagol’)

### **Tasks:**

1. Say if the following claims are justified: a) the excerpt contains a fragment of indirect speech; b) it is graphically highlighted; c) there is no repetition on phonetic or syntactic level in this passage.

2. Say whether the excerpt is expressive or not; if it is, how is its expressive character achieved?

3. Compare the original with the translation: is the convergence fully preserved? Point out ‘translator’s losses’, if any.

А у Фродо в ушах ясно зазвучали далекие голоса из прошлого: «Жаль, что Бильбо не проткнул кинжалом подлую тварь, когда подвернулся случай!»

«Жаль? Но ведь именно жалость удержала его руку. Он пощадил, ибо у него не было необходимости убивать...»

«Но мне Голлума совсем не жалко. Он заслуживает смерти».

«Вне всякого сомнения, заслуживает! Смерти заслуживают многие из живущих. А разве не умирают те, кто должен был жить? Ты можешь подарить им жизнь? Тогда не спеши никого осуждать на смерть. Во имя справедливости. Ибо даже мудрейшие не могут всего предвидеть».

– Хорошо, – громко сказал хоббит и опустил меч. – Я боюсь, но, как видишь, я его не тронул. Я его увидел и почувствовал сострадание.

### **Task 4.**

‘Perhaps he also thought that you were Saruman,’ said Gimli. ‘But you speak of him as if he was a friend. I thought Fangorn was dangerous.’

‘Dangerous!’ cried Gandalf. ‘And so am I, very dangerous: more dangerous than anything you will ever meet, unless you are brought alive before the seat of the Dark Lord. And Aragorn is dangerous, and Legolas is dangerous. You are beset with dangers, Gimli son of Glóin; for you are dangerous yourself, in your own fashion. Certainly the forest of Fangorn is perilous – not least to those that are too ready with their axes; and Fangorn him-

self, he is perilous too; yet he is wise and kindly nonetheless. But now his long slow wrath is brimming over, and all the forest is filled with it. The coming of the hobbits and the tidings that they brought have spilled it: it will soon be running like a flood; but its tide is turned against Saruman and the axes of Isengard.’

(From: ‘The White Rider’)

**Exercises:**

1. Divide Gandalf’s speech into 2 parts: which of them is merely emphatic, which of them is metaphorical?
2. How is compositional unity of the second part achieved?
3. Comment the effect of tautological repetition of ‘dangerous’
4. Dwell upon convergence in this excerpt, its constituents.
5. Compare the original with the translation: is the convergence fully preserved? Point out ‘translator’s losses’, if any.

Может быть, он тоже принял тебя за Сарумана, – сказал Гимли. – Ты говоришь о нем, как о друге, а я думал, что Фангорн грозен и внушает ужас.

– Грозен! – повторил Гэндальф. – Я тоже грозен и даже очень. Могу внушать ужас. Страшнее меня никого нет, разве что Черный Властелин. Арагорн грозен и Леголас грозен. Тебя окружают опасные личности, Гимли сын Глоина, и сам ты тоже грозен по-своему. Фангорнский Лес, конечно, опасен, особенно для тех, кто тут слишком рьяно размахивает топором. Древесник грозен, но вместе с тем он мудр и добр. Последние дни он кипит от гнева, который накапливался многие годы, а сейчас залил весь лес и переливается через край. Появление хоббитов оказалось каплей, переполнившей чашу, и волна этого гнева теперь потечет, как река. Но она направлена против Сарумана и топоров Исенгарда.

And Gandalf said: ‘This is your realm, and the heart of the greater realm that shall be. The Third Age of the world is ended, and the new age is begun; and it is your task to order its beginning and to preserve what may be preserved. For though much has been saved, much must now pass away; and the power of the Three Rings also is ended. And all the lands that you see, and those that lie round about them, shall be dwellings of Men. For the time comes of the Dominion of Men, and the Elder Kindred shall fade or depart.’

(From: ‘the Warden and the King’)

**Exercises:**

1. What are genre peculiarities of a *prophecy*? Does this prophecy have standard characteristics of the genre?

2. What is the effect of polysyndeton and semantic repetition in this excerpt?

3. How is compositional unity of the excerpt achieved?

4. Compare the original with the translation: is the convergence fully preserved? Point out 'translator's losses', if any.

Вот твое королевство, пока только начало будущего великого государства. Третья Эпоха кончается, скоро начнется новая. Твое дело – править тем, что заложено, и сохранить то, что достойно перейти в будущее. Мы много спасли, но еще много должно сгинуть. Власть Трех Колец тоже кончилась. Во всех землях, которые ты видишь отсюда и еще дальше за ними, будут жить люди. Пришло время Человека, Древнее Племя должно угаснуть или уйти.

## UNIT 2. Lexical Field analysis

### Explanatory Notes

LFA is based mainly on the approach of I. V. Arnold and includes some elements of Stylistic of Decoding. It concentrates on practical, detailed study of texts or their parts, sometimes being unaware of the author's personality and the author's individual style. Somewhat seemingly mechanical technique of stylistic analysis does not in the least exclude intuition and personal judgment of the student, and makes this type of analysis – as any – very subjective. Much depends on the thesaurus, degree/level of one's knowledge of the language and literature, one's aesthetic preferences (but this is true for any type of analysis).

This type of analysis may be used in any text, but best suited to it (in our opinion) would be 1) heterogeneous texts with numerous short paragraphs which will hardly be good for paragraph analysis; 2) comparatively short linguistically complicated texts offering lots of ideas; 3) poetic samples (preferred by I. V. Arnold); 4) essays or epistolary texts lacking a discernible plot.

A possible plan of discussion will be:

1) a summary with its usual constituents, but with an emphasis not only on the gist but on the idea of the text which student will prove in the process of the analysis;

2) an approximate/subjective enumerating of the most obvious themes/lexical fields;



3) establishing their hierarchy (principal, interdependent, background) – in the process of the analysis these suppositions prompted by intuition, may undergo some changes.

The analysis begins with the best represented LF, including the greatest number of lexical units (LU), connected directly (derivatives, synonyms, antonyms) and through associations (constant and casual). It is recommended to mark – for oneself – the number of LU, but offer to your listeners not more than three or four.

One should dwell on the predominant evaluative, emotive and stylistic connotations of the LF in general paying attention to the contextually acquired evaluative and emotive connotations. LU's falling out of the general picture should be commented on separately.

To avoid a mechanical enumeration of facts special attention should be paid to the following: each statement should be followed by the student assessing its significance for a more profound understanding of the text in general and the before mentioned (in the summary) idea in particular.

The next step is stating the means of foregrounding of the theme (strong position, semantic repetition, contrast – on the level of denotations and connotations, – convergence, defeated expectancy etc). The means of foregrounding should be juxtaposed with those of related LFs: the more means of foregrounding, the greater is the significance of the LF for understanding the text.

The conclusion should contain confirming or altering the preliminary supposition, the final variant of the idea and the gist is given.

P.S. The so-called background theme is usually characterized by the neutrality of evaluative and emotive connotations.

### Conclusion

After the discussion of the principal theme of the text one may say that it convincingly confirms the suppositions about the authoress: she is not a young person, she is inclined for philosophical generalizations. They are reflected in the digression which might be considered the idea of the text.

## **A PRIVATE VIEW**

*By Anita Brookner*

**Text: see UNIT 1.**

### **Lexical Field Analysis**

Summary (The beginning will coincide with the one offered in the part dedicated to paragraph analysis, but there will be some additions and alterations after the conclusion of the discussion of one LF. They will concern the author and the idea of the text).

At first sight the LFs of the text, mentioned in the seemingly obvious order will be Death, Friendship, Money, Time and Nice as a purely background theme. The first two are surely interconnected.

A closer inspection of the text based on the consideration of the strong positions of this (not speaking about the title) will show the presence of «now» in the initial and final sentences. Besides, the author's digression «... time itself...can play...» may be considered another strong position of the text and, moreover, contain the idea. So the seemingly obvious hierarchy was erroneous.

«Time» is the theme that connects and permeates all the rest. The mention of the word itself, its periods (forty years, days, weeks etc), the constant opposition: «now-then», the digression – all point at the direct connection with the theme. Connected through associations are, after all, most of the LUs of other themes, including the supposedly background «Nice» (the evaluative connotations of the word are opposed depending on «now» – «then»). The emphasis on Past Perfect is another means attracting one's attention to the time opposition.

Speaking about the connotations the student should keep to the following scheme (the order can be different):

a. Stylistic connotations of the LUs belonging to the theme “Time” (for example) are similar for all of them belong to the same layer of the vocabulary – literary /neutral. This makes the LF so unobtrusive at first sight.

b. Evaluative connotations of the LUs belonging to the theme “Time” are opposed: positive for the “then” and negative for the “now”. The opposition is more evident in connection with other themes (“Money”, “Friendship”, “Nice”). The word itself, mostly neutral in many texts here acquires a negative evaluative connotation: ... “can play sly tricks” ... In general, evaluative connotations are both positive and negative.

c. Emotive connotation (in general) are also positive or negative, but this must be followed by the indication of the exact emotion/emotions they evoke. In case of the LF “Time” emotive connotations of the part “now” are contextually acquired negative and help to feel the character's grief, sadness, even a kind of irritation, confusion, bewilderment.

P. S. One can also speak of expressive connotations, but they are most subjective. The three mentioned above are more easily discernible.

The means of foregrounding of the theme «Time» are:

- 1) semantic repetition;
- 2) strong position;
- 3) contrast on the level of denotation and connotations (evaluative and emotive).

### Conclusion

The analysis of a seemingly neutral and “innocent” (as compared, say, with “death”) theme “Time” gives the clue to the course of G.B.’s disquiet: he is forced to live in two-times simultaneously. This proves unbearable as it would be for any person. But this is but “a private view”.

#### **Tasks:**

- 1) Analyse one of the above mentioned LFs according to the plan;
- 2) Illustrate the difference in the evaluative and emotive connotations of the theme «Nice».

## **SECOND SKIN**

*By Caroline Castle Hicks  
New York 1998*

*I looked on child rearing not only as a work of love and duty but as a profession that was fully as interesting and challenging as any honorable profession in the world, and one that demanded the best I could bring to it.*

*Rose Kennedy*

My favorite pair of old jeans will never fit me again. I have finally accepted this immutable truth. After nurturing and giving birth to two babies, my body had undergone a metamorphosis. I may have  
5 returned to my pre-baby weight, but subtle shifts and expansions have taken place – my own version of continental drift. As a teenager, I never understood the difference between junior and misses sizing; misses clothing just looked old. Now it is all too clear that wasp waists and micro-fannies are but the fleeting trappings of youth. But  
10 that’s okay, because while the jeans no longer button, the life I exchanged for them fits better than they ever did.

For me, this is a barefoot, shorts and T-shirts time of life. I have slipped so easily into young motherhood; it is most comfortable role I have ever worn. No tough seams, no snagging zippers. Just a  
15 feeling that I have stepped out of the dressing room in something that finally feels right.

I love the feel of this baby on my hip, his soft head a perfect fit under my chin, his tiny hands splayed out like small pink starfish against my arms. I love the way my eight-year-old daughter walks  
20 alongside us as we cross the grocery store’s sunny parking lot. On

gorgeous spring days, the breeze lifts her wispy ponytail, and we laugh at how the sunshine makes the baby sniff and squint. I am constantly reaching out to touch them, the way a seamstress would two lengths of perfect silk, envisioning what might be made from them, yet hesitant to alter them, to lose the weight of their wholeness in my hands.

25 On those rare mornings when I wake up before they do, I go into their rooms and watch them sleeping, their faces creased and rosy. Finally, they squirm and stretch themselves awake, reaching out for a hug. I gather them up, bury my face in them and breathe deeply. They are like towels just pulled from the dryer, tumbled warm and cottony.

30 Sometimes, I follow the sound of girlish voices to my daughter's room, where she and her friends play dress-up, knee-deep in garage-sale chiffon, trying life on for size. Fussing and preening in front of the mirror, they drape themselves in cheap beads and adjust tiaras made of sequins and cardboard. I watch these little girls with their lank, shiny hair that no rubber bands or barrettes seem able to tame. They are constantly pushing errant strands behind their ears, and in that grown-up gesture, I see glimpses of the women they will become. I know that too soon these clouds of organdy and lace will settle permanently into their battered boxes, the ones that have served as treasure chests and princess thrones. They will become the hand-me-downs of my daughter's girlhood, handed back to me.

40 For now, though, my children curl around me on the sofa in the evening, often falling asleep, limbs limp and soft against me like the folds of a well-worn nightgown. For now, we still adorn each other, and they are content to be clothed in my embrace. I know there will be times that will wear like scratchy wool sweaters and four-inch heels. We will have to try on new looks together, tugging and scrunching, trying to keep the basic fabric intact. By then, we will have woven a complicated tapestry with its own peculiar pattern, its snags and pulls and tears.

50 But I will not forget this time, of drowsy heads against my shoulder, of footy pajamas and mother-daughter dresses, of small hands clasped in mine. This time fits me. I plan to wear it well.

### A Sample of Analysis of This Text

#### Summary

The text is an essay – «a literary composition in prose and very short» (Concise Oxford Dictionary); «a short piece of literature in which a writer gives his or her thoughts on a particular subject usually in a graceful and pleasing style» (Longman's Dictionary of English Language and Culture) – evidently on the subject of motherhood (this may be considered the

gist) and the paramount importance of it (which may be considered as one of the ideas).

The authoress is a contemporary (judging by the year of publication) American (according to the place of publication), writer, concerned with joys and cares of motherhood. It might be supposed that the essay is – in a way – autobiographical.

The gist and one of the ideas were mentioned above. The facts the reader gets are not many: clothes (fitting or not), two girls that will grow into adulthood in their turn.

The obvious LFs are Clothes, Happiness, Time, Children. The peculiarity of this essay is the presence of an epigraph. Any epigraph directly or by associations is connected with the idea of the text (as the author sees it). This epigraph is rather long for its kind and does not need any interpretation. It speaks quite clearly of the honourable profession of a Mother.

The lexical layer of the text – as is expected of an essay – is neutral, at places sounding intimate.

### Analysis

If one does not pay attention to the epigraph, beginning with the strong position of the title, the initial strong position (1<sup>st</sup> sentence) and the final strong position of the text (the word «wear» in the last sentence) the text deals with clothes. The number of the LUs belonging to it is overwhelming. The seemingly paradoxical fact is the following: the text is evidently dedicated to the joys of motherhood and Clothes should be a background theme. Everything becomes logical if the title is understood as a metonymy/metaphor: «second skin» = a perfectly fitting dress (a metonymy), clothes as indicators of time (a metaphor). The interconnection between the LFs Clothes, Time, Motherhood becomes obvious. LUs Clothes and Time are inseparable («shorts and T-shirt time of life», «times that will wear like scratchy wool sweaters» etc). «Time» as a LF is all embracing: past, present and future. The stylistic connotations of the LUs belonging to all three are similar: most of the Time/Clothes units belong to the colloquial layer of the vocabulary.

The evaluative connotations are slightly different: «fleeting trappings of youth», «tough seams», «snagging zippers» referring to the past are more negative than «something that finally feels right», «two lengths of perfect silk» etc referring to the present which are positive.

The group of LUs referring to the future has rather uncertain evaluative connotations, but the emotive ones allow to feel the narrator's hope for the better: «we will have woven a complicated tapestry...»

The emotive connotations of the first two groups are different conveying slight irony for the past («my own version of continental drift») and satisfaction with the present («This time fits me. I plan to wear it well»).

The LF of Time/Clothes is foregrounded first of all through a dense convergence: metonymy, metaphors, similes, epithets, etc, mostly lexicogrammatical SDs.

The discussion of this LF confirms the fact that the text is an essay – very personal, graceful and pleasing.

### **Tasks:**

- 1) Find in the texts 3 LUs connected with the theme Motherhood directly;
- 2) 3 – through constant and 3 – through casual associations. Speak of the 3 types of connotations of each group.

## **THE WIFE OF A KING**

*By Jack London*

Once when the northland was very young, the social and civic virtues were remarkably alike for their paucity and their simplicity. When the burden of domestic duties grew grievous, and the fireside mood expanded to a constant protest against its bleak loneliness, the  
5     adventurers from the Southland, in lieu of better, paid the stipulated prices and took unto themselves native wives. It was a foretaste of Paradise to the women, for it must be confessed that the white rovers gave far better care and treatment of them than did their Indian copartners. Of course, the white men themselves were satisfied with such deals, as  
10    were also the Indian men for that matter. Having sold their daughters and sisters for cotton blankets and obsolete rifles and traded their warm furs for flimsy calico and bad whisky, the sons of the soil promptly and cheerfully succumbed to quick consumption and other swift diseases correlated with the blessings of a superior civilization.

15             It was in these days of Arcadian simplicity that Cal Galbraith journeyed through the land and fell sick on the Lower River. It was a refreshing advent in the lives of the good Sisters of the Holy Cross, who gave him shelter and medicine; though they little dreamed of the hot elixir infused into his veins by the touch of their soft hands and  
20    their gentle ministrations. Cal Galbraith, became troubled with strange thoughts which clamored for attention till he laid eyes on the Mission girl, Madeline. Yet he gave no sign, biding his time patiently. He strengthened with the coming spring, and when the sun rode the heavens in a golden circle, and the joy and throb of life was in all the land,

25 he gathered his still weak body together and departed.

Now, Madeline, the Mission girl, was an orphan. Her white father had failed to give a bald-faced grizzly the trail one day, and had died quickly. Then her Indian mother, having no man to fill the winter cache, had tried the hazardous experiment of waiting till the salmon-run on fifty pounds of flour and half as many of bacon. After that, the baby, Chook-ra, went to live with the good Sisters, and to be thenceforth known by another name.

But Madeline still had kinsfolk, the nearest being a dissolute uncle who outraged his vitals with inordinate quantities of the white man's whisky. He strove daily to walk with the gods, and incidentally, his feet sought shorter trails to the grave. When sober he suffered exquisite torture. He had no conscience. To this ancient vagabond Cal Galbraith duly presented himself, and they consumed many words and much tobacco in the conversation that followed. Promises were also made; and in the end the old heathen took a few pounds of dried salmon and his birch-bark canoe, and paddled away to the Mission of the Holy Cross.

It is not given the world to know what promises he made and what lies he told – the Sisters never gossip; but when he returned, upon his swarthy chest there was a brass crucifix, and in his canoe his niece Madeline. That night there was a grand wedding and a potlach; so that for two days to follow there was no fishing done by the village. But in the morning Madeline shook the dust of the Lower River from her moccasins, and with her husband, in a poling-boat, went to live on the Upper River in a place known as the Lower Country. And in the years which followed she was a good wife, sharing her husband's hardships and cooking his food. And she kept him in straight trails, till he learned to save his dust and to work mightily. In the end, he struck it rich and built a cabin in Circle City; and his happiness was such that men who came to visit him in his home-circle became restless at the sight of it and envied him greatly.

But the Northland began to mature and social amenities to make their appearance.

### Tasks:

#### Fill in the gaps by providing context and reproduce the analysis.

The excerpt under analysis is the introductory page of a short story from the Klondike cycle which was created at the beginning of J. London's literary career. It serves as an exposition to the story proper: presents place and time of the action (\_\_\_\_\_), introduces protagonists –

\_\_\_\_\_ and provides approximately a 5-7 years' flashback into their past. Semantic parallelism and personification in the initial sentence: \_\_\_\_\_ and the final one, detached from the rest of the text \_\_\_\_\_ create a framing effect and bring \_\_\_\_\_ to prominence. The place becomes yet another actant in the story. Distinct markers of a 'fireside-story' genre (initial sentence \_\_\_\_\_, used as a connective in the narration, a classical fairy tale closure \_\_\_\_\_) make it look a semiautonomous complete narrative.

Lexical fields of the text are FAMILY, INDIANS, CIVILIZATION, NORTHLAND and TRADE. FAMILY is an easily discernible theme – the text abounds in names of kinship and family relations, one of which is supported by title strong position – \_\_\_\_\_. The LF permeates the text and unites other themes. At the same time due to general neutrality of its evaluative and emotive connotations and lack of solid foregrounding it doesn't hold a position of prominence; rather, it serves as background to the other two.

INDIANS is a LF represented by a number of LU directly connected with it (\_\_\_\_\_ and the case of language periphrasis \_\_\_\_\_). All instances of describing Indian life-style are connected with the theme through constant associations (\_\_\_\_\_) Indian female name (\_\_\_\_\_); used rather economically, they create effective setting for the action. Groups of LU connected with the theme through casual associations are mostly articles of trade with white men (\_\_\_\_\_) and diseases. This last group has pronounced negative evaluative and emotive connotations, whereas the previous two are more or less neutral. It is of interest that this last group is 'shared' by the opposing theme – CIVILIZATION, creating a negatively colored point of transition.

Means of foregrounding this theme are:

- 1) defeated expectancy (e.g. \_\_\_\_\_)
- 2) convergence (instances of periphrasis E.g. \_\_\_\_\_)

= starved, \_\_\_\_\_ = poisoned himself, violation of combinability norms with the effect of an oxymoron \_\_\_\_\_; coupling \_\_\_\_\_; parallel construction \_\_\_\_\_ which is further intensified through inverted word order. Similar positions in the syntactic structure highlight similar functions of crucifix and kin – both are trading items.

Elaborate way of treating this theme actually serves triple function:

- it might remind the reader of the embellished manner of Indian speech;
- it effectively reduces readability of the paragraphs, making the addressee actively involved in decoding the text instead of gliding upon its surface;
- it creates ironic effect



Indian theme in the excerpt, to repeat, is closely interconnected with CIVILIZATION<sup>1</sup> and at the same time foregrounded through contrast with it on the level of denotation. CIVILIZATION is represented, apart from one case of direct nomination, by a number of miscellaneous LU connected with it through constant associations (\_\_\_\_\_) and for the most part neutral. LU casually connected with this theme comprise articles of trade with Indians, diseases - the list we have presented for the previous theme plus one notable addition - 'native wives'. For white explorers of Northland wives denoted a more civilized 'proper' style of life. LUs representing this theme belong to markedly different layers of vocabulary: from bookish and formal immediate context of the LF - \_\_\_\_\_ to colloquial *he struck it rich*. The effect created is ironic - civilization seems to be a flimsy façade hiding harsh reality of the northland.

NORTHLAND, foregrounded through initial and final strong position, is represented by the word itself, its synonym 'land', a few toponymic LUs (\_\_\_\_\_) and a few miscellaneous LUs associated with the theme through constant associations (\_\_\_\_\_). The rest of LUs, casually connected with it, overlap with other LFs - INDIANS and CIVILIZATION - and share their connotative peculiarities. This theme is clearly a background one.

TRADE is another background theme, represented directly by its derivative ('to trade') and a group of LUs, constantly associated with trade transactions (\_\_\_\_\_). The nucleus of this LF is generally neutral, while LUs, casually connected with it, overlap with other LFs - INDIANS and CIVILIZATION - and again share their connotative peculiarities.

All in all, constant overlapping and fusion of themes might be pointed out as a marked structural peculiarity of the excerpt. To some extent it renders character of **life** in general, where everything is interconnected. This testifies to the fact that the story is hardly work of a half-baked amateur, even though it belongs to the initial stage of J. London's literary career.

Conclusion: H. Fielding once said: "I describe not Man, but manners". This quote might be fully applied to the text: what at first glance looks like a family saga set in some exotic environment is in fact an unsettling narrative of Indians getting in touch with civilization and having some trade but no fair deal with one temporary exception - marriages. But then the Northland began to mature...

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<sup>1</sup> There are instances of 'fusing' these themes in micro context, e.g. *That night there was a grand wedding and a potlatch*

**LORD OF THE RINGS (THE TWO TOWERS)**  
**CHAPTER 'JOURNEY TO THE CROSSROADS**  
**(P. 728–729)**

For about an hour they went on, silently, in single file, oppressed by the gloom and by the absolute stillness of the land, broken only now and again by the faint rumbling as of thunder far away or drum-beats in some hollow of the hills. Down from their hiding-place they went, and then turning south they steered as straight a course as Gollum could find across a long broken slope that leaned up towards the mountains. Presently, not far ahead, looming up like a black wall, they saw a belt of trees. As they drew nearer they became aware that these were of vast size, very ancient it seemed, and still towering high, though their tops were gaunt and broken, as if tempest and lightning-blast had swept across them, but had failed to kill them or to shake their fathomless roots.

'The Cross-roads, yes,' whispered Gollum, the first words that had been spoken since they left their hiding-place. 'We must go that way.' Turning eastward now, he led them up the slope; and then suddenly there it was before them: the Southward Road, winding its way about the outer feet of the mountains, until presently it plunged into the great ring of trees.

