Міністерство освіти і науки України
Рівненський державний гуманітарний університет
Кафедра практики англійської мови

ТЕКСТИ ТА ЗАВДАННЯ ДЛЯ ДОМАШНЬОГО ЧИТАННЯ

(для здобувачів ступеня «магістр» факультету іноземної філології)

Навчальний посібник

Рівне – 2018

Тексти та завдання для домашнього читання : навчальний посібник (для здобувачів ступеня «магістр» факультету іноземної філології) / Укладачі : Ю.В. Курята, О.В. Касаткіна-Кубишкіна . – Рівне : РДГУ, 2018. – 119 с.

Укладачі: Ю.В. Курята – к. психолог. н., доц. кафедри практики англійської мови РДГУ, О.В. Касаткіна-Кубишкіна – к. психолог. н., доц. кафедри практики англійської мови РДГУ

Рецензенти: - к.пед.н., доц., завідувач кафедри іноземних мов Міжнародного економіко-гуманітарного університету імені академіка Степана Демянчука Кочмар Діана Анатоліївна
- к.пед.н., доц. кафедри практики англійської мови РДГУ Білоус Тамара Миколаївна

Відповідальний за випуск: Курята Ю.В. – к. психолог. н., доц. кафедри практики англійської мови РДГУ.

Навчальний посібник містить пояснювальну записку, дев'ять неадаптованих різностильових оповідань визначних американських авторів XX-XXI століття, а також чітко розроблену структуру вправ для розвитку лексичних, мовленнєвих та письмових вмінь. Їх особливістю є те, що до кожного тексту присутні відео завдання на диску, різноманітний матеріал яких взятий з джерел дозволеного авторами вільного доступу в мережі.

Затверджено на засіданні кафедри практики англійської мови РДГУ, протокол № 3 від 15 березня 2018 р.

Рекомендовано до друку науково-методичною радою факультету іноземної філології РДГУ, протокол № 5 від 16.05.2018 р.

© Курята Ю.В., Касаткіна-Кубишкіна О.В., 2018
© Рівненський державний гуманітарний університет, 2018

ЗМІСТ:

ПОЯСНЮВАЛЬНА ЗАПИСКА

Читання завжди відігравало та відіграє важливу роль в житті освіченої людини або ж такої, яка прагне нею бути. Ця мовленнєва діяльність безумовно сприяє всебічному розвитку особистості, адже читаючи, ми взаємодіємо не з паперовими сторінками, не з рядками літер, тобто, не просто з книгою, а з людьми, які написали твір, з їхніми думками та переживаннями, поглядами та переконаннями. Сучасна методика викладання іноземних мов визначає читання не лише як засіб, але і як ціль навчання, що не втрачає свого значення і на старшій ланці – щодо здобувачів ступеня магістра.

Навчальний посібник призначений для досягнення основної мети домашнього читання у вищій мовній школі – послідовного та глибокого розкриття художньо-естетичного змісту оригінальних літературних творів, яке ґрунтується на активній участі читача в умовному діалозі з автором художнього тексту та його персонажами – в міжкультурному діалозі. Кожна тематична розробка, яка відповідає програмним вимогам предмету *іноземна мова* для здобувачів ступеня *магістр* факультету іноземної філології, розрахована на одне заняття з домашнього читання відповідно до норм читання на старших курсах вищої мовної школи, яке можна реалізувати за рахунок аудиторної чи самостійної роботи.

Структура та зміст завдань посібника зумовлені цільовою установкою домашнього читання. Запропонований комплекс завдань передбачає послідовне проникнення в ідейний зміст текстів з урахуванням естетичної та соціокультурної інформації, є скерованим на розвиток творчої активності читача. Це дає можливість ознайомитися з культурою та зрозуміти національно-специфічні особливості народу, мова якого вивчається, усвідомити розбіжності в умовах життя, в естетичних та етичних нормах, культурних традиціях, виявити особливості пізнання реалій світу, усвідомити їх та виразити ці особливості вербальними засобами.

Увесь комплекс вправ призначений для активізації нової лексики текстів, поглиблення сприйняття і розуміння твору, проникнення в його зміст, формування вмінь стилістичного та ідейного аналізу написаного, крім того, посібник містить завдання для розвитку вмінь письма.

1. **“The Unicorn in the Garden”**

by James Thurber

Once upon a sunny morning a man who sat in a breakfast nook looked up from his scrambled eggs to see a white unicorn with a golden horn quietly cropping the roses in the garden. The man went up to the bedroom where his wife was still asleep and woke her. "There's a unicorn in the garden," he said. "Eating roses." She opened one unfriendly eye and looked at him.

"The unicorn is a mythical beast," she said, and turned her back on him. The man walked slowly downstairs and out into the garden. The unicorn was still there; now he was browsing among the tulips. "Here, unicorn," said the man, and he pulled up a lily and gave it to him. The unicorn ate it gravely. With a high heart, because there was a unicorn in his garden, the man went upstairs and roused his wife again. "The unicorn," he said, "ate a lily." His wife sat up in bed and looked at him coldly. "You are a booby," she said, "and I am going to have you put in the booby-hatch."

The man, who had never liked the words "booby" and "booby-hatch," and who liked them even less on a shining morning when there was a unicorn in the garden, thought for a moment. "We'll see about that," he said. He walked over to the door. "He has a golden horn in the middle of his forehead," he told her. Then he went back to the garden to watch the unicorn; but the unicorn had gone away. The man sat down among the roses and went to sleep.

As soon as the husband had gone out of the house, the wife got up and dressed as fast as she could. She was very excited and there was a gloat in her eye. She telephoned the police and she telephoned a psychiatrist; she told them to hurry to her house and bring a strait-jacket. When the police and the psychiatrist arrived they sat down in chairs and looked at her, with great interest.

"My husband," she said, "saw a unicorn this morning." The police looked at the psychiatrist and the psychiatrist looked at the police. "He told me it ate a lily," she said. The psychiatrist looked at the police and the police looked at the psychiatrist. "He told me it had a golden horn in the middle of its forehead," she said. At a solemn signal from the psychiatrist, the police leaped from their chairs and seized the wife. They had a hard time subduing her, for she put up a terrific struggle, but they finally subdued her. Just as they got her into the strait-jacket, the husband came back into the house.

"Did you tell your wife you saw a unicorn?" asked the police. "Of course not," said the husband. "The unicorn is a mythical beast." "That's all I wanted to know," said the psychiatrist. "Take her away. I'm sorry, sir, but your wife is as crazy as a jaybird."

So they took her away, cursing and screaming, and shut her up in an institution. The husband lived happily ever after.

Moral: Don't count your boobies until they are hatched.

EXERCISES:

I. **Answer the following questions and do the given assignments**:

1. Find some information about the author and present it to the group.

2. **AUDIO AND VIDEO ASIGNMENTS:**

Listen to James Thurber's interview and watch a short video adaptation of the story before starting the discussion. Be ready to comment on the author's ideas expressed in the interview (*a teacher may stop the video at some moments to let the students comment on that part*).

3. Give a short account of the events. **4**. Try to guess how long they have been married? Why? **5**. How did their relations develop throughout their marriage? Why? **6**. What are the conflicts in this story? **7**. Who is the main character: the husband or the wife? **8**. Suggest another title for the story. **9**. "Unicorn in the Garden" by James Thurber is a classic example of the existentialist philosophy of choice and subjectivity, as shown by the characterization of a husband and his wife, the police and the psychiatrist. Comment on the choices all characters make in the story. **10**. What kind of irony does the author use in the story? Explain. (*Verbal irony* is the contrast between what is said and what is actually meant. *Dramatic irony* occurs when the audience knows more than the characters

do.
Irony of situation refers to a happening that is the opposite of what is expected or intended). **11**. Some statements authors make are long remembered especially if they are short and wise. Benjamin Franklin once wrote, "He that falls in love with himself has no rivals," and people have been repeating the line ever since. Such a brief statement of some truth is called an aphorism. Sometimes an author creates an aphorism by putting a twist on some old saying.
I) What old saying is the moral in "The Unicorn in the Garden" based on?
II) What other aphorisms can you think of?
III) Thurber is having fun with words when he substitutes "boobies" for "chickens" in the old saying to create his moral. What is the meaning of the aphorism he creates?
12. What other moral do you see besides the one at the end? **13**. A unicorn is sometimes associated with love in mythology. How can you interpret the story from this point of view? **14.** Comment on the poem (define the main idea, speak on the emotional background) and explain how it may be related to our topic.

"Happiness"

We often wonder,
where happiness starts.
The journey usually begins,
in our individual hearts.

Each of us possesses,
our happiness view.
We must stick to our values,
in the mirror we must be true.

Spending time with others,
who we love and deeply care.
It's these simple moments in time,
every day we'd love to share.

All the fortunes in this world,
shall not make our spirits sing.
It's amazing how much joy,
a baby's laughter seems to bring.

Happiness is processed,
a million times inside each mind.
The secret is no secret,
just be positive and kind.

This feeling that we seek,
does not depend on age.
We truly hope it follows us,
as we turn another page.

(AnitaPoems.com)

II. **Comment and explain in the context of the story:**

She opened one unfriendly eye and looked at him; "We'll see about that," he said; .. Don't count your boobies until they are hatched.

III. **Vocabulary work.**

Find in the text equivalents for the following words and phrases and make up your own sentences with them.

An out-of-the-way place, a quiet corner; in this context, a crazy person (probably from the name of a stupid extinct bird); an armless belted jacket used to confine the violently insane; a look of malice or greed; grave or serious.

IV. **Writing.**

Write on the topic: “The recipe for a happy family life.”

2. **“The Orphaned Swimming Pool”**
by John Updike

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 reread; indeed, it is difficult to remember who read them in the first place. 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.

It was a young pool, only two years old, of the fragile type fashioned 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 encircling 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 tall, hairy-backed man with long arms, and a nose flattened by football, 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. They grew brown and supple and smooth with swimming. Ted would begin his day with a swim, before dressing to catch the train, and Linda 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 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 languorous stroke.

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 lemonade for the children. Their friends felt less comfortable about appearing, towels in hand, at the Turners' on weekends. Though Linda had lost some weight and looked elegant, and Ted was cumbersomely 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 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 surface. A speckled plastic ball drifted into a corner beside the diving 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 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 substances into the pool. He looked pale and thin. He instructed Roscoe Chace, his neighbor on the left, how to switch on the Pump and change the filter, and how much chlorine and Algitrol should be added weekly. He explained he would not be able to make it out every weekend — as if the distance that for years he had travelled twice each day, gliding in and out of New York, had become an impossibly steep climb back into the past. Linda, he confided vaguely, had left her parents 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 —- 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 everything, right when they could least afford it. It became, then, a kind 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 offspring and Swiss au-pair girls were established as lifeguards. A nylon rope with flotation corks, meant to divide the wading end from the 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. Ari 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 July, said, "Meet you 4 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 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 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 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 goose fleshed, wrinkled child shivering home to supper, there was a tide of evening activity, trysts (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.

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 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 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 anyone 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.

EXERCISES:

I. **Answer the following questions and do the given assignments**:

1. Find some information about the author and present it to the group.

2. **AUDIO AND VIDEO ASIGNMENTS:**

Watch John Updiker's interview, comment on the questions asked and answers given (*a teacher may stop the video at some moments to let the students comment on that part*).

3. Give a short account of the events. **4**. What can the title mean? **5**. Explain the comparison between "marriages" and "chemical unions"? **6**. How important is the swimming pool for the understanding of the story? **7**. What were the first signs that there was something wrong in The Turners' marriage? **8**. How did the pool look like right after Linda moved out to Ohio with the children? **9**. After the Turners' divorce the neighbors start using the pool. "The Murtaugh children (…) began to use it, without supervision. So Linda's old friends, (….) began to show up (…). It became, then, a kind of duty, a test of loyalty, to use the pool." How nice and friendly are The Turnes' neighbors? **10**. There is a detailed list of everyone who went for a swim at the Turners' house. Why do you think Updike is so meticulous at this point of the narrative? **11**. Ted had an affair. When did it start? How long did it last? Was this affair the reason for their divorce?**12**. In August, Linda returns to the house. She looks at the deserted pool and realizes that it "in truth had no bottom, it held bottomless loss, it was on huge blue tear". What do we learn with Linda's remark? **13**. Explore the theme of loneliness or loss and discuss how the writer has conveyed this to the reader through the use of language and style. **14.** An important feature of Postmodernism is "Sense of fragmentation and decentered self; multiple, conflicting identities". Discuss this characteristic in Updike's short story. **15.** Comment on the video and the lyrics of the song, talk on the images in the video, define the main idea, speak on the emotional background and explain how it may be related to our topic.

"Family portrait"

Momma please stop crying, I can't stand the sound
Your pain is painful and its tearin' me down
I hear glasses breaking as I sit up in my bed
I told dad you didn't mean those nasty things you said
You fight about money, 'bout me and my brother
And this I come home to, this is my shelter
It ain't easy growing up in World War three
Never knowing what love could be, you'll see
I don't want love to destroy me like it has done my family
Can we work it out, can we be a family?
I promise I'll be better, Mommy I'll do anything
Can we work it out, can we be a family?
I promise I'll be better, daddy please don't leave
Daddy please stop yellin', I can't stand the sound
Make mama stop cryin', 'cause I need you around
My mama…

(Pink)

II. **Comment and explain in the context of the story:**

the Turners had scored again; Ted was cumbersomely jovial; they gave off the faint, sleepless, awkward-making aroma of a couple in trouble; The postman.. averted his eyes from the side yard politely; Ted was fearful of the legal consequences of their being seen by anyone who might write and tell Linda; his private pool turned public carnival; her lips looked drier and more quizzical than ever, still seeking to frame that troubling question.

III. **Vocabulary work.**

1. Match the nouns in A with their synonyms in B.

A. a) bounding; b) drought; c) stroke; d) brace; e) solicitation; f) offspring; g) outlet; h) tryst; i) tangle; j) onslaught; k) interloper.

B. 1) attack; 2) blow; 3) children; 4) connection; 5) deficiency; 6) group; 7) net; 8) opening; 9) rendezvous; 10) request; 11) trespasser.

IV. **Writing.**

Write on the topic: “The secrets of harmonious relations.”

3. “**Jonathan Livingston Seagull**”

by Richard Bach

To the real Jonathan Seagull,
who lives within us all.

Part One

It was morning, and the new sun sparkled gold across the ripples of a gentle sea. A mile from shore a fishing boat chummed the water and the word for Breakfast Flock flashed through the air, till a crowd of a thousand seagulls came to dodge and fight for bits of food. It was another busy day beginning.

