
ENGLISH

1111/02

Paper 2 Fiction

April 2018

INSERT

1 hour plus 10 minutes' reading time



This document consists of **3** printed pages and **1** blank page.

Text for Section A, an extract from 'Cat's Eye' by Margaret Atwood

Time is not a line but a dimension, like the dimensions of space.

It was my brother Stephen who told me that, when he wore his ravelling maroon sweater to study in and spent a lot of time standing on his head so that the blood would run down into his brain and nourish it. I didn't understand what he meant but maybe he didn't explain it very well.

'Stephen says time is not a line,' I say. Cordelia rolls her eyes, as I knew she would. 5

'So?' she says. This answer pleases both of us. It puts the nature of time in its place, and also Stephen, who calls us 'the teenagers', as if he himself is not one.

Cordelia and I are riding on the streetcar, going downtown, as we do on winter Saturdays. The streetcar is muggy with twice-breathed air and the smell of wool. Cordelia sits with nonchalance, nudging me with her elbow now and then, staring blankly at the other people with her grey-green eyes, opaque and glinting as metal. She can outstare anyone, and I am almost as good. We're impervious, we scintillate, we are thirteen. 10

We wear long coats with tie belts, the collars turned up to look like movie stars, and rubber boots with the tops folded down and men's work socks inside. In our pockets are stuffed the kerchiefs our mothers make us wear but that we take off as soon as we are out of sight. We scorn head-coverings. Our mouths are tough, crayon red, shiny as nails. We think we are friends. 15

On the streetcars there are always old ladies, or we think of them as old. They're of various kinds. Some are respectably dressed, in tailored coats and matching gloves and tidy, no-nonsense hats. Others are poorer and have dark shawls around their shoulders. Others are bulgy, dumpy, with clamped self-righteous mouths, their arms festooned with shopping bags; these we associate with sales, with bargain basements. Cordelia can tell cheap cloth at a glance. 'Gaberdine,' she says, 'Ticky-tack.' 20

Then there are the ones who still try for an effect of glamour. There aren't many of these, but they stand out. They wear scarlet outfits or purple ones, and dangly earrings, and hats that look like stage props. Their lipstick mouths are too big around their mouths, their eyes drawn screw-jiggy around their real eyes. 25

This is the kind we like best. They have a certain gaiety to them, a power of invention, they don't care what people think. We think that their bizarre costumes are chosen, and that when the time comes we also will be free to choose.

'That's what I'm going to be like,' says Cordelia. 'Only I'm going to have a yappy Pekinese, and chase kids off my lawn.' 30

'I'm going to have a pet iguana,' I say, 'and wear nothing but cerise.' It's a word I have recently learned.

Now I think, what if they couldn't see what they looked like? Maybe it was as simple as that: eye problems. I'm having that problem now: too close to the mirror and I'm a blur, too far back and I can't see the details. Who knows what faces I'm making, what kind of modern art I'm drawing on myself? Even when I've got the distance adjusted, I vary. Some days I look like a worn-out thirty-five, others like a sprightly fifty. 35

If I were to meet Cordelia again, what would I tell her about myself? The truth, or whatever would make me look good? 40

I haven't seen her for a long time. I wasn't expecting to see her. But now that I'm back here I can hardly walk down a street without a glimpse of her, turning a corner, entering a door. It goes without saying that these fragments of her belong to women who, seen whole, are not Cordelia.

I think of encountering her without warning. Perhaps in a worn coat and a knitted hat, sitting on a kerb, with two plastic bags filled with her only possessions, muttering to herself.

45

I've been walking for hours it seems, down the hill to the downtown, where streetcars no longer run.

Now I've reached the place where we used to get off the streetcar, stepping into the grating wind that cut up from the lake between the flat-roofed, dowdy buildings. But this part of the city is no longer flat, dowdy, shabby-genteel. Tubular neon in cursive script decorates the restored brick facades, and there's a lot of brass trim, a lot of real estate, a lot of money. Up ahead there are huge oblong towers, all of glass, lit up like enormous gravestones of cold light.

50

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE

BLANK PAGE

Permission to reproduce items where third-party owned material protected by copyright is included has been sought and cleared where possible. Every reasonable effort has been made by the publisher (UCLES) to trace copyright holders, but if any items requiring clearance have unwittingly been included, the publisher will be pleased to make amends at the earliest possible opportunity.

To avoid the issue of disclosure of answer-related information to candidates, all copyright acknowledgements are reproduced online in the Cambridge International Examinations Copyright Acknowledgements Booklet. This is produced for each series of examinations and is freely available to download at www.cie.org.uk after the live examination series.

Cambridge International Examinations is part of the Cambridge Assessment Group. Cambridge Assessment is the brand name of University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES), which is itself a department of the University of Cambridge.