'This is the only way,' whispered Gollum. 'No paths beyond the road. No paths. We must go to the Cross-roads. But make haste! Be silent!'

As furtively as scouts within the campment of their enemies, they crept down on to the road, and stole along its westward edge under the stony bank, grey as the stones themselves, and soft-footed as hunting cats. At length they reached the trees, and found that they stood in a great roofless ring, open in the middle to the sombre sky; and the spaces between their immense boles were like the great dark arches of some ruined hall. In the very centre four ways met. Behind them lay the road to the Morannon; before them it ran out again upon its long journey south; to their right the road from old Osgiliath came climbing up, and crossing, passed out eastward into darkness: the fourth way, the road they were to take.

Standing there for a moment filled with dread Frodo became aware that a light was shining; he saw it glowing on Sam's face beside him. Turning towards it, he saw, beyond an arch of boughs, the road to Osgiliath running almost as straight as a stretched ribbon down, down, into the West. There, far away, beyond sad Gondor now over-

40 whelmed in shade, the Sun was sinking, finding at last the hem of the  
great slow-rolling pall of cloud, and falling in an ominous fire towards  
the yet unsullied Sea. The brief glow fell upon a huge sitting figure,  
still and solemn as the great stone kings of Argonath. The years had  
gnawed it, and violent hands had maimed it. Its head was gone, and in  
45 its place was set in mockery a round rough-hewn stone, rudely painted  
by savage hands in the likeness of a grinning face with one large red  
eye in the midst of its forehead. Upon its knees and mighty chair, and  
all about the pedestal, were idle scrawls mixed with the foul symbols  
that the maggot-folk of Mordor used.

Suddenly, caught by the level beams, Frodo saw the old king's  
50 head: it was lying rolled away by the roadside. 'Look, Sam!' he cried,  
startled into speech. 'Look! The king has got a crown again!'

The eyes were hollow and the carven beard was broken, but  
about the high stern forehead there was a coronal of silver and gold. A  
trailing plant with flowers like small white stars had bound itself  
55 across the brows as if in reverence for the fallen king, and in the crevices  
of his stony hair yellow stoneweed gleamed.

'They cannot conquer forever!' said Frodo. And then suddenly  
the brief glimpse was gone. The Sun dipped and vanished, and as if at  
the shuttering of a lamp, black night fell.

### Tasks to the text:

1. LFs of the text are JOURNEY, WEATHER, GROWTH, DECAY and SILENCE: distribute the following LUs between themes, say, whether they are constantly associated with the themes or whether the association exists only in the given context: *whisper, scouts, creep, gloom, pall of cloud, trailing plant, stretched ribbon, darkness, stillness, furtively, somber sky, maggot-folk, immense bores, faint rumbling.*

2. Dwell upon two opposing subthemes of LF WEATHER: SUN/CALM and GLOOM/STORM. (LUs which serve as constituents for the subthemes, evaluative and emotive connotations, means of foregrounding) Are the subthemes balanced in their representation? If not, what helps to create this effect of misbalance?

3. Comment on: *a) yet unsullied Sea, b) as if at the shuttering of a lamp, c) soft-footed as hunting cats, d) Behind them lay the road to the Morannon; before them it ran out again upon its long journey south; to their right the road from old Osgiliath came climbing up, and crossing, passed out eastward into darkness: the fourth way, the road they were to take.* (stylistic peculiarities, general effect).

4. Prove or refute, making use of the context:

- The excerpt is both dynamic and static;
- The general mood of the text is that of hope and anticipation;
- One of peculiarities of the excerpt is repetitive reversal of themes and tone of the narrative;
- The principal theme of the excerpt is JOURNEY.

1. Compare the translation of the excerpt with the original text: point out contexts in which the original stylistic colouring or trope is NOT preserved ('translator's losses').

Шли они так около часа, в полном молчании, друг за другом; их давил мрак и глухая тишина, которую иногда разрывал дальний гром или грохот барабанов, доходящий из-за гор. Они уже были значительно ниже своего укрытия в кустах и южнее, и продолжали идти вперед, на юг и вниз, держась этого направления, насколько позволял неровный спуск. И вот перед ними черной стеной встали деревья.

Подойдя к ним, хоббиты увидели, что деревья огромные, очень старые и высокие, с обломанными и оголенными верхушками, будто по ним прошла буря.

– Здесь Перепутье, да, – шепнул Голлум. Это были первые слова, произнесённым им в пути. – Надо идти вон туда.

Он повернул на восток и полез в гору. И вдруг перед ними открылся Южный Тракт, огибающий подножия гор и упирающийся в кольцо деревьев.

– Здесь только одна дорога, – зашептал Голлум снова. – Тропок нет, только одна дорога. Нет тропинок. Надо идти к Перепутью. Быстро! Тихо!

Крадучись, словно разведчики во вражеских владениях, они вышли на Тракт, мягко, по-кошачьи, ступая, и помчались по нему как тени, в серых плащах по серым камням, пока не добежали до деревьев, и оказались словно в большом круглом зале без крыши, как в развалинах замка с щелями-окнами меж стволов. Здесь дорога пересекалась с другой, образуя крест, так что из-под деревьев расходились четыре пути. По одному из них, Южному Тракту, ведущему дальше в Харат, пришли путники. Вправо шла дорога в старинный город Осгилиат, влево – путь на восток, во Тьму. Именно туда предстояло идти.

Фродо стоял на Перепутье, объятый тревогой и страхом, как вдруг увидел свет. Его отблеск падал на лицо Сэма. В поисках источника света Фродо посмотрел в просвет между стволами на дорогу в Осгилиат, которая натянутой струной вела на запад. Над далеким горизонтом за затененным Гондором заходящее солнце нашло, наконец, разрыв в тучах, и видно было, как его пламенный шар быстро катится

по чистому небу над Морем. Последний закатный луч, скользнув по Сэму, на минуту осветил огромную статую человека, сидящего в спокойной и торжественной позе, напоминающую фигуры Королей-Аргонатов. Время разрушило памятник, грубые руки искалечили его. Вместо головы кто-то положил круглый камень и намалевал на нем лицо с нелепой ухмылкой и одним большим красным глазом посреди лба. Бессмысленные каракули и неумелые рисунки, распространенные среди диких племен, населявших Мордор, покрывали колени, величественный трон и постамент памятника.

Луч успел еще показать Фродо отрубленную голову каменного Короля: она валялась на земле, откатившись в сторону от дороги.

– Смотри, Сэмми! – крикнул вдруг Фродо с удивлением. – Смотри! Король обрел корону!

Глазницы, когда-то сверкавшие дорогими камнями, были пусты, резные завитки бороды побиты, но высокий лоб окружала серебряная с золотом корона. Присмотревшись, хоббиты увидели, что у висков голову оплели мелкие белые цветы, похожие на звездочки, а среди них и в каменных волосах надо лбом цветут желтые чашечки рассыпушек.

– Не смогли они победить Короля навечно! – сказал Фродо.

В это мгновение последний луч погас. Солнце скрылось в море, будто кто-то задул лампу над миром, и его покрыла черная ночь.

## A MURDER OF QUALITY

*John LeCarrè*

### *Chapter 5*

#### **Cat and Dog**

5 It was just after seven o'clock that evening when George Smiley  
climbed the steps which led up to the front door of Mr Terence  
Fielding's house. He rang, and was admitted to the hall by a little  
plump woman in her middle fifties. To his right a log fire burned  
warmly on a pile of wood ash and above him he was vaguely aware of  
a minstrel gallery and a mahogany staircase, which rose in a spiral to  
the top of the house. Most of the light seemed to come from the fire,  
and Smiley could see that the walls around him were hung with a  
great number of paintings of various styles and periods, and the  
10 chimney-piece was laden with all manner of *objets d'art*. With an  
involuntary shudder, he noticed that neither the fire nor the pictures  
quite succeeded in banishing the faint smell of school – of polish  
bought wholesale, of cocoa and community cooking. Corridors led

15 from the hall, and Smiley observed that the lower part of each wall was painted a dark brown or green according to the inflexible rule of school decorators. From one of these corridors the enormous figure of Mr Terence Fielding emerged.

He advanced on Smiley, massive and genial, with his splendid mane of grey hair falling anyhow across his forehead, and his gown billowing behind him.

20 'Smiley? Ah! You've met True, have you, Miss Truebody, my housekeeper? Marvellous this snow, isn't it? Pure Bruegel! Seen the boys skating by the Eyot? Marvellous sight! Black suits, coloured scarves, pale sun; all there, isn't it, all there! Bruegel to the life. 25 Marvellous!' He took Smiley's coat and flung it on to a decrepit deal chair with a rush seat which stood in the corner of the hall.

'You like that chair – you recognize it?'

'I don't think I do,' Smiley replied in some confusion.

30 'Ah, you should, you know, you should! Had it made in Provence before the war. Little carpenter I knew. Place it now? Facsimile of Van Gogh's yellow chair; some people recognize it.' He led the way down a corridor and into a large comfortable study adorned with Dutch tiles, small pieces of Renaissance sculpture, mysterious bronzes, china dogs and unglazed vases; and Fielding 35 himself towering magnificent among them.

As senior housemaster of Carne, Fielding wore, in place of the customary academic dress, a wonderful confection of heavy black skirts and legal bib, like a monk in evening dress. All this imparted a suggestion of clerical austerity in noted contrast to the studied 40 flamboyance of his personality. Evidently conscious of this, he sought to punctuate the solemnity of his uniform and give to it a little of his own temperament, by adorning it with flowers carefully chosen from his garden. He had scandalized the tailors of Carne, whose frosted windows carried the insignia of royal households, by having 45 buttonholes let into his gown. These he would fill according to his mood with anything from hibernia to bluebells. This evening he wore a rose, and from its freshness Smiley deduced that he had this minute put it into place, having ordered it specially.

50 'Sherry wine or Madeira?'

'Thank you; a glass of sherry.'

'Tart's drink, Madeira,' Fielding called, as he poured from a decanter, 'but boys like it. Perhaps that's why. They're frightful flirts.' He handed Smiley a glass and added, with a dramatic modification of his voice:

55 'We're all rather subdued at the moment by this dreadful business. We've never had anything quite like it, you know. Have you seen the evening papers?'

'No, I'm afraid I haven't. But the Sawley Arms is packed with journalists of course.'

60 'They've really gone to town. They've got the Army out in Hampshire, playing about with mine-detectors. God knows what they expect to find.'

'How have the boys taken it?'

'They adore it! My own house has been particularly fortunate, of course, because the Rodes were dining here that night. Some oaf from the police even wanted to question one of my boys.'

65 'Indeed,' said Smiley innocently. 'What on earth about?'

'Oh, God knows,' Fielding replied abruptly, and then, changing the subject, he asked, 'You knew my brother well, didn't you? He

70 talked about you, you know.'

'Yes, I knew Adrian very well. We were close friends.'

'In the war, too?'

'Yes.'

'Were you in his crowd, then?'

75 'What crowd?'

'Steed-Asprey, Jebedee. All those people.'

'Yes.'

'I never really heard how he died. Did you?'

'No.'

80 'We didn't see much of one another in later years, Adrian and I. Being a fraud, I can't afford to be seen beside the genuine article,' Fielding declared, with something of his earlier panache. Smiley was spared the embarrassment of a reply by a quiet knock at the door, and a tall red-haired boy came timidly into the room.

85 'I've called the Adsum, sir, if you're ready, sir.'

'Damn,' said Fielding, emptying his glass. 'Prayers.' He turned to Smiley.

'Meet Perkins, my head prefect. Musical genius, but a problem in the schoolroom. That right, Tim? Stay here or come as you like. It only lasts ten minutes.'

### Tasks:

- 1) Single out the lexical fields in the extract and enumerate them in a hierarchical order. Which of these LFs are interconnected? How?
- 2) Pick out all the lexical units that enter into the LF 'Fielding'.

Divide them into two groups: a) LUs having a direct connection with the theme, b) LUs connected with the theme through casual associations.

3) Comment on the connotations of the lexical units belonging to the theme 'Fielding'. Are these units mostly neutral or coloured? What effect is achieved as a result? In particular, what can be said about the prevailing means of characterization?

4) Point out the means that foreground the LF 'Fielding'. Identify and analyse the EMs and SDs that make up each of these means of foregrounding.

5) Which LFs of those you singled out in (1) are interconnected? How?

6) Analyse the dialogue part according to the scheme suggested in UNIT 1. How is Fielding's tension revealed in it?

7) Provide a complete analysis of the lexical field 'Fielding' according to the plan.

## NOT A PENNY MORE, NOT A PENNY LESS

*By Jeffrey Archer*

**Jeffrey Howard Archer, Baron Archer of Weston-super-Mare** (born 15 April 1940) is a best-selling English author and former politician whose political career ended with his conviction and subsequent imprisonment (2001–03) for perjury and perverting the course of justice.

Alongside his literary work, Archer was a Member of Parliament (1969–74), and deputy chairman of the Conservative Party (1985–86). He was made a life peer in 1992.

His books have sold at least 250 million copies worldwide.

*Not a Penny More, Not a Penny Less* is Archer's first novel. It narrates about the near-bankruptcy of four prosperous men and about their fight to regain the lost fortunes. Together, they work out a plan to steal their money back from Harvey Metcalfe (formerly Henryk Metelski), a Polish immigrant to the United States, who rose from messenger boy to corporate magnate, combining business skills with little loyalty and much ruthlessness.

Below is an extract from the beginning of the novel.

\* \* \*

Making a million legally has always been difficult. Making a million illegally has always been a little easier. Keeping a million when you have made it is perhaps the most difficult of all. Henryk Metelski was one of those rare men who managed all three. Even if



5 the million he had made legally came after the million he had made  
illegally, what put him a yard ahead of the others was that he managed  
to keep it all.

Henryk Metelski was born on the Lower East Side of New York  
on May 17, 1909, in a small room that already slept four children. He  
10 grew up through the Depression, believing in God and one meal a  
day. His parents were from Warsaw and had emigrated from Poland at  
the turn of the century. Henryk's father was a baker by trade and had  
soon found a job in New York, where immigrant Poles specialised in  
baking black rye bread and running small restaurants for their  
15 country-men. Both parents would have liked Henryk to have been an  
academic success, but he was never destined to become an  
outstanding pupil at his high school. His natural gifts lay elsewhere. A  
cunning, smart little boy, he was far more interested in the control of  
the underground school market in cigarettes and liquor than in stirring  
20 tales of the American Revolution and the Liberty Bell. Little Henryk  
never believed for one moment that the best things in life were free,  
and the pursuit of money and power came as naturally to him as the  
pursuit of a mouse to a cat.

When Henryk was a pimply and flourishing fourteen-year-old,  
25 his father died of what we now know to be cancer. His mother  
outlived her husband by no more than a few months, leaving the five  
children to fend for themselves. Henryk, like the other four, should  
have gone into the district orphanage for destitute children, but in the  
early 1920s it was not hard for a boy to disappear in New York—  
30 though it was harder to survive. Henryk became a master of survival,  
a schooling which was to prove very useful to him in later life.

He knocked around the Lower East Side with his belt tightened  
and his eyes open, shining shoes here, washing dishes there, always  
looking for an entrance to the maze at the heart of which lay wealth  
35 and prestige. His first chance came when his roommate Jan Pelnik, a  
messenger boy on the New York Stock Exchange, put himself  
temporarily out of action with a sausage garnished with salmonella.  
Henryk, deputed to report his friend's mishap to the Chief Messenger,  
upgraded food poisoning to tuberculosis, and talked himself into the  
40 ensuing vacancy. He then changed his room, donned a new uniform,  
lost a friend, and gained a job.

Most of the messages Henryk delivered during the early twenties  
read "Buy." Many of them were quickly acted upon, for this was a  
boom era. He watched men of little ability make fortunes while he  
45 remained nothing more than an observer. His instincts directed him

towards those individuals who made more money in a week on the Stock Exchange than he could hope to make in a lifetime on his salary.

50 He set about learning how to master the way the Stock Exchange operated, he listened to private conversations, opened sealed messages and found out which closed company reports to study. By the age of eighteen he had had four years' experience of Wall Street: four years which most messenger boys would have spent simply walking across crowded floors, delivering little pink of paper, four years which to Henryk Metelski were the equivalent of a Master's Degree from the Harvard Business School. He was not to know that one day he would lecture to that august body.

### **Tasks:**

1) Single out the lexical fields in the extract and enumerate them in a hierarchical order.

2) Pick out all the lexical units that enter into the LF 'Business'. Divide them into two groups: a) LUs having a direct connection with the theme, b) LUs connected with the theme through casual associations. Which of these units can be considered economic terms?

3) Comment on the connotations of the lexical units belonging to the theme 'Business'. Are these units mostly neutral or coloured? What effect is achieved as a result? In particular, what can be said about the prevailing means of characterization? What is the author's attitude to Henryk Metelski?

4) Point out the means that foreground the LF 'Business'. Identify and analyse the EMs and SDs that make up each of these means of foregrounding.

5) Find two contrasting sub-themes that are included into the LF 'Business', each consisting of at least 4 words or word-combinations. Comment on the connotations of these words and word-combinations.

6) Which LFs of those you singled out in (1) are interconnected? How?

## **IF NOBODY SPEAKS OF REMARKABLE THINGS**

*By Jon McGregor*

If you listen, you can hear it.

The city, it sings.

If you stand quietly, at the foot of a garden, in the middle of a

street, on the roof of a house.

5           It's clearest at night, when the sound cuts more sharply across  
the surface of things, when the song reaches out to a place inside you.

          It's a wordless song, for the most, but it's a song all the same,  
and nobody hearing it could doubt what it sings. And the song sings  
the loudest when you pick out each note.

10          The low soothing hum of air-conditioners, fanning out the heat  
and the smells of shops and cafes and offices across the city, winding  
up and winding down, long breaths layered upon each other, a lullaby  
hum for tired streets.

15          The rush of traffic still cutting across flyovers, even in the dark  
hours a constant crush of sound, tyres rolling across tarmac and en-  
gines rumbling, loose drains and manhole covers clack-clacking like  
cast-iron castanets.

20          Road-menders mending, choosing the hours of least interruption,  
rupturing the cold night air with drills and jack-hammers and pneu-  
matic pumps, hard-sweating beneath the fizzing hiss of floodlights,  
shouting to each other like drummers in rock bands calling out  
rhythms, pasting new skin on the veins of the city.

25          Restless machines in workshops and factories with endless  
shifts, turning and pumping and steaming and sparking, pressing and  
rolling and weaving and printing, the hard crash and ring and clatter  
lifting out of echo-high buildings and sifting into the night, an unau-  
dited product beside the paper and cloth and steel and bread, the  
packed and the bound and the made.

30          Lorries reversing, right round the arc of industrial parks, it seems  
every lorry in town is reversing, backing through gateways, easing up  
ramps, shrill-calling their presence while forklift trucks gas and prang  
around them, heaping and stacking and loading.

35          And all the alarms, calling for help, each district and quarter,  
each street and estate, each every way you turn has alarms going off,  
coming on, going off, coming on, a hammered ring like a lightning  
drum-roll, like a mesmeric bell-toll, the false and the real as loud as  
each other, crying their needs to the night like an understaffed or-  
phanage, babies waawaa-ing in darkened wards.

40          Sung sirens, sliding through the streets, streaking blue light from  
distress to distress, the slow wail weaving urgency through the darkest  
of the dark hours, a lament lifted high, held above the rooftops and  
fading away, lifted high, flashing past, fading away.

          And all these things sing constant, the machines and the sirens,  
the cars blurting hey and rumbling all headlong, the hoots and the

45 shouts and the hums and the crackles, all come together and rouse like  
 a choir, sinking and rising with the turn of the wind, the counter and  
 solo, the harmony humming expecting more voices.  
 So listen.  
 Listen, and there is more to hear.

50 The rattle of a dustbin lid knocked to the floor.  
 The scrawl and scratch of two hackle-raised cats.  
 The sudden thundercrash of bottles emptied into crates.  
 The slam-slam of car doors, the changing of gears, the hobbled  
 clip-clop of a slow walk home.

55 The rippled roll of shutters pulled down on late-night cafes, a  
 crackled voice crying street names for taxis, a loud scream that lingers  
 and cracks into laughter, a bang that might just be an old car backfir-  
 ing, a callbox calling out for an answer, a treeful of birds tricked into  
 morning, a whistle and a shout and a broken glass, a blare of soft mu-  
 sic and a blam of hard beats, a barking and yelling and singing and  
 crying and it all swells up all the rumbles and crashes and bangings  
 and slams, all the noise and the rush and the non-stop wonder of the  
 song of the city you can hear if you listen the song  
 and it stops

65 in some rare and sacred dead time, sandwiched between the late  
 sleepers and the early risers, there is a miracle of silence.  
 Everything has stopped.

### Questions and tasks:

1. Find lexical units belonging to the lexical field “Sounds” (connect-  
 ed both directly and through associations).
2. What lexical groups do these LU fall into (the sounds of the road,  
 the sounds of everyday life, alarms, the sounds produced by people etc.)?  
 What contextual connotations do words of each group acquire? How does  
 the atmosphere change throughout the description? Explain how the diversi-  
 ty of sounds contributes to the vivid description of the sound picture – “the  
 song of the city”. Comment on the extended metaphor “the song of the city”.
3. Find metaphors and similes in the text and explain their functions.  
 Pay attention to the numerous “music” metaphors and similes. Discuss the  
 cases of personification and their role in creating the image of a city as a  
 living being.
4. Talk about the emotive connotations of the words LUs belonging  
 to the theme “Sounds”.

5. Dwell on the role of phonetic expressive means and stylistic devices in the excerpt. Point out all cases of alliteration and onomatopoeia and comment on their functions.

6. Find cases of polysyndeton and say whether you think they add anything to the mood of the text.

7. Examine parallel structures and repetition as means of foregrounding of the theme “Sounds”.

8. What is the effect produced by nominative sentences? Incomplete sentences? Short paragraphs? Lack of punctuation marks?

9. How does the subordinate LF “Machinery” add to the effect? Can you notice any other lexical fields connected with the LF “Sounds”?

10. Provide a complete analysis of the lexical field “Sounds” according to the plan.

## ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO’S NEST

*By Ken Kesey*

5 The Big Nurse is able to set the wall clock at whatever speed she wants by just turning one of those dials in the steel door; she takes a notion to hurry things up, she turns the speed up, and those hands whip around that disk like spokes in a wheel. The scene in the picture-  
screen windows goes through rapid changes of light to show morning,  
noon, and night – throb off and on furiously with day and dark, and  
everybody is driven like mad to keep up with that passing of fake  
time; awful scramble of shaves and breakfasts and appointments and  
lunches and medications and ten minutes of night so you barely get  
10 your eyes closed before the dorm light’s screaming at you to get up  
and start the scramble again, go like a sonofabitch this way, going  
through the full schedule of a day maybe twenty times an hour, till the  
Big Nurse sees everybody is right up to the breaking point, and she  
slacks off on the throttle, eases off the pace on that clock-dial, like  
15 some kid been fooling with the moving-picture projection machine  
and finally got tired watching the film run at ten times its natural  
speed, got bored with all that silly scampering and insect squeak of  
talk and turned it back to normal.

20 She’s given to turning up the speed this way on days like, say,  
when you got somebody to visit you or when the VFW brings down a  
smoker show from Portland – times like that, times you’d like to hold  
and have stretch out. That’s when she speeds things up.

But generally it’s the other way, the slow way. She’ll turn that

25 dial to a dead stop and freeze the sun there on the screen so it don't  
move a scant hair for weeks, so not a leaf on a tree or a blade of grass  
in the pasture shimmers. The clock hands hang at two minutes to three  
and she's liable to let them hang there till we rust. You sit solid and  
you can't budge, you can't walk or move to relieve the strain of sit-  
ting, you can't swallow and you can't breathe. The only thing you can  
30 move is your eyes and there's nothing to see but petrified Acutes  
across the room waiting on one another to decide whose play it is. The  
old Chronic next to me has been dead six days, and he's rotting to the  
chair. And instead of fog sometimes she'll let a clear chemical gas in  
through the vents, and the whole ward is set solid when the gas  
35 changes into plastic.

Lord knows how long we hang this way.

Then, gradually, she'll ease the dial up a degree, and that's worse  
yet. I can take hanging dead still better'n I can take that sirup-slow hand  
of Scanlon across the room, taking three days to lay down a card. My  
40 lungs pull for the thick plastic air like getting it through a pinhole. I try  
to go to the latrine and I feel buried under a ton of sand, squeezing my  
bladder till green sparks flash and buzz across my forehead.

### Questions and tasks:

1. Enumerate the lexical units belonging to the theme "Time". Pay attention to the major lexical fields here – "Speeding up" and "Slowing down". State the type of connection between the LU (direct connection – derivatives, synonyms, antonyms or through associations),

2. Analyse the predominant emotive connotations (contextually acquired) of the LF "Time". Find words that have expressive connotations and comment on them.