But way off alone, out by himself beyond boat and shore, Jonathan Livingston Seagull was practicing. A hundred feet in the sky he lowered his webbed feet, lifted his beak, and strained to hold a painful hard twisting curve through his wings. The curve meant that he would fly slowly, and now he slowed until the wind was a whisper in his face, until the ocean stood still beneath him. He narrowed his eyes in fierce concentration, held his breath, forced one... single... more... inch... of... curve... Then his feathers ruffled, he stalled and fell.

Seagulls, as you know, never falter, never stall. To stall in the air is for them disgrace and it is dishonor.

But Jonathan Livingston Seagull, unashamed, stretching his wings again in that trembling hard curve - slowing, slowing, and stalling once more - was no ordinary bird.

Most gulls don't bother to learn more than the simplest facts of flight - how to get from shore to food and back again. For most gulls, it is

not flying that matters, but eating. For this gull, though, it was not eating that mattered, but flight. More than anything else. Jonathan Livingston Seagull loved to fly.

This kind of thinking, he found, is not the way to make one's self popular with other birds. Even his parents were dismayed as Jonathan spent whole days alone, making hundreds of low-level glides, experimenting.

He didn't know why, for instance, but when he flew at altitudes less than half his wingspan above the water, he could stay in the air longer, with less effort. His glides ended not with the usual feet-down splash into the sea, but with a long flat wake as he touched the surface with his feet tightly streamlined against his body. When he began sliding in to feet-up landings on the beach, then pacing the length of his slide in the sand, his parents were very much dismayed indeed.

"Why, Jon, why?" his mother asked. "Why is it so hard to be like the rest of the flock, Jon? Why can't you leave low flying to the pelicans, the albatross? Why don't you eat? Son, you're bone and feathers!"

"I don't mind being bone and feathers mom. I just want to know what I can do in the air and what I can't, that's all. I just want to know."

"See here Jonathan" said his father not unkindly. "Winter isn't far away. Boats will be few and the surface fish will be swimming deep. If you must study, then study food, and how to get it. This flying business is all very well, but you can't eat a glide, you know. Don't you forget that the reason you fly is to eat."

Jonathan nodded obediently. For the next few days he tried to behave like the other gulls; he really tried, screeching and fighting with the flock around the piers and fishing boats, diving on scraps of fish and bread. But he couldn't make it work.

It's all so pointless, he thought, deliberately dropping a hard-won anchovy to a hungry old gull chasing him. I could be spending all this time learning to fly. There's so much to learn!

It wasn't long before Jonathan Gull was off by himself again, far out at sea, hungry, happy, learning.

The subject was speed, and in a week's practice he learned more about speed than the fastest gull alive.

From a thousand feet, flapping his wings as hard as he could, he pushed over into a blazing steep dive toward the waves, and learned why seagulls don't make blazing steep pewter-dives. In just six seconds he was moving seventy miles per hour, the speed at which one's wing goes unstable on the upstroke.

Time after time it happened. Careful as he was, working at the very peak of his ability, he lost control at high speed.

Climb to a thousand feet. Full power straight ahead first, then push over, flapping, to a vertical dive. Then, every time, his left wing stalled on an upstroke, he'd roll violently left, stall his right wing recovering, and flick like fire into a wild tumbling spin to the right.

He couldn't be careful enough on that upstroke. Ten times he tried, and all ten times, as he passed through seventy miles per hour, he burst into a churning mass of feathers, out of control, crashing down into the water.

The key, he thought at last, dripping wet, must be to hold the wings still at high speeds - to flap up to fifty and then hold the wings still.

From two thousand feet he tried again, rolling into his dive, beak straight down, wings full out and stable from the moment he passed fifty miles per hour. It took tremendous strength, but it worked. In ten seconds he had blurred through ninety miles per hour. Jonathan had set a world speed record for seagulls!

But victory was short-lived. The instant he began his pullout, the instant he changed the angle of his wings, he snapped into that same terrible uncontrolled disaster, and at ninety miles per hour it hit him like dynamite. Jonathan Seagull exploded in midair and smashed down into a brickhard sea.

When he came to, it was well after dark, and he floated in moonlight on the surface of the ocean. His wings were ragged bars of lead, but the weight of failure was even heavier on his back. He wished, feebly, that the weight could be just enough to drug him gently down to the bottom, and end it all.

As he sank low in the water, a strange hollow voice sounded within him. There's no way around it. I am a seagull. I am limited by my nature.

If I were meant to learn so much about flying, I'd have charts for brains.

If I were meant to fly at speed, I'd have a falcon's short wings, and live on mice instead of fish. My father was right. I must forget this foolishness. I must fly home to the Flock and be content as I am, as a poor limited seagull.

The voice faded, and Jonathan agreed. The place for a seagull at night is on shore, and from this moment forth, he vowed, he would be a normal gull. It would make everyone happier.

He pushed wearily away from the dark water and flew toward the land, grateful for what he had learned about work-saving low-altitude flying.

But no, he thought. I am done with the way I was, I am done with everything I learned. I am a seagull like every other seagull, and I will fly like one. So he climbed painfully to a hundred feet and flapped his wings harder, pressing for shore.

He felt better for his decision to be just another one of the Flock.

There would be no ties now to the force that had driven him to learn, there would be no more challenge and no more failure. And it was pretty, just to stop thinking, and fly through the dark, toward the lights above the beach.

Dark! The hollow voice cracked in alarm. Seagulls never fly in the dark!

Jonathan was not alert to listen. It's pretty, he thought. The moon and the lights twinkling on the water, throwing out little beacon-trails through the night, and all so peaceful and still...

Get down! Seagulls never fly in the dark! If you were meant to fly in the dark, you'd have the eyes of an owl! You'd have charts for brains!

You'd have a falcon's short wings!

There in the night, a hundred feet in the air, Jonathan Livingston Seagull - blinked. His pain, his resolutions, vanished.

Short wings. A falcon's short wings!

That's the answer! What a fool I've been! All I need is a tiny little wing, all I need is to fold most of my wings and fly on just the tips alone! Short wings!

He climbed two thousand feet above the black sea, and without a moment for thought of failure and death, he brought his forewings tightly in to his body, left only the narrow swept daggers of his wingtips extended into the wind, and fell into a vertical dive.

The wind was a monster roar at his head. Seventy miles per hour, ninety, a hundred and twenty and faster still. The wing-strain now at a hundred and forty miles per hour wasn't nearly as hard as it had been before at seventy, and with the faintest twist of his wingtips he eased out of the dive and shot above the waves, a gray cannonball under the moon.

He closed his eyes to slits against the wind and rejoiced. A hundred forty miles per hour! And under control! If I dive from five thousand feet instead of two thousand, I wonder how fast..

His vows of a moment before were forgotten, swept away in that great swift wind. Yet he felt guiltless, breaking the promises he had made himself. Such promises are only for the gulls that accept the ordinary.

One who has touched excellence in his learning has no need of that kind of promise.

By sunup, Jonathan Gull was practicing again. From five thousand feet the fishing boats were specks in the flat blue water, Breakfast Flock was a faint cloud of dust motes, circling.

He was alive, trembling ever so slightly with delight, proud that his fear was under control. Then without ceremony he hugged in his forewings, extended his short, angled wingtips, and plunged direcfly toward the sea.

By the time he passed four thousand feet he had reached terminal velocity, the wind was a solid beating wall of sound against which he could move no faster. He was flying now straight down, at two hundred fourteen miles per hour. He swallowed, knowing that if his wings unfolded at that speed be'd be blown into a million tiny shreds of seagull. But the speed was power, and the speed was joy, and the speed was pure beauty.

He began his pullout at a thousand feet, wingtips thudding and blurring in that gigatitic wind, the boat and the crowd of gulls tilting and growing meteor-fast, directly in his path.

He couldn't stop; he didn't know yet even how to turn at that speed.

Collision would be instant death.

And so he shut his eyes.

It happened that morning, then, just after sunrise, that Jonathan Livingston Seagull fired directly through the center of Breakfast Flock, ticking off two hundred twelve miles per hour, eyes closed, in a great roaring shriek of wind and feathers. The Gull of Fortune smiled upon him this once, and no one was killed.

By the time he had pulled his beak straight up into the sky he was still scorching along at a hundred and sixty miles per hour. When he had slowed to twenty and stretched his wings again at last, the boat was a crumb on the sea, four thousand feet below.

His thought was triumph. Terminal velocity! A seagull at two hundred fourteen miles per hour! It was a breakthrough, the greatest single moment in the history of the Flock, and in that moment a new age opened for Jonathan Gull. Flying out to his lonely practice area, folding his wings for a dive from eight thousand feet, he set himself at once to discover how to turn.

A singlewingtip feather, he found, moved a fraction of an inch, gives a smooth sweeping curve at tremendous speed. Before he learned this, however, he found that moving more than one feather at that speed will spin you like a ritIe ball... and Jonathan had flown the first aerobatics of any seagull on earth.

He spared no time that day for talk with other gulls, but flew on past sunset. He discovered the loop, the slow roll, the point roll, the inverted spin, the gull bunt, the pinwheel.

When Jonathan Seagull joined the Flock on the beach, it was full night. He was dizzy and terribly tired. Yet in delight he flew a loop to landing, with a snap roll just before touchdown. When they hear of it, he thought, of the Breakthrough, they'll be wild with joy. How much more there is now to living! Instead of our drab slogging forth and back to the fishing boats, there's a reason to life! We can lift ourselves out of ignorance, we can find ourselves as creatures of excellence and intelligence and skill. We can be free! We can learn to fly!

The years ahead hummed and glowed with promise.

The gulls were flocked into the Council Gathering when he landed, and apparently had been so flocked for some time. They were, in fact, waiting.

"Jonathan Livingston Seagull! Stand to Center!" The Elder's words sounded in a voice of highest ceremony. Stand to Center meant only great shame or great honor. Stand to Center for Honor was the way the gulls' foremost leaders were marked. Of course, he thought, the Breakfast Flock this morning; they saw the Breakthrough! But I want no honors. I have no wish to be leader. I want only to share what I've found, to show those horizons out ahead for us all. He stepped forward.

"Jonathan Livingston Seagull," said the Elder, "Stand to Center for Shame in the sight of your fellow gulls!"

It felt like being hit with a board. His knees went weak, his feathers sagged, there was roaring in his ears. Centered for shame? Impossible! The Breakthrough! They can't understand! They're wrong, they're wrong!

"... for his reckless irresponsibility " the solemn voice intoned, "violating the dignity and tradition of the Gull Family..."

To be centered for shame meant that he would be cast out of gull society, banished to a solitary life on the Far Cliffs.

"... one day Jonathan Livingston Seagull, you shall learn that irresponsibility does not pay. Life is the unknown and the unknowable, except that we are put into this world to eat, to stay alive as long as we possibly can."

A seagull never speaks back to the Council Flock, but it was Jonathan's voice raised. "Irresponsibility? My brothers!" he cried. "Who is more responsible than a gull who finds and follows a meaning, a higher purpose for life? For a thousand years we have scrabbled after fish heads, but now we have a reason to live - to learn, to discover, to be free! Give me one chance, let me show you what I've found..."

The Flock might as well have been stone.

"The Brotherhood is broken," the gulls intoned together, and with one accord they solemnly closed their ears and turned their backs upon him.

Jonathan Seagull spent the rest of his days alone, but he flew way out beyond the Far Cliffs. His one sorrow was not solituile, it was that other gulls refused to believe the glory of flight that awaited them; they refused to open their eyes and see. He learned more each day. He learned that a streamlined high-speed dive could bring him to find the rare and

tasty fish that schooled ten feet below the surface of the ocean: he no longer needed fishing boats and stale bread for survival. He learned to sleep in the air, setting a course at night across the offshore wind, covering a hundred miles from sunset to sunrise. With the same inner control, he flew through heavy sea-fogs and climbed above them into dazzling clear skies... in the very times when every other gull stood on the ground, knowing nothing but mist and rain. He learned to ride the high winds far inland, to dine there on delicate insects.

What he had once hoped for the Flock, he now gained for himself alone; he learned to fly, and was not sorry for the price that he had paid. Jonathan Seagull discovered that boredom and fear and anger are the reasons that a gull's life is so short, and with these gone from his thought, he lived a long fine life indeed.

They came in the evening, then, and found Jonathan gliding peaceful and alone through his beloved sky. The two gulls that appeared at his wings were pure as starlight, and the glow from them was gentle and friendly in the high night air. But most lovely of all was the skill with which they flew, their wingtips moving a precise and constant inch from his own. Without a word, Jonathan put them to his test, a test that no gull had ever passed. He twisted his wings, slowed to a single mile per hour above stall. The two radiant birds slowed with him, smoothly, locked in position. They knew about slow flying.

He folded his wings, rolled and dropped in a dive to a hundred ninety miles per hour. They dropped with him, streaking down in flawless formation.

At last he turned that speed straight up into a long vertical slow-roll. They rolled with him, smiling.

He recovered to level flight and was quiet for a time before he spoke. "Very well," he said, "who are you?"

"We're from your Flock, Jonathan. We are your brothers." The words were strong and calm. "We've come to take you higher, to take you home."

"Home I have none. Flock I have none. I am Outcast. And we fly now at the peak of the Great Mountain Wind. Beyond a few hundred feet, I can lift this old body no higher."

"But you can Jonathan. For you have learned. One school is finished, and the time has come for another to begin."

As it had shined across him all his life, so understanding lighted that moment for Jonathan Seagull. They were right. He could fly higher, and it was time to go home.

He gave one last look across the sky, across that magnificent silver land where he had learned so much.

"I'm ready " he said at last.

And Jonathan Livingston Seagull rose with the two starbright gulls to disappear into a perfect dark sky.

Part Two

So this is heaven, he thought, and he had to smile at himself. It was hardly respectful to analyze heaven in the very moment that one flies up to enter it.

As he came from Earth now, above the clouds and in close formation with the two brilliant gulls, he saw that his own body was growing as bright as theirs. True, the same young Jonathan Seagull was there that had always lived behind his golden eyes, but the outer form had changed.

It felt like a seagull body, but already it flew far better than his old one had ever flown. Why, with half the effort, he thought, I'll get twice the speed, twice the performance of my best days on Earth!

His feathers glowed brilliant white now, and his wings were smooth and perfect as sheets of polished silver. He began, delightedly, to learn about them, to press power into these new wings.

At two hundred fifty miles per hour he felt that he was nearing his level-flight maximum speed. At two hundred seventy-three he thought that he was flying as fast as he could fly, and he was ever so faintly disappointed. There was a limit to how much the new body could do, and though it was much faster than his old level-flight record, it was still a limit that would take great effort to crack. In heaven, he thought, there should be no limits.

The clouds broke apart, his escorts called, "Happy landings, Jonathan," and vanished into thin air.

He was flying over a sea, toward a jagged shoreline. A very few seagulls were working the updrafts on the cliffs. Away off to the north, at the horizon itself, flew a few others. New sights, new thoughts, new questions. Why so few gulls? Heaven should be flocked with gulls! And why am I so tired, all at once? Gulls in heaven are never supposed to be tired, or to sleep.

Where had he heard that? The memory of his life on Earth was falling away. Earth had been a place where he had learned much, of course, but the details were blurred - something about fighting for food, and being Outcast.

The dozen gulls by the shoreline came to meet him, none saying a word. He felt only that he was welcome and that this was home. It had been a big day for him, a day whose sunrise he no longer remembered.

He turned to land on the beach, beating his wings to stop an inch in the air, then dropping lightly to the sand, The other gulls landed too, but not one of them so much as flapped a feather. They swung into the wind, bright wings outstretched, then somehow they changed the curve of their feathers until they had stopped in the same instant their feet touched the ground. It was beautiful control, but now Jonathan was just too tired to try it. Standing there on the beach, still without a word spoken, he was asleep.

In the days that followed, Jonathan saw that there was as much to learn about flight in this place as there had been in the life behind him. But with a difference. Here were gulls who thought as he thought, For each of them, the most important thing in living was to reach out and touch perfection in that which they most loved to do, and that was to fly. They were magnificent birds, all of them, and they spent hour after hour every day practicing flight, testing advanced aeronautics.

For a long time Jonathan forgot about the world that he had come from, that place where the Flock lived with its eyes tightly shut to the joy of flight, using its wings as means to the end of finding and fighting for food. But now and then, just for a moment, he remembered.

He remembered it one morning when he was out with his instructor, while they rested on the beach after a session of folded-wing snap rolls.

"Where is everybody, Sullivan?" he asked silently, quite at home now with the easy telepathy that these gulls used.. "Why aren't there more of us here? Why, where I came from there were.. "

"... thousands and thousands of gulls. I know. " Sullivan shook his head. "The only answer I can see, Jonathan, is that you are pretty well a one-in-a-million bird. Most of us came along ever so slowly. We went from one world into another that was almost exactly like it, forgetting right away where we had come from, not caring where we were headed, living for the moment. Do you have any idea how many lives we must have gone through before we even got the first idea that there is more to life than eating, or fighting, or power in the Flock? A thousand lives, Jon, ten thousand! And then another hundred lives until we began to learn that there is such a thing as perfection, and another hundred again to get the idea that our purpose for living is to find that perfection and show it forth. The same rule holds for us now, of course: we choose our next world through what we learn in this one. Learn nothing, and the next world is the same as this one, all the same limitations and lead weights to overcome."

He stretched his wings and turned to face the wind. "But you, Jon," he said, "learned so much at one time that you didn't have to go through a thousand lives to reach this one."

In a moment they were airborne again, practicing. The formation point-roils were difficult, for through the inverted half Jonathan had to think upside down, reversing the curve of his wing, and reversing it exactly in harmony with his instructor's. "Let's try it again." Sullivan said over and over: "Let's try it again." Then, finally, "Good." And they began practicing outside loops.

One evening the gulls that were not night-flying stood together on the sand, thinking. Jonathan took all his courage in hand and walked to the Elder Gull, who, it was said, was soon to be moving beyond this world.

"Chiang..." he said a little nervously.

The old seagull looked at him kindly. "Yes, my son?" Instead of being enfeebled by age, the Elder had been empowered by it; he could outfly any gull in the Flock, and he had learned skills that the others were only gradually coming to know.

"Chiang, this world isn't heaven at all, is it?" The Elder smiled in the moonlight. "You are learning again, Jonathan Seagull," he said.

"Well, what happens from here? Where are we going? Is there no such place as heaven?"

"No, Jonathan, there is no such place. Heaven is not a place, and it is not a time. Heaven is being perfect." He was silent for a moment. "You are a very fast flier, aren't you?"

"I... I enjoy speed," Jonathan said, taken aback but proud that the Elder had noticed.

"You will begin to touch heaven, Jonathan, in the moment that you touch perfect speed. And that isn't flying a thousand miles an hour, or a million, or flying at the speed of light. Because any number is a limit, and perfection doesn't have limits. Perfect speed, my son, is being there."

Without warning, Chiang vanished and appeared at the water's edge fifty feet away, all in the flicker of an instant. Then he vanished again and stood, in the same millisecond, at Jonathan's shoulder. "It's kind of fun," he said.

Jonathan was dazzled. He forgot to ask about heaven. "How do you do that? What does it feel like? How far can you go?"

"You can go to any place and to any time that you wish to go," the Elder said. "I've gone everywhere and everywhen I can think of." He looked across the sea. "It's strange. The gulls who scorn perfection for the sake of travel go nowhere, slowly. Those who put aside travel for the sake of perfection go anywhere, instantly. Remember, Jonathan, heaven isn't a place or a time, because place and time are so very meaningless. Heaven is..."

"Can you teach me to fly like that?" Jonathan Seagull trembled to conquer another unknown.

"Of course if you wish to learn."

"I wish. When can we start?".

"We could start now if you'd like."

"I want to learn to fly like that," Jonathan said and a strange light glowed in his eyes. "Tell me what to do," Chiang spoke slowly and watched the younger gull ever so carefully.

"To fly as fast as thought, to anywhere that is," he said, "you must begin by knowing that you have already arrived ..."

The trick, according to Chiang, was for Jonathan to stop seeing himself as trapped inside a limited body that had a forty-two inch wingspan and performance that could be plotted on a chart. The trick was to know that his true nature lived, as perfect as an unwritten number, everywhere at once across space and time.

Jonathan kept at it, fiercely, day after day, from before sunrise till past midnight. And for all his effort he moved not a feather width from his spot.

"Forget about faith!" Chiang said it time and again. "You didn't need faith to fly, you needed to understand flying. This is just the same. Now try again ..."

Then one day Jonathan, standing on the shore, closing his eyes, concentrating, all in a flash knew what Chiang had been telling him. "Why, that's true! I am a perfect, unlimited gull!" He felt a great shock of joy.

"Good!" said Chiang and there was victory in his voice.

Jonathan opened his eyes. He stood alone with the Elder on a totally different seashore - trees down to the water's edge, twin yellow suns turning overhead.

"At last you've got the idea," Chiang said, "but your control needs a little work... "

Jonathan was stunned. "Where are we?"

Utterly unimpressed with the strange surroundings, the Elder brushed the question aside. "We're on some planet, obviously, with a green sky and a double star for a sun."

Jonathan made a scree of delight, the first sound he had made since he had left Earth. "IT WORKS!"

"Well, of course, it works, Jon." said Chiang. "It always works, when you know what you're doing. Now about your control..."

By the time they returned, it was dark. The other gulls looked at Jonathan with awe in their golden eyes, for they had seen him disappear from where he had been rooted for so long.

He stood their congratulations for less than a minute. "I'm the newcomer here! I'm just beginning! It is I who must learn from you!"

"I wonder about that, Jon," said Sullivan standing near. "You have less fear of learning than any gull I've seen in ten thousand years. "The Flock fell silent, and Jonathan fidgeted in embarrassment.

"We can start working with time if you wish," Chiang said, "till you can fly the past and the future. And then you will be ready to begin the most difficult, the most powerful, the most fun of all. You will be ready to begin to fly up and know the meaning of kindness and of love."

A month went by, or something that felt about like a month, and Jonathan learned at a tremendous rate. He always had learned quickly from ordinary experience, and now, the special student of the Elder Himself, he took in new ideas like a streamlined feathered computer.

But then the day came that Chiang vanished. He had been talking quietly with them all, exhorting them never to stop their learning and their practicing and their striving to understand more of the perfect invisible principle of all life. Then, as he spoke, his feathers went brighter and brighter and at last turned so brilliant that no gull could look upon him.

"Jonathan," he said, and these were the last words that he spoke, "keep working on love."

When they could see again, Chiang was gone.

As the days went past, Jonathan found himself thinking time and again of the Earth from which he had come. If he had known there just a tenth, just a hundredth, of what he knew here, how much more life would have meant! He stood on the sand and fell to wondering if there was a gull back there who might be struggling to break out of his limits, to see the meaning of flight beyond a way of travel to get a breadcrumb from a rowboat. Perhaps there might even have been one made Outcast for speaking his truth in the face of the Flock. And the more Jonathan practiced his kindness lessons, and the more he worked to know the nature of love, the more he wanted to go back to Earth. For in spite of his lonely past, Jonathan Seagull was born to be an instructor, and his own way of demonstrating love was to give something of the truth that he had seen to a gull who asked only a chance to see truth for himself.

Sullivan, adept now at thought-speed flight and helping the others to learn, was doubtful.

"Jon, you were Outcast once. Why do you think that any of the gulls in your old time would listen to you now? You know the proverb, and it's true: The gull sees farthest who flies highest. Those gulls where you came from are standing on the ground, squawking and fighting among themselves.

They're a thousand miles from heaven - and you say you want to show them heaven from where they stand! Jon, they can't see their own wingtips! Stay here. Help the new gulls here, the ones who are high enough to see what you have to tell them." He was quiet for a moment, and then he said, "What if Chiang had gone back to his old worlds? Where would you have been today?"

The last point was the telling one, and Sullivan was right. The gull sees farthest who flies highest.

Jonathan stayed and worked with the new birds coming in, who were all very bright and quick with their lessons. But the old feeling came back, and he couldn't help but think that there might be one or two gulls back on Earth who would be able to learn, too. How much more would he have known by now if Chiang had come to him on the day that he was Outcast!

"Sully, I must go back " he said at last "Your students are doing well. They can help you bring the newcomers along."

Sullivan sighed, but he did not argue. "I think I'll miss you, Jonathan," was all he said.

"Sully, for shame!" Jonathan said in reproach, "and don't be foolish! What are we trying to practice every day? If our friendship depends on things like space and time, then when we finally overcome space and time, we've destroyed our own brotherhood! But overcome space, and all we have left is Here. Overcome time, and all we have left is Now. And in the middle of Here and Now, don't you think that we might see each other once or twice?"

Sullivan Seagull laughed in spite of himself. "You crazy bird," he said kindly. "If anybody can show someone on the ground how to see a thousand miles, it will be Jonathan Livingston Seagull." He looked at the sand. "Good-bye, Jon, my friend."

"Good bye, Sully. We'll meet again." And with that, Jonathan held in thought an image of the great gull flocks on the shore of another time, and

he knew with practiced ease that he was not bone and feather but a perfect idea of freedom and flight, limited by nothing at all.

Fletcher Lynd Seagull was still quite young, but already he knew that no bird had ever been so harshly treated by any Flock, or with so much injustice.

"I don't care what they say," he thought fiercely, and his vision blurred as he flew out toward the Far Cliffs. "There's so much more to flying than just flapping around from place to place! A... a... mosquito does that! One little barrel roll around the Elder Gull, just for fun, and I'm Outcast! Are they blind? Can't they see? Can't they think of the glory that it'll be when we really learn to fly?

"I don't care what they think. I'll show them what flying is! I'll be pure Outlaw, if that's the way they want it. And I'll make them so sorry..."

The voice came inside his own head, and though it was very gentle, it startled him so much that he faltered and stumbled in the air.

"Don't be harsh on them, Fletcher Seagull. In casting you out, the other gulls have only hurt themselves, and one day they will know this, and one day they will see what you see. Forgive them, and help them to understand."

An inch from his right wingtip flew the most brilliant white gull in all the world, gliding effortlessly along, not moving a feather, at what was very nearly Fletcher's top speed.

There was a moment of chaos in the young bird. "What's going on? Am I mad? Am I dead? What is this?"

Low and calm, the voice went on within his thought, demanding an answer. "Fletcher Lynd Seagull, do you want to fly?"

"YES, I WANT TO FLY!".

"Fletcher Lynd Seagull, do you want to fly so much that you will forgive the Flock, and learn, and go back to them one day and work to help them know?"

There was no lying to this magnificent skillful being, no matter how proud or how hurt a bird was Fletcher Seagull.

"I do " he said softly.

"Then, Fletch," that bright creature said to him, and the voice was very kind, "let's begin with Level Flight...."

Part Three

Jonathan circled slowly over the Far Cliffs, watching. This rough young Fletcher Gull was very nearly a perfect flight-student. He was strong and light and quick in the air, but far and away more important, he had a blazing drive to learn to fly.

Here he came this minute, a blurred gray shape roaring out of a dive, flashing one hundred fifty miles per hour past his instructor. He pulled abruptly into another try at a sixteen point vertical slow roll, calling the points out loud.

"...eight... nine... ten... see-Jonathan-l'm-running-out-ofairspeed.. eleven... I-want-good-sharp-stops-like yours... twelve... but-blast-it-Ijust-can't-make...- thirteen... theselast-three-points... without... fourtee ...aaakk!"

Fletcher's whipstall at the top was all the worse for his rage and fury at failing. He fell backward, tumbled, slammed savagely into an inverted spin, and recovered at last, panting, a hundred feet below his instructor's level.

"You're wasting your time with me, Jonathan! I'm too dumb! I'm too stupid! I try and try, but I'll never get it!"

Jonathan Seagull looked down at him and nodded. "You'll never get it for sure as long as you make that pullup so hard. Fletcher, you lost forty miles an hour in the entry! You have to be smooth! Firm but smooth, remember?"

He dropped down to the level of the younger gull. "Let's try it together now, in formation. And pay attention to that pullup. It's a smooth, easy entry."

By the end of three months Jonathan had six other students, Outcasts all, yet curious about this strange new idea of flight for the joy of flying.

Still, it was easier for them to practice high performance than it was to understand the reason behind it.

"Each of us is in truth an idea of the Great Gull, an unlimited idea of freedom," Jonathan would say in the evenings on the beach, "and precision flying is a step toward expressing our real nature. Everything

that limits us we have to put aside. That's why all this high-speed practice, and low speed, and aerobatics...."

...and his students would be asleep, exhausted from the day's flying. They liked the practice, because it was fast and exciting and it fed a hunger for learning that grew with every lesson. But not one of them, not even Fletcher Lynd Gull, had come to believe that the flight of ideas could possibly be as real as the flight of wind and feather.

"Your whole body, from wingtip to wingtip," Jonathan would say, other times, "is nothing more than your thought itself, in a form you can see. Break the chains of your thought, and you break the chains of your body, too..." But no matter how he said it, it sounded like pleasant fiction, and they needed more to sleep.

It was only a month later that Jonathan said the time had come to return to the Flock.