3. Comment on the contrast between speeding up and slowing down as a means of foregrounding of the theme "Time".

4. Pick out cases of parallel structures, antithesis and polysyndeton. What effect do these devices produce when the author describes turning up the speed? Slowing the speed down?

5. How does alliteration contribute to the atmosphere of the excerpt?

6. Comment on the cases of hyperbole.

7. Examine how the writer uses machine imagery to describe the change of time flow.

8. Provide a complete analysis of the lexical field "Time" according to the plan.

## FORTINBRAS HAS ESCAPED!

*By Eric Malpass*

It was, without any doubt, the most wonderful moment of Gaylord's life. He took one last, rapturous look out of the window, just to make sure it wasn't all his imagination. Then he hitched up his pyjamas and dived, like an excited bee, for his parents' bedroom. 'Momma!' he cried. 'Poppa! There's floods'.

'There are floods', corrected Poppa. It wasn't that he was being unusually intelligent for six-thirty in the morning. It was just that correcting Gaylord's grammar was a reflex action. But Momma was already out of bed and gazing at the dawn countryside.

'Well, I'm not surprised,' she said. 'It sounded in the night as though every bath in the angels' ablutions had been left running.' But she was really rather shocked. She's known that a few bars of silver in the ridges of the fields would be enough to cause her son's excitement. But this was more serious. The snake-like river she knew so well was drowned in a sprawling lake. Trees stood trunkless. Hedges guarded streams, not lanes. The cattle gathered disconsolately on mounds, and gazed at the scene with dejection and suspicion.

It was serious. The crawling water was not a hundred yards from the house. And there must be a lot more to pour down from the hills. All last night the rain had come, not falling gently from the sky, but hissing and spitting with the venom and fury of machine-gun bullets. And even now, through the rain had stopped, the sky was a litter of dirty rags. Dawn was drab and menacing. 'Can I go and tell Grandpa?' asked Gaylord, jiggling at her side.

She nodded. 'Don't expect cries of wild delight', she warned. But Gaylord was already on his gladsome way. He burst into the thick darkness of Grandpa's room. 'Grandpa, we've got floods,' he cried.

Down in the blankets, something stirred. It was Grandpa, hoping that if he kept quiet it would go away.

'Shall I draw the curtains so that you can see?' Gaylord asked eagerly.

There was a vast upheaval in the bed, like some dinosaur struggling from the primeval ooze. "What the devil do you want?" demanded Grandpa, threshing desperately about under the pillows for his watch. For answer Gaylord dramatically flung back the curtains. 'Look', he cried.

Grandpa looked. 'Good God', he said. He began to climb urgently out of bed. Gaylord was well satisfied. He hurried downstairs to tell

Fortinbras. But Fortinbras heard the news with quiet acceptance. He  
40 simply watched Gaylord nervously with his pink little eyes, and went  
on washing his paws and smoothing his whiskers. It occurred to Gay-  
lord, not for the first time, that white mice are really interested only in  
their own rather circumscribed little world.

Schultz, on the other hand, received the news with unconcealed  
45 delight. He thumped his tail, he slobbered happily, he began to bark,  
while gazing fixedly at the young master with sappy adoration.

'Quiet, Schultz,' said Gaylord. For some unaccountable reason  
grown-ups didn't like a lot of noise at six-thirty in the morning.  
Schultz stopped barking, yawned with a noise like a creaking gate,  
50 and looked hopeful. Gaylord flung his arms round the ridiculous crea-  
ture's neck. 'If Grandpa builds an Ark,' he said, 'there'll have to be a  
lady Schultz to go in with you.' He held the animal closer. 'But I bet  
she won't be as nice as you, Schultz.'

It is doubtful whether Schultz, being a dog of very limited intel-  
55 ligence, understood any of this. But he wagged his tail, and licked the  
young master's face, and it never occurred to Gaylord for a moment  
that Schultz hadn't got it all as clear as a bell. His parents, Grandpa,  
Fortinbras, Schultz. Gaylord felt pleased with himself. He'd brought  
the glad news to the entire household promptly and efficiently. With  
60 the disappointing exception of Fortinbras, reactions had been emi-  
nently satisfactory. And it was not yet seven o'clock. A whole day of  
alarms and excursions, or so he dearly hoped, lay before him. Life  
was good.

### Tasks to the text:

1. The portion under analysis comprises initial pages of the book  
"Fortinbras has escaped!" and serves as exposition to the novel. Comment  
on the way TIME and PLACE of the action are introduced: are they appar-  
ent? Do they have to be deduced? What *can* be deduced from the excerpt?

2. Which clues does the text provide for deducing social position of  
the family (financial position, level of education, religion, etc)?

3. Using context, support or disprove the following statements:

4. Evaluative connotations of LF FLOOD are homogenous (strongly  
negative);

DELIGHT is a background theme in the narrative;

Mother is a person given to emotional outbursts.

5. Comment upon the sentence: *It was Grandpa, hoping that if he  
kept quiet it would go away:* does it provide any hint as to Grandfather's  
attitude to his grandson?



6. Similes characterize not only the object, but the speaker. Comment on: *And even now, through the rain had stopped, the sky was a litter of dirty rags*. Which character of the story might be associated with this particular simile?

7. Speak about convergence, that serves as means of foregrounding the LF FLOOD

8. Pick out LUs and phrases that might reflect the plane of the author in this excerpt.

9. What is the genre of the book? Which books/authors does it remind you of?

### UNIT III. Comments

#### Explanatory Notes

Comments is the type of analysis students try to present if they are not willing or incapable to cope with the two previously discussed variants.

«Comments», «to comment» is defined in dictionaries as «explanatory notes», «written or spoken opinion, explanations, or judgement made about»..., «to make a comment, give an opinion»... The very definition supposes a somewhat literary approach to the text. Students interpret it as paraphrasing the text, i.e. present a variant of retelling supplied – at best – with two or three linguistic/stylistic remarks.

A classical variant of Comments can be found in «Analytical Reading» and «Three Centuries of English Prose» by I. V. Arnold and N. Y. Diakonova (Leningrad, 1962, 1963, 1964).

Students, even if they possess the scope of information – literary and linguistic – are limited by time.

Here is an attempt to recommend a greatly clipped variant of Comments – which will answer the requirements or purposes (very down-to-earth, prosaic, pragmatic) of text interpretation in the graduation course: to demonstrate one's ability of speaking English sufficiently well and to prove one's ability recognize and assess some elements of the theoretical courses covered.

Two variants are suggested.

I. 1) «placing» the text – saying if it is a complete work or an excerpt (if it is an excerpt, speaking about its role in a bigger work).

2) Stating the genre (from the point of view of the plot and of the manner).

3) Introducing the author (using either facts or one's imagination) as to the period, country, degree of being prolific or not, the intended audience, interests.

- 4) Enumerating the facts becoming clear because of the text.
- 5) State the predominant impression, the mood the text produces.
- 6) Give the proofs, illustrations of how, due to what linguistic means it (the mood) becomes obvious (a prosaic recommendation: a) there should be 4-6 illustrations; b) do not begin retelling the text).
- 7) Make a conclusion. Usually any conclusion is connected with the beginning. It is possible to connect it with points 1, 2, 3.

II. The second variety of comments may include the same points 1, 2, 3. The next points would be different.

- 4) Give the gist of the text in 1-2 sentences (avoid names and details).
- 5) Divide the text into parts, single out dialogue or represented speech.
- 6) Deal with parts as a succession: show their interdependence, means of connection. From each part single out 1-2 linguistically interesting facts and speak of them, emphasizing their significance for the contents, gist, idea. Speaking of SDs keep to the scheme: a) the effect, b) quotation, c) name of the SD (in case you forget it, just «a word combination»). b) and c) are interchangeable. The «effect» would not let you forget the significance.
- 7) Make a conclusion (as in variant I).

The comments on the text «A Private View» belongs to the second variant. The difference is in the number of linguo-stylistic facts that are discussed. They are, of course, too many for a student. The comments is an illustration of what might (or should) attract one's attention. Reproducing this at the lesson a student will easily do the "desirable substraction".

## **A PRIVATE VIEW**

*By Anita Brookner*

**Text: see UNIT 1.**

### **Comments. Second Variant**

The novel "A Private View" is one of the latest works of a writer of considerable renown Anita Brookner who is a winner of several prizes.

Essentially belonging to the first half of the XXth century (b. 1928) she combines traditional form of psychological study with a certain incisiveness of the end of the century and manages to mingle depressing reminiscences of an elderly civil servant with shrewd observations not devoid of touches of irony.

Critics say that "A Private View" is the story of a man in emotional turmoil. ...In George Bland Brookner presents her most accomplished portrait of moral vulnerability. Modest, reliable and decorous throughout his life, George Bland faces retirement with uncertainty compounded by the early death of his friend Putnam, condemning him to unwonted solitude."

From the initial four paragraphs of the novel the reader learns that the place of the action is Nice – a famous place for a holiday abroad, supposed to pleasure the monied ones with its sunlight, spread and noise, its late autumn “out-of-season” charm. But Nice as such is of no importance: the choice – “an unwise one or no choice at all” – may be explained by Bland’s visiting it forty years ago. At present he does not perceive it as anything special – “Sitting in an expensive restaurant – as it might be Le Chanteclour”. Living there for only four days made him “cautious”. This is unexpected as unexpected is his desire “to get rid of some of his money”. If the second is perfectly achievable in a place like this, that which is most important for him – escaping the bitter thoughts about his deceased friend – proved impossible. With a touch of irony Brookner says that they “faithfully continued to attend” Bland in Nice. The combination – “faithfully ... to attend” – is surely an understatement. The fact might be rendered as “haunted”, or “persistently annoyed”, but a much milder form is chosen by the author, nevertheless concentrating the reader’s attention on those, in a way personified thoughts. The particular significance of thoughts, reminiscences becomes obvious due to various types of repetition of the word: simple lexical, through pronouns and synonymic repetition. The epithet “unwelcome” in the final strong position in the sentence is another instance of a peculiar, typical of elderly Britishers, preference for modesty of expression. This modesty sometimes results in sad humour: the fact of his friend’s death of cancer is presented in a much milder way – “inconveniently succumbed to cancer”.

As it is typical of many classics of realist tradition Brookner’s writing is a blend of the author’s narration and represented speech. The latter allows the reader to form his own opinion about the personage without the author pressing his/her own view. The thoughts and reminiscences come as though by themselves.

To tell the two planes – the plane of the author and that of the character – one from the other is sometimes almost impossible, both grammatically – past tense and a third person narration – and lexically, since the age and cultural level both of Brookner and her character are nearly identical. The only thing that might be of any help here is the emotional colouring of some passages. But the philosophical digression concerning the “sly tricks” played by time might be ascribed to both.

The first paragraph sounds pretty dry and matter-of-fact. But the next one is pathetic. The tragic effect is achieved by mentioning “the incongruity”, the ironic trick of fate: a man who had started poor, poverty affecting his thoughts and feelings – “imprinted on his mind and ... in his heart” – can, in the long last, spend his money freely and ... is unable to enjoy it. His friend’s death is persistently standing before his mind’s eye.

The theme “death” is quite obvious due to the presence of: “sorely missed”, “pain”, “death”, “skeletal hand”, “clutching”, “a series of God Well cards”, “trusted in life right up to the end”, “the eyes had closed for ever”.

For Bland these weeks were “not easy”, “almost unbearable” – the modesty of expression, the desire not to lay stress on emotions are here again.

The part devoted to the friend’s closeness and perfect understanding is given in the form of represented speech easily recognizable because of the presence of the introductory – “the thought” – and lexically. The words evidently belonging to the character’s vocabulary are obvious. The fact of being poor is treated rather contemptuously – “shabby beginnings” – and preferably not alluded to later on – “their gleeful rueful secret”. The epithets are not quite antonymous, so the contribution is not oxymoronic. The second epithet – “rueful” = expressing mock compassion – is further on made clear by the text. The friends having slowly achieved – “affluence” – note the limiting attribute – and able to afford club membership and dinners at better hotels “conjure” their past mentioning evidently the cheapest brands of wines. Anaphoric repetition of “Both” combined with parallel constructions stresses their affinity. Brookner is a fine psychologist: people who had achieved their goal – “middle class affluence” – enjoy recollecting their less fortunate past. Equally psychologically true is the attitude of people originally belonging to lower walks of life to the virtues of middle class. Remarkable is the evolution: from “misgiving”, “suspicion”, “applauding them in his friend” – to “charity”, “benevolence”, and “fair-mindedness that had come to them quite naturally” – as they were becoming richer. It should be noted though that the last two virtues are limited by attributes “judicious” and “hard won”. Evidently charity is not an exclusively middle-class virtue.

The final sentence of the portion together with “to take stock” frames the text. Though it is but a part of a bigger work, it might be taken as a psychological story with the typical static character and open-plot structure.

By way of summing up it is necessary to repeat that Anita Brookner is a true follower in the best realist tradition in English literature, a writer with a sharp eye for detail and keen psychologism. There is something in her manner resembling both Katherine Mansfield and John Galsworthy.

## A KISS BEFORE DYING

*By Ira Levin*  
2004

### Two

He was born in Menasset, on the outskirts of Fall River, Massachusetts; the only child of a father who was an oiler in one of the Fall River textile mills and a mother who sometimes had to take in sewing

5 when the money ran low. They were of English extraction with some  
French intermixed along the way, and they lived in a neighbourhood  
populated largely by Portuguese. His father found no reason to be  
bothered by this, but his mother did. She was a bitter and unhappy  
woman who had married young, expecting her husband to make more  
of himself than a mere oiler.

10 At an early age he became conscious of his good looks. On Sun-  
days guests would come and exclaim over him – the blondness of his  
hair, the clear blue of his eyes – but his father was always there, shaking  
his head admonishingly at the guests. His parents argued a great deal,  
usually over the time and money his mother devoted to dressing him.

15 Because his mother had never encouraged him to play with the  
children of the neighbourhood, his first few days at school were an  
agony of insecurity. He was suddenly an anonymous member of a  
large group of boys, some of whom made fun of the perfection of his  
clothes had the obvious care he took to avoid the puddles in the  
20 school yard. One day, when he could bear it no longer, he went up to  
the ringleader of the hazers had spat on his shoes. The ensuing fight  
was brief but wild, and at the end of it he had the ringleader flat on his  
back and was kneeling on his chest, banging his head against the  
ground again and again. A teacher came running and broke up the  
25 fight. After that, everything was all right. Eventually he accepted the  
ringleader as one of his friends.

His marks in school were good, which made his mother glow  
and even won reluctant praise from his father. His marks became still  
better when he started sitting next to an unattractive but brilliant girl  
30 who was so beholden to him for some awkward cloakroom kisses that  
she neglected to cover her paper during examinations.

His school-days were the happiest of his life; the girls liked him  
for his looks and charm; the teachers liked him because he was polite  
and attentive, nodding when they stated important facts, smiling when  
35 they attempted jokes; and to the boys he showed his dislike of both  
girls and teachers just enough so that they liked him too. At home, he  
was a god. His father finally gave in and joined his mother in deferent  
admiration.

40 When he started dating, it was with the girls from the better part  
of the town. His parents argued again, over his allowance and the  
amount of money spent on his clothes. The arguments were short  
though, his father only sparring half-heartedly. His mother began to  
talk about his marrying a rich man's daughter. She only said it joking-  
ly, of course, but she said it more than once.

45 He was president of his senior class in high school and was  
graduated with the third highest average and honours in mathematics  
and science. In the school year-book he was named the best dancer,  
the most popular and the most likely to succeed. His parents gave a  
party for him which was attended by many young people from the  
50 better part of the town.

Two weeks later he was drafted.

### **Comments. First Variant**

1. The text belongs to the initial portion (not the very beginning) of a novel or a long-short story.

2. The genre of the book (or a story) is, judging by the title, a work of a detective fiction with a tingle of melodrama. Evidently it includes an unhappy love story. The literary trend, if it is possible to assess it by a comparatively short text is either realism or naturalism.

3. The author is surely an American (but the extraction is not certain), modern, judging by the time of publication. Most probably he is well-read in American short stories (Theodore Dreiser, Sherwood Anderson). Since the text reads well, is a detective cum love story, the author might be pretty prolific. He is not a classic with the aspirations of a classic, but he has a style of his own: terse, dry and suggestive.

4. The text is dedicated to growing and maturing of a handsome man who inherited his mother's ambitions and snobbishness and who is ready not to remain something as insignificant as his father. The part is but a start of a career of a hard, calculating man. Probably he will turn out the villain of the story.

5. The predominant impression as apprehension. Nothing is stated (or emphasized) definitely but some details are suggestive enough (understanding personal beauty, the cruelty in the fight, becoming a ring-leader, using an unattractive girl etc.)

6. a) The character is an anonymous "he". This only shows the attitude – negative – of the authoress.

b) The mother is a "bitter and unhappy" woman because of the frustration of her youthful hopes: "a mere oiler" sounds contemptuous.

Her snobbishness is stressed by her attitude to the Portuguese (not shared by his husband) and by not encouraging the son to play with them.

c) The selfish character of the boy is clear in his using "an unattractive girl".

d) His hypocrisy is clear in the part describing his school-days. The repetition of the verb "like" and parallel structures make it clear.

e) The repeated mention of “the better part of the town” and his mother’s repeated joke about his eventually marrying a rich man’s daughter is another means of stressing the snobbishness.

f) The abundance of superlatives in the last paragraph of the text shows his success and realization of ambitions hopes.

In conclusion it is possible to suppose that the part “One” was devoted to the prospective victim of this worthy son of his mother. Should anyone, by any chance be in the way of “His” success, the outcome is clear.

The text surely belongs to an American author if only because the geographical names, mention of different nationalities and the use of “hazers” (meaning “bullies”).

Tasks: 1) Comment upon the sentences containing: “...world come”, “admonishingly”, “anonymous”, “again and again”, “cloakroom kisses”, “sparring”.

## THE TIME OF OUR SINGING

*R. Powers*

### December 1961

In some empty hall, my brother is still singing. His voice hasn’t dampened yet. Not altogether. The rooms where he sang still hold an impression, their walls dimpled with his sound, awaiting some future phonograph capable of replaying them.

5 My brother Jonah stands fixed, leaning against a piano. He’s just twenty. The sixties have only begun.

The country still dozes in its last pretended innocence. No one has heard of Jonah Strom but our family, what’s left of it. We’ve come to Durham, North Carolina, the old music building at Duke. He has  
10 made it to the finals of a national vocal competition he’ll later deny ever having entered. Jonah stands alone, just right of center stage. My brother towers in place, listing a little, backing up into the crook of the grand piano, his only safety. He curls forward, the scroll on a reticent cello. Left hand steadies him against the piano edge, while right  
15 hand cups in front of him, holding some letter, now oddly lost. He grins at the odds against being here, breathes in, and sings.

One moment, the Erl-King is hunched on my brother’s shoulder, whispering a blessed death. In the next, a trapdoor opens up in the air and my brother is elsewhere, teasing out Dowland of all things, a bit  
20 of ravishing sass for this stunned lieder crowd, who can’t grasp the web that slips over them: Time stands still with gazing on her face, Stand still and gaze for minutes, hours, and years to her give place.

All other things shall change, but she remains the same,  
Till heavens changed have their course and time hath lost his name.

25 Two stanzas, and his tune is done. Silence hangs over the hall. It drifts  
above the seats like a balloon across the horizon. For two downbeats,  
even breathing is a crime. Then there's no surviving this surprise ex-  
cept by applauding it away. The noisy gratitude of hands starts time  
up again, sending the dart to its target and my brother on to the things

30 that will finish him.  
This is how I see him, although he'll live another third of a century.  
This is the moment when the world first finds him out, the night I hear  
where his voice is headed. I'm up onstage, too, at the battered Stein-  
way with its caramel action. I accompany him, trying to keep up, try-  
ing not to listen to that siren voice that says, Stop your fingers, crash

35 your boat on the reef of keys, and die in peace.  
Though I make no fatal fumbles, that night is not my proudest as a  
musician. After the concert, I'll ask my brother again to let me go, to  
find an accompanist who can do him justice. And again he'll refuse.

40 "I already have one, Joey."  
I'm there, up onstage with him. But at the same time, I'm down in the  
hall, in the place I always sit at concerts: eight rows back, just inside  
the left aisle. I sit where I can see my own fingers moving, where I  
can study my brother's face – close enough to see everything, but far

45 enough to survive seeing.  
Stage fright ought to paralyze us. Backstage is a single bleeding ulcer.  
Performers who've spent their whole youth training for this moment  
now prepare to spend their old age explaining why it didn't go as  
planned. The hall fills with venom and envy, families who've traveled

50 hundreds of miles to see their lives' pride reduced to runner-up. My  
brother alone is fearless. He has already paid. This public contest has  
nothing to do with music. Music means those years of harmonizing  
together, still in the shell of our family, before that shell broke open  
and burned. Jonah glides through the backstage fright, the dressing

55 rooms full of well-bred nausea, on a cloud, as though through a dress  
rehearsal for a performance already canceled. Onstage, against this  
sea of panic, his calm electrifies. The drape of his hand on the piano's  
black enamel ravishes his listeners, the essence of his sound before he  
even makes one.

60 I see him on this night of his first open triumph, from four decades on.  
He still has that softness around his eyes that later life will crack and  
line. His jaw quakes a little on Dowland's quarter notes, but the notes  
do not. He drops his head toward his right shoulder as he lifts to the



high C, shrinking from his entranced listeners. The face shudders, a  
65 look only I can see, from my perch behind the piano. The broken-  
ridged bridge of his nose, his bruised brown lips, the two bumps of  
bone riding his eyes: almost my own face, but keener, a year older, a  
shade lighter. That breakaway shade: the public record of our family's  
private crime.

70 My brother sings to save the good and make the wicked take their  
own lives. At twenty, he's already intimate with both. This is the  
source of his resonance, the sound that holds his audience stilled for a  
few stopped seconds before they can bring themselves to clap. In the  
soar of that voice, they hear the rift it floats over.

75 The year is a snowy black-and-white signal coming in on rabbit ears.  
The world of our childhood – the A-rationing, radio-fed world pitched  
in that final war against evil – falls away into a Kodak tableau. A man  
has flown in space. Astronomers pick up pulses from starlike objects.  
Across the globe, the United States draws to an inside straight. Ber-  
80 lin's cinder box is ready to flash at any moment. Southeast Asia  
smolders, nothing but a curl of smoke coming from the banana leaves.  
At home, a rash of babies piles up behind the viewing glass of mater-  
nity hospitals from Bar Harbor to San Diego. Our hatless boy presi-  
dent plays touch football on the White House lawn. The continent is  
85 awash in spies, beatniks, and major appliances. Montgomery hits the  
fifth year of an impasse that won't occur to me until five more have  
passed. And seven hundred unsuspecting people in Durham, North  
Carolina, disappear, lulled into the granite mountainside opened by  
Jonah's sound.

### **Questions and tasks:**

1. Examine the facts of Jonah's life (his age, occupation, family).  
What method of characterization is used in the text? Are there examples of  
direct description?

2. What information can be drawn about the narrator and the rela-  
tionship between the brothers? Identify the mode of narration.

3. What linguistic means create a nostalgic mood in the excerpt?

4. Comment on the atmosphere of tension and cut-throat competition  
reigning backstage. What metaphors convey the tension?

5. Discuss the metaphors, similes and hyperboles that help the author  
to recreate the reaction of the audience to Jonah's performance.

6. Discuss the role of syntactical expressive means and stylistic de-  
vices in the excerpt.

7. In the text there are some hints about a future calamity and some tragic events that have already taken place. Find these references and explain their implications.

8. By careful reference to the last paragraph comment on the historical setting of the story. Explain whether you think it adds anything to the mood of the excerpt. Find sentences in other paragraphs that describe the historical background. How is it connected with the personal story of the characters?

9. Provide a complete analysis of the excerpt according to the plan.

## **FORTINBRAS HAS ESCAPED!**

*By Eric Malpass*

5 It was, without any doubt, the most wonderful moment of Gaylord's life. He took one last, rapturous look out of the window, just to make sure it wasn't all his imagination. Then he hitched up his pyjamas and dived, like an excited bee, for his parents' bedroom. 'Momma!' he cried. 'Poppa! There's floods'.

'There are floods', corrected Poppa. It wasn't that he was being unusually intelligent for six-thirty in the morning. It was just that correcting Gaylord's grammar was a reflex action. But Momma was already out of bed and gazing at the dawn countryside.