"We're not ready!" said Henry Calvin Gull. "We're not welcome! We're Outcast! We can't force ourselves to go where we're not welcome, can we?"

"We're free to go where we wish and to be what we are," Jonathan answered, and he lifted from the sand and turned east, toward the home grounds of the Flock.

There was brief anguish among his students, for it is the Law of the Flock that an Outcast never returns, and the Law had not been broken once in ten thousand years. The Law said stay; Jonathan said go; and by now he was a mile across the water. If they waited much longer, he would reach a hostile Flock alone.

"Well, we don't have to obey the law if we're not a part of the Flock, do we?" Fletcher said, rather self-consciously. "Besides, if there's a fight we'll be a lot more help there than here.'"

And so they flew in from the west that morning, eight of them in a double-diamond formation, wingtips almost overlapping. They came across the Flock's Council Beach at a hundred thirty-five miles per hour, Jonathan in the lead. Fletcher smoothly at his right wing, Henry Calvin struggling gamely at his left. Then the whole formation rolled slowly to the right, as one bird... level... to... inverted... to... level, the wind whipping over them all.

The squawks and grackles of everyday life in the Flock were cut off as though the formation were a giant knife, and eight thousand gull-eyes watched, without a single blink. One by one, each of the eight birds pulled sharply upward into a full loop and flew all the way around to a dead-slow stand-up landing on the sand. Then as though this sort of thing happened every day, Jonathan Seagull began his critique of the flight.

"To begin with," he said with a wry smile, "you were all a bit late on the join-up..."

It went like lightning through the Flock. Those birds are Outcast! And they have returned! And that... that can't happen! Fletcher's predictions of battle melted in the Flock's confusion.

"Well sure, O.K. they're Outcast," said some of the younger gulls, "but hey, man, where did they learn to fly like that?"

It took almost an hour for the Word of the Elder to pass through the Flock: Ignore them. The gull who speaks to an Outcast is himself Outcast. The gull who looks upon an Outcast breaks the Law of the Flock, Gray-feathered backs were turned upon Jonathan from that moment onward, but he didn't appear to notice. He held his practice sessions directly over the Council Beach and for the first time began pressing his students to the limit of their ability.

"Martin Gull!" he shouted across the sky. "You say you know low-speed flying. You know nothing till you prove it! FLY!"

So quiet little Martin William Seagull, startled to be caught under his instructor's fire, surprised himself and became a wizard of low speeds. In the lightest breeze he could curve his feathers to lift himself without a single flap of wing from sand to cloud and down again.

Likewise Charles-Roland Gull flew the Great Mountain Wind to twenty-four thousand feet, came down blue from the cold thin air, amazed and happy, determined to go still higher tomorrow.

Fletcher Seagull, who loved aerobatics like no one else, conquered his sixteen point vertical slow roll and the next day topped it off with a triple cartwheel, his feathers flashing white sunlight to a beach from which more than one furtive eye watched.

Every hour Jonathan was there at the side of each of his students, demonstrating, suggesting, pressuring, guiding. He flew with them

through night and cloud and storm, for the sport of it, while the Flock huddled miserably on the ground.

When the flying was done, the students relaxed in the sand, and in time they listened more closely to Jonathan. He had some crazy ideas that they couldn't understand, but then he had some good ones that they could.

Gradually, in the night, another circle formed around the circle of students a circle of curious gulls listening in the darkness for hours on end, not wishing to see or be seen of one another, fading away before daybreak.

It was a month after the Return that the first gull of the Flock crossed the line and asked to learn how to fly. In his asking, Terrence Lowell Gull became a condemned bird, labeled Outcast; and the eighth of Jonathan's students.

The next night from the Flock came Kirk Maynard Gull, wobbling across the sand, dragging his leftwing, to collapse at Jonathan's feet. "Help me," he said very quietly, speaking in the way that the dying speak. "I want to fly more than anything else in the world..."

"Come along then." said Jonathan. "Climb with me away from the ground, and we'll begin."

"You don't understand My wing. I can't move my wing."

"Maynard Gull, you have the freedom to be yourself, your true self, here and now, and nothing can stand in your way. It is the Law of the Great Gull, the Law that Is."

"Are you saying I can fly?"

"I say you are free."

As simply and as quickly as that, Kirk Maynard Gull spread his wings, effortlessly, and lifted into the dark night air. The Flock was roused from sleep by his cry, as loud as he could scream it, from five hundred feet up: "I can fly! Listen! I CAN FLY!"

By sunrise there were nearly a thousand birds standing outside the circle of students, looking curiously at Maynard. They didn't care whether they were seen or not, and they listened, trying to understand Jonathan Seagull.

He spoke of very simple things - that it is right for a gull to fly, that freedom is the very nature of his being, that whatever stands against that freedom must be set aside, be it ritual or superstition or limitation in any form.

"Set aside," came a voice from the multitude, "even if it be the Law of the Flock?"

"The only true law is that which leads to freedom," Jonathan said. "There is no other."

"How do you expect us to fly as you fly?" came another voice. "You are special and gifted and divine, above other birds."

"Look at Fletcher! Lowell! Charles-Roland! Judy Lee! Are they also special and gifted and divine? No more than you are, no more than I am. The only difference, the very only one, is that they have begun to understand what they really are and have begun to practice it."

His students, save Fletcher, shifted uneasily. They hadn't realized that this was what they were doing.

The crowd grew larger every day, coming to question, to idolize, to scorn.

"They are saying in the Flock that if you are not the Son of the Great Gull Himself," Fletcher told Jonathan one morning after Advanced Speed Practice, "then you are a thousand years ahead of your time."

Jonathan sighed. The price of being misunderstood, he thought. They call you devil or they call you god. "What do you think, Fletch? Are we ahead of our time?"

A long silence. "Well, this kind of flying has always been here to be learned by anybody who wanted to discover it; that's got nothing to do with time. We're ahead of the fashion, maybe, Ahead of the way that most gulls fly."

"That's something," Jonathan said rolling to glide inverted for a while. "That's not half as bad as being ahead of our time."

It happened just a week later. Fletcher was demonstrating the elements of high-speed flying to a class of new students. He had just pulled out of his dive from seven thousand feet, a long gray streak firing a few inches above the beach, when a young bird on its first flight glided directly into his path, calling for its mother. With a tenth of a second to avoid the youngster, Fletcher Lynd Seagull snapped hard to the left, at something over two hundred miles per hour, into a cliff of solid granite.

It was, for him, as though the rock were a giant hard door into another world. A burst of fear and shock and black as he hit, and then he was adrift in a strange sky, forgetting, remembering, forgetting; afraid and sad and sorry, terribly sorry.

The voice came to him as it had in the first day that he had met Jonathan Livingston Seagull, "The trick Fletcher is that we are trying to overcome our limitations in order, patiently, We don't tackle flying through rock until a little later in the program."

"Jonathan!".

"Also known as the Son of the Great Gull " his instructor said dryly, "What are you doing here? The cliff! Haven't I didn't I.., die?"

"Oh, Fletch, come on. Think. If you are talking to me now, then obviously you didn't die, did you? What you did manage to do was to change your level of consciousness rather abruptly. It's your choice now. You can stay here and learn on this level - which is quite a bit higher than the one you left, by the way - or you can go back and keep working with the Flock. The Elders were hoping for some kind of disaster, but they're startled that you obliged them so well."

"I want to go back to the Flock, of course. I've barely begun with the new group!"

"Very well, Fletcher. Remember what we were saying about one's body being nothing more than thought itself....?"

Fletcher shook his head and stretched his wings and opened his eyes at the base of the cliff, in the center of the whole Flock assembled. There was a great clamor of squawks and screes from the crowd when first he moved.

"He lives! He that was dead lives!"

"Touched him with a wingtip! Brought him to life! The Son of the Great Gull!"

"No! He denies it! He's a devil! DEVIL! Come to break the Flock!"

There were four thousand gulls in the crowd, frightened at what had happened, and the cry DEVIL! went through them like the wind of an ocean storm. Eyes glazed, beaks sharp, they closed in to destroy.

"Would you feel better if we left, Fletcher?" asked Jonathan.

"I certainly wouldn't object too much if we did..."

Instantly they stood together a half-mile away, and the flashing beaks of the mob closed on empty air.

"Why is it," Jonathan puzzled, "that the hardest thing in the world is to convince a bird that he is free, and that he can prove it for himself if he'd just spend a little time practicing? Why should that be so hard?"

Fletcher still blinked from the change of scene. "What did you just do? How did we get here?"

"You did say you wanted to be out of the mob, didn't you?"

"Yes! But how did you..."

"Like everything else, Fletcher. Practice." By morning the Flock had forgotten its insanity, but Fletcher had not. "Jonathan, remember what you said a long time ago, about loving the Flock enough to return to it and help it learn?"

"Sure."

"I don't understand how you manage to love a mob of birds that has just tried to kill you."

"Oh, Fletch, you don't love that! You don't love hatred and evil, of course. You have to practice and see the real gull, the good in every one of them, and to help them see it in themselves. That's what I mean by love. It's fun, when you get the knack of it.

"I remember a fierce young bird for instance, Fletcher Lynd Seagull, his name. Just been made Outcast, ready to fight the Flock to the death, getting a start on building his own bitter hell out on the Far Cliffs. And here he is today building his own heaven instead, and leading the whole Flock in that direction."

Fletcher turned to his instructor, and there was a moment of fright in his eye. "Me leading? What do you mean, me leading? You're the instructor here. You couldn't leave!"

"Couldn't I? Don't you think that there might be other flocks, other Fletchers, that need an instructor more than this one, that's on its way toward the light?"

"Me? Jon, I'm just a plain seagull and you're... "

" ...the only Son of the Great Gull, I suppose?" Jonathan sighed and looked out to sea. "You don't need me any longer. You need to keep finding yourself, a little more each day, that real, unlimited Fletcher

Seagull. He's your instructor. You need to understand him and to practice him."

A moment later Jonathan's body wavered in the air, shimmering, and began to go transparent. "Don't let them spread silly rumors about me, or make me a god. O.K., Fletch? I'm a seagull. I like to fly, maybe..."

"JONATHAN!"

"Poor Fletch. Don't believe what your eyes are telling you. All they show is limitation. Look with your understanding, find out what you already know, and you'll see the way to fly."

The shimmering stopped. Jonathan Seagull had vanished into empty air.

After a time, Fletcher Gull dragged himself into the sky and faced a brand-new group of students, eager for their first lesson.

"To begin with " he said heavily, "you've got to understand that a seagull is an unlimited idea of freedom, an image of the Great Gull, and your whole body, from wingtip to wingtip, is nothing more than your thought itself."

The young gulls looked at him quizzically. Hey, man, they thought, this doesn't sound like a rule for a loop.

Fletcher sighed and started over. "Hm. Ah... very well," he said, and eyed them critically. "Let's begin with Level Flight." And saying that, he understood all at once that his friend had quite honestly been no more divine than Fletcher himself.

No limits, Jonathan? he thought. Well, then, the time's not distant when I'm going to appear out of thin air on your beach, and show you a thing or two about flying!

And though he tried to look properly severe for his students, Fletcher Seagull suddenly saw them all as they really were, just for a moment, and he more than liked, he loved what he saw. No limits, Jonathan? he thought, and he smiled. His race to learn had begun.

EXERCISES

I. **Answer the following questions and do the given assignments**:

1. Find some information about the author and present it to the group.

2. **AUDIO AND VIDEO ASIGNMENTS:**

Watch Richard Bach's interview, comment on the questions asked and answers given (*a teacher may stop the video at some moments to let the students comment on that part*).

3. What is the plot of "Jonathan Livingston Seagull"? **4.** What does flying represent in the story? **5.** What is the theme of "Johnathan Livingston Seagull"? **6.** Who are the main characters in "Jonathan Livingston Seagull" besides the hero Jonathan? **7.** Describe three of the characters in Jonathan Livingston Seagull. **8.** What is the problem raised in the story? **9.** What are the moral lesson and Bible verses in Jonathan Livingston Seagull? **10.** Who is the Jonathan Livingston Seagull in real world? **11.** What general truths about human nature does Jonathan Livingston Seagull reveal? **12.** What is the author's 'tone' in the book Jonathan Livingston Seagull? **13.** What allegory can you find in the story? **14.** Does the resolution follow the conflict and the climax in Jonathan Livingston Seagull? **15.** To discuss if we really manage to live according to our true philosophy of life consider the following:

- What do you get up each and every morning wanting to do?
- What directs your actions and decisions, especially the impulsive ones?
- What gives you a sense of satisfaction at the end of the day?
- What feeling is in the core of your soul that you know to be self-evident, not needing to be demonstrated or explained, obvious?
- Why are your beliefs important for you?
- How does your philosophy measure up to higher standards or ideals?
- What is your philosophy of life in one sentence?
- What would be the title of your philosophy?
- What does life mean for you?

16. Comment on the poem (define the main idea, speak on the emotional background) and explain how it may be related to our topic.

"A Psalm Of Life"

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream!—
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way;
But to act, that each to-morrow
Find us farther than to-day.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of Life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant!
Let the dead Past bury its dead!
Act,—act in the living Present!
Heart within, and God o'erhead!

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time;

Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,

With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.

(Henry Wadsworth Longfellow)

II. **Comment and explain in the context of the story:**

Heaven is not a place, and it is not a time. Heaven is being perfect; to fly as fast as thought, to anywhere that is, you must begin by knowing that you have already arrived ..; the trick was to know that his true nature lived, as perfect as an unwritten number, everywhere at once across space and time; and then you will be ready to begin the most difficult, the most powerful, the most fun of all. You will be ready to .. know the meaning of kindness and of love; each of us is in truth an idea .. an unlimited idea of freedom; your whole body..is nothing more than your thought itself, in a form you can see. Break the chains of your thought, and you break the chains of your body, too.

III. **Vocabulary work.**

1. Match the words in A with their synonyms in B.

A. a) altitude; b) velocity; c) fidget; d) exhort; e) chaos; f) anguish; g) outcast; h) condemn; i) quizzical.

B. 1) acceleration; 2) disorder; 3) distance; 4) agony; 5) untouchable; 6) twiddle; 7) incredulous; 8) censure; 9) admonish.

IV. **Writing.**

1). Write on the topic: "How can we make ourselves truly free?"