10 'Well, I'm not surprised,' she said. 'It sounded in the night as though every bath in the angels' ablutions had been left running.' But she was really rather shocked. She's known that a few bars of silver in the ridges of the fields would be enough to cause her son's excitement. But this was more serious. The snake-like river she knew so well was  
15 drowned in a sprawling lake. Trees stood trunkless. Hedges guarded streams, not lanes. The cattle gathered disconsolately on mounds, and gazed at the scene with dejection and suspicion.

It was serious. The crawling water was not a hundred yards from the house. And there must be a lot more to pour down from the hills.  
20 All last night the rain had come, not falling gently from the sky, but hissing and spitting with the venom and fury of machine-gun bullets. And even now, through the rain had stopped, the sky was a litter of dirty rags. Dawn was drab and menacing. 'Can I go and tell Grandpa?' asked Gaylord, jiggling at her side.

25 She nodded. 'Don't expect cries of wild delight', she warned. But Gaylord was already on his gladsome way. He burst into the thick darkness of Grandpa's room. 'Grandpa, we've got floods,' he cried.

Down in the blankets, something stirred. It was Grandpa, hoping

that if he kept quiet it would go away.

30 'Shall I draw the curtains so that you can see?' Gaylord asked eagerly.

There was a vast upheaval in the bed, like some dinosaur struggling from the primeval ooze. "What the devil do you want?" demanded Grandpa, threshing desperately about under the pillows for his watch. For answer Gaylord dramatically flung back the curtains. 35 'Look', he cried.

Grandpa looked. 'Good God', he said. He began to climb urgently out of bed. Gaylord was well satisfied. He hurried downstairs to tell Fortinbras. But Fortinbras heard the news with quiet acceptance. He 40 simply watched Gaylord nervously with his pink little eyes, and went on washing his paws and smoothing his whiskers. It occurred to Gaylord, not for the first time, that white mice are really interested only in their own rather circumscribed little world.

Schultz, on the other hand, received the news with unconcealed 45 delight. He thumped his tail, he slobbered happily, he began to bark, while gazing fixedly at the young master with sappy adoration.

'Quiet, Schultz,' said Gaylord. For some unaccountable reason grown-ups didn't like a lot of noise at six-thirty in the morning. Schultz stopped barking, yawned with a noise like a creaking gate, 50 and looked hopeful. Gaylord flung his arms round the ridiculous creature's neck. 'If Grandpa builds an Ark,' he said, 'there'll have to be a lady Schultz to go in with you.' He held the animal closer. 'But I bet she won't be as nice as you, Schultz.'

It is doubtful whether Schultz, being a dog of very limited intelligence, understood any of this. But he wagged his tail, and licked the 55 young master's face, and it never occurred to Gaylord for a moment that Schultz hadn't got it all as clear as a bell. His parents, Grandpa, Fortinbras, Schultz. Gaylord felt pleased with himself. He'd brought the glad news to the entire household promptly and efficiently. With the 60 disappointing exception of Fortinbras, reactions had been eminently satisfactory. And it was not yet seven o'clock. A whole day of alarms and excursions, or so he dearly hoped, lay before him. Life was good.

### Questions and tasks:

1. Pick out lexical units expressing the boy's emotions, comment on their connotations.
2. Find verbs that describe Gaylord's movements. What semantic component do they have in common and how does it reflect the boy's emotional state?

3. Comment on the similes in the text. How effectively do you think they reflect the simplicity of the child's world?
4. Focus on the short interior monologue of the boy in the last paragraph. Comment on the sentence structure and word choice. Pay attention to the words that acquire contextual connotations when used by the boy.
5. Find instances of intentionally sophisticated grammar and lexis introduced into the description of the child's world. What effect is achieved?
6. Comment on the grown-ups' perception of the events. What similes, metaphors and epithets describe their reaction? Compare it with the child's emotions.
7. What does the reference to the Ark tell us about the boy and the family?
8. Are there any other means of creating a humorous effect?
9. Provide a complete analysis of the excerpt according to the plan.

## THE SCARLATTI INHERITANCE

*By Robert Ludlum*

ROBERT LUDLUM was a hugely successful thriller writer; his 23 books were sold in some 210 million copies. His publishers claimed for him the title of the world's best-selling writer. Ludlum's plots invariably revolved around a fantastic global conspiracy that pointed to corruption in high places, his preferred villains being neo-Nazis, ruthless industrial cartels and rogue intelligence agencies. 'The Bourne Identity' is probably the best known of them.

Though Ludlum's publications attracted critical scorn, they undoubtedly kept readers gripped. *The Scarlatti Inheritance* is Robert Ludlum's debut novel. It's a fictional account of the son of an Italian immigrant and his quest for power. The book begins with the basic premise that Ulster Scarlett has taken the nom de guerre of Heinrich Kroeger and is an important part of Nazi Germany and Hitler's rise to power. When "Scarlatti" was published – with the interesting premise that an international group of money men joined together to back the growing Nazi party for profit - the Pentagon felt obliged to deny it.

\* \* \*

5 A gray-haired man of sixty-three sat at his desk looking out the window over K Street in Washington. His name was Benjamin Reynolds and in two years he would retire. Until that time, however, he was responsible for the functions of an innocuous-sounding agency attached to the Department of the Interior. The agency was titled Field Services and Accounting. To less than a hundred people, it was known simply as Group Twenty.

10 The agency got its shortened name from its origins: a group of twenty field accountants sent out by Interior to look into the growing conflicts of interest between those politicians allocating federal funds and those of the electorate receiving them. With America's entry into

the war and the overnight industrial expansion necessary to sustain the war effort Group Twenty became an overworked unit.

15 The awarding of munitions and armament contracts to businesses throughout the country demanded an around-the-clock scrutiny beyond the capabilities of the limited number of field accountants. However, rather than expand the silent agency, it was decided to use it only in the most sensitive – or embarrassing – areas. There were a sufficient number of these. And the field accountants were specialists.

20 After the war there was talk of disbanding Group Twenty, but each time such action was considered problems arose that required its talents. Generally they were problems involving highly placed public servants who dipped a bit too greedily into the public jewel box. But in isolated cases Group Twenty assumed duties shunned by other departments for any number of reasons.

25 Such as the Treasury Department's reluctance to pursue a vapor called Scarlatti.

'Why, Glover' asked the gray haired man. "The question is why? Assuming there's an ounce of prosecutable proof, why?-

30 "Why does anyone break a law?" A man roughly ten years younger than Reynolds answered him, with another question "For profit. And there's a lot of profit in Prohibition."

35 "No! God damn it to hell, no!" Reynolds spun around in his chair and slammed his pipe on the desk blotter. "You're wrong. This Scarlatti has more money than our combined imaginations can conceive of. It's like saying the Mellons are going to open a bookmaking parlor in Philadelphia. It doesn't make sense. . . . Join me in a drink.

It was after five and Group Twenty's staff was gone for the day. Only the man named Glover and Ben Reynolds remained.

40 "You shock me, Ben," Glover said with a grin.

"Then to hell with you. I'll save it for myself."

"You do that and I'll turn you in... Good stuff?"

"Right off the boat from old Blighty, they tell me." Reynolds took a leather-bound flask out of his top drawer and two water glasses from a desk tray and poured.

45 "If you rule out profits, what the devil have you got left, Ben?"

"Damned if I know," replied the older man, drinking.

"What are you going to do? I gather no one else wants to do anything."

"Yes, siree! That is no, siree! Nobody wants to touch this. . . .

50 Oh, they'll go after Mr. Smith and Mr. Jones with a vengeance. They'll prosecute the hell out of some poor slob in East Orange, New

Jersey, with a case in his basement But not this one!"

"You lost me, Ben."

55 This is the Scarlatti Industries. This is big, powerful friends on the Hill. Remember, Treasury needs money, too. It gets it up there."

"What do you want to do, Ben?"

"I want to find out why the mammoth's tusk is plunging into bird feed."

"How?"

60 "With Canfield. He's partial to bird feed himself, the poor son of a bitch."

65 "He's a good man, Ben." Glover did not like the sound of Reynolds's invective. He liked Matthew Canfield. He thought he was talented, quick. There but for the money to complete an education was a young man with a future. Too good for government service. A lot better than either of them. . . . Well, better than himself, better than a man named Glover who didn't care anymore. There weren't many people better than Reynolds.

70 Benjamin Reynolds looked up at his subordinate. He seemed to be reading his thoughts. "Yes, he's a good man. . . . He's in Chicago. Go out and call him. His routing must be somewhere."

"I have it in my desk."

"Then get him in here by tomorrow night."

### Tasks to the text:

1. Divide the excerpt into parts and give a 1-2 sentence summary of each part.
2. Give a very brief characteristic of the historic period which is part of the setting.
3. Which stereotypes about American life are supported/refuted in this excerpt?
4. Using the context, prove or disprove the following statements:
  - The excerpt introduces BIG MONEY as one more protagonist;
  - The relations of Reynolds and Glover are strained, the two men are hardly on friendly terms;
  - Group 20 is a powerful organization
5. Find an instance of represented speech in the text and comment on it (does it provide more or less credibility to the information provided?)
6. Explain what is *friends on the Hill*, *old Blighty*; *I'll turn you in*: what extra clues do they provide for the narrative?
7. Comment on: a) *Generally they were problems involving highly placed public servants who dipped a bit too greedily into the public jewel*

- box. b) *Such as the Treasury's reluctance to pursue a vapor called Scarlati.* c) *"I want to find out why the mammoth's tusk is plunging into bird feed."* d) *Too good for government service.* (stylistic peculiarities, general effect)
8. Define the genre of the book; say which books/films it reminds you of.

## BEFORE/AFTER

*By Mary McCluskey*

In an instant, a life can divide into Before and After. A phone call, a news flash can do it. Invariably, something remains as a reminder. For Joseph, a colleague at Chloe's office, it is Bach playing on the stereo before the screech of brakes, the crunch of metal, an ambulance, the hospital.

"I hear Bach now and think: oh, yes, I used to love that. Before. In my other life."

For Chloe's sister, Anna, it is a body shampoo. She told Chloe how the shower was hot and steam clouded the glass. She stood in the warm fog, then sniffed the fresh, pine scent of the new Badedas body shampoo. That clean scent of mountains and good health. Just seconds later, her fingers, tentative, pressed back and forth, smoothing the skin as her brain bristled indignantly. It can't be! But it is, yes, it is. I think it is. A lump.

And after – doctors, visits, surgery, chemo, hair loss, pain.

Chloe will be reminded of these conversations in four minutes. Right now she chooses a pretty china cup, Staffordshire, patterned with red roses. She pokes the tea bag with a spoon while she pours in the boiling water and then decides to start the laundry while the tea steeps. Dan's shirts are already loaded in the washer but she pulls them out anyway, to shake them. She is nervous that a stray ballpoint might lie forgotten in a pocket, leave a Caspian Sea of navy ink never to be bleached away. As she shakes the shirt, something flies out, floats up like confetti to land on the lid of the dryer. She studies, frowning, a pair of ticket stubs for a New York City theatre.

She is puzzled at first. Then remembers, of course, the business conference in New York City. Seven days had stretched to ten; Dan had been exhausted when he came home, complaining about the demands of clients, the tedious conversation of his colleagues. Chloe studies these tickets with a sense of unreality, as if she is watching herself on a movie set, frowning for the camera. But her mind is seething with questions. Dan had not told her of this theatre visit. Off-

Broadway does not seem appropriate, somehow. Hedda Gabler is an odd choice for an evening with a client. Or a colleague.

35 <2>

With cold clarity, Chloe sees that these stubs will lead to questions that she does not want to ask, but must ask. That will lead to answers she does not want to hear. Later, a Decree Absolute, loneliness.

40 Chloe knows as she stirs her tea, stirs what is now gungy, tarry soup, that she is already in the after. She throws the tea away, gets a fresh teabag, starts over. The tea, though freshly brewed, still tastes thick and stale.

45 She understands now, that she has moved in space, slid towards some other life. She has crossed that invisible but solid line. Lipton's Orange Pekoe has joined Bach's St. Matthew's Passion and Badedas with Original Scent, to be forever in the before. And there is no going back.

## Tasks

### 1. Make sure you know the meaning of the following words and word combinations.

a news flash, screech, crunch, tentative (adj.), to bristle, to steep, Decree Absolute, movie set, to seethe, off-Broadway, gungy, tarry, stale, start over.

### 2. Provide information about the names:

Staffordshire, Hedda Gabler, St. Matthew's Passion.

### 3. Answer the questions.

1. Who is the main character of the story? Draw her character sketch.
2. Where does the action take place?
3. Who are Joseph, Anna, Chloe, Dan?
4. How do you understand the words '*before*', '*after*' in this story?

What do they stand for?

5. What is the meaning of the phrase '*the other life*'?

6. What were the 'before/after' moments associated with for the people described in the story? What will *the other life* be associated with for the main character?

7. What are the questions the main character does not want to ask?

What are the answers she does not want to hear?

8. What does '*a Decree Absolute*' really mean in the situation?

9. What is the ending of the story? Can you call it pessimistic?

10. Has the main character made a decision?



11. Have you ever experienced similar tragic event/events? Are there any associations in your mind that you will never forget? How did you react? How did you cope with it?

**4. Identify the trope(s) and speak about the effect they produced on the reader.**

1. ...a life can divide into Before and After.
2. "I hear Bach now and think: oh, yes, I used to love that. Before. In my other life".
3. ...as her brain bristled indignantly.
4. It can't be! But it is, yes, it is. I think it is. A lump.
5. ...leave a Caspian Sea of navy ink never to be bleached away...
6. ...something flies out, floats up like confetti to land on the lid of the dryer.
7. Chloe knows as she stirs her tea, stirs what is now gungy, tarry soup, that she is already in the after.
8. Lipton's Orange Pekoe has joined Bach's St. Matthew's Passion and Badedas with Original Scent, to be forever in the before.

**5. Speak about the narration, the mood, the structure of the story. Write its summary.**

**6. Find information about the author. Prepare a stylistic analysis of the story.**

## **THE STORY OF AN HOUR**

*By Kate Chopin*

Knowing that Mrs. Mallard was afflicted with a heart trouble, great care was taken to break to her as gently as possible the news of her husband's death.

5 It was her sister Josephine who told her, in broken sentences; veiled hints that revealed in half concealing. Her husband's friend Richards was there, too, near her. It was he who had been in the newspaper office when intelligence of the railroad disaster was received, with Brently Mallard's name leading the list of "killed." He had only taken the time to assure himself of its truth by a second telegram, and had hastened to forestall any less careful, less tender friend in bearing the sad message.

10 She did not hear the story as many women have heard the same, with a paralyzed inability to accept its significance. She wept at once,

15 with sudden, wild abandonment, in her sister's arms. When **the storm of grief had spent itself** she went away to her room alone. She would have no one follow her.

There stood, facing the open window, **a comfortable, roomy armchair**. Into this **she sank**, pressed down by **a physical exhaustion that haunted her body and seemed to reach into her soul**.

20 She could see in the open square before her house the tops of trees that were all aquiver with the new spring life. The delicious breath of rain was in the air. In the street below a peddler was crying his wares. The notes of a distant song which some one was singing reached her faintly, and countless sparrows were twittering in the eaves. There were patches of blue sky showing here and there through the clouds that had met and piled one above the other in the west facing her window.

25 She sat with her head thrown back upon the cushion of the chair, quite motionless, except when a sob came up into her throat and shook her, as **a child who has cried itself to sleep continues to sob in its dreams**.

30 She was young, with a fair, calm face, **whose lines bespoke repression** and even a certain strength. But now there was a dull stare in her eyes, whose gaze was fixed away off yonder on one of those patches of blue sky. It was not a glance of reflection, but rather indicated a suspension of intelligent thought.

35 There was something coming to her and she was waiting for it, fearfully. What was it? She did not know; it was too subtle and elusive to name. But **she felt it, creeping out of the sky**, reaching toward her through the sounds, the scents, the color that filled the air.

40 Now her bosom rose and fell tumultuously. She was beginning to recognize this thing that was approaching to possess her, and she was striving to beat it back with her will – as powerless as her two white slender hands would have been. When she abandoned herself **a little whispered word escaped** her slightly parted lips. She said it over and over under her breath: "free, free, free!" The vacant stare and the look of terror that had followed it went from her eyes. They stayed keen and bright. Her pulses beat fast, and **the coursing blood warmed and relaxed every inch of her body**. She did not stop to ask if it were or were not **a monstrous joy** that held her. A clear and exalted perception enabled her to dismiss the suggestion as trivial.

50 She knew that she would weep again when she saw the kind, tender hands folded in death; the face that had never looked save with love upon her, fixed and gray and dead. But **she saw** beyond that bit-

55 ter moment a **long procession of years to come that would belong**  
to her absolutely. And she opened and spread her arms out to  
them in welcome. There would be no one to live for her during those  
coming years; she would live for herself. **There would be no power-**  
60 **ful will bending hers** in that blind persistence with which men and  
women believe they have a right to impose a private will upon a fel-  
low-creature. **A kind intention or a cruel intention made the act**  
**seem no less a crime as she looked upon it in that brief moment of**  
**illumination.**

**And yet she had loved him – sometimes.** Often she had not.  
65 What did it matter! What could love, the unsolved mystery, count for  
in face of this possession of self-assertion which she suddenly recog-  
nized as the strongest impulse of her being!

"Free! Body and soul free!" she kept whispering.

Josephine was kneeling before the closed door with her lips to  
70 the keyhole, imploring for admission. "Louise, open the door! I beg,  
open the door – you will make yourself ill. What are you doing,  
Louise? For heaven's sake open the door."

"Go away. I am not making myself ill." No; **she was drinking in**  
**a very elixir of life through that open window.** Her fancy was run-  
75 ning riot along those days ahead of her. Spring days, and summer  
days, and all sorts of days that would be her own. She breathed a  
quick prayer that life might be long. It was only yesterday she had  
thought with a shudder that life might be long.

She arose at length and opened the door to her sister's importuni-  
80 ties. There was a feverish triumph in her eyes, and she carried herself  
unwittingly **like a goddess of Victory.** She clasped her sister's waist,  
and together they descended the stairs. Richards stood waiting for  
them at the bottom.

Someone was opening the front door with a latchkey. It was  
85 Brently Mallard who entered, a little travel-stained, composedly carry-  
ing his grip-sack and umbrella. He had been far from the scene of  
the accident, and did not even know there had been one. He stood  
amazed at Josephine's piercing cry; at Richards' quick motion to  
screen him from the view of his wife.

90 But Richards was too late.

When the doctors came they said she had died of heart disease –  
of the joy that kills.

### **Tasks**

1. Find information about the author – **Kate Chopin (1851 – 1904).**



**2. When was the short story written?**

**3. How do you understand the title of the story?**

**Study the picture.**



**Which episode is depicted?**

**Is it important for the narration?**

1. Who are the main characters? How are they portrayed? How do they communicate with each other?
2. What is the structure of the story? Is it unusual, trivial, or other?
3. How does the plot develop?
4. What are the topics touched upon in the story?

5. Are there any symbols? How do they relate to the plot and the characters?

6. Find cases of irony. Explain the meaning of the phrase “the joy that kills”.

7. Name the devices that are in bold type. Dwell on the effect of their employment.

8. Find and discuss other linguistic means that you consider necessary for the analysis of this text.

9. What is the message of the story?

**Sum up your observations.**

## THE BLIND ASSASSIN Text 1

*By Margaret Atwood*

**Margaret Eleanor Atwood** (born November 18, 1939) is a Canadian poet, novelist, literary critic, essayist, and environmental activist. She is among the most-honoured authors of fiction in recent history. While she is best known for her work as a novelist, she is also a poet, having published 15 books of poetry to date. Many of her poems have been inspired by myths and fairy tales, which have been interests of hers from an early age.

*The Blind Assassin* is her award-winning, bestselling novel. Set in Canada, it is narrated from the present day, referring back to events that span the twentieth century. Time Magazine named it the best novel of 2000 and included it in its list of the 100 greatest English-language novels since 1923.

The novel centres on the protagonist, Iris Chase, and her sister Laura, who committed suicide shortly after the Second World War ended. Iris, now an old woman, recalls the events and relationships of her childhood, youth and middle age, as well as her unhappy marriage to Richard Griffen, a rival of her industrialist father. Interwoven into the novel is a story within a story, a secret affair attributed to Laura and published by Iris about Alex Thomas, a politically radical author of pulp science fiction who has an ambiguous relationship with the sisters.

The book is set in the fictional Ontario town of Port Ticonderoga and in the Toronto of the 1930s and 1940s. It is a work of historical fiction with the major events of Canadian history forming an important backdrop to the novel.

\* \* \*

5 She has a single photograph of him. She tucked it into a brown envelope on which she'd written *clippings*, and hid the envelope between the pages of *Perennials for the Rock Garden*, where no one else would ever look.

She's preserved this photo carefully, because it's almost all she has left

of him. It's black and white, taken by one of those boxy, cumbersome flash  
10 cameras from before the war, with their accordion-pleat nozzles and their  
well-made leather cases that looked like muzzles, with straps and intricate  
buckles. The photo is of the two of them together, her and this man, on a pic-  
nic. *Picnic* is written on the back, in pencil – not his name or hers, just *picnic*.  
She knows the names, she doesn't need to write them down.

15 They're sitting under a tree; it might have been an apple tree; she didn't  
notice the tree much at the time. She's wearing a white blouse with the  
sleeves rolled to the elbow and a wide skirt tucked around her knees. There  
must have been a breeze, because of the way the shirt is blowing up against  
her; or perhaps it wasn't blowing, perhaps it was clinging; perhaps it was hot.  
20 It was hot. Holding her hand over the picture, she can still feel the heat com-  
ing up from it, like the heat from a sun-warmed stone at midnight.

The man is wearing a light-coloured hat, angled down on his head and  
partially shading his face. His face appears to be more darkly tanned than  
hers. She's turned half towards him, and smiling, in a way she can't remember  
25 smiling at anyone since. She seems very young in the picture, too young,  
though she hadn't considered herself too young at the time. He's smiling too –  
the whiteness of his teeth shows up like a scratched match flaring – but he's  
holding up his hand, as if to fend her off in play, or else to protect himself  
from the camera, from the person who must be there, taking the picture; or  
30 else to protect himself from those in the future who might be looking at him,  
who might be looking in at him through this square, lighted window of glazed  
paper. As if to protect himself from her. As if to protect her. In his out-  
stretched, protecting hand there's the stub end of a cigarette.

She retrieves the brown envelope when she's alone, and slides the photo  
35 out from among the newspaper clippings. She lays it flat on the table and  
stares down into it, as if she's peering into a well or pool – searching beyond  
her own reflection for something else, something she must have dropped or  
lost, out of reach but still visible, shimmering like a jewel on sand. She exam-  
ines every detail. His fingers bleached by the flash or the sun's glare; the  
40 folds of their clothing; the leaves of the tree, and the small round shapes  
hanging there – were they apples, after all? The coarse grass in the fore-  
ground. The grass was yellow then because the weather had been dry.

Over to one side – you wouldn't see it at first – there's a hand, cut by the  
margin, scissored off at the wrist, resting on the grass as if discarded. Left to  
45 its own devices.

The trace of blown cloud in the brilliant sky, like ice cream smudged on  
50 chrome. His smoke-stained fingers. The distant glint of water. All drowned now.

Drowned, but shining.

## THE BLIND ASSASSIN Text 2

*By Margaret Atwood*

\* \* \*

Ten days after the war ended, my sister Laura drove a car off a bridge. The bridge was being repaired: she went right through the Danger sign. The car fell a hundred feet into the ravine, smashing through the treetops feathery with new leaves, then burst into flames and rolled down into the shallow creek  
5 at the bottom. Chunks of the bridge fell on top of it. Nothing much was left of her but charred smithereens.

I was informed of the accident by a policeman: the car was mine, and they'd traced the licence. His tone was respectful: no doubt he recognized Richard's name. He said the tires may have caught on a streetcar track or the  
10 brakes may have failed, but he also felt bound to inform me that two witnesses – a retired lawyer and a bank teller, dependable people – had claimed to have seen the whole thing. They'd said Laura had turned the car sharply and deliberately, and had plunged off the bridge with no more fuss than stepping off a curb. They'd noticed her hands on the wheel because of the white gloves she'd  
15 been wearing.

It wasn't the brakes, I thought. She had her reasons. Not that they were ever the same as anybody else's reasons. She was completely ruthless in that way.

"I suppose you want someone to identify her," I said. "I'll come down as soon as I can." I could hear the calmness of my own voice, as if from a distance.  
20

In reality I could barely get the words out; my mouth was numb, my entire face was rigid with pain. I felt as if I'd been to the dentist. I was furious with Laura for what she'd done, but also with the policeman for implying that she'd done it. A hot wind was blowing around my head, the strands of my hair  
25 lifting and swirling in it, like ink spilled in water.

"I'm afraid there will be an inquest, Mrs. Griffen," he said.