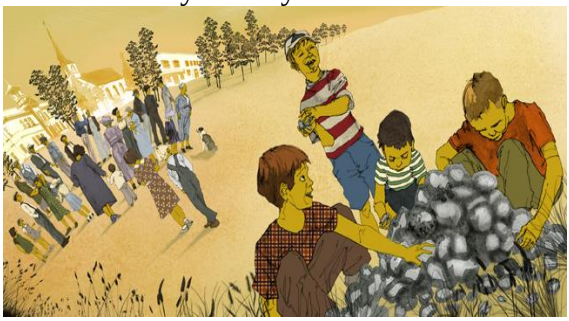
2). Talk to the OLDEST person in your family (or friend) at your home or a relative who lives somewhere else. Use a phone, Skype, whatever you have to use. Ask the same questions from task 1, assignment 15 above about one's philosophy of life. Record the interview and take notes on paper as you have the talk. Write down and present your interview to the group.

3). Prepare presentation to be delivered before the class entitled – ***What I Believe about Life***. It should last just enough to laconically express yourself – for a few minutes. You can use PowerPoint, make a video, write

a speech and create a poster, write a speech with any artistic expression. There should be a minimum of 6 slides, scenes in a section. There should be 4 sections in your presentation.

- My philosophy of life.
- What I think life is all about.
- The wisdom of my elders.
- How I can make my life better.

4. **"The Lottery"**
by Shirley Jackson



The morning of June 27th was clear and sunny, with the fresh warmth of a full-summer day; the flowers were blossoming profusely and the grass was richly green. The people of the village began to gather in the square, between the post office and the bank, around ten o'clock; in some towns there were so many people that the lottery took two days and had to be started on June 2th, but in this village, where there were only about three hundred people, the whole lottery took less than two hours, so it could begin at ten o'clock in the morning and still be through in time to allow the villagers to get home for noon dinner.

The children assembled first, of course. School was recently over for the summer, and the feeling of liberty sat uneasily on most of them; they tended to gather together quietly for a while before they broke into boisterous play, and their talk was still of the classroom and the teacher, of books and reprimands. Bobby Martin had already stuffed his pockets full of stones, and the other boys soon followed his example, selecting the

smoothest and roundest stones; Bobby and Harry Jones and Dickie Delacroix – the villagers pronounced this name "Dellacroy" – eventually made a great pile of stones in one corner of the square and guarded it against the raids of the other boys. The girls stood aside, talking among themselves, looking over their shoulders at rolled in the dust or clung to the hands of their older brothers or sisters. Soon the men began to gather, surveying their own children, speaking of planting and rain, tractors and taxes. They stood together, away from the pile of stones in the corner, and their jokes were quiet and they smiled rather than laughed. The women, wearing faded house dresses and sweaters, came shortly after their menfolk. They greeted one another and exchanged bits of gossip as they went to join their husbands.

Soon the women, standing by their husbands, began to call to their children, and the children came reluctantly, having to be called four or five times. Bobby Martin ducked under his mother's grasping hand and ran, laughing, back to the pile of stones. His father spoke up sharply, and Bobby came quickly and took his place between his father and his oldest brother.

The lottery was conducted – as were the square dances, the teen club, the Halloween program – by Mr. Summers, who had time and energy to devote to civic activities. He was a round-faced, jovial man and he ran the coal business, and people were sorry for him, because he had no children and his wife was a scold. When he arrived in the square, carrying the black wooden box, there was a murmur of conversation among the villagers, and he waved and called. "Little late today, folks." The postmaster, Mr. Graves, followed him, carrying a three-legged stool, and the stool was put in the center of the square and Mr. Summers set the black box down on it. The villagers kept their distance, leaving a space between themselves and the stool. and when Mr. Summers said, "Some of you fellows want to give me a hand?" there was a hesitation before two men. Mr. Martin and his oldest son, Baxter, came forward to hold the box steady on the stool while Mr. Summers stirred up the papers inside it.

The original paraphernalia for the lottery had been lost long ago, and the black box now resting on the stool had been put into use even before Old Man Warner, the oldest man in town, was born. Mr. Summers spoke frequently to the villagers about making a new box, but no one liked to

upset even as much tradition as was represented by the black box. There was a story that the present box had been made with some pieces of the box that had preceded it, the one that had been constructed when the first people settled down to make a village here. Every year, after the lottery, Mr. Summers began talking again about a new box, but every year the subject was allowed to fade off without anything's being done. The black box grew shabbier each year: by now it was no longer completely black but splintered badly along one side to show the original wood color, and in some places faded or stained.

Mr. Martin and his oldest son, Baxter, held the black box securely on the stool until Mr. Summers had stirred the papers thoroughly with his hand. Because so much of the ritual had been forgotten or discarded, Mr. Summers had been successful in having slips of paper substituted for the chips of wood that had been used for generations. Chips of wood, Mr. Summers had argued, had been all very well when the village was tiny, but now that the population was more than three hundred and likely to keep on growing, it was necessary to use something that would fit more easily into he black box. The night before the lottery, Mr. Summers and Mr. Graves made up the slips of paper and put them in the box, and it was then taken to the safe of Mr. Summers' coal company and locked up until Mr. Summers was ready to take it to the square next morning. The rest of the year, the box was put way, sometimes one place, sometimes another; it had spent one year in Mr. Graves's barn and another year underfoot in the post office, and sometimes it was set on a shelf in the Martin grocery and left there.

There was a great deal of fussing to be done before Mr. Summers declared the lottery open. There were the lists to make up – of heads of families, heads of households in each family, members of each household in each family. There was the proper swearing-in of Mr. Summers by the postmaster, as the official of the lottery; at one time, some people remembered, there had been a recital of some sort, performed by the official of the lottery, a perfunctory, tuneless chant that had been rattled off duly each year; some people believed that the official of the lottery used to stand just so when he said or sang it, others believed that he was supposed to walk among the people, but years and years ago this part of the ritual had been allowed to lapse. There had been, also, a ritual salute, which the official of the lottery had had to use in addressing each person who came

up to draw from the box, but this also had changed with time, until now it was felt necessary only for the official to speak to each person approaching. Mr. Summers was very good at all this; in his clean white shirt and blue jeans, with one hand resting carelessly on the black box, he seemed very proper and important as he talked interminably to Mr. Graves and the Martins.

Just as Mr. Summers finally left off talking and turned to the assembled villagers, Mrs. Hutchinson came hurriedly along the path to the square, her sweater thrown over her shoulders, and slid into place in the back of the crowd. "Clean forgot what day it was," she said to Mrs. Delacroix, who stood next to her, and they both laughed softly. "Thought my old man was out back stacking wood,"

Mrs. Hutchinson went on, "and then I looked out the window and the kids was gone, and then I remembered it was the twentyseventh and came a-running." She dried her hands on her apron, and Mrs. Delacroix said, "You're in time, though. They're still talking away up there." Mrs. Hutchinson craned her neck to see through the crowd and found her husband and children standing near the front. She tapped Mrs. Delacroix on the arm as a farewell and began to make her way through the crowd. The people separated good-humoredly to let her through: two or three people said, in voices just loud enough to be heard across the crowd, "Here comes your, Missus, Hutchinson," and "Bill, she made it after all." Mrs. Hutchinson reached her husband, and Mr. Summers, who had been waiting, said cheerfully. "Thought we were going to have to get on without you, Tessie." Mrs. Hutchinson said, grinning, "Wouldn't have me leave m'dishes in the sink, now, would you, Joe?," and soft laughter ran through the crowd as the people stirred back into position after Mrs. Hutchinson's arrival.

"Well, now." Mr. Summers said soberly, "guess we better get started, get this over with, so's we can go back to work. Anybody ain't here?"

"Dunbar." several people said. "Dunbar. Dunbar."

Mr. Summers consulted his list. "Clyde Dunbar." he said. "That's right. He's broke his leg, hasn't he? Who's drawing for him?"

"Me. I guess," a woman said. and Mr. Summers turned to look at her. "Wife draws for her husband." Mr. Summers said. "Don't you have a grown boy to do it for you, Janey?" Although Mr. Summers and everyone

else in the village knew the answer perfectly well, it was the business of the official of the lottery to ask such questions formally. Mr. Summers waited with an expression of polite interest while Mrs. Dunbar answered.

"Horace's not but sixteen yet." Mrs. Dunbar said regretfully. "Guess I gotta fill in for the old man this year."

"Right." Sr. Summers said. He made a note on the list he was holding. Then he asked, "Watson boy drawing this year?"

A tall boy in the crowd raised his hand. "Here," he said. "I'm drawing for my mother and me." He blinked his eyes nervously and ducked his head as several voices in the crowd said things like "Good fellow, Jack." and "Glad to see your mother's got a man to do it."

"Well," Mr. Summers said, "guess that's everyone. Old Man Warner make it?"

"Here," a voice said. and Mr. Summers nodded.

A sudden hush fell on the crowd as Mr. Summers cleared his throat and looked at the list. "All ready?" he called. "Now, I'll read the names – heads of families first – and the men come up and take a paper out of the box. Keep the paper folded in your hand without looking at it until everyone has had a turn. Everything clear?"

The people had done it so many times that they only half listened to the directions: most of them were quiet, wetting their lips, not looking around. Then Mr. Summers raised one hand high and said, "Adams." A man disengaged himself from the crowd and came forward. "Hi. Steve." Mr. Summers said, and Mr. Adams said. "Him, Joe." They grinned at one another humorlessly and nervously. Then Mr. Adams reached into the black box and took out a folded paper. He held it firmly by one corner as he turned and went hastily back to his place in the crowd, where he stood a little apart from his family, not looking down at his hand.

"Allen." Mr. Summers said. "Anderson.... Bentham."

"Seems like there's no time at all between lotteries any more." Mrs. Delacroix said to Mrs. Graves in the back row. "Seems like we got through with the last one only last week." "Time sure goes fast. – Mrs. Graves said. "Clark.... Delacroix"

"There goes my old man." Mrs. Delacroix said. She held her breath while her husband went forward.

"Dunbar," Mr. Summers said, and Mrs. Dunbar went steadily to the box while one of the women said. "Go on. Janey," and another said, "There she goes."

"We're next." Mrs. Graves said. She watched while Mr. Graves came around from the side of the box, greeted Mr. Summers gravely and selected a slip of paper from the box. By now, all through the crowd there were men holding the small folded papers in their large hand, turning them over and over nervously Mrs. Dunbar and her two sons stood together, Mrs. Dunbar holding the slip of paper.

"Harburt.... Hutchinson."

"Get up there, Bill," Mrs. Hutchinson said, and the people near her laughed.

"Jones."

"They do say," Mr. Adams said to Old Man Warner, who stood next to him, "that over in the north village they're talking of giving up the lottery."

Old Man Warner snorted. "Pack of crazy fools," he said. "Listening to the young folks, nothing's good enough for them. Next thing you know, they'll be wanting to go back to living in caves, nobody work any more, live hat way for a while. Used to be a saying about 'Lottery in June, corn be heavy soon.' First thing you know, we'd all be eating stewed chickweed and acorns. There's always been a lottery," he added petulantly. "Bad enough to see young Joe Summers up there joking with everybody." "Some places have already quit lotteries." Mrs. Adams said.

"Nothing but trouble in that," Old Man Warner said stoutly. "Pack of young fools."

"Martin." And Bobby Martin watched his father go forward. "Overdyke.... Percy."

"I wish they'd hurry," Mrs. Dunbar said to her older son. "I wish they'd hurry."

"They're almost through," her son said.

"You get ready to run tell Dad," Mrs. Dunbar said.

Mr. Summers called his own name and then stepped forward precisely and selected a slip from the box. Then he called, "Warner." "Seventy-seventh year I been in the lottery," Old Man Warner said as he went through the crowd.

"Seventy-seventh time."

"Watson" The tall boy came awkwardly through the crowd. Someone said, "Don't be nervous, Jack," and Mr. Summers said, "Take your time, son."

"Zanini."

After that, there was a long pause, a breathless pause, until Mr. Summers, holding his slip of paper in the air, said, "All right, fellows." For a minute, no one moved, and then all the slips of paper were opened. Suddenly, all the women began to speak at once, saving. "Who is it?," "Who's got it?," "Is it the Dunbars?," "Is it the Watsons?" Then the voices began to say, "It's Hutchinson. It's Bill," "Bill Hutchinson's got it."

"Go tell your father," Mrs. Dunbar said to her older son. People began to look around to see the Hutchinsons. Bill Hutchinson was standing quiet, staring down at the paper in his hand. Suddenly Tessie Hutchinson shouted to Mr. Summers. "You didn't give him time enough to take any paper he wanted. I saw you. It wasn't fair!"

"Be a good sport, Tessie." Mrs. Delacroix called, and Mrs. Graves said, "All of us took the same chance."

"Shut up, Tessie," Bill Hutchinson said.

"Well, everyone," Mr. Summers said, "that was done pretty fast, and now we've got to be hurrying a little more to get done in time." He consulted his next list. "Bill," he said, "you draw for the Hutchinson family. You got any other households in the Hutchinsons?"

"There's Don and Eva," Mrs. Hutchinson yelled. "Make them take their chance!"

"Daughters draw with their husbands' families, Tessie," Mr. Summers said gently. "You know that as well as anyone else."

"It wasn't fair," Tessie said.

"I guess not, Joe." Bill Hutchinson said regretfully. "My daughter draws with her husband's family; that's only fair. And I've got no other family except the kids."

"Then, as far as drawing for families is concerned, it's you," Mr. Summers said in explanation, "and as far as drawing for households is concerned, that's you, too. Right?"

"Right," Bill Hutchinson said.

"How many kids, Bill?" Mr. Summers asked formally.

"Three," Bill Hutchinson said. "There's Bill, Jr., and Nancy, and little Dave. And Tessie and me."

"All right, then," Mr. Summers said. "Harry, you got their tickets back?"

Mr. Graves nodded and held up the slips of paper. "Put them in the box, then," Mr. Summers directed. "Take Bill's and put it in."

"I think we ought to start over," Mrs. Hutchinson said, as quietly as she could. "I tell you it wasn't fair. You didn't give him time enough to choose. Everybody saw that." Mr. Graves had selected the five slips and put them in the box, and he dropped all the papers but those onto the ground, where the breeze caught them and lifted them off.

"Listen, everybody," Mrs. Hutchinson was saying to the people around her.

"Ready, Bill?" Mr. Summers asked, and Bill Hutchinson, with one quick glance around at his wife and children, nodded.

"Remember," Mr. Summers said. "take the slips and keep them folded until each person has taken one. Harry, you help little Dave." Mr. Graves took the hand of the little boy, who came willingly with him up to the box. "Take a paper out of the box, Davy." Mr. Summers said. Davy put his hand into the box and laughed. "Take just one paper." Mr. Summers said. "Harry, you hold it for him." Mr. Graves took the child's hand and removed the folded paper from the tight fist and held it while little Dave stood next to him and looked up at him wonderingly.