"Naturally," I said. "But it was an accident. My sister was never a good driver."

I could picture the smooth oval of Laura's face, her neatly pinned chignon, the dress she would have been wearing: a shirtwaist with a small rounded collar, in a sober colour – navy blue or steel grey or hospital-corridor green. Penitential colours – less like something she'd chosen to put on than like something she'd been locked up in. Her solemn half-smile; the amazed lift of her eyebrows, as if she were admiring the view.  
30

The white gloves: a Pontius Pilate gesture. She was washing her hands of me. Of all of us.  
35

What had she been thinking of as the car sailed off the bridge, then hung suspended in the afternoon sunlight, glinting like a dragonfly for that one instant of held breath before the plummet? Of Alex, of Richard, of bad faith, of our father and his wreckage; of God, perhaps, and her fatal, triangular bargain. Or of the stack of cheap school exercise books that she must have hidden that very morning, in the bureau drawer where I kept my stockings, knowing I would be the one to find them.

When the policeman had gone I went upstairs to change. To visit the morgue I would need gloves, and a hat with a veil. Something to cover the eyes. There might be reporters. I would have to call a taxi. Also I ought to warn Richard, at his office: he would wish to have a statement of grief prepared.

I went into my dressing room: I would need black, and a handkerchief. I opened the drawer, I saw the notebooks. I undid the crisscross of kitchen string that tied them together. I noticed that my teeth were chattering, and that I was cold all over. I must be in shock, I decided.

What I remembered then was Reenie, from when we were little. It was Reenie who'd done the bandaging of scrapes and cuts and minor injuries: Mother might be resting, or doing good deeds elsewhere, but Reenie was always there. She'd scoop us up and sit us on the white enamel kitchen table, alongside the pie dough she was rolling out or the chicken she was cutting up or the fish she was gutting, and give us a lump of brown sugar to get us to close our mouths. *Tell me where it hurts*, she'd say. *Stop howling. Just calm down and show me where.*

But some people can't tell where it hurts. They can't calm down. They can't ever stop howling.

### Questions and tasks

1. Which statement do you agree with?

- a) the facts are presented coldly and clinically;
- b) the violence of the accident is described with great emotion.

What is the effect achieved by presenting the events this way?

2. What impression do you have of Iris and her background?

3. When is Iris...?

- a) calm;
- b) nostalgic;
- c) very angry;
- d) clear thinking;
- e) cold and factual.



4. Give a list of dramatic words used in the text and speak about the effect they produce.
5. Point out the similes in the text. Explain their function.
6. Speak about the effect of epithets in the text.
7. Comment on the case of allusion in the extract.
8. Study and explain the absence of connectives.
9. Collate and classify various syntactical means of expressing Mrs. Griffen's state of shock and confusion.
10. Which approach to interpretation suits this portion best? Prove your point of view.
11. Provide a complete analysis of the given extract according to the approach you chose in the previous exercise. Make use of the snippets of interpretation you made in exercises 1-9.

## CHEAP AT HALF THE PRICE

*By Jeffrey Archer*

**Jeffrey Howard Archer, Baron Archer of Weston-super-Mare** (born 15 April 1940) is a best-selling English author and former politician whose political career ended with his conviction and subsequent imprisonment (2001–03) for perjury and perverting the course of justice.

Alongside his literary work, Archer was a Member of Parliament (1969–74), and deputy chairman of the Conservative Party (1985–86). He was made a life peer in 1992.

Below is the initial portion of the story "Cheap at Half the Price", which is the second in *Twelve Red Herrings* (or *12 Red Herrings*), Archer's 1994 short story collection. The author challenges his readers to find "twelve red herrings", one in each story. The book reached #3 in the Canadian best-sellers (fiction) list.

\* \* \*

Women are naturally superior to men, and Mrs. Consuela Rosenheim was no exception.

- 5 Victor Rosenheim, an American banker, was Consuela's third husband, and the gossip columns on both sides of the Atlantic were suggesting that, like a chain smoker, the former Colombian model was already searching for her next spouse before she had extracted the last gasp from the old one. Her first two husbands – one an Arab, the other a Jew (Consuela showed no racial prejudice when it came to signing marriage contracts) – had not quite
- 10 left her in a position that would guarantee her financial security once her natural beauty had faded.

But two more divorce settlements would sort that out.

With this in mind, Consuela estimated that she only had another five

15 years before the final vow must be taken.

The Rosenheims flew into London from their home in New York – or, to be more accurate, from their homes in New York. Consuela had travelled to the airport by chauffeur-driven car from their mansion in the Hamptons, while her husband had been taken from his Wall Street office in a second  
20 chauffeur-driven car.

They met up in the Concorde lounge at JFK. When they had landed at Heathrow another limousine transported them to the Ritz, where they were escorted to their usual suite without any suggestion of having to sign forms or book in.

25 The purpose of their trip was twofold. Mr. Rosenheim was hoping to take over a small merchant bank that had not benefited from the recession, while Mrs. Rosenheim intended to occupy her time looking for a suitable birthday present – for herself.

30 Despite considerable research I have been unable to discover exactly which birthday Consuela would officially be celebrating.

After a sleepless night induced by jet-lag, Victor Rosenheim was whisked away to an early-morning meeting in the City, while Consuela remained in bed toying with her breakfast. She managed one piece of thin un-buttered toast and a stab at a boiled egg.

35 Once the breakfast tray had been removed, Consuela made a couple of phone calls to confirm luncheon dates for the two days she would be in London. She then disappeared into the bathroom.

Fifty minutes later she emerged from her suite dressed in a pink Olagane suit with a dark blue collar, her fair hair bouncing on her shoulders. Few  
40 of the men she passed between the elevator and the revolving doors failed to turn their heads, so Consuela judged that the previous fifty minutes had not been wasted. She stepped out of the hotel and into the morning sun to begin her search for the birthday present.

Consuela began her quest in New Bond Street. As in the past, she had  
45 no intention of straying more than a few blocks north, south, east or west from that comforting landmark, while a chauffeur-driven car hovered a few yards behind her.

She spent some time in Asprey's considering the latest slimline watches, a gold statue of a tiger with jade eyes, and a Fabergè egg, before moving  
50 on to Cartier, where she dismissed a crested silver salver, a platinum watch and a Louis XIV long-case clock.

From there she walked another few yards to Tiffany's, which, despite a determined salesman who showed her almost everything the shop had to offer, she still left empty-handed.

55 Consuela stood on the pavement and checked her watch. It was 12.52,

and she had to accept that it had been a fruitless morning.

She instructed her chauffeur to drive her to Harry's Bar, where she found Mrs. Stavros Kleanthis waiting for her at their usual table. Consuela greeted her friend with a kiss on both cheeks, and took the seat opposite her.

60 Mrs. Kleanthis, the wife of a not unknown shipowner – the Greeks preferring one wife and several liaisons - had for the last few minutes been concentrating her attention on the menu to be sure that the restaurant served the few dishes that her latest diet would permit.

65 "How's Victor?" asked Maria, once she and Consuela had ordered their meals.

Consuela paused to consider her response, and decided on the truth.

"Fast reaching his sell-by date," she replied. "And Stavros?"

70 "Well past his, I'm afraid," said Maria. "But as I have neither your looks nor your figure, not to mention the fact that I have three teenage children, I don't suppose I'll be returning to the market to select the latest brand."

Consuela smiled as a *salade niçoise* was placed in front of her.

"So, what brings you to London – other than to have lunch with an old friend?" asked Maria.

75 "Victor has his eye on another bank," replied Consuela, as if she were discussing a child who collected stamps. "And I'm in search of a suitable birthday present."

"And what are you expecting Victor to come up with this time?" asked Maria. "A house in the country? A thoroughbred racehorse? Or perhaps your own Lear jet?"

80 "None of the above," said Consuela, placing her fork by the half-finished salad. "I need something that can't be bargained over at a future date, so my gift must be one that any court, in any state, will acknowledge is unquestionably mine."

"Have you found anything appropriate yet?" asked Maria.

85 "Not yet," admitted Consuela. "Asprey's yielded nothing of interest, Cartier's cupboard was almost bare, and the only attractive thing in Tiffany's was the salesman, who was undoubtedly penniless. I shall have to continue my search this afternoon."

90 The salad plates were deftly removed by a waiter whom Maria considered far too young and far too thin. Another waiter with the same problem poured them both a cup of fresh decaffeinated coffee. Consuela refused the proffered cream and sugar, though her companion was not quite so disciplined.

95 The two ladies grumbled on about the sacrifices they were having to make because of the recession until they were the only diners left in the room. At this point a fatter waiter presented them with the bill - an extraordinarily long ledger considering that neither of them had ordered a second

course, or had requested more than Evian from the wine waiter.

On the pavement of South Audley Street they kissed again on both cheeks before going their separate ways, one to the east and the other to the west.

### **Questions and tasks:**

1. What is the prevailing mood of the passage? Prove your point of view by quoting the text.

2. Collate the cases of irony from the extract and comment on them.

3. Analyse the humorous effects of the passage.

4. How are the characters of the two women individualized in the text?

5. Compile a character study of the two women.

6. What is the author's attitude to the two women? Prove your point by referring to the text.

7. Analyse the simile in the first paragraph.

8. Pick out verbal metaphors from the extract and dwell on the effect they create.

9. Comment on the implications of the combination "fast reaching his sell-by date". What is the stylistic device?

10. Study and explain the use of passive voice. How does it contribute to revealing the characters' social standing?

11. Analyse the emphatic constructions in the extract.

12. Which approach to interpretation suits this portion best? Prove your point of view.

13. Provide a complete analysis of the given extract according to the approach you chose the previous exercise. Make use of the snippets of interpretation you made in exercises 1-11.

## **ADDITIONAL TEXTS FOR INTERPRETATION**

### **1. ALL CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL**

*By J. Herriot*

I had arrived in the Dales, I felt, at a bad time. The farmers, after a generation of neglect, had seen the coming of a prophet, the wonderful new vet, Mr. Farnon. He appeared like a comet, trailing his new ideas in his wake. He was able, energetic and charming and they received him as a maiden would a lover. And now, at the height of the honeymoon, I had to push my way into the act, and I just wasn't wanted. I was beginning to get used to the questions: "Where's Mr. Farnon?"—"Is he ill or something?"—"I expected Mr. Farnon." It was a

10 bit daunting to watch their faces fall when they saw me walking on to  
their farms. Usually they looked past me hopefully and some even  
went and peered into the car to see if the man they really wanted was  
hiding in there. And it was uphill work examining an animal when its  
owner was chafing in the background, wishing with all his heart that I  
was somebody else. But I had to admit they were fair. I got no effu-  
15 sive welcomes and when I started to tell them what I thought about  
the case they listened with open skepticism, but I found that if I got  
my jacket off and really worked at the job they began to thaw a little.  
And they were hospitable. Even though they were disappointed at  
having me they asked me into their homes. "Come in and have a bit o'  
20 dinner," was a phrase I heard nearly every day. Sometimes I was glad  
to accept and I ate some memorable meals with them. Often, too, they  
would slip half a dozen eggs or a pound of butter into the car as I was  
leaving. This hospitality was traditional in the Dales and I knew they  
would probably do the same for any visitor, but it showed the core of  
25 friendliness which lay under the often unsmiling surface of these peo-  
ple and it helped. I was beginning to learn about the farmers and what  
I found I liked. They had toughness and a philosophical attitude which  
was new to me. Misfortunes which would make the city dweller want  
to bang his head against a wall were shrugged off with "Aye, well,  
these things happen."

## 2. THE HOBBIT

*By J. R. R. Tolkien*

By some curious chance one morning long ago in the quiet of  
the world, when there was less noise and more green, and the hobbits  
were still numerous and prosperous, and Bilbo Baggins was standing  
at his door after breakfast smoking an enormous long wooden pipe  
5 that reached nearly down to his woolly toes (neatly brushed) – Gan-  
dalf came by. Gandalf! If you had heard only a quarter of what I have  
heard about him, and I have only heard very little of all there is to  
hear, you would be prepared for any sort I of remarkable tale. Tales  
and adventures sprouted up all over the place wherever he went, in  
10 the most extraordinary fashion.

All that the unsuspecting Bilbo saw that morning was an old  
man with a staff. He had a tall pointed blue hat, a long grey cloak, a  
silver scarf over which a white beard hung down below his waist, and  
immense black boots. "Good morning!" said Bilbo, and he meant it.  
15 The sun was shining, and the grass was very green. But Gandalf  
looked at him from under long bushy eyebrows that stuck out further  
than the brim of his shady hat. "What do you mean?" he said. "Do

you wish me a good morning, or mean that it is a good morning  
whether I want not; or that you feel good this morning; or that it is  
20 morning to be good on?"

"All of them at once," said Bilbo. "And a very fine morning for a  
pipe of tobacco out of doors, into the bargain. If you have a pipe about  
you, sit down and have a fill of mine! There's no hurry, we have all the  
25 day before us!" Then Bilbo sat down on a seat by his door, crossed his  
legs, and blew out a beautiful grey ring of smoke that sailed up into the  
air without breaking and floated away over The Hill.

"Very pretty!" said Gandalf. "But I have no time to blow smoke-  
rings this morning. I am looking for someone to share in an adventure  
that I am arranging, and it's very difficult to find anyone."

30 "I should think so – in these parts! We are plain quiet folk and  
have no use for adventures. Nasty disturbing uncomfortable things!  
Make you late for dinner! I can't think what anybody sees in them,  
said our Mr. Baggins, and stuck one thumb behind his braces, and  
blew out another even bigger smoke-ring. Then he took out his morn-  
35 ing letters, and began to read, pretending to take no more notice of the  
old man. He had decided that he was not quite his sort, and wanted  
him to go away. But the old man did not move. He stood leaning on  
his stick and gazing at the hobbit without saying anything, till Bilbo  
got quite uncomfortable and even a little cross.

40 "Good morning!" he said at last. "We don't want any adventures  
here, thank you! You might try over The Hill or across The Water."  
By this he meant that the conversation was at an end.

"What a lot of things you do use Good morning for!" said Gan-  
dalf. "Now you mean that you want to get rid of me, and that it won't  
45 be good till I move off."

"Not at all, not at all, my dear sir! Let me see, I don't think I  
know your name?"

"Yes, yes, my dear sir – and I do know your name, Mr. Bilbo  
Baggins. And you do know my name, though you don't remember  
50 that I belong to it. I am Gandalf, and Gandalf means me! To think that  
I should have lived to be good-morninged by Belladonna Took's son,  
as if I was selling buttons at the door!" "Gandalf, Gandalf! Good gra-  
cious me! Not the wandering wizard that gave Old Took a pair of  
magic diamond studs that fastened themselves and never came un-  
55 done till ordered? Not the fellow who used to tell such wonderful  
tales at parties, about dragons and goblins and giants and the rescue of  
princesses and the unexpected luck of widows' sons? Not the man that  
used to make such particularly excellent fireworks! I remember those!

60 Old Took used to have them on Midsummer's Eve. Splendid! They  
used to go up like great lilies and snapdragons and laburnums of fire  
and hang in the twilight all evening!" You will notice already that Mr.  
Baggins was not quite so prosy as he liked to believe, also that he was  
very fond of flowers. "Dear me!" she went on. "Not the Gandalf who  
65 was responsible for so many quiet lads and lasses going off into the  
Blue for mad adventures. Anything from climbing trees to visiting  
Elves – or sailing in ships, sailing to other shores! Bless me, life used  
to be quite inter – I mean, you used to upset things badly in these  
parts once upon a time. I beg your pardon, but I had no idea you were  
70 still in business." "Where else should I be?" said the wizard. "All the  
same I am pleased to find you remember something about me. You  
seem to remember my fireworks kindly, at any rate, and that is not  
without hope. Indeed for your old grand-father Took's sake, and for  
the sake of poor Belladonna, I will give you what you asked for."

"I beg your pardon, I haven't asked for anything!"

75 "Yes, you have! Twice now. My pardon. I give it you. In fact I will  
go so far as to send you on this adventure. Very amusing for me, very  
good for you and profitable too, very likely, if you ever get over it."

"Sorry! I don't want any adventures, thank you. Not today. Good  
morning!"

80 But please come to tea – any time you like! Why not tomorrow?  
Come tomorrow!

Good-bye!"

With that the hobbit turned and scuttled inside his round green  
door, and shut it as quickly as he dared, not to seem rude. Wizards  
85 after all are wizards.

"What on earth did I ask him to tea for!" he said to him-self, as  
he went to the pantry.

### 3. CAPTAIN BLOOD: HIS ODYSSEY

*By Rafael Sabatini*

#### Chapter 1. The Messenger

Peter Blood, bachelor of medicine and several other things be-  
sides, smoked a pipe and tended the geraniums boxed on the sill of his  
window above Water Lane in the town of Bridgewater.

5 Sternly disapproving eyes considered him from a window oppo-  
site, but went disregarded. Mr. Blood's attention was divided between  
his task and the stream of humanity in the narrow street below; a  
stream which poured for the second time that day towards Castle

Field, where earlier in the afternoon Ferguson, the Duke's chaplain, had preached a sermon containing more treason than divinity.

10        These straggling, excited groups were mainly composed of men with green boughs in their hats and the most ludicrous of weapons in their hands. Some, it is true, shouldered fowling pieces, and here and there a sword was brandished; but more of them were armed with clubs, and most of them trailed the mammoth pikes fashioned out of  
15        scythes, as formidable to the eye as they were clumsy to the hand. There were weavers, brewers, carpenters, smiths, masons, bricklayers, cobblers, and representatives of every other of the trades of peace among these improvised men of war. Bridgewater, like Taunton, had  
20        yielded so generously of its manhood to the service of the bastard Duke that for any to abstain whose age and strength admitted of his bearing arms was to brand himself a coward or a papist.

      Yet Peter Blood, who was not only able to bear arms, but trained and skilled in their use, who was certainly no coward, and a papist only when it suited him, tended his geraniums and smoked his pipe on  
25        that warm July evening as indifferently as if nothing were afoot. One other thing he did. He flung after those war-fevered enthusiasts a line of Horace – a poet for whose work he had early conceived an inordinate affection:

      “Quo, quo, scelesti, ruitis?”

30        And now perhaps you guess why the hot, intrepid blood inherited from the roving sires of his Somersetshire mother remained cool amidst all this frenzied fanatical heat of rebellion; why the turbulent spirit which had forced him once from the sedate academical bonds his father would have imposed upon him, should now remain quiet in  
35        the very midst of turbulence. You realize how he regarded these men who were rallying to the banners of liberty – the banners woven by the virgins of Taunton, the girls from the seminaries of Miss Blake and Mrs. Musgrove, who – as the ballad runs – had ripped open their silk petticoats to make colours for King Monmouth's army. That Latin  
40        line, contemptuously flung after them as they clattered down the cobbled street, reveals his mind. To him they were fools rushing in wicked frenzy upon their ruin.

#### 4. HOPE AND COMFORT

*By A.J. McKenna*

      Charley Foley calls into the Mater Misericordia Hospital to visit his wife.



5           'How are you feeling?' he asks, sitting at the bedside, close to Dolly who is smiling up at him, her black hair resting against the white pillows.

          'I'm fine,' Dolly says, quietly. She looks old and tired to Charley; she is deathly pale and has black pouches under her eyes. When she slips her fingers into Charley's he notices two ugly brown liver spots on the back her small hand.

10           'You look tired,' Charley says. 'Aren't you sleeping?'

          'I was a bit restless last night.'

          Dolly does not mention the pain: she doesn't want to upset her husband.

          'Any word from Linda?' she asks.

15           'She phoned again last night. I told her you were grand. I said there was nothing to worry about.'

          Linda, their eldest, teaches in a university in Galway. Linda will come home for the holiday in August. Their son, Colm, and his children live in Australia. Colm hasn't been told that his mother is unwell.

20           Colm's a worrier: it's best he's not upset.

          Charley gazes dreamily across the chattering hospital ward, bright with pale afternoon sunlight. Other visitors are doing their duties, gathering around the sick, bringing flowers and fruit, offering words of hope and comfort.

25           'Have you seen the doctor again?' Charley asks his wife.

          'Tomorrow maybe.'

          'Any idea how long they'll keep you in?'

          Dolly turns away and coughs into a tissue, then settles back. She takes Charley's hand again.

30           'They'll let me know on Monday. They have to do lots more tests. They won't let me home until they know. I'm sorry to be such a bother.'

          Dolly's small chest heaves under her heavy nightdress. Charley thinks of a frightened bird. *Sweet Dolores Delarosa* he used to call her long ago when they were courting, mocking her sorrowful eyes and the way she took everything too seriously. He can't help wondering if she made herself sick with worry.

*Poor Dolly Delarosa!*

          'Don't let them budge you until you're absolutely better,' he says.

          'Are you managing all right, darling?'

40           'Grand.'

          Charley is eating out and staying away from the house as much as possible. He's managing all right.

          The minutes pass in heated tedium. Charley is watching the visi-

tors and glancing at the small alarm clock beside his wife's bed. He can  
45 hear its distant ticking and still recall the irritating ring when it dragged  
his wife from bed at the crack of dawn and moments later her breakfast  
sounds clattering in the kitchen keeping him awake, reminding him that  
there's a day's work ahead and children to be schooled and fed.

*Tic-tic-tic-tic- tic-tic-tic.*

50 The kids are all grown up now. Second grandchild imminent.  
Time is running out. A grey face in the shaving mirror reminding  
Charley of middle age and the rot ahead. Where's the point in having  
money if you can't enjoy it? Why can't clocks take their time? What's  
the hurry?

55 *Ah – God have mercy! Dolly Dolorosa. How different might it  
have been without her?*

Dolly's eyelids droop. Her mouth opens a fraction. She looks  
almost dead. Moments pass slowly.

60 'This must be very boring for you,' she says, without opening her  
eyes.

'Not at all. It does me good to see you.'

'It's not nice having to visit anybody in hospital. It's so depressing.'

'Nonsense.'

65 Dolly settles her dark head further back against the white pil-  
lows. Grimaces for an instant then braves a smile.

'You should leave now, Charley. I think I might sleep for a  
while.'

'Are you sure?'

'Positive.'

70 Charley bounces to his feet.

'I'll come in later,' he says.

'Please don't. With it being Saturday the wards will be crammed  
with people. Leave it till the morning. Come after Mass.'

'Is that's what you want?'

75 'It is, darling.'

Dolly opens her eyes, smiles like a child. It's been a long time  
since Dolly was a child.

'You look tired, darling,' she says. 'Aren't you sleeping?'

'I was a bit restless last night.'

80 'Try to take things easy.'

Dolly squeezes her husband's hand, presses her ringed finger  
against his gold wedding ring. Her fingers are light as feathers.

'Off you go, darling,' she says. 'Try to not worry.'

Charley bends and kisses Dolly's hot forehead.

85 'I'll see you tomorrow,' he says.  
 Dolly's eyes close. Her fingers slip from his.  
*Tic-tic-tic-tic-tic.*

Charley walks along a polished corridor and finds the exit. Outside in the bright car park he locates his car and sits inside. He glances around at the visitors coming and going. Nurses walk past, reminding him of butterflies. Charley reaches for his mobile phone and taps in a number. The call is answered almost immediately.

90 'Katherine?' he says.  
 'Where are you? I've been waiting ages for you to call.'  
 95 'I'm outside the hospital. I've just been in to see her.'  
 'How is she?'  
 'All right. As well as can be expected, I suppose. Who really knows?'

Charley pulls down the sunshade to protect his eyes from the blinding brightness, then returns his attention to his new friend, Katherine.

100 'She'll be in for a while longer.'  
 'Will I see you later?' Katherine asks.  
 'I expect so.'  
 'Stay tonight,' she offers. 'If you like.'

105 Charley thinks of his own empty house, the quietness without Dolly and the dreadful silences she left behind.  
 'I'd like that, darling,' he says.  
 'Come now,' Katherine whispers with a smile in her lovely voice. 'I'll cheer you up.'

110 Charley says goodbye and puts the phone away. He smiles properly for the first time that day. He starts the engine and as he drives away Charley glances through the rear view mirror and sees the grey hospital building receding like a prison.  
*God help me, he thinks. God help us all.*

## 5. THE FIVE BOONS OF LIFE

*By Mark Twain*

### CHAPTER I

In the morning of life came a good fairy with her basket, and said:  
 "Here are gifts. Take one, leave the others. And be wary, chose wisely; oh, choose wisely! for only one of them is valuable."  
 The gifts were five: Fame, Love, Riches, Pleasure, Death. The youth said, eagerly:  
 "There is no need to consider"; and he chose Pleasure.

He went out into the world and sought out the pleasures that youth delights in. But each in its turn was short-lived and disappointing, vain and empty; and each, departing, mocked him. In the end he said: "These years I have wasted. If I could but choose again, I would choose wisely."

## CHAPTER II

The fairy appeared, and said:

"Four of the gifts remain. Choose once more; and oh, remember-time is flying, and only one of them is precious."

The man considered long, then chose Love; and did not mark the tears that rose in the fairy's eyes.

After many, many years the man sat by a coffin, in an empty home. And he communed with himself, saying: "One by one they have gone away and left me; and now she lies here, the dearest and the last. Desolation after desolation has swept over me; for each hour of happiness the treacherous trader, Love, as sold me I have paid a thousand hours of grief. Out of my heart of hearts I curse him."

## CHAPTER III

"Choose again." It was the fairy speaking.

"The years have taught you wisdom – surely it must be so. Three gifts remain. Only one of them has any worth – remember it, and choose warily."

The man reflected long, then chose Fame; and the fairy, sighing, went her way.

Years went by and she came again, and stood behind the man where he sat solitary in the fading day, thinking. And she knew his thought:

"My name filled the world, and its praises were on every tongue, and it seemed well with me for a little while. How little a while it was! Then came envy; then detraction; then calumny; then hate; then persecution. Then derision, which is the beginning of the end. And last of all came pity, which is the funeral of fame. Oh, the bitterness and misery of renown! target for mud in its prime, for contempt and compassion in its decay."

## CHAPTER IV

"Chose yet again." It was the fairy's voice.

"Two gifts remain. And do not despair. In the beginning there was but one that was precious, and it is still here."

"Wealth – which is power! How blind I was!" said the man. "Now, at last, life will be worth the living. I will spend, squander, dazzle. These mockers and despisers will crawl in the dirt before me, and I will feed my hungry heart with their envy. I will have all luxuries, all joys, all enchant-

ments of the spirit, all contentments of the body that man holds dear. I will buy, buy, buy! deference, respect, esteem, worship – every pinchbeck grace of life the market of a trivial world can furnish forth. I have lost much time, and chosen badly heretofore, but let that pass; I was ignorant then, and could but take for best what seemed so."

Three short years went by, and a day came when the man sat shivering in a mean garret; and he was gaunt and wan and hollow-eyed, and clothed in rags; and he was gnawing a dry crust and mumbling:

"Curse all the world's gifts, for mockeries and gilded lies! And mis-called, every one. They are not gifts, but merely lendings. Pleasure, Love, Fame, Riches: they are but temporary disguises for lasting realities – Pain, Grief, Shame, Poverty. The fairy said true; in all her store there was but one gift which was precious, only one that was not valueless. How poor and cheap and mean I know those others now to be, compared with that inestimable one, that dear and sweet and kindly one, that steps in dreamless and enduring sleep the pains that persecute the body, and the shames and griefs that eat the mind and heart. Bring it! I am weary, I would rest."

## CHAPTER V

The fairy came, bringing again four of the gifts, but Death was wanting. She said:

"I gave it to a mother's pet, a little child. It was ignorant, but trusted me, asking me to choose for it. You did not ask me to choose."

"Oh, miserable me! What is left for me?"

"What not even you have deserved: the wanton insult of Old Age."

## 6. FEDORA

*By Kate Chopin*

Fedora had determined upon driving over to the station herself for Miss Malthers.

5        Though one or two of them looked disappointed – notably her brother – no one opposed her. She said the brute was restive, and shouldn't be trusted to the handling of the young people.

To be sure Fedora was old enough, from the standpoint of her sister Camilla and the rest of them. Yet no one would ever have thought of it but for her own persistent affectation and idiotic assumption of superior years and wisdom. She was thirty.

10        Fedora had too early in life formed an ideal and treasured it. By this ideal she had measured such male beings as had hitherto challenged her attention, and needless to say she had found them wanting. The young people – her brothers' and sisters' guests, who were con-

15 stantly coming and going that summer – occupied her to a great extent, but failed to interest her. She concerned herself with their comforts – in the absence of her mother – looked after their health and well-being; contrived for their amusements, in which she never joined. And, as Fedora was tall and slim, and carried her head loftily, and wore eye-glasses and a severe expression, some of them – the  
20 silliest – felt as if she were a hundred years old. Young Malthers thought she was about forty.

One day when he stopped before her out in the gravel walk to ask her some question pertaining to the afternoon's sport, Fedora, who was tall, had to look up into his face to answer him. She had known  
25 him eight years, since he was a lad of fifteen, and to her he had never been other than the lad of fifteen.

But that afternoon, looking up into his face, the sudden realization came home to her that he was a man – in voice, in attitude, in bearing, in every sense – a man. In an absorbing glance, and with un-  
30 accountable intention, she gathered in every detail of his countenance as though it were a strange, new thing to her, presenting itself to her vision for the first time. The eyes were blue, earnest, and at the moment a little troubled over some trivial affair that he was relating to her. The face was brown from the sun, smooth, with no suggestion of  
35 ruddiness, except in the lips, that were strong, firm and clean. She kept thinking of his face, and every trick of it after he passed on.

From that moment he began to exist for her. She looked at him when he was near by, she listened for his voice, and took notice and account of what he said. She sought him out; she selected him when  
40 occasion permitted. She wanted him by her, though his nearness troubled her. There was uneasiness, restlessness, expectation when he was not there within sight or sound. There was redoubled uneasiness when he was by – there was inward revolt, astonishment, rapture, self-contumely; a swift, fierce encounter betwixt thought and feeling.

Fedora could hardly explain to her own satisfaction why she wanted to go herself to the station for young Malthers' sister. She felt a desire to see the girl, to be near her; as unaccountable, when she tried to analyze it, as the impulse which drove her, and to which she often yielded, to touch his hat, hanging with others upon the hall pegs,  
50 when she passed it by. Once a coat which he had discarded hung there too. She handled it under pretense of putting it in order. There was no one near, and, obeying a sudden impulse, she buried her face for an instant in the rough folds of the coat.

Fedora reached the station a little before train time. It was in a

55 pretty nook, green and fragrant, set down at the foot of a wooded hill.  
Off in a clearing there was a field of yellow grain, upon which the  
sinking sunlight fell in slanting, broken beams. Far down the track  
there were some men at work, and the even ring of their hammers was  
60 the only sound that broke upon the stillness. Fedora loved it all – sky  
and woods and sunlight; sounds and smells. But her bearing – elegant,  
composed, reserved – betrayed nothing emotional as she tramped the  
narrow platform, whip in hand, and occasionally offered a conde-  
scending word to the mail man or the sleepy agent.

Malthers' sister was the only soul to disembark from the train.  
65 Fedora had never seen her before; but if there had been a hundred, she  
would have known the girl. She was a small thing; but aside from  
that, there was the coloring; there were the blue, earnest eyes; there,  
above all, was the firm, full curve of the lips; the same setting of the  
white, even teeth. There was the subtle play of feature, the elusive  
70 trick of expression, which she had thought peculiar and individual in  
the one, presenting themselves as family traits.

The suggestive resemblance of the girl to her brother was vivid,  
poignant even to Fedora, realizing, as she did with a pang, that famili-  
arity and custom would soon blur the image.

75 Miss Malthers was a quiet, reserved creature, with little to say.  
She had been to college with Camilla, and spoke somewhat of their  
friendship and former intimacy. She sat lower in the cart than Fedora,  
who drove, handling whip and rein with accomplished skill.

80 “You know, dear child,” said Fedora, in her usual elderly fashion,  
“I want you to feel completely at home with us.” They were driving  
through a long, quiet, leafy road, into which the twilight was just begin-  
ning to creep. “Come to me freely and without reserve – with all your  
wants; with any complaints. I feel that I shall be quite fond of you.”

85 She had gathered the reins into one hand, and with the other free  
arm she encircled Miss Malthers' shoulders.

When the girl looked up into her face, with murmured thanks, Fedo-  
ra bent down and pressed a long, penetrating kiss upon her mouth.

Malthers' sister appeared astonished, and not too well pleased. Fe-  
dora, with seemingly unruffled composure, gathered the reins, and for the  
90 rest of the way stared steadily ahead of her between the horses' ears.

## 7. THE RESTRAINTS

*By Robert Hill Long*

Even when she was very little her hunger was worth something:

hunger taught her to dance, and her father noticed. When his thirst was deep enough he could charm any bartender into clearing the narrow bar for just one dance – see, a girl, and feet so tiny. The patrons would shout for a second dance when they saw how the drumbeat of her bare feet could start such a trembling among the bottles on shelves. By the third or fourth dance, the trembling reached the glasses in their hands: they threw coins and bills at her feet to make her stop. Then father would let her climb down and be a little girl again, mumbling thanks in poor English for the chair and spoon and bowls of stew brought her by drunken bricklayers and stevedores.

Afterwards, under the stars of whatever field they slept in, she'd dream the same dream: dancing in a dress with ruffles, polka dots. Some nights, still asleep, she'd rise and wander. Once she woke in the middle of a dirt road: an armadillo sniffed her, a train blew in the distance. Another time she woke on the porch of an old white couple. Her English was so poor they guessed she was deaf-mute. They bathed and fed her, aimed to adopt her. She was trying on a dress with blue dots in front of their radio full of Bing Crosby when her father knocked at the screen door. He made her choose between the dress and him. To protect his livelihood after that, he tied a rope from her ankle to his ankle at night. If she rose to leave, she fell.

It is many dances later, now, many dresses, many men later. The nurses who are otherwise kind tie her old-lady wrists down so she cannot rip out the IV again. Some nights her feet drum against the footboard, but weakly. When she can forget the restraints, she goes over memories step by step: the time she was caught dancing in a bar at age ten and jailed for three days. Emerging, she saw father at the corner holding his hat, which meant he was ashamed of himself. Out of his jacket he drew the most beautiful loaf of bread, which she ate before allowing him to kiss her. She remembers the night her stitched-up knee opened on stage in Chicago: with every spin she flung blood onto the front-row gowns and tuxedos. By then even her blood was famous.

But sometimes when she was ten, twelve, dancing in those bars, she would not stop. Not even after her father's guitar stopped. She made the coins at her feet tremble and spin, kicked the sweaty dollar bills back at the drinkers and shouters. Having the moment, that was having everything. When she closes her eyes now she knows who it is, tied to her on the narrow bed.



## 8. PERIOD PIECE

*By Joyce Cary*

5           Tutin, married sixteen years, with three children, had an affair with his secretary, Phyllis, aged eighteen, and wanted a divorce. His wife, Clare, with her usual good sense, was resigned. 'If you feel you must make a break,' she said, sadly but without bitterness, 'there's no more to be said. It would be stupid to try to hold you against your will. You'd only hate me and that wouldn't help either of us.'

10           But when her mother in remote Yorkshire heard of this arrangement, she wrote and said it was preposterous and wicked, she wouldn't allow it. Old Mrs. Beer was the widow of a canon. She was a short, stout woman with a red face and a heavy jaw – a pugnacious and indomitable face. Yet there was something defeated about it too. The little faded blue eyes especially seemed to confess that the old woman had long given up hope of any serious attention from anybody.

15           You see such faces in boxing booths among the seconds and backers, men who have been in the ring all their lives and lost all their fight, but still follow the game as bottle holders, training partners, punching bags for young champions.

20           Her son-in-law laughed at her when she didn't exasperate him to madness by her sudden raids and arbitrary commands. Each time a child was born she planted herself in the household and took charge of every detail – laying down the law in an intolerable manner and flatly contradicting everybody from the doctor to the monthly nurse.

25           Now, at this talk of divorce, she excelled herself. When Clare wrote her explanations she came south without any warning whatever, broke into Tutin's office and, marching up to his desk, umbrella in hand as if about to beat him, demanded, "What's this nonsense about a divorce?"

30           This in the presence of the secretary who was taking dictation – not Phyllis, of course – Phyllis was no longer a secretary. As the future Mrs. Tutin she had to think of her dignity. She had a nice flat in a new building in Mayfair and spent her time shopping. The new secretary, on promotion from the general office, was a widow of fifty, Mrs. Bateman, with a dark moustache and a strong cast in one eye. Phyllis had chosen her as a thoroughly reliable person.

35           All the same, Tutin was not anxious to have his most private affairs discussed in front of her. He opened his mouth to tell her to go but Mrs. Beer had now come between. She planted her umbrella on the desk, and shouted at him, "But there's not going to be a divorce"

My dear Mamma, all this has been discussed between Clare and me and we are completely agreed that it's impossible to go on.

45 'Of course you can go on – if you had to go on you'd go on very well.'

Mrs. Bateman was still folding up her notebook, now she dropped her pencil. Tutin, a thoroughly good-natured man, hating to quarrel with anybody, answered patiently, 'Of course, these things are not so simple.'

50 Frank Tutin was a humane, a kindly man. He was extremely upset by this crisis in his family life. He realised how his wife was suffering, how much the children were concerned. He did not forget for a moment, he said, the danger to them of a broken home. Divorce was a very serious thing.

For days he had discussed it with Clare, analysing all the complex factors involved: Clare's feelings, his feelings, the children's feelings, Phyllis's feelings and everybody's right to consideration. Sometimes he had thought that there was no way out – divorce would be as bad as the present unhappy situation. But gradually he had found confidence; certain large principles detached themselves in the confusion – that the children of divided parents in an unhappy home were, according to a psychiatrist consulted by Frank himself, just as likely to suffer in character as those left with one or the other, alone but devoted, after divorce: that the Tutin's home life was growing every day more distracted, tense and impossible, that the one guiltless person who must not be let down was poor little Phyllis, that Frank and Clare had had many years of happiness together and could not fairly expect to go on for ever.

60 Clare in this crisis lived up to all Frank's expectations of her. Like the highly intelligent woman she was she took all his points.

70 And now, just when the divorce had been arranged in the most civilised manner, when Clare had agreed to ask Phyllis to the house to discuss the whole affair – Clare had been charming to Phyllis, so young and so worried, so terribly in love, Phyllis was already quite devoted to her – and when she had agreed to accept a reasonable alimony and allow Tutin to have free access to the children. Mrs. Beer comes charging in like some paleolithic monster, hopelessly thick-skinned, brutal, insensitive. Comes and calls him selfish.

75 One could not blame the poor old woman. She was simply out of touch – she belonged to a rougher, cruder age where psychology was practically unheard of, where moral judgments were simply thrown out like packets from a slot machine, where there were only two kinds of character, bad and good, and only one kind of marriage.

## 9. EVENING

*Susan Minot*

### PART 3

She woke before dawn coughing. She could make out the shape of the glass of water on the table but it was too far to reach and after a while she managed to stop coughing without drinking.

5 She lay still as the room grew light. The blue ceiling turned grey then light grey. It was thoroughly quiet. It seemed to be the beginning of something more than just day. For a few long moments she lay and felt – what was it? The dawn light put her in mind of creation. It must have been this way on the actual first day of the world. A thin yellow light spread out and all the sorrows which sat in her seemed suddenly  
10 to lift up and fly off and were replaced with the most inappropriate hope. For what had she to hope for? A swift end perhaps. And yet her whole spirit was lifting, she felt hope not only for herself, but – it did sound absurd – for all humanity. She lay here on a trembling leaf and thought of all the other people lying on their leaves waiting for the  
15 sun to come up and it seemed that if they were quiet and patient what each of them wanted would eventually come. She was sure of it. An orange glow filled the room.

The glass on the bedside table began to sink. She closed her eyes for a moment to concentrate and the pain got worse. This was the  
20 darkness she would be looking at for a long time. She opened her eyes. The glass continued sinking. She could not see the water in it, only the top rim. She struggled to keep it in sight. The glass was going very slowly, but it was important that she see it the moment it disappeared. She smelled the pillow beside her.

25 A yellow suitcase came flying out of the fog, it was dragged over loose stones, thrown into a car, hauled over a polished floor. It lay open on a suitcase rack at the foot of a bed. She walked through stripes of light and shadow, something rattled, there had been rain in New Haven and a hot wind off the platform in Providence. They were  
30 waiting for her in Boston. Her lipstick rolled on the ground and the face with the sunglasses was luminous.

She sat in the backseat beside him with the windows down. Buddy drank more beer and fell asleep and Ralph refused any offers  
35 to drive because if anything happened to his father's car he'd be disowned and he drove on in silence.

Do you always talk to people as if you were slicing them with a

knife? Harris Arden said. He flicked his ash out the window, his cigarette small in his hand.

40       The road took them through towns where rows of elms met overhead and threw blue shadows on the roofs. Clotheslines fluttered on upper porches, two boys fished in a river, steel cranes rose up above the docks at Bath. Off the road were signs for sea lavender, eel, fresh mackerel, live lobsters, blueberries, corn picked today and in a  
45       pickup truck a little girl selling jam and pies. The sky was bleached behind torn clouds. Ann wondered what it would be like to kiss his mouth. By Wiscasset the mudflats swirled and shimmered under the bridge and further on was a hillside scorched by fire with black spindly trees. A man stood with his hands on his hips staring at a barn  
50       door. An apple tree floated beside a yellow farmhouse. Harris pointed to a wreath of flowers at a turn near Thomaston and memorials on town greens were polished wedges cut from local granite. They passed a church with a black door and houses with fish-scale shingles and dormer windows and slate roofs. Cement steps led up to brick  
55       storefronts with trucks parked diagonally outside. Restaurants had orange claws over their doors and drive-in dairies had children sitting backwards at picnic tables eating soft ice cream. Motels were named Waters Edge, Light House, Sea View, Moody's.

60       Ann had grown up on a street outside of Boston with sidewalks and no lawns and spent summers on the South Shore and the air feathering by the window now smelled of the sea and recalled her childhood and long days on the beach. She felt far from that childhood sitting in the woody but the distance between her and it seemed suddenly voluptuous and she wondered if it showed and if the person  
65       beside her had any idea of the happiness and contentment which had so suddenly and surprisingly taken possession of her.

70       The birds were loud in the morning then loud again at night just before evening. A few chirps then silence, then a long trill. She heard a car door slam and hum by below on Emerson Street. A dog barked and was answered by another dog closer. The plumbing ran at the far end of the hall and a heaviness filled her as the pain moved in.

      What are you doing?

      It's going to storm. I'm closing the windows.

      No, leave them open.

75       It will drench the rug, said the nurse, turning back, leaving them up.

      I want the air. Nothing like the air of a storm.

      The suitcase had belonged to her mother, it had a smooth shell-lacked surface with yellow stitching underneath the glaze. The locks

80 snapped and the comers were rounded, hollow and shellike. Ann Lord  
could almost taste the surface of it at the back of her throat.

85 A warm July wind, the smell of a fish cannery. She stood beside  
him as the water went by. His shirt collar was bent under, but she didn't  
untuck it. His hair was wheat-colored and unruly and shook like cotton  
tufts in the wind. The engine of the ferry vibrated through the railing  
and Ann Grant felt it in her hands and chest. Being a doctor he was not  
a lot outdoors and his face didn't have the same color as the other pas-  
sengers'. He told her about the emergency room being busy on full  
moons, he told her people trusted doctors more than they should.

90 Ann felt the excitement of the wedding, of the people traveling,  
of the suitcases opening and cheeks kissed and the new dresses and  
the cocktails and dinners and suits needing to be pressed. She'd first  
visited the Wittenboms' when she was fifteen after meeting Lila that  
winter at skating class in Boston and knew well the flowered chairs of  
95 the living room and the routine of taking picnics made by Mrs. Bab-  
bage to Butter or Fling or Coleman's Island, traveling in crowded  
motorboats and landing with care on rocky beaches and while it had  
been new and different to her at first she now felt a part of it. The  
man beside her added a new element. She did not know what to ex-  
100 pect from him and everything he said surprised her. She imagined he  
would always surprise her.

## 10. JAMAICA INN

*By Daphne du Maurier*

\* \* \*

"I've waited long enough tonight, and gone half mad with it,"  
said Mary. "I'd rather come upon my uncle face to face than lie here in  
the ditch, seeing and hearing nothing. It's my aunt I'm thinking of.  
She's as innocent as a child in all this business, and I want to care for  
5 her if I can. Give me a pistol and let me go. I can tread like a cat, and  
I'll not run my head into a noose, I promise you." She threw off the  
heavy cloak and hood that had protected her from the cold night air,  
and seized hold of the pistol that he handed down to her reluctantly.  
"Don't follow me unless I call or give some signal," she said. "Should  
10 you hear a shot fired, then perhaps it would be as well to come after  
me. But come warily, for all that. There's no need for both of us to run  
like fools into danger. For my part, I believe my uncle to have gone."

She hoped now that he had, and by driving into Devon made an

15 end to the whole business. The country would be rid of him, and in  
the cheapest possible way. He might, even as he had said, start life  
again, or, more likely still, dig himself in somewhere five hundred  
miles from Cornwall and drink himself to death. She had no interest  
now in his capture; she wanted it finished and thrust aside; she wanted  
20 above all to lead her own life and forget him, and to put the world  
between her and Jamaica Inn. Revenge was an empty thing. To see  
him bound and helpless, surrounded by the squire and his men, would  
be of little satisfaction. She had spoken to Richards with confidence,  
but for all that she dreaded an encounter with her uncle, armed as she  
was; and the thought of coming upon him suddenly in the passage of  
25 the inn, with his hands ready to strike, and his bloodshot eyes staring  
down upon her, made her pause in her stride, before the yard, and  
glance back to the dark shadow in the ditch that was Richards and the  
trap. Then she levelled her pistol, her finger upon the trigger, and  
looked round the corner of the stone wall to the yard.

30 It was empty. The stable door was shut. The inn was as dark and  
silent as when she had left it nearly seven hours before, and the win-  
dows and the door were barred. She looked up to her window, and the  
pane of glass gaped empty and wide, unchanged since she had  
climbed from it that afternoon.

35 There were no wheel marks in the yard, no preparations for de-  
parture. She crept across to the stable and laid her ear against the  
door. She waited a moment, and then she heard the pony move rest-  
lessly in his stall; she heard his hoofs clink on the cobbles.

Then they had not gone, and her uncle was still at Jamaica Inn.

40 Her heart sank; and she wondered if she should return to Rich-  
ards and the trap, and wait, as he had suggested, until Squire Bassat  
and his men arrived. She glanced once more at the shuttered house.  
Surely, if her uncle intended to leave, he would have gone before  
now. The cart alone would take an hour to load, and it must be nearly  
45 eleven o'clock. He might have altered his plans and decided to go on  
foot, but then Aunt Patience could never accompany him. Mary hesi-  
tated; the situation had become odd now, and unreal.

She stood by the porch and listened. She even tried the handle of  
the door. It was locked, of course. She ventured a little way round the  
50 corner of the house, past the entrance to the bar, and so to the patch of  
garden behind the kitchen. She trod softly now, keeping herself in  
shadow, and she came to where a chink of candlelight would show  
through the gap in the kitchen shutter. There was no light. She stepped  
close now to the shutter and laid her eye against the slit. The kitchen

55 was black as a pit. She laid her hand on the knob of the door and slowly turned it. It gave, to her astonishment, and the door opened. This easy entrance, entirely unforeseen, shocked her for a moment, and she was afraid to enter.

60 Supposing her uncle sat on his chair, waiting for her, his gun across his knee? She had her own pistol, but it gave her no confidence.

Very slowly she laid her face to the gap made by the door. No sound came to her. Out of the tail of her eye she could see the ashes of the fire, but the glow was almost gone. She knew then that nobody was there. Some instinct told her that the kitchen had been empty for hours. She pushed the door wide and went inside. The room struck cold and damp. She waited until her eyes had become accustomed to the darkness, and she could make out the shape of the kitchen table and the chair beside it. There was a candle on the table, and she thrust it into the feeble glow of the fire, where it took light and flickered. 65 When it burnt strong enough, she held it high above her head and looked about her. The kitchen was still strewn with the preparations for departure. There was a bundle belonging to Aunt Patience on the chair, and a heap of blankets lay on the floor ready to be rolled. In the corner of the room, where it always stood, was her uncle's gun. They 70 had decided, then, to wait for another day, and were now abed and asleep in the room upstairs.

The door to the passage was wide open, and the silence became more oppressive than before, strangely and horribly still.

80 Something was not as it had been; some sound was lacking that must account for the silence. Then Mary realised that she could not hear the clock. The ticking had stopped.

She stepped into the passage and listened again. She was right; the house was silent because the clock had stopped. She went forward slowly, with the candle in one hand and the pistol levelled in the other.

85 She turned the corner, where the long dark passage branched into the hall, and she saw that the clock, which stood always against the wall beside the door into the parlour, had toppled forward and fallen upon its face. The glass was splintered in fragments on the stone flags, and the wood was split. The wall gaped bare where it had stood, very 90 naked now and strange, with the paper marked a deep yellow in contrast to the faded pattern of the wall. The clock had fallen across the narrow hall, and it was not until she came to the foot of the stairs that Mary saw what was beyond.