"Nancy next," Mr. Summers said. Nancy was twelve, and her school friends breathed heavily as she went forward switching her skirt, and took a slip daintily from the box "Bill, Jr.," Mr. Summers said, and Billy, his face red and his feet overlarge, near knocked the box over as he got a paper out. "Tessie," Mr. Summers said. She hesitated for a minute, looking around defiantly, and then set her lips and went up to the box. She snatched a paper out and held it behind her.

"Bill," Mr. Summers said, and Bill Hutchinson reached into the box and felt around, bringing his hand out at last with the slip of paper in it.

The crowd was quiet. A girl whispered, "I hope it's not Nancy," and the sound of the whisper reached the edges of the crowd.

"It's not the way it used to be." Old Man Warner said clearly. "People ain't the way they used to be."

"All right," Mr. Summers said. "Open the papers. Harry, you open little Dave's."

Mr. Graves opened the slip of paper and there was a general sigh through the crowd as he held it up and everyone could see that it was blank. Nancy and Bill. Jr.. opened theirs at the same time, and both beamed and laughed, turning around to the crowd and holding their slips of paper above their heads.

"Tessie," Mr. Summers said. There was a pause, and then Mr. Summers looked at Bill Hutchinson, and Bill unfolded his paper and showed it. It was blank.

"It's Tessie," Mr. Summers said, and his voice was hushed. "Show us her paper. Bill."

Bill Hutchinson went over to his wife and forced the slip of paper out of her hand. It had a black spot on it, the black spot Mr. Summers had made the night before with the heavy pencil in the coal company office. Bill Hutchinson held it up, and there was a stir in the crowd.

"All right, folks." Mr. Summers said. "Let's finish quickly."

Although the villagers had forgotten the ritual and lost the original black box, they still remembered to use stones. The pile of stones the boys had made earlier was ready; there were stones on the ground with the blowing scraps of paper that had come out of the box Delacroix selected a stone so large she had to pick it up with both hands and turned to Mrs. Dunbar. "Come on," she said. "Hurry up."

Mr. Dunbar had small stones in both hands, and she said, gasping for breath. "I can't run at all. You'll have to go ahead and I'll catch up with you."

The children had stones already. And someone gave little Davy Hutchinson few pebbles.

Tessie Hutchinson was in the center of a cleared space by now, and she held her hands out desperately as the villagers moved in on her. "It isn't fair," she said. A stone hit her on the side of the head. Old Man Warner was saying, "Come on, come on, everyone." Steve Adams was in the front of the crowd of villagers, with Mrs. Graves beside him.

"It isn't fair, it isn't right," Mrs. Hutchinson screamed, and then they were upon her.

EXERCISES:

I. **Answer the following questions and do the given assignments**:

1. Find some information about the author and present it to the group.

2. **AUDIO AND VIDEO ASIGNMENTS:**

Watch the video on understanding "The Lottery", comment on the main points mentioned.

3. What is the plot of the story? **4.** Were you surprised by the ending of the story? If not, at what point did you know what was going to happen? How does Jackson start to foreshadow the ending in paragraphs 2 and 3? Conversely, how does Jackson lull us into thinking that this is just an ordinary story with an ordinary town? **5.** Where does the story take place? In what way does the setting affect the story? Does it make you more or less likely to anticipate the ending? **6.** In what ways are the characters differentiated from one another? Looking back at the story, can you see why Tessie Hutchinson is singled out as the "winner"? **7.** What are some examples of irony in this story? For example, why might the title, "The Lottery," or the opening description in paragraph one, be considered ironic? **8.** Jackson gives interesting names to a number of her characters. Explain the possible allusions, irony or symbolism of some of these: ● Delacroix ● Graves ● Summers ● Bentham ● Hutchinson ● Warner ● Martin **9.** Take a close look at Jackson's description of the black wooden box and of the black spot on the fatal slip of paper. What do these objects suggest to you? Why is the black box described as "battered"? Are there any other symbols in the story? **10.** What do you understand to be the writer's own attitude toward the lottery and the stoning? Exactly what in the story makes her attitude clear to us? **11.** This story satirizes a number of social issues, including the reluctance of people to reject outdated traditions, ideas, rules, laws, and practices. What kinds of traditions, practices, laws, etc. might "The Lottery" represent? **12.** This story was published in 1948, just after World War II. What other cultural or historical events, attitudes, institutions, or rituals might Jackson be satirizing in this story? **13.** Comment on the poem (define the main idea, speak on the emotional background) and explain how it may be related to our topic.

"Desert of Lives"

A desert of lives.

A maze of relationships.
We're just people trying to survive,
As our lives unzips.
Yet will there be a chance to thrive,
And follow that of mere lips?
Or will we take initiative and drive,
As we begin our own trips?
So that we can revive,
To be someone who isn't made from just scripts.
Thus knowing how it truly is to be "alive,"
And form relationships.
Within the desert of lives,
We can only continue to find different ways to survive.

(Ethan Ly)

II. **Vocabulary work.**

1. Match the words in A with their synonyms in B.

A. a) profusely; b) assemble; c) boisterous; d) reprimand; e) survey; f) reluctant; g) pile; h) paraphernalia; i) petulant; j) defiant; k) battered.

B. 1) rebuke; 2) analysis; 3) damaged; 4) lavishly; 5) regalia; 6) whiny; 7) rebellious; 8) summon; 9) stack; 10) uncertain; 11) raucous.

III. **Writing.**

1). Write on the topic: "Standing out of the crowd"

5. **"Travels with the Snow Queen"**
by Kelly Link

Part of you is always traveling faster, always traveling ahead. Even when you are moving, it is never fast enough to satisfy that part of you. You enter the walls of the city early in the evening, when the cobblestones are a mottled pink with reflected light, and cold beneath the slap of your bare, bloody feet. You ask the man who is guarding the gate to recommend a place to stay the night, and even as you are falling into the bed at the inn,

the bed, which is piled high with quilts and scented with lavender, perhaps alone, perhaps with another traveler, perhaps with the guardsman who had such brown eyes, and a mustache that curled up on either side of his nose like two waxed black laces, even as this guardsman, whose name you didn't ask calls out a name in his sleep that is not your name, you are dreaming about the road again. When you sleep, you dream about the long white distances that still lie before you.

Your destination is North. The map that you are using is a mirror. You are always pulling the bits out of your bare feet, the pieces of the map that broke off and fell on the ground as the Snow Queen flew overhead in her sleigh. Where you are, where you are coming from, it is impossible to read a map made of paper. If it were that easy then everyone would be a traveler. You have heard of other travelers whose maps are breadcrumbs, whose maps are stones, whose maps are the four winds, whose maps are yellow bricks laid one after the other. You read your map with your foot, and behind you somewhere there must be another traveler whose map is the bloody footprints that you are leaving behind you.

There is a map of fine white scars on the soles of your feet that tells you where you have been. When you are pulling the shards of the Snow Queen's looking–glass out of your feet, you remind yourself, you tell yourself to imagine how it felt when Kay's eyes, Kay's heart were pierced by shards of the same mirror. Sometimes it is safer to read maps with your feet.

Ladies. Has it ever occurred to you that fairy tales aren't easy on the feet?

So this is the story so far. You grew up, you fell in love with the boy next door, Kay, the one with blue eyes who brought you bird feathers and roses, the one who was so good at puzzles. You thought he loved you—maybe he thought he did, too. But three years and exactly two days after you moved in with him, you were having drinks out on the patio. You weren't exactly fighting, and you can't remember what he had done that had made you so angry, but you threw your glass at him. There was a noise like the sky shattering.

The cuff of his trousers got splashed. There were little fragments of glass everywhere. "Don't move," you said. You weren't wearing shoes.

He raised his hand up to his face. “I think there’s something in my eye,” he said.

His eye was fine, of course, there wasn’t a thing in it, but later that night when he was undressing for bed, there were little bits of glass like grains of sugar, dusting his clothes. When you brushed your hand against his chest, something pricked your finger and left a smear of blood against his heart.

The next day it was snowing and he went out for a pack of cigarettes and never came back. You sat on the patio drinking something warm and alcoholic, with nutmeg in it, and the snow fell on your shoulders. You were wearing a short–sleeved T–shirt; you were pretending that you weren’t cold, and that your lover would be back soon. You put your finger on the ground and then stuck it in your mouth. The snow looked like sugar, but it tasted like nothing at all.

The man at the corner store said that he saw your lover get into a long white sleigh. There was a beautiful woman in it, and it was pulled by thirty white geese. “Oh, her,” you said, as if you weren’t surprised. You went home and looked in the wardrobe for that cloak that belonged to your great–grandmother. You were thinking about going after him. You remembered that the cloak was woolen and warm, and a beautiful red—a traveler’s cloak. But when you pulled it out, it smelled like wet dog and the lining was ragged, as if something had chewed on it. It smelled like bad luck: it made you sneeze, and so you put it back. You waited for a while longer.

Two months went by, and Kay didn’t come back, and finally you left and locked the door of your house behind you. You were going to travel for love, without shoes, or cloak, or common sense. This is one of the things a woman can do when her lover leaves her. It’s hard on the feet perhaps, but staying at home is hard on the heart, and you weren’t quite ready to give him up yet. You told yourself that the woman in the sleigh must have put a spell on him, and he was probably already missing you. Besides, there are some questions you want to ask him, some true things you want to tell him. This is what you told yourself.

The snow was soft and cool on your feet, and then you found the trail of glass, the map.

After three weeks of hard traveling, you came to the city.

No, really, think about it. Think about the little mermaid, who traded in her tail for love, got two legs and two feet, and every step was like walking on knives. And where did it get her? That's a rhetorical question, of course. Then there's the girl who put on the beautiful red dancing shoes. The woodsman had to chop her feet off with an axe.

There are Cinderella's two stepsisters, who cut off their own toes, and Snow White's stepmother, who danced to death in red–hot iron slippers. The Goose Girl's maid got rolled down a hill in a barrel studded with nails. Travel is hard on the single woman. There was this one woman who walked east of the sun and then west of the moon, looking for her lover, who had left her because she spilled tallow on his nightshirt. She wore out at least one pair of perfectly good iron shoes before she found him. Take our word for it, he wasn't worth it. What do you think happened when she forgot to put the fabric softener in the dryer? Laundry is hard, travel is harder. You deserve a vacation, but of course you're a little wary. You've read the fairy tales. We've been there, we know.

That's why we here at Snow Queen Tours have put together a luxurious but affordable package for you, guaranteed to be easy on the feet and on the budget. See the world by goosedrawn sleigh, experience the archetypal forest, the winter wonderland; chat with real live talking animals (please don't feed them). Our accommodations are three–star: sleep on comfortable, guaranteed pea–free box–spring mattresses; eat meals prepared by world–class chefs. Our tour guides are friendly, knowledgeable, well–traveled, trained by the Snow Queen herself. They know first aid, how to live off the land; they speak three languages fluently.

Special discount for older sisters, stepsisters, stepmothers, wicked witches, crones, hags, princesses who have kissed frogs without realizing what they were getting into, etc.

You leave the city and you walk all day beside a stream that is as soft and silky as blue fur. You wish that your map was water, and not broken glass. At midday you stop and bathe your feet in a shallow place and the ribbons of red blood curl into the blue water.

Eventually you come to a wall of briars, so wide and high that you can't see any way around it. You reach out to touch a rose, and prick your finger. You suppose that you could walk around, but your feet tell you that

the map leads directly through the briar wall, and you can't stray from the path that has been laid out for you. Remember what happened to the little girl, your great–grandmother, in her red woolen cape. Maps protect their travelers, but only if the travelers obey the dictates of their maps. This is what you have been told.

Perched in the briars above your head is a raven, black and sleek as the curlicued moustache of the guardsman. The raven looks at you and you look back at it. "I'm looking for someone," you say. "A boy named Kay."

The raven opens its big beak and says, "He doesn't love you, you know."

You shrug. You've never liked talking animals. Once your lover gave you a talking cat, but it ran away and secretly you were glad. "I have a few things I want to say to him, that's all." You have, in fact, been keeping a list of all the things you are going to say to him. "Besides, I wanted to see the world, be a tourist for a while."

"That's fine for some," the raven says. Then he relents. "If you'd like to come in, then come in. The princess just married the boy with the boots that squeaked on the marble floor."

"That's fine for some," you say. Kay's boots squeak; you wonder how he met the princess, if he is the one that she just married, how the raven knows that he doesn't love you, what this princess has that you don't have, besides a white sleigh pulled by thirty geese, an impenetrable wall of briars, and maybe a castle. She's probably just some bimbo.

"The Princess Briar Rose is a very wise princess," the raven says, "but she's the laziest girl in the world. Once she went to sleep for a hundred days and no one could wake her up, although they put one hundred peas under her mattress, one each morning."

This, of course, is the proper and respectful way of waking up princesses. Sometimes Kay used to wake you up by dribbling cold water on your feet. Sometimes he woke you up by whistling.

"On the one hundredth day," the raven says, "she woke up all by herself and told her council of twelve fairy godmothers that she supposed it was time she got married. So they stuck up posters, and princes and youngest sons came from all over the kingdom."

When the cat ran away, Kay put up flyers around the neighborhood. You wonder if you should have put up flyers for Kay. "Briar Rose wanted

a clever husband, but it tired her dreadfully to sit and listen to the young men give speeches and talk about how rich and sexy and smart they were. She fell asleep and stayed asleep until the young man with the squeaky boots came in. It was his boots that woke her up.

"It was love at first sight. Instead of trying to impress her with everything he knew and everything he had seen, he declared that he had come all this way to hear Briar Rose talk about her dreams. He'd been studying in Vienna with a famous Doctor, and was deeply interested in dreams."

Kay used to tell you his dreams every morning. They were long and complicated and if he thought you weren't listening to him, he'd sulk. You never remember your dreams. "Other peoples' dreams are never very interesting," you tell the raven.

The raven cocks its head. It flies down and lands on the grass at your feet. "Wanna bet?" it says. Behind the raven you notice a little green door recessed in the briar wall. You could have sworn that it wasn't there a minute ago.

The raven leads you through the green door, and across a long green lawn towards a two–story castle that is the same pink as the briar roses. You think this is kind of tacky, but exactly what you would expect from someone named after a flower. "I had this dream once," the raven says, "that my teeth were falling out. They just crumbled into pieces in my mouth. And then I woke up, and realized that ravens don't have teeth."

You follow the raven inside the palace, and up a long, twisty stair–case. The stairs are stone, worn and smoothed away, like old thick silk. Slivers of glass glister on the pink stone, catching the light of the candles on the wall. As you go up, you see that you are part of a great gray rushing crowd. Fantastic creatures, flat and thin as smoke, race up the stairs, men and women and snakey things with bright eyes. They nod to you as they slip past. "Who are they?" you ask the raven.

"Dreams," the raven says, hopping awkwardly from step to step. "The Princess's dreams, come to pay their respects to her new husband. Of course they're too fine to speak to the likes of us."

But you think that some of them look familiar. They have a familiar smell, like a pillow that your lover's head has rested upon.

At the top of the staircase is a wooden door with a silver keyhole. The dreams pour steadily through the keyhole, and under the bottom of the door.

You see a bed big enough for a giant, with four tall oak trees for bedposts. You climb up the ladder that rests against the side of the bed to see the Princess's sleeping husband. As you lean over, a goose feather flies up and tickles your nose. You brush it away, and dislodge several seedy–looking dreams. Briar Rose rolls over and laughs in her sleep, but the man beside her wakes up. "Who is it?" he says. "What do you want?"

He isn't Kay. He doesn't look a thing like Kay. "You're not Kay," you tell the man in the Princess's bed.

"Who is Kay?" he says, so you explain it all to him, feeling horribly embarrassed. The raven is looking pleased with itself, the way your talking cat used to look, before it ran away. You glare at the raven. You glare at the man who is not Kay.

After you've finished, you say that something is wrong, because your map clearly indicates that Kay has been here, in this bed. Your feet are leaving bloody marks on the sheets, and you pick a sliver of glass off the foot of the bed, so everyone can see that you're not lying. Princess Briar Rose sits up in bed, her long pinkish–brown hair tumbled down over her shoulders. "He's not in love with you," she says, yawning.

This is the list you carry in your pocket, of the things you plan to say to Kay, when you find him, if you find him:

1. I'm sorry that I forgot to water your ferns while you were away that time.

2. When you said that I reminded you of your mother, was that a good thing?

3. I never really liked your friends all that much.

4. None of my friends ever really liked you.

5. Do you remember when the cat ran away, and I cried and cried and made you put up posters, and she never came back? I wasn't crying because she didn't come back. I was crying because I'd taken her to the woods, and I was scared she'd come back and tell you what I'd done, but I guess a wolf got her, or something. She never liked me anyway.

6. I never liked your mother.

7. After you left, I didn't water your plants on purpose. They're all dead.

8. Goodbye.

9. Were you ever really in love with me?

10. What exactly did you mean, when you said that it was fine that I had put on a little weight, that you thought I was even more beautiful, that I should go ahead and eat as much as I wanted, but when I weighed myself on the bathroom scale, I was exactly the same weight as before, I hadn't gained a single pound?

11. So maybe I'm an idiot, but I used to be in love with you.

12. I slept with some guy, I didn't mean to, it just kind of happened. Is that how it was with you? Not that I'm making any apologies, or that I'd accept yours, I just want to know.

13. My feet hurt, and it's all your fault.

14. I mean it this time, goodbye.

The Princess Briar Rose isn't a bimbo after all, even if she does have a silly name and a pink castle. You admire her dedication to the art and practice of sleep. By now you are growing sick and tired of traveling, and would like nothing better than to curl up in a big featherbed for one hundred days, or maybe even one hundred years, but she offers to loan you her carriage, and when you explain that you have to walk, she sends you off with a troop of armed guards. They will escort you through the forest, which is full of thieves and wolves and princes on quests, lurking about. The guards politely pretend that they don't notice the trail of blood that you are leaving behind.

It is after sunset, and you aren't even half a mile into the forest, which is dark and scary and full of noises, when bandits ambush your escort, and slaughter them all. The bandit queen, who is grizzled and gray, with a nose like an old pickle, yells delightedly at the sight of you. "You're a nice plump one for my supper!" she says, and draws her long knife out of the stomach of one of the dead guards. She is just about to slit your throat, as you stand there, politely pretending not to notice the blood that is pooling around the bodies of the dead guards, that is now obliterating the bloody tracks of your feet, the knife that is at your throat, when a girl about your own age jumps onto the robber queen's back, pulling at the robber queen's braided hair as if it were reins.

There is a certain family resemblance between the robber queen and the girl who right now has her knees locked around the robber queen's throat. "I don't want you to kill her," the girl says, and you realize that she means you, that you were about to die a minute ago, that travel is much more dangerous than you had ever imagined. You add an item of complaint to the list of things that you plan to tell Kay, if you find him.

The girl has half–throttled the robber queen, who has fallen to her knees, gasping for breath. "She can be my sister," the girl says insistently. "You promised I could have a sister and I want her. Besides, her feet are bleeding."

The robber queen drops her knife, and the girl drops back onto the ground, kissing her mother's hairy gray cheek. "Very well, very well," the robber queen grumbles, and the girl grabs your hand, pulling you farther and faster into the woods, until you are running and stumbling, her hand hot around yours.

You have lost all sense of direction; your feet are no longer set upon your map. You should be afraid, but instead you are strangely exhilarated. Your feet don't hurt anymore, and although you don't know where you are going, for the very first time you are moving fast enough, you are almost flying, your feet are skimming over the night–black forest floor as if it were the smooth, flat surface of a lake, and your feet were two white birds. "Where are we going?" you ask the robber girl.

"We're here," she says, and stops so suddenly that you almost fall over. You are in a clearing, and the full moon is hanging overhead. You can see the robber girl better now, under the light of the moon. She leads you to a tumbledown stone keep, which is as black inside as her fingernail polish, and smells strongly of dirty straw and animals.

"Are you a princess?" she asks you. "What are you doing in my mother's forest? Don't be afraid. I won't let my mother eat you."

You explain to her that you are not a princess, what you are doing, about the map, who you are looking for, what he did to you, or maybe it was what he didn't do. When you finish, the robber girl puts her arms around you and squeezes you roughly. "You poor thing! But what a silly way to travel!" she says. She shakes her head and makes you sit down on the stone floor of the keep and show her your feet. You explain that they

always heal, that really your feet are quite tough, but she takes off her leatherette boots and gives them to you.

The floor of the keep is dotted with indistinct, motionless forms. One snarls in its sleep, and you realize that they are dogs. The robber girl is sitting between four slender columns, and when the dog snarls, the thing shifts restlessly, lowering its branchy head. It is a hobbled reindeer. "Well go on, see if they fit," the robber girl says, pulling out her knife. She drags it along the stone floor to make sparks. "What are you going to do when you find him?"

"Sometimes I'd like to cut off his head," you say. The robber girl grins, and thumps the hilt of her knife against the reindeer's chest.

The robber girl's feet are just a little bigger, but the boots are still warm from her feet. You explain that you can't wear the boots, or else you won't know where you are going. "Nonsense!" the robber girl says rudely.

You ask if she knows a better way to find Kay, and she says that if you are still determined to go looking for him, even though he obviously doesn't love you, and he isn't worth a bit of trouble, then the thing to do is to find the Snow Queen. "Do you know where the Snow Queen lives?"

The reindeer replies in a low, hopeless voice that he doesn't know, but he is sure that his old mother does. The robber girl slaps his flank. "Then you'll take her to your mother," she says. "And mind that you don't dawdle on the way."

She turns to you and gives you a smacking wet kiss on the lips and says, "Keep the shoes, they look much nicer on you than they did on me. And don't let me hear that you've been walking on glass again." She gives the reindeer a speculative look. "You know, Bae, I almost think I'm going to miss you."

You step into the cradle of her hands, and she swings you over the reindeer's bony back. Then she saws through the hobble with her knife, and yells "Ho!" waking up the dogs.

You knot your fingers into Bae's mane, and bounce up as he stumbles into a fast trot. The dogs follow for a distance, snapping at his hooves, but soon you have outdistanced them, moving so fast that the wind peels your lips back in an involuntary grimace. You almost miss the feel of glass beneath your feet. By morning, you are out of the forest again, and Bae's hooves are churning up white clouds of snow.

Sometimes you think there must be an easier way to do this. Sometimes it seems to be getting easier all on its own. Now you have boots and a reindeer, but you still aren't happy. Sometimes you wish that you'd stayed at home. You're sick and tired of traveling towards the happily ever after, whenever the fuck that is—you'd like the happily right now. Thank you very much.

When you breathe out, you can see the fine mist of your breath and the breath of the reindeer floating before you, until the wind tears it away. Bae runs on.

The snow flies up, and the air seems to grow thicker and thicker. As Bae runs, you feel that the white air is being rent by your passage, like heavy cloth. When you turn around and look behind you, you can see the path shaped to your joined form, woman and reindeer, like a hall stretching back to infinity. You see that there is more than one sort of map, that some forms of travel are indeed easier. "Give me a kiss," Bae says. The wind whips his words back to you. You can almost see the shape of them hanging in the heavy air.

"I'm not really a reindeer," he says. "I'm an enchanted prince."

You politely decline, pointing out that you haven't known him that long, and besides, for traveling purposes, a reindeer is better than a prince.

"He doesn't love you," Bae says. "And you could stand to lose a few pounds. My back is killing me."

You are sick and tired of talking animals, as well as travel. They never say anything that you didn't already know. You think of the talking cat that Kay gave you, the one that would always come to you, secretly, and looking very pleased with itself, to inform you when Kay's fingers smelled of some other woman. You couldn't stand to see him pet it, his fingers stroking its white fur, the cat lying on its side and purring, its pointy little tongue sticking out at you. "Shut up," you say to Bae.

He subsides into an offended silence. His long brown fur is rimmed with frost, and you can feel the tears that the wind pulls from your eyes turning to ice on your cheeks. The only part of you that is warm are your feet, snug in the robber girl's boots. "It's just a little farther," Bae says, when you have been traveling for what feels like hours. "And then we're home."

You cross another corridor in the white air, and he swerves to follow it, crying out gladly, “We are near the old woman of Lapmark’s house, my mother’s house.”

“How do you know?” you ask.

“I recognize the shape that she leaves behind her,” Bae says. “Look!”

You look and see that the corridor of air you are following is formed like a short, stout, petticoated woman. It swings out at the waist like a bell.

“How long does it last?”

“As long as the air is heavy and dense,” he says, “we burrow tunnels through the air like worms, but then the wind will come along and erase where we have been.”

The woman–tunnel ends at a low red door. Bae lowers his head and knocks his antlers against it, scraping off the paint. The old woman of Lapmark opens the door, and you clamber stiffly off Bae’s back. There is much rejoicing as mother recognizes son, although he is much changed from how he had been.

The old woman of Lapmark is stooped and fat as a grub. She fixes you a cup of tea, while Bae explains that you are looking for the Snow Queen’s palace.

“You’ve not far to go now,” his mother tells you. “Only a few hundred miles and past the house of the woman of Finmany. She’ll tell you how to go—let me write a letter explaining everything to her. And don’t forget to mention to her that I’ll be coming for tea tomorrow; she’ll change you back then, Bae, if you ask her nicely.”

The woman of Lapmark has no paper, so she writes the letter on a piece of dried cod, flat as a dinner plate. Then you are off again. Sometimes you sleep as Bae runs on, and sometimes you aren’t sure if you are asleep or waking. Great balls of greenish light roll cracking across the sky above you. At times it seems as if Bae is flying alongside the lights, chatting to them like old friends. At last you come to the house of the woman of Finmany, and you knock on her chimney, because she has no door.

Why, you may wonder, are there so many old women living out here? Is this a retirement community? One might not be remarkable, two is certainly more than enough, but as you look around, you can see little heaps of snow, lines of smoke rising from them. You have to be careful

where you put your foot, or you might come through someone's roof. Maybe they came here for the quiet, or because they like ice fishing, or maybe they just like snow.

It is steamy and damp in the house, and you have to climb down the chimney, past the roaring fire, to get inside. Bae leaps down the chimney, hooves first, scattering coals everywhere. The Finmany woman is smaller and rounder than the woman of Lapmark. She looks to you like a lump of pudding with black currant eyes. She wears only a greasy old slip, and an apron that has written on it, "If you can't stand the heat, stay out of my kitchen."

She recognizes Bae even faster than his mother had, because, as it turns out, she was the one who turned him into a reindeer for teasing her about her weight. Bae apologizes, insincerely, you think, but the Finmany woman says she will see what she can do about turning him back again. She isn't entirely hopeful. It seems that a kiss is the preferred method of transformation. You don't offer to kiss him, because you know what that kind of thing leads to.

The Finmany woman reads the piece of dried cod by the light of her cooking fire, and then she throws the fish into her cooking pot. Bae tells her about Kay and the Snow Queen, and about your feet, because your lips have frozen together on the last leg of the journey, and you can't speak a word.

"You're so clever and strong," the reindeer says to the Finmany woman. You can almost hear him add *and fat* under his breath. "You can tie up all the winds in the world with a bit of thread. I've seen you hurling the lightning bolts down from the hills as if they were feathers. Can't you give her the strength of ten men, so that she can fight the Snow Queen and win Kay back?"

"The strength of ten men?" the Finmany woman says. "A lot of good that would do! And besides, he doesn't love her."

Bae smirks at you, as if to say, I told you so. If your lips weren't frozen, you'd tell him that she isn't saying anything that you don't already know. "Now!" the Finmany woman says, "take her up on your back one last time, and put her down again by the bush with the red berries. That marks the edge of the Snow Queen's garden; don't stay there gossiping, but come straight back. You were a handsome boy—I'll make you twice as

good–looking as you were before. We'll put up flyers, see if we can get someone to come and kiss you."

"As for you, missy," she says. "Tell the Snow Queen now that we have Bae back, that we'll be over at the Palace next Tuesday for bridge. Just as soon as he has hands to hold the cards."

She puts you on Bae's back again, giving you such a warm kiss that your lips unfreeze, and you can speak again. "The woman of Lapmark is coming for tea tomorrow," you tell her. The Finmany woman lifts Bae, and you upon his back, in her strong, fat arms, giving you a gentle push up the chimney.

Good morning, ladies, it's nice to have you on the premiere Snow Queen Tour. I hope that you all had a good night's sleep, because today we're going to be traveling quite some distance. I hope that everyone brought a comfortable pair of walking shoes. Let's have a head count, make sure that everyone on the list is here, and then we'll have introductions. My name is Gerda, and I'm looking forward to getting to know all of you.

Here you are at last, standing before the Snow Queen's palace, the palace of the woman who enchanted your lover and then stole him away in her long white sleigh. You aren't quite sure what you are going to say to her, or to him. When you check your pocket, you discover that your list has disappeared. You have most of it memorized, but you think maybe you will wait and see, before you say anything. Part of you would like to turn around and leave before the Snow Queen finds you, before Kay sees you. You are afraid that you will burst out crying or even worse, that he will know that you walked barefoot on broken glass across half the continent, just to find out why he left you.