The landlord of Jamaica Inn lay on his face amongst the wreckage.

95 The fallen clock had hidden him at first, for he sprawled in the

shadow, one arm flung high above his head and the other fastened upon the broken splintered door. Because his legs were stretched out on either side of him, one foot jamming the wainscoting, he looked even larger in death than he did before, his great frame blocking the entrance from wall to wall.

## 11. CAKES AND ALE

*By William Somerset Maugham*

William Somerset Maugham is one of the best known English writers of the XXth century. He was not only a novelist of considerable rank, but also one of the most successful dramatists and short-story writers. His first novel *Liza of Lambeth* came out in 1897, and he went on producing books at the rate of at least one a year for sixty odd years. Always keeping in the public eye and striving to satisfy the public tastes so as to make his books sell, Maugham achieved a great popularity with the reading public in England, and especially in the United States of America.

Giving him his due for brilliance of style and a pointed ridicule of many social vices, such as snobbishness, money-worship, pretence, self-interest etc., we realize, however, his cynical attitude to mankind. It is quite obvious that when describing the corruption of modern society, he is not indignant but rather amused. His habitual attitude is that of expecting little or nothing of his fellow men. His ironical cynicism combined with a keen wit and power of observation affords him effective means of portraying English reality without shrinking before its seamy side.

*Cakes and Ale* was claimed by Maugham himself to be the best of his books. It represents the backstage life of the literary profession and unmasks the scheming and humbug behind the veneration and popularity to which Drifffield, a "Grand Old Man" of letters, is exposed, and which he has to live up to.

The extract below contains the portrait of another writer, Alroy Kear, who after Drifffield's death is chosen to write his biography and glorify his achievement. The dry and rather acid irony of the book lies in the contrast between what Drifffield really was and the lofty pathetic Life that Kear, a practised humbug, is planning to write. The character, as the preface states, is a composite portrait in which Maugham puts a great deal of himself. This projecting himself into his book is rather typical of Maugham, who, he confesses, has a grim capacity for seeing his own absurdity.

## CHAPTER I

5 Roy was very modest about his first novel. It was short, neatly written, and, as is everything he has produced since, in perfect taste. He sent it with a pleasant letter to all the leading writers of the day, and in this he told each one how greatly he admired his works, how much he had learned from his study of them, and how ardently he aspired to follow, albeit at a humble distance, the trail his correspondent had blazed. He laid his book at the feet of a great artist as the trib-



10       ute of a young man entering upon the profession of letters to one  
whom he would always look up to as his master. Deprecatingly, fully  
conscious of his audacity in asking so busy a man to waste his time on  
a neophyte's puny effort, he begged for criticism and guidance. Few  
of the replies were perfunctory. The authors he wrote to, flattered by  
his praise, answered at length. They commended his book; many of  
15       them asked him to luncheon. They could not fail to be charmed by his  
frankness and warmed by his enthusiasm. He asked for their advice  
with a humility that was touching and promised to act upon it with a  
sincerity that was impressive. Here, they felt, was someone worth  
taking a little trouble over.

20       His novel had a considerable success. It made him many friends in  
literary circles and in a very short while you could not go to a tea-party  
in Bloomsbury, Campden Hill, or Westminster without finding him  
handing round bread and butter or disembarassing an elderly lady of an  
empty cup. He was so young, so bluff, so gay, he laughed so merrily at  
25       other people's jokes that no one could help liking him. He joined dining  
clubs where in the basement of a hotel in Victoria Street or Holborn  
men of letters, young barristers, and ladies in Liberty silks and strings  
of beads, ate a three-and-sixpenny dinner and discussed art and litera-  
ture. It was soon discovered that he had a pretty gift for after-dinner  
speaking. He was so pleasant that his fellow writers, his rivals and con-  
30       temporaries, forgave him even the fact that he was a gentleman. He was  
generous in his praise of their fledgling works, and when they sent him  
manuscripts to criticize could never find a thing amiss. They thought  
him not only a good sort, but a sound judge.

35       He wrote a second novel. He took great pains with it and he pro-  
fited by the advice his elders in the craft had given him. It was only just  
that more than one should at his request write a review for a paper with  
whose editor Roy had got into touch and only natural that the review  
should be flattering. His second novel was successful, but not so suc-  
cessful as to arouse the umbrageous susceptibilities of his competitors.  
40       In fact it confirmed them in their suspicions that he would never set the  
Thames on fire. He was a jolly good fellow, no side, or anything like  
that: they were quite content to give a leg up to a man who would never  
climb so high as to be an obstacle to themselves. I know some who  
smile bitterly now when they reflect on the mistake they made.

45       But when they say that he is swollen-headed they err. Roy has  
never lost the modesty which in his youth was his most engaging trait.

"I know I'm not a great novelist," he will tell you. "When I com-  
pare myself with the giants I simply don't exist. I used to think that one

50 day I should write a really great novel, but I've long ceased even to  
hope for that. All I want people to say is that I do my best. I do work. I  
never let anything slip-shod get past me. I think I can tell a good story  
and I can create characters that ring true. And after all, the proof of the  
pudding is in the eating: *The Eye of the Needle* sold thirty-five thousand  
in England and eighty thousand in America, and for the serial rights of  
55 my next book I've got the biggest terms I've ever had yet."

And what, after all, can it be other than modesty that makes him  
even now write to the reviewers of his books, thanking them for their  
praise, and ask them to luncheon? Nay, more: when someone has writ-  
ten a slinging criticism and Roy, especially since his reputation became  
60 so great, has had to put up with some very virulent abuse, he does not,  
like most of us, shrug his shoulders, fling a mental insult at the ruffian  
who does not like our work, and then forget about it; he writes a long  
letter to his critic, telling him that he is very sorry he thought his book  
bad, but his review was so interesting in itself, and if he might venture  
65 to say so, showed so much critical sense and so much feeling for words,  
that he felt bound to write to him. No one is more anxious to improve  
himself than he, and he hopes he is still capable of learning. He does  
not want to be a bore, but if the critic has nothing to do on Wednesday  
or Friday will he come and lunch at the Savoy and tell him why exactly  
70 he thought his book so bad? No one can order a lunch better than Roy,  
and generally by the time the critic has eaten half a dozen oysters and a  
cut from a saddle of baby lamb, he has eaten his words too. It is only  
poetic justice that when Roy's next novel comes out the critic should  
see in the new work a very great advance.

75 One of the difficulties that a man has to cope with as he goes  
through life is what to do about the persons with whom he has once  
been intimate and whose interest for him has in due course subsided.  
If both parties remain in a modest station the break comes about natu-  
rally, and no ill feeling subsists, but if one of them achieves eminence  
80 the position is awkward. He makes a multitude of new friends, but the  
old ones are inexorable; he has a thousand claims on his time, but  
they feel that they have the first right to it. Unless he is at their beck  
and call they sigh and with a shrug of the shoulders say:

85 "Ah, well, I suppose you're like everyone else. I must expect to  
be dropped now that you're a success."

That, of course, is what he would like to do if he had the courage.  
For the most part he hasn't. He weakly accepts an invitation to supper  
on Sunday evening. The cold roast beef is frozen and comes from Aus-  
tralia and was over-cooked at middle day; and the burgundy – ah, why

90 will they call it burgundy? Have they never been to Beaune and stayed  
at the Hotel de la Poste? Of course it is grand to talk of the good old  
days when you shared a crust of bread in a garret together, but it is a  
little disconcerting when you reflect how near to a garret is the room  
you are sitting in. You feel ill at ease when your friend tells you that  
95 his books don't sell and that he can't place his short stories; the man-  
agers won't even read his plays, and when he compares them with  
some of the stuff that's put on (here he fixes you with an accusing  
eye) it really does seem a bit hard. You are embarrassed and you look  
100 away. You exaggerate the failures you have had in order that he may  
realize that life has its hardships for you too. You refer to your work  
in the most disparaging way you can and are a trifle taken aback to  
find that your host's opinion of it is the same as yours. You speak of  
the fickleness of the public so that he may comfort himself by think-  
105 ing that your popularity cannot last. He is a friendly but severe critic.

"I haven't read your last book," he says, "but I read the one be-  
fore. I've forgotten its name."

You tell him.

"I was rather disappointed in it. I didn't think it was quite so  
110 good as some of the things you've done. Of course you know which  
my favourite is."

And you, having suffered from other hands than his, answer at  
once with the name of the first book you ever wrote: you were twenty  
then, and it was crude and ingenuous, and on every page was written  
115 your inexperience.

"You'll never do anything so good as that," he says heartily, and  
you feel that your whole career has been a long decadence from that  
one happy hit. "I always think you've never *quite* fulfilled the prom-  
ise you showed then."

120 The gas-fire roasts your feet, but your hands are icy. You look at  
your wrist-watch surreptitiously and wonder whether your old friend  
would think it offensive if you took your leave as early as ten. You  
have told your car to wait round the corner so that it should not stand  
outside the door and by its magnificence affront his poverty, but at the  
125 door he says:

"You'll find a bus at the bottom of the street. I'll just walk down  
with you."

Panic seizes you and you confess that you have a car. He finds it  
very odd that the chauffeur should wait round the corner. You answer  
130 that this is one of his idiosyncrasies. When you reach it your friend  
looks at it with tolerant superiority. You nervously ask him to dinner

with you one day. You promise to write to him and you drive away wondering whether when he comes he will think you are swanking if you ask him to Claridge's or mean if you suggest Soho?

135 Roy Kear suffered from none of these tribulations. It sounds a little brutal, to say that when he had got all he could get of people he dropped them; but it would take so long to put the matter more delicately, and would need so subtle an adjustment of hints, half-tones, and allusions, playful or tender, that such being at bottom the fact, I  
140 think it as well to leave it at that. Most of us when we do a caddish thing harbour resentment against the person we have done it to, but Roy's heart, always in the right place, never permitted him such pettiness. He could use a man very shabbily without afterwards bearing him the slightest ill will.

145 "Poor old Smith," he would say. "He is a dear; I'm so fond of him. Pity he's growing so bitter. I wish one could do something for him. No, I haven't seen him for years. It's no good trying to keen up old friendships. It's painful for both sides. The fact is, one grows out of people, and the only thing is to face it.

150 But if he ran across Smith at some gathering like the private view of the Royal Academy no one could be more cordial. He wrung his hand and told him how delighted he was to see him. His face beamed. He shed good fellowship as the kindly sun its rays. Smith rejoiced in the flow of this wonderful vitality and it was damned decent of Roy to say he'd give his eye-teeth to have written a book half  
155 us good as Smith's last. On the other hand, if Roy thought Smith had not seen him, he looked the other way; but Smith *had* seen him, and Smith resented being cut. Smith was very acid. He said that in the old days Roy had been glad enough to share a steak with him in a shabby  
160 restaurant and spend a month's holiday in a fisherman's cottage at St. Ives. Smith said that Roy was a time-server. He said he was a snob. He said he was a humbug.

Smith was wrong here. The most shining characteristic of Alroy Kear was his sincerity. No one can be a humbug for five and-twenty  
165 years. Hypocrisy is the most difficult and nerve-racking vice, that any man can pursue; it needs an unceasing vigilance and a rare detachment of spirit. It cannot, like adultery or gluttony, be practised at spare moments; it is a whole-time job. It needs also a cynical humour; although Roy laughed so much I never thought he had a very quick  
170 sense of humour, and I am quite sure that he was incapable of cynicism. Though I have finished few of his novels, I have begun a good many, and to my mind his sincerity is stamped on every one of their

multitudinous pages. This is clearly the chief ground of his stable popularity. Roy has always sincerely believed what everyone else  
175 believed at the moment. When he wrote novels about the aristocracy he sincerely believed that its members were dissipated and immoral, and yet had a certain nobility and an innate aptitude for governing the British Empire; when later he wrote of the middle classes he sincerely  
180 believed that they were the backbone of the country. His villains have always been villainous, his heroes heroic, and his maidens chaste.

## 12. THE WAR OF THE WORLDS

*By Herbert George Wells*

*The War of the Worlds* (1898), a science fiction novel by Herbert George Wells, is the first-person narrative of an unnamed protagonist's adventures in London and the countryside southwest of London as Earth is invaded by Martians. Written in 1895-1897, it is one of the earliest stories that details a conflict between mankind and an alien race.

*The War of the Worlds* has two parts, *Book One: The Coming of the Martians* and *Book Two: The Earth under the Martians*. The narrator, a philosophically inclined author, struggles to return to his wife while seeing the Martians lay waste to southern England.

The novel suggests that the development of science benefits society only on condition that the latter is built up on just and humane principles, otherwise progress is basically dangerous. The Martians coming from their planet to the Earth in order to enslave it, personify the cruel forces of capitalism. They possess engineering knowledge far superior to that of terrestrial men, their intellect are cool and unsympathetic. Human feelings of love, hatred, sorrow or happiness are completely foreign to them.

The extract below is taken from the second book of the novel. After the Martian invasion has defeated humanity, the hero and another chance survivor hide in the scullery of a house not far from London. The fifth "cylinder" shot from Mars strikes this house and buries them under the ruins of this scullery. Almost uninjured but cut off from the rest of the world, they watch the Martians through a gap in the wall.

### **Book Two. The Earth Under the Martians**

#### **Chapter II**

##### **What We Saw From the Ruined House**

The fifth cylinder must have fallen right into the midst of the house we had first visited. The building had vanished, completely smashed, pulverised, and dispersed by the blow. The cylinder lay now far beneath the original foundations--deep in a hole, already vastly

larger than the pit I had looked into at Woking. The earth all round it had splashed under that tremendous impact -"splashed" is the only word -and lay in heaped piles that hid the masses of the adjacent houses. It had behaved exactly like mud under the violent blow of a hammer. Our house had collapsed backward; the front portion, even on the ground floor, had been destroyed completely; by a chance the kitchen and scullery had escaped, and stood buried now under soil and ruins, closed in by tons of earth on every side save towards the cylinder. Over that aspect we hung now on the very edge of the great circular pit the Martians were engaged in making. The heavy beating sound was evidently just behind us, and ever and again a bright green vapour drove up like a veil across our peephole.

The cylinder was already opened in the centre of the pit, and on the farther edge of the pit, amid the smashed and gravel-heaped shrubbery, one of the great fighting-machines, deserted by its occupant, stood stiff and tall against the evening sky. At first I scarcely noticed the pit and the cylinder, although it has been convenient to describe them first, on account of the extraordinary glittering mechanism I saw busy in the excavation, and on account of the strange creatures that were crawling slowly and painfully across the heaped mould near it.

The mechanism it certainly was that held my attention first. It was one of those complicated fabrics that have since been called handling-machines, and the study of which has already given such an enormous impetus to terrestrial invention. As it dawned upon me first, it presented a sort of metallic spider with five jointed, agile legs, and with an extraordinary number of jointed levers, bars, and reaching and clutching tentacles about its body. Most of its arms were retracted, but with three long tentacles it was fishing out a number of rods, plates, and bars which lined the covering and apparently strengthened the walls of the cylinder. These, as it extracted them, were lifted out and deposited upon a level surface of earth behind it.

Its motion was so swift, complex, and perfect that at first I did not see it as a machine, in spite of its metallic glitter. The fighting-machines were coordinated and animated to an extraordinary pitch, but nothing to compare with this. People who have never seen these structures, and have only the ill-imagined efforts of artists or the imperfect descriptions of such eye-witnesses as myself to go upon, scarcely realise that living quality.

I recall particularly the illustration of one of the first pamphlets to give a consecutive account of the war. The artist had evidently made a hasty study of one of the fighting-machines, and there his

knowledge ended. He presented them as tilted, stiff tripods, without either flexibility or subtlety, and with an altogether misleading monotony of effect. The pamphlet containing these renderings had a considerable vogue, and I mention them here simply to warn the reader against the impression they may have created. They were no more like the Martians I saw in action than a Dutch doll is like a human being. To my mind, the pamphlet would have been much better without them.

At first, I say, the handling-machine did not impress me as a machine, but as a crablike creature with a glittering integument, the controlling Martian whose delicate tentacles actuated its movements seeming to be simply the equivalent of the crab's cerebral portion. But then I perceived the resemblance of its grey-brown, shiny, leathery integument to that of the other sprawling bodies beyond, and the true nature of this dexterous workman dawned upon me. With that realisation my interest shifted to those other creatures, the real Martians. Already I had had a transient impression of these, and the first nausea no longer obscured my observation. Moreover, I was concealed and motionless, and under no urgency of action.

They were, I now saw, the most unearthly creatures it is possible to conceive. They were huge round bodies – or, rather, heads--about four feet in diameter, each body having in front of it a face. This face had no nostrils--indeed, the Martians do not seem to have had any sense of smell, but it had a pair of very large dark-coloured eyes, and just beneath this a kind of fleshy beak. In the back of this head or body – I scarcely know how to speak of it – was the single tight tympanic surface, since known to be anatomically an ear, though it must have been almost useless in our dense air. In a group round the mouth were sixteen slender, almost whip-like tentacles, arranged in two bunches of eight each. These bunches have since been named rather aptly, by that distinguished anatomist, Professor Howes, the HANDS. Even as I saw these Martians for the first time they seemed to be endeavouring to raise themselves on these hands, but of course, with the increased weight of terrestrial conditions, this was impossible. There is reason to suppose that on Mars they may have progressed upon them with some facility.

The internal anatomy, I may remark here, as dissection has since shown, was almost equally simple. The greater part of the structure was the brain, sending enormous nerves to the eyes, ear, and tactile tentacles. Besides this were the bulky lungs, into which the mouth opened, and the heart and its vessels. The pulmonary distress caused by the denser atmosphere and greater gravitational attraction was only

too evident in the convulsive movements of the outer skin.

And this was the sum of the Martian organs. Strange as it may seem to a human being, all the complex apparatus of digestion, which makes up the bulk of our bodies, did not exist in the Martians. They were heads--merely heads. Entrails they had none. They did not eat, much less digest. Instead, they took the fresh, living blood of other creatures, and INJECTED it into their own veins. I have myself seen this being done, as I shall mention in its place. But, squeamish as I may seem, I cannot bring myself to describe what I could not endure even to continue watching. Let it suffice to say, blood obtained from a still living animal, in most cases from a human being, was run directly by means of a little pipette into the recipient canal. . . .

### 13. THE MAN AND THE SNAKE

*By Ambrose Bierce*

It is of veritabyll report, and  
attested of so many that there be  
nowe of wyse and learned none  
to gaynsaye it,  
that ye serpente hys eye hath a  
magnetick propertie  
that whosoe falleth into its sva-  
sion is drawn forwards  
in despyte of his wille, and  
perisheth miserabyll by ye  
creature hys byte.

5 Stretched at ease upon a sofa, in gown and slippers, Harker Brayton smiled as he read the foregoing sentence in old Morryster's "Marvell's of Science." "The only marvel in the matter," he said to himself, "is that the wise and learned in Morryster's day should have believed such nonsense as is rejected by most of even the ignorant in ours."

10 A train of reflections followed – for Brayton was a man of thought – and he unconsciously lowered his book without altering the direction of his eyes. As soon as the volume had gone below the line of sight, something in an obscure corner of the room recalled his attention to his surroundings. What he saw, in the shadow under his bed, were two small points of light, apparently about an inch apart. They might have been reflections of the gas jet above him, in metal nail heads; he gave them but little thought and resumed his reading. A moment later something – some impulse which it did not occur to him



15 to analyze – impelled him to lower the book again and seek for what  
he saw before. The points of light were still there. They seemed to  
have become brighter than before, shining with a greenish luster  
which he had not at first observed. He thought, too, that they might  
20 have moved a trifle—were somewhat nearer. They were still too  
much in the shadow, however, to reveal their nature and origin to an  
indolent attention, and he resumed his reading. Suddenly something  
in the text suggested a thought which made him start and drop the  
book for the third time to the side of the sofa, whence, escaping from  
his hand, it fell sprawling to the floor, back upward. Brayton, half-  
25 risen, was staring intently into the obscurity beneath the bed, where  
the points of light shone with, it seemed to him, an added fire. His  
attention was now fully aroused, his gaze eager and imperative. It  
disclosed, almost directly beneath the foot rail of the bed, the coils of  
a large serpent--the points of light were its eyes! Its horrible head,  
30 thrust flatly forth from the innermost coil and resting upon the outer-  
most, was directed straight toward him, the definition of the wide,  
brutal jaw and the idiotlike forehead serving to show the direction of  
its malevolent gaze. The eyes were no longer merely luminous points;  
they looked into his own with a meaning, a malign significance.

35 II

A snake in a bedroom of a modern city dwelling of the better  
sort is, happily, not so common a phenomenon as to make explanation  
altogether needless. Harker Brayton, a bachelor of thirty-five, a schol-  
ar, idler, and something of an athlete, rich, popular, and of sound  
40 health, had returned to San Francisco from all manner of remote and  
unfamiliar countries. His tastes, always a trifle luxurious, had taken  
on an added exuberance from long privation; and the resources of  
even the Castle Hotel being inadequate for their perfect gratification,  
he had gladly accepted the hospitality of his friend, Dr. Druring, the  
45 distinguished scientist. Dr. Druring's house, a large, old-fashioned one  
in what was now an obscure quarter of the city, had an outer and visi-  
ble aspect of reserve. It plainly would not associate with the contigu-  
ous elements of its altered environment, and appeared to have devel-  
oped some of the eccentricities which come of isolation. One of these  
50 was a "wing," conspicuously irrelevant in point of architecture, and  
no less rebellious in the matter of purpose; for it was a combination of  
laboratory, menagerie, and museum. It was here that the doctor in-  
dulged the scientific side of his nature in the study of such forms of  
animal life as engaged his interest and comforted his taste--which, it  
55 must be confessed, ran rather to the lower forms. For one of the high-

er types nimbly and sweetly to recommend itself unto his gentle senses, it had at least to retain certain rudimentary characteristics allying it to such "dragons of the prime" as toads and snakes. His scientific sympathies were distinctly reptilian; he loved nature's vulgarians and described himself as the Zola of zoology. His wife and daughters, not having the advantage to share his enlightened curiosity regarding the works and ways of our ill-starred fellow-creatures, were, with needless austerity, excluded from what he called the Snakery, and doomed to companionship with their own kind; though, to soften the rigors of their lot, he had permitted them, out of his great wealth, to outdo the reptiles in the gorgeousness of their surroundings and to shine with a superior splendor.

Architecturally, and in point of "furnishing," the Snakery had a severe simplicity befitting the humble circumstances of its occupants, many of whom, indeed, could not safely have been intrusted with the liberty which is necessary to the full enjoyment of luxury, for they had the troublesome peculiarity of being alive. In their own apartments, however, they were under as little personal restraint as was compatible with their protection from the baneful habit of swallowing one another; and, as Brayton had thoughtfully been apprised, it was more than a tradition that some of them had at divers times been found in parts of the premises where it would have embarrassed them to explain their presence. Despite the Snakery and its uncanny associations--to which, indeed, he gave little attention—Brayton found life at the Druring mansion very much to his mind.

### III

Beyond a smart shock of surprise and a shudder of mere loathing, Mr. Brayton was not greatly affected. His first thought was to ring the call bell and bring a servant; but, although the bell cord dangled within easy reach, he made no movement toward it; it had occurred to his mind that the act might subject him to the suspicion of fear, which he certainly did not feel. He was more keenly conscious of the incongruous nature of the situation than affected by its perils; it was revolting, but absurd.

The reptile was of a species with which Brayton was unfamiliar. Its length he could only conjecture; the body at the largest visible part seemed about as thick as his forearm. In what way was it dangerous, if in any way? Was it venomous? Was it a constrictor? His knowledge of nature's danger signals did not enable him to say; he had never deciphered the code.

If not dangerous, the creature was at least offensive. It was de

trop--"matter out of place"—an impertinence. The gem was unworthy of the setting. Even the barbarous taste of our time and country, which had loaded the walls of the room with pictures, the floor with furniture, and the furniture with bric-a-brac, had not quite fitted the place for this bit of the savage life of the jungle. Besides—inupportable thought!—the exhalations of its breath mingled with the atmosphere which he himself was breathing!

These thoughts shaped themselves with greater or less definition in Brayton's mind, and begot action. The process is what we call consideration and decision. It is thus that we are wise and unwise. It is thus that the withered leaf in an autumn breeze shows greater or less intelligence than its fellows, falling upon the land or upon the lake. The secret of human action is an open one—something contracts our muscles. Does it matter if we give to the preparatory molecular changes the name of will?

Brayton rose to his feet and prepared to back softly away from the snake, without disturbing it, if possible, and through the door. People retire so from the presence of the great, for greatness is power, and power is a menace. He knew that he could walk backward without obstruction, and find the door without error. Should the monster follow, the taste which had plastered the walls with paintings had consistently supplied a rack of murderous Oriental weapons from which he could snatch one to suit the occasion. In the meantime the snake's eyes burned with a more pitiless malevolence than ever.