The front door is open, so you don't bother knocking, you just walk right in. It isn't that large a palace, really. It is about the size of your own house and even reminds you of your own house, except that the furniture, Danish modern, is carved out of blue–green ice—as are the walls and everything else. It's a slippery place and you're glad that you are wearing the robber girl's boots. You have to admit that the Snow Queen is a meticulous housekeeper, much tidier than you ever were. You can't find the Snow Queen and you can't find Kay, but in every room there are white

geese who, you are in equal parts relieved and surprised to discover, don't utter a single word.

"Gerda!" Kay is sitting at a table, fitting the pieces of a puzzle together. When he stands up, he knocks several pieces of the puzzle off the table, and they fall to the floor and shatter into even smaller fragments. You both kneel down, picking them up. The table is blue, the puzzle pieces are blue, Kay is blue, which is why you didn't see him when you first came into the room. The geese brush up against you, soft and white as cats.

"What took you so long?" Kay says. "Where in the world did you get those ridiculous boots?" You stare at him in disbelief.

"I walked barefoot on broken glass across half a continent to get here," you say. But at least you don't burst into tears. "A robber girl gave them to me."

Kay snorts. His blue nostrils flare. "Sweetie, they're hideous."

"Why are you blue?" you ask.

"I'm under an enchantment," he says. "The Snow Queen kissed me. Besides, I thought blue was your favorite color."

Your favorite color has always been yellow. "If you kiss me," he says, "you break the spell and I can come home with you. If you break the spell, I'll be in love with you again."

You refrain from asking if he was in love with you when he kissed the Snow Queen. Pardon me, you think, when *she* kissed him. "What is that puzzle you're working on?" you ask.

"Oh, that," he says. "That's the other way to break the spell. If I can put it together, but the other way is easier. Not to mention more fun. Don't you want to kiss me?"

You look at his blue lips, at his blue face. You try to remember if you liked his kisses. "Do you remember the white cat?" you say. "It didn't exactly run away. I took it to the woods and left it there."

"We can get another one," he says.

"I took it to the woods because it was telling me things."

"We don't have to get a talking cat," Kay says. "Besides, why did you walk barefoot across half a continent of broken glass if you aren't going to kiss me and break the spell?" His blue face is sulky.

"Maybe I just wanted to see the world," you tell him. "Meet interesting people."

The geese are brushing up against your ankles. You stroke their white feathers and the geese snap, but gently, at your fingers. “You had better hurry up and decide if you want to kiss me or not,” Kay says. “Because she’s home.”

When you turn around, there she is, smiling at you like you are exactly the person that she was hoping to see.

The Snow Queen isn’t how or what you’d expected. She’s not as tall as you—you thought she would be taller. Sure, she’s beautiful, you can see why Kay kissed her (although you are beginning to wonder why she kissed him), but her eyes are black and kind, which you didn’t expect at all. She stands next to you, not looking at Kay at all, but looking at you. “I wouldn’t do it if I were you,” she says.

“Oh come on,” Kay says. “Give me a break, lady. Sure it was nice, but you don’t want me hanging around this icebox forever, any more than I want to be here. Let Gerda kiss me, we’ll go home and live happily ever after. There’s supposed to be a happy ending.”

“I like your boots,” the Snow Queen says.

“You’re beautiful,” you tell her.

“I don’t believe this,” Kay says. He thumps his blue fist on the blue table, sending blue puzzle pieces flying through the air. Pieces lie like nuggets of sky–colored glass on the white backs of the geese. A piece of the table has splintered off, and you wonder if he is going to have to put the table back together as well.

“Do you love him?”

You look at the Snow Queen when she says this and then you look at Kay. “Sorry,” you tell him. You hold out your hand in case he’s willing to shake it.

“Sorry!” he says. “You’re sorry! What good does that do me?”

“So what happens now?” you ask the Snow Queen.

“Up to you,” she says. “Maybe you’re sick of traveling. Are you?”

“I don’t know,” you say. “I think I’m finally beginning to get the hang of it.”

“In that case,” says the Snow Queen, “I may have a business proposal for you.”

“Hey!” Kay says. “What about me? Isn’t someone going to kiss me?”

You help him collect a few puzzle pieces. “Will you at least do this much for me?” he asks. “For old time’s sake. Will you spread the word, tell a few single princesses that I’m stuck up here? I’d like to get out of here sometime in the next century. Thanks. I’d really appreciate it. You know, we had a really nice time, I think I remember that.”

The robber girl’s boots cover the scars on your feet. When you look at these scars, you can see the outline of the journey you made. Sometimes mirrors are maps, and sometimes maps are mirrors. Sometimes scars tell a story, and maybe someday you will tell this story to a lover. The soles of your feet are stories—hidden in the black boots, they shine like mirrors. If you were to take your boots off, you would see reflected in one foot–mirror the Princess Briar Rose as she sets off on her honeymoon, in her enormous four–poster bed, which now has wheels and is pulled by twenty white horses.

It’s nice to see women exploring alternative means of travel.

In the other foot–mirror, almost close enough to touch, you could see the robber girl whose boots you are wearing. She is setting off to find Bae, to give him a kiss and bring him home again. You wouldn’t presume to give her any advice, but you do hope that she has found another pair of good sturdy boots.

Someday, someone will probably make their way to the Snow Queen’s palace, and kiss Kay’s cold blue lips. She might even manage a happily ever after for a while.

You are standing in your black laced boots, and the Snow Queen’s white geese mutter and stream and sidle up against you. You are beginning to understand some of what they are saying. They grumble about the weight of the sleigh, the weather, your hesitant jerks at their reins. But they are good–natured grumbles. You tell the geese that your feet are maps *and* your feet are mirrors. But you tell them that you have to keep in mind that they are also useful for walking around on. They are perfectly good feet.

EXERCISES:

I. **Answer the following questions and do the given assignments**:

1. Find some information about the author and present it to the group.

2. **AUDIO AND VIDEO ASIGNMENTS:**

Watch Kelly Link's interview, comment on the questions asked and answers given (*a teacher may stop the video at some moments to let the students comment on that part*).
3. What is the plot of the story? **4.** What do feet and a map symbolize in the story? **5.** What is the theme of the story? **6.** Who are the main characters? Whom do they represent? **7.** Kelly Link's stories would vie with Hurakami for the strangest stories one has ever read. Unlike Hurakami, however, there is no Kafkaesque feeling of alienation; the odd people in Kelly Link's stories seem generally content with the craziness of their lives. What kind of stories is this one? How would you define the genre of the story? **8.** What is the problem raised in the story? **9.** What is the moral lesson a woman gets at the end? **10.** What is the feminist massage of the story? **11.** What general truths about human nature does this story reveal? **12.** Do we get a happy end in the story? What kind of? **13.** Comment on the poem (define the main idea, speak on the emotional background) and explain how it may be related to our topic.

"Value Of Love"

I have seen women lifted by love,
Countless women surrounded, fed, embraced by love,
But most recently I have met a woman condemned by love,
Alienated, starved, forgotten by love.
The pain from love is visible in the eyes, heart, and soul of this woman.
She who lives for love, who would die for love.
Curiosity forces me to look deep into her.

Big brown eyes tell of a man whose love was taken away as quickly as was given.
A selfish man whose compassion drowned in these eyes.
Taking advantage of the faith and forgiveness she possesses.
Tears roll down her cheeks and begin to drip from her delicate chin.
As sympathy overwhelms me, I invite myself in for a better look.

A bleeding heart welcomes me to the truth behind this love.
What once was bliss has transformed.

The love that filled now forces her to starve,
An endless hunger that consumes, leaving nothing for this woman.
This man has stripped her of all that she loved, including himself.
He has laughed at her sorrow and found comfort in her misery.
My heart breaks for her as she opens up to let me in.

One foot after the other I step into her soul.
My thoughts echo as I begin to connect with her sorrows.
"Stop," catches her attention as I start to reason with her.
"Do not give yourself to this man."
Confusion fills her as she wakes to catch my gaze.
"If your love/your life mean so little to you that you can just give it away, why should it mean any more to him?"
I hear these words and reality sets in.

I have met this woman in love,
Alienated, starved, forgotten by love.
I have seen into her eyes, felt her heartache, and visited her soul.
This muse whose sorrow connects so genuinely with mine... is ME!
I have given my life to a man who has never asked nor has he ever cared for it.
I have believed and made true all lies.
I have accepted inferiority, for how can he value me more than I value myself?

(Jennifer Edwards)

II. **Comment and explain in the context of the story:**

You read your map with your foot; you were going to travel for love, without shoes, or cloak, or common sense. This is one of the things a woman can do when her lover leaves her; he'd been studying in Vienna with a famous Doctor, and was deeply interested in dreams; you are afraid that you will burst out crying or even worse, that he will know that you walked barefoot on broken glass across half the continent, just to find out why he left you.

III. **Vocabulary work.**

1. Match the words in A with their synonyms in B.

A. a) scent; b) sleigh; c) discount; d) stray; e) relent; f) squeak; g) sulk; h) glare; i) bimbo; j) lurk; k) exhilarated; l) smirk; m) enchant; n) meticulous.

B. 1) give up; 2) glow; 3) sneer; 4) doll; 5) frown; 6) bewitch; 7) sledge; 8) animated; 9) creep; 10) odor; 11) scrupulous; 12) wander; 13) squeal; 14) allowance.

IV. **Writing.**

1). Write on the topic: "The pieces of advice one can give in case of dysfunctional toxic relationship."

6. **"The Lady Or The Tiger?"**

by Frank Stockton

IN THE very olden time, there lived a semi-barbaric king, whose ideas, though somewhat polished and sharpened by the progressiveness of distant Latin neighbors, were still large, florid, and untrammelled, as became the half of him which was barbaric. He was a man of exuberant fancy, and, withal, of an authority so irresistible that, at his will, he turned his varied fancies into facts. He was greatly given to self-communing; and, when he and himself agreed upon any thing, the thing was done. When every member of his domestic and political systems moved smoothly in its appointed course, his nature was bland and genial; but whenever there was a little hitch, and some of his orbs got out of their orbits, he was blander and more genial still, for nothing pleased him so much as to make the crooked straight, and crush down uneven places.

Among the borrowed notions by which his barbarism had become semified was that of the public arena, in which, by exhibitions of manly and beastly valor, the minds of his subjects were refined and cultured.

But even here the exuberant and barbaric fancy asserted itself. The arena of the king was built, not to give the people an opportunity of hearing the rhapsodies of dying gladiators, nor to enable them to view the inevitable conclusion of a conflict between religious opinions and hungry jaws, but for purposes far better adapted to widen and develop the mental energies of the people. This vast amphitheatre, with its encircling galleries, its mysterious vaults, and its unseen passages, was an agent of poetic justice, in which crime was punished. Or virtue rewarded, by the decrees of an impartial and incorruptible chance.

When a subject was accused of a crime of sufficient importance to interest the king, public notice was given that on an appointed day the fate of tile accused person would be decided in the king's arena, – a structure which well deserved its name; for, although its form and plan were borrowed from afar, its purpose emanated solely from the brain of this man, who, every barleycorn a king, knew no tradition to which he owed more allegiance than pleased his fancy, and who engrafted on every adopted form of human thought and action the rich growth of his barbaric idealism.

When all the people had assembled in the galleries, and the king, surrounded by his court, sat high up on his throne of royal state on one side of the arena, he gave a signal, a door beneath him opened, and the accused subject stepped out into the amphitheatre. Directly opposite him, on the other side of the enclosed space, were two doors, exactly alike and side by side. It was the duty and the privilege of the person on trial, to walk directly to these doors and open one of them. He could open either door he pleased: he was subject to no guidance or influence but that of the aforementioned impartial and incorruptible chance. If he opened the one, there came out of it a hungry tiger, the fiercest and most cruel that could be procured, which immediately sprang upon him, and tore him to pieces, as a punishment for his guilt. The moment that the case of the criminal was thus decided, doleful iron bells were clanged, great wails went up from the hired mourners posted on the outer rim of the arena, and the vast audience, with bowed heads and downcast hearts, wended slowly their homeward

way, mourning greatly that one so young and fair, or so old and respected, should have merited so dire a fate.

But, if the accused person opened the other door, there came forth from it a lady, the most suitable to his years and station that his majesty could select among his fair subjects; and to this lady he was immediately married, as a reward of his innocence. It mattered not that he might already possess a wife and family, or that his affections might be engaged upon an object of his own selection: the king allowed no such subordinate arrangements to interfere with his great scheme of retribution and reward. The exercises, as in the other instance, took place immediately, and in the arena. Another door opened beneath the king, and a priest, followed by a band of choristers' and dancing maidens blowing joyous airs on golden horns and treading an measure, advanced to where the pair stood side by side; and the wedding was promptly and cheerily solemnized. Then the gay brass bells rang forth their merry peals, the people shouted glad hurrahs, and the innocent man, preceded by children strewing flowers on his path, led his bride to his home.

This was the king's semi-barbaric method of administering justice. Its perfect fairness is obvious. The criminal could not know out of which door would come the lady: he opened either he pleased, without having the slightest idea whether, in the next instant, he was to be devoured or married. On some occasions the tiger came out of one door, and on some out of the other. The decisions of this tribunal were not only fair, they were positively determinate: the accused person was instantly punished if he found himself guilty; and, if innocent, he was rewarded on the spot, whether he liked it or not. There was no escape from the judgments or the king's arena.

The institution was a very popular one. When the people gathered together on one of the great trial days, they never knew whether they were to witness a bloody slaughter or a hilarious wedding. This element of uncertainty lent an interest to the occasion which it could not otherwise have attained. Thus, the masses were entertained and pleased, and the thinking part of the community could bring no charge of unfairness against this plan; for did not the accused person have the whole matter in his own hands?

This semi-barbaric king had a daughter as blooming as his most florid fancies, and with a soul as fervent and imperious as his own. As is usual in such cases, she was the apple of his eye, and was loved by him above all humanity. Among his courtiers was a young man of that fineness of blood and lowness of station common to the conventional heroes of romance who love royal maidens. This royal maiden was well satisfied with her lover, for he was handsome and brave to a degree unsurpassed in all this kingdom; and she loved him with an ardor that had enough of barbarism in it to make it exceedingly warm and strong. This love affair moved on happily for many months, until one day the king happened to discover its existence. He did not hesitate nor waver in regard to his duty in the premises. The youth was immediately cast into prison, and a day was appointed for his trial in the king's arena. This, of course, was an especially important occasion; and his majesty, as well as all the people, was greatly interested in the workings and development of this trial.

Never before had such a case occurred; never before had a subject dared to love the daughter of a king. In after-years such things became commonplace enough; but then they were, in no slight degree, novel and startling.

The tiger-cages of the kingdom were searched for the most savage and relentless beasts, from which the fiercest monster might be selected for the arena; and the ranks of maiden youth and beauty throughout