Brayton lifted his right foot free of the floor to step backward. That moment he felt a strong aversion to doing so.

"I am accounted brave," he murmured; "is bravery, then, no more than pride? Because there are none to witness the shame shall I retreat?"

He was steadying himself with his right hand upon the back of a chair, his foot suspended.

"Nonsense!" he said aloud; "I am not so great a coward as to fear to seem to myself afraid."

He lifted the foot a little higher by slightly bending the knee, and thrust it sharply to the floor—an inch in front of the other! He could not think how that occurred. A trial with the left foot had the same result; it was again in advance of the right. The hand upon the chair back was grasping it; the arm was straight, reaching somewhat backward. One might have seen that he was reluctant to lose his hold. The snake's malignant head was still thrust forth from the inner coil as before, the neck level. It had not moved, but its eyes were now elec-

tric sparks, radiating an infinity of luminous needles.

140 The man had an ashy pallor. Again he took a step forward, and  
another, partly dragging the chair, which, when finally released, fell  
upon the floor with a crash. The man groaned; the snake made neither  
sound nor motion, but its eyes were two dazzling suns. The reptile  
itself was wholly concealed by them. They gave off enlarging rings of  
145 rich and vivid colors, which at their greatest expansion successively  
vanished like soap bubbles; they seemed to approach his very face,  
and anon were an immeasurable distance away. He heard, some-  
where, the continual throbbing of a great drum, with desultory bursts  
of far music, inconceivably sweet, like the tones of an aeolian harp.  
He knew it for the sunrise melody of Memnon's statue, and thought he  
146 stood in the Nileside reeds, hearing, with exalted sense, that immortal  
anthem through the silence of the centuries.

The music ceased; rather, it became by insensible degrees the  
distant roll of a retreating thunderstorm. A landscape, glittering with  
sun and rain, stretched before him, arched with a vivid rainbow, fram-  
150 ing in its giant curve a hundred visible cities. In the middle distance a  
vast serpent, wearing a crown, reared its head out of its voluminous  
convolutions and looked at him with his dead mother's eyes. Suddenly  
this enchanting landscape seemed to rise swiftly upward, like the drop  
scene at a theater, and vanished in a blank. Something struck him a  
155 hard blow upon the face and breast. He had fallen to the floor; the  
blood ran from his broken nose and his bruised lips. For a moment he  
was dazed and stunned, and lay with closed eyes, his face against the  
door. In a few moments he had recovered, and then realized that his  
fall, by withdrawing his eyes, had broken the spell which held him.  
160 He felt that now, by keeping his gaze averted, he would be able to  
retreat. But the thought of the serpent within a few feet of his head,  
yet unseen--perhaps in the very act of springing upon him and throw-  
ing its coils about his throat--was too horrible. He lifted his head,  
stared again into those baleful eyes, and was again in bondage.

170 The snake had not moved, and appeared somewhat to have lost  
its power upon the imagination; the gorgeous illusions of a few mo-  
ments before were not repeated. Beneath that flat and brainless brow  
its black, beady eyes simply glittered, as at first, with an expression  
unspeakably malignant. It was as if the creature, knowing its triumph  
175 assured, had determined to practice no more alluring wiles.

Now ensued a fearful scene. The man, prone upon the floor,  
within a yard of his enemy, raised the upper part of his body upon his  
elbows, his head thrown back, his legs extended to their full length.

180 His face was white between its gouts of blood; his eyes were strained  
open to their uttermost expansion. There was froth upon his lips; it  
dropped off in flakes. Strong convulsions ran through his body, mak-  
ing almost serpentine undulations. He bent himself at the waist, shift-  
ing his legs from side to side. And every movement left him a little  
nearer to the snake. He thrust his hands forward to brace himself  
185 back, yet constantly advanced upon his elbows.

#### IV

Dr. Druring and his wife sat in the library. The scientist was in  
rare good humor.

"I have just obtained, by exchange with another collector," he  
190 said, "a splendid specimen of the Ophiophagus."

"And what may that be?" the lady inquired with a somewhat  
languid interest.

"Why, bless my soul, what profound ignorance! My dear, a man  
who ascertains after marriage that his wife does not know Greek, is  
195 entitled to a divorce. The Ophiophagus is a snake which eats other  
snakes."

"I hope it will eat all yours," she said, absently shifting the lamp.  
"But how does it get the other snakes? By charming them, I suppose."

"That is just like you, dear," said the doctor, with an affectation  
200 of petulance. "You know how irritating to me is any allusion to that  
vulgar superstition about the snake's power of fascination."

The conversation was interrupted by a mighty cry which rang  
through the silent house like the voice of a demon shouting in a tomb.  
Again and yet again it sounded, with terrible distinctness. They  
205 sprang to their feet, the man confused, the lady pale and speechless  
with fright. Almost before the echoes of the last cry had died away the  
doctor was out of the room, springing up the staircase two steps at a  
time. In the corridor, in front of Brayton's chamber, he met some  
servants who had come from the upper floor. Together they rushed at  
210 the door without knocking. It was unfastened, and gave way. Brayton  
lay upon his stomach on the floor, dead. His head and arms were part-  
ly concealed under the foot rail of the bed. They pulled the body  
away, turning it upon the back. The face was daubed with blood and  
froth, the eyes were wide open, staring--a dreadful sight!

215 "Died in a fit," said the scientist, bending his knee and placing his  
hand upon the heart. While in that position he happened to glance under  
the bed. "Good God!" he added; "how did this thing get in here?"

He reached under the bed, pulled out the snake, and flung it, still  
coiled, to the center of the room, whence, with a harsh, shuffling

sound, it slid across the polished floor till stopped by the wall, where it lay without motion. It was a stuffed snake; its eyes were two shoe buttons.

## 14. JUST GOOD FRIENDS

*By Jeffrey Archer*

\* \* \*

I woke up before him feeling slightly horny, but I knew there was nothing I could do about it.

5 I blinked, and my eyes immediately accustomed themselves to the half-light. I raised my head and gazed at the large expanse of motionless white flesh lying next to me. If only he took as much exercise as I did he wouldn't have that spare tire, I thought unsympathetically

10 Roger stirred restlessly and even turned over to face me, but I knew he would not be fully awake until the alarm on his side of the bed started ringing. I pondered for a moment whether I could go back to sleep again or should get up and find myself some breakfast before he awoke. In the end I settled for just lying still on my side daydreaming, but making sure I didn't disturb him. When he did eventually open his eyes, I planned to pretend I was still asleep—that  
15 way he would end up getting breakfast for me. I began to go over the things that needed to be done after he had left for the office. As long as I was at home ready to greet him when he returned from work, he didn't seem to mind what I got up to during the day.

20 A gentle rumble emanated from his side of the bed. Roger's snoring never disturbed me. My affection for him was unbounded, and I only wished I could find the words to let him know. In truth, he was the first man I had really appreciated. As I gazed at his unshaven face I was reminded that it hadn't been his looks that had attracted me in the pub that night.

25 I had first come across Roger in the Cat and Whistle, a public house situated on the corner of Mafeking Road. You might say it was our local. He used to come in around eight, order a pint of mild, and take it to a small table in the corner of the room just beyond the dart board. Mostly he would sit alone, watching the darts being thrown  
30 toward double top but more often settling in one or five, if they managed to land on the board at all. He never played the game himself, and I often wondered, from my vantage point behind the bar, if he was fearful of relinquishing his favourite seat or just had no

interest in the sport.

35        Then things suddenly changed for Roger – for the better, was no  
doubt how he saw it – when one evening in early spring a blond  
named Madeleine, wearing an imitation fur coat and drinking double  
martinis, perched on the stool beside him. I had never seen her in the  
pub before, but she was obviously known locally, and loose bar talk  
40        led me to believe it couldn't last. You see, word was around that she  
was looking for someone whose horizons stretched beyond the Cat  
and Whistle.

      In fact the affair – if that's what it ever came to – lasted for only  
twenty days. I know because I counted every one of them. Then one  
45        night voices were raised, and heads turned as she left the small stool  
just as suddenly as she had come. His tired eyes watched her walk to  
a vacant place at the corner of the bar, but he didn't show any surprise  
at her departure and made no attempt to pursue her.

      Her exit was my cue to enter. I almost leaped from behind the  
50        bar and, moving as quickly as dignity allowed, was seconds later  
sitting on the vacant stool beside him. He didn't comment and  
certainly made no attempt to offer me a drink, but the one glance he  
shot in my direction did not suggest he found me an unacceptable  
replacement. I looked around to see if anyone else had plans to usurp  
55        my position. The men standing round the dart board didn't seem to  
care. Treble seventeen, twelve, and a five kept them more than  
occupied. I glanced toward the bar to check if the boss had noticed  
my absence, but he was busy taking orders. I saw that Madeleine was  
already sipping a glass of champagne from the pub's only bottle,  
60        purchased by a stranger whose stylish double-breasted blazer and  
striped bow tie convinced me she wouldn't be bothering with Roger  
any longer. She looked well set for at least another twenty days.

      I looked up at Roger – I had known his name for some time,  
although I had never addressed him as such, and I couldn't be sure that  
65        he was aware of mine. I began to flutter my eyelashes in a rather  
exaggerated way. I felt a little stupid, but at least it elicited a gentle  
smile. He leaned over and touched my cheek, his hands surprisingly  
gentle. Neither of us felt the need to speak. We were both lonely, and it  
seemed unnecessary to explain why. We sat in silence, he occasionally  
70        sipping his beer, I from time to time rearranging my legs, while a few  
feet from us the darts pursued their undetermined course.

      When the publican cried, "Last orders," Roger downed the  
remains of his beer while the dart players completed what had to be  
their final game.

75           No one commented when we left together, and I was surprised  
that Roger made no protest as I accompanied him back to his little  
semidetached. I already knew exactly where he lived because I had  
seen him on several occasions standing at the bus stop in Dobson  
80           Street in a silent line of reluctant morning passengers. Once I even  
positioned myself on a nearby wall in order to study his features more  
carefully. It was an anonymous, almost commonplace face, but he had  
the warmest eyes and the kindest smile I had observed in any man.

          My only anxiety was that he didn't seem aware of my existence,  
just constantly preoccupied, his eyes each evening and his thought  
85           each morning only for Madeleine. How I envied that girl. She had  
everything I wanted – except a decent fur coat, the only thing my  
mother had left me. In truth, I have no right to be catty about  
Madeleine, as her past couldn't have been more murky than mine.

          All that took place well over a year ago and, to prove my total  
90           devotion to Roger, I have never entered the Cat and Whistle since. He  
seemed to have forgotten Madeleine, because he never once spoke of  
her in front of me. An unusual man, he didn't question me about any  
of my past relationships either.

          Perhaps he should have. I would have liked him to know the  
95           truth about my life we'd met, though it all seems irrelevant now. You  
see, I had been the youngest in a family of four, so I always came last  
in line. I had never known my father, and I arrived home one night to  
discover that my mother had run off with another man. Tracy, one of  
my sisters, warned me not to expect her back. She turned out to be  
100          right, for I have never seen my mother since that day. It's awful to  
have to admit, if only to oneself, that one's mother is a tramp.

          Now an orphan, I began to drift, often trying to stay one step  
ahead of the law – not so easy when you haven't always got  
somewhere to put your head down. I can't even recall how I ended up  
105          with Derek – if that was his real name. Derek, whose dark sensual  
looks would have attracted any susceptible female, told me that he  
had been on a merchant steamer for the past three years. When he  
made love to me I was ready to believe anything. I explained to him  
that all I wanted was a warm home, regular food, and perhaps in time  
110          a family of my own. He ensured that one of my wishes was fulfilled,  
because a few weeks after he left me I ended up with twins, two girls.  
Derek never set eyes on them: He had returned to sea even before I  
could tell him I was pregnant. He hadn't needed to promise me the  
earth; he was so good-looking he must have known I would have been  
115          his just for a night on the tiles.



I tried to bring up the girls decently, but the authorities caught up with me this time, and I lost them both. I wonder where they are now? God knows. I only hope they've ended up in a good home. At least they inherited Derek's irresistible looks, which can only help the  
120 through life. It's just one more thing Roger will never know about. His unquestioning trust only makes me feel more guilty, and now I never seen able to find a way of letting him know the truth.

After Derek had gone back to sea I was on my own for almost a year before getting part-time work at the Cat and Whistle. The  
125 publican was so mean that he wouldn't even have provided food and drink for me if hadn't kept to my part of the bargain.

Roger used to come in about once, perhaps twice a week before he met the blond with the shabby fake coat. After that it was every night until she upped and left him.

I knew he was perfect for me the first time I heard him order a pint of mild. A pint of mild – I can't think of a better description of Roger. In those early days the barmaids used to flirt openly with him, but he didn't show any interest. Until Madeleine latched on to him, I wasn't even sure that it was women he preferred. Perhaps in the end it  
135 was my androgynous looks that appealed to him.

I think I must have been the only one in that pub who was looking for something more permanent.

And so Roger allowed me to spend the night with him. I remember that he slipped into the bathroom to undress while I rested on  
140 what I assumed would be my side of the bed. Since that night he has never once asked me to leave, let alone tried to kick me out. It's an easygoing relationship. I've never known him to raise his voice or scold me unfairly. Forgive the cliché, but for once I have fallen on my feet.

Br. Br. Br. That damned alarm. I wished I could have buried  
145 it. The noise would go on and on until at last Roger decided to stir himself. I once tried to stretch across him and put a stop to its infernal ringing, only ending up knocking the contraption on the floor, which annoyed him even more than the ringing. Never again, I concluded. Eventually a long arm emerged from under the blanket, and a palm  
150 dropped onto the top of the clock, and the awful din subsided. I'm a light sleeper – the slightest movement stirs me. If only he had asked me, I could have woken him far more gently each morning. After all, my methods are every bit as reliable as any man-made contraption.

Half awake, Roger gave me a brief cuddle before kneading my  
155 back, always guaranteed to elicit a smile. Then he yawned, stretched, and declared as he did every morning, "Must hurry along or I'll be

late for the office.” I suppose some females would be annoyed by the predictability of our morning routine- but not this lady. It was all part of a life that made me feel secure in the belief that at last I had found something worthwhile.

160 Roger managed to get his feet into the wrong slippers – always a fifty-fifty chance – before lumbering toward the bathroom. He emerged fifteen minutes later, as he always did, looking only slightly better than he did when he entered. I’ve learned to live with what  
165 some would have called his foibles, while he has learned to accept my mania for cleanliness and a need to feel secure.

“Get up, lazybones,” he remonstrated, but then only smiled when I resettled myself, refusing to leave the warm hollow that had been left by his body.

170 “I suppose you expect me to get your breakfast before I go to work?” he added as he made his way downstairs. I didn’t bother to reply. I knew that in a few moments’ time he would be opening the front door picking up the morning newspaper, any mail, and our regular  
175 pint of milk. Reliable as ever, he would put on the kettle, then head for the pantry, fill a bowl with my favourite breakfast food, and add my portion of the milk, leaving himself just enough for two cups of coffee.

I could anticipate almost to the second when breakfast would be ready. First I would hear the kettle boil, a few moments later the milk would be poured, then finally there would be the sound of a chair  
180 being pulled up. That was the signal I needed to confirm it was time for me to join him.

I stretched my legs slowly, noticing that my nails needed some attention. I had already decided against a proper wash until after he had left for the office I could hear the sound of the chair being scraped  
185 along the kitchen linoleum. I felt so happy that I literally jumped off the bed before making my way toward the open door. A few seconds later I was downstairs. Although he had already taken his first mouthful of corn flakes he stopped eating the moment he saw me.

190 “Good of you to join me,” he said, a grin spreading over his face.

I padded over toward him and looked up expectantly. He bent down and pushed my bowl toward me. I began to lap up the milk happily, my tail swishing from side to side.

It’s a myth that we only swish our tails when we are angry.

## 15. THE ORPHANED SWIMMING POOL

*By John Updike*

5       Marriages, like chemical unions, release upon dissolution packets  
of the energy locked up in their bonding. There is the piano no one  
wants, the cocker spaniel no one can take care of. Shelves of books  
suddenly stand revealed as burdensomely dated and unlikely to be re-  
read; indeed, it is difficult to remember who read them in the first place.  
10       And what of those old skis in the attic? Or the doll house waiting to be  
repaired in the basement? The piano goes out of tune, the dog goes  
mad. The summer that the Turners got their divorce, their swimming  
pool had neither a master nor a mistress, though the sun beat down day  
after day, and a state of drought was declared in Connecticut.

15       It was a young pool, only two years old, of the fragile type fash-  
ioned by laying a plastic liner within a carefully carved hole in the  
ground. The Turners' side yard looked infernal while it was being  
done; one bulldozer sank into the mud and had to be pulled free by  
another. But by midsummer the new grass was sprouting, the encir-  
cling flagstones were in place, the blue plastic tinted the water a  
heavenly blue, and it had to be admitted that the Turners had scored  
again. They were always a little in advance of their friends. He was a  
20       tall, hairy-backed man with long arms, and a nose flattened by foot-  
ball, and a sullen look of too much blood; she was a fine-boned  
blonde with dry blue eyes and lips usually held parted and crinkled as  
if about to ask a worrisome, or whimsical, question. They never  
seemed happier, nor their marriage healthier, than those two summers.  
25       They grew brown and supple and smooth with swimming. Ted would  
begin his day with a swim, before dressing to catch the train, and Lin-  
da would hold court all day amid crowds of wet matrons and children,  
and Ted would return from work to find a poolside cocktail party in  
progress, and the couple would end their day at midnight, when their  
30       friends had finally left, by swimming nude, before bed. What ecstasy!  
In darkness the water felt mild as milk and buoyant as helium, and the  
swimmers became giants, gliding from side to side in a single lan-  
guorous stroke.

35       The next May, the pool was filled as usual, and the usual after-  
school gangs of mothers and children gathered, but Linda, unlike her,  
stayed indoors. She could be heard within the house, moving from  
room to room, but she no longer emerged, as in the other summers,  
with a cheerful tray of ice and brace of bottles, and Triscuits and lem-  
onade for the children. Their friends felt less comfortable about ap-

40 pearing, towels in hand, at the Turners' on weekends. Though Linda  
had lost some weight and looked elegant, and Ted was clumsily  
jovial, they gave off the faint, sleepless, awkward-making aroma of a  
couple in trouble. Then, the day after school was out, Linda fled with  
45 the children to her parents in Ohio. Ted stayed nights in the city, and  
the pool was deserted. Though the pump that ran the water through  
the filter continued to mutter in the lilacs, the cerulean pool grew  
cloudy. The bodies of dead horseflies and wasps dotted the still sur-  
face. A speckled plastic ball drifted into a corner beside the diving  
50 board and stayed there. The grass between the flagstones grew lank.  
On the glass-topped poolside table, a spray can of Off! had lost its  
pressure and a gin-and-tonic glass held a sere mint leaf. The pool  
looked desolate and haunted, like a stagnant jungle spring; it looked  
poisonous and ashamed. The postman, stuffing overdue notices and  
55 pornography solicitations into the mailbox, averted his eyes from the  
side yard politely.

Some June weekends, Ted sneaked out from the city. Families  
driving to church glimpsed him dolefully sprinkling chemical sub-  
stances into the pool. He looked pale and thin. He instructed Roscoe  
60 Chace, his neighbor on the left, how to switch on the pump and  
change the filter, and how much chlorine and Algitrol should be add-  
ed weekly. He explained he would not be able to make it out every  
weekend — as if the distance that for years he had traveled twice each  
day, gliding in and out of New York, had become an impossibly steep  
65 climb back into the past. Linda, he confided vaguely, had left her par-  
ents in Akron and was visiting her sister in Minneapolis. As the shock  
of the Turners' joint disappearance wore off, their pool seemed less  
haunted and forbidding. The Murtaugh children — the Murtaughs, a  
rowdy, numerous family, were the Turners' right-hand neighbors —  
70 began to use it, without supervision. So Linda's old friends, with their  
children, began to show up, «to keep the Murtaughs from drowning  
each other». For if anything were to happen to a Murtaugh, the poor  
Turners (the adjective had become automatic) would be sued for eve-  
rything, right when they could least afford it. It became, then, a kind  
75 of duty, a test of loyalty, to use the pool.

July was the hottest in twenty-seven years. People brought their  
own lawn furniture over in station wagons and set it up. Teenage off-  
spring and Swiss *au-pair* girls were established as lifeguards. A nylon  
rope with flotation corks, meant to divide the wading end from the  
80 diving end of the pool, was found coiled in the garage and reinstalled.

Agnes Kleefield contributed an old refrigerator, which was wired to an outlet above Ted's basement workbench and used to store ice, quinine water, and soft drinks. An honor system shoebox containing change appeared beside it; a little lost-and-found – an array of forgotten sunglasses, flippers, towels, lotions, paperbacks, shirts, even underwear – materialized on the Turners' side steps. When people, that 85 July, said, «Meet you at the pool», they did not mean the public pool past the shopping center, or the country-club pool beside the first tee. They meant the Turners'. Restrictions on admission – were difficult 90 to enforce tactfully. A visiting Methodist bishop, two Taiwanese economists, an entire girls' Softball team from Darien, an eminent Canadian poet, the archery champion of Hartford, the six members of a black rock group called the Good Intentions, an ex-mistress of Aly Khan, the lavender-haired mother-in-law of a Nixon adviser not quite 95 of Cabinet rank, an infant of six weeks, a man who was killed the next day on the Merritt Parkway, a Filipino who could stay on the pool bottom for eighty seconds, two Texans who kept cigars in their mouths and hats on their heads, three telephone linemen, four expatriate 100 Czechs, a student Maoist from Wesleyan, and the postman all swam, as guests, in the Turners' pool, though not all at once. After the daytime crowd ebbed, and the shoebox was put back in the refrigerator, and the last *au-pair* girl took the last goosefleshed, wrinkled child shivering home to supper, there was a tide of evening activity, trysts 105 (Mrs. Kleefield and the Nicholson boy, most notoriously) and what some called, overdramatically, orgies. True, late splashes and excited guffaws did often keep Mrs. Chace awake, and the Murtaugh children spent hours at their attic window with binoculars. And there was the evidence of the lost underwear.

110 One Saturday early in August, the morning arrivals found an unknown car with New York plates parked in the garage. But cars of all sorts were so common – the parking tangle frequently extended into the road – that nothing much was thought of it, even when someone noticed that the bedroom windows upstairs were open. And nothing 115 came of it, except that around suppertime, in the lull before the evening crowds began to arrive in force, Ted and an unknown woman, of the same physical type as Linda but brunette, swiftly exited from the kitchen door, got into the car, and drove back to New York. The few lingering babysitters and beaux thus unwittingly glimpsed the root of 120 the divorce. The two lovers had been trapped inside the house all day; Ted was fearful of the legal consequences of their being seen by any-

one who might write and tell Linda. The settlement was at a ticklish stage; nothing less than terror of Linda's lawyers would have led Ted to suppress his indignation at seeing, from behind the window screen, his private pool turned public carnival. For long thereafter, though in the end he did not marry the woman, he remembered that day when they lived together like fugitives in a cave, feeding on love and ice water, tiptoeing barefoot to the depleted cupboards, which they, arriving late last night, had hoped to stock in the morning, not foreseeing the onslaught of interlopers that would pin them in. Her hair, he remembered, had tickled his shoulders as she crouched behind him at the window, and through the angry pounding of his own blood he had felt her slim body breathless with the attempt not to giggle. August drew in, with cloudy days. Children grew bored with swimming. Roscoe Chace went on vacation; to Italy; the pump broke down, and no one repaired it. Dead dragonflies accumulated on the surface of the pool. Small deluded toads hopped in and swam around hopelessly. Linda at last returned. From Minneapolis she had gone on to Idaho for six weeks, to be divorced. She and the children had burnt faces from riding and hiking; her lips looked drier and more quizzical than ever, still seeking to frame that troubling question. She stood at the window, in the house that already seemed to lack its furniture, at the same side window where the lovers had crouched, and gazed at the deserted pool. The grass around it was green from splashing, save where a long-lying towel had smothered a rectangle and left it brown. Aluminum furniture she didn't recognize lay strewn and broken. She counted a dozen bottles beneath the glass-topped table. The nylon divider had parted, and its two halves floated independently. The blue plastic beneath the colorless water tried to make a cheerful, otherworldly statement, but Linda saw that the pool in truth had no bottom, it held bottomless loss, it was one huge blue tear. Thank God no one had drowned in it. Except her. She saw that she could never live here again. In September the place was sold to a family with toddling infants, who for safety's sake have not only drained the pool but have sealed it over with iron pipes and a heavy mesh, and put warning signs around, as around a chained dog.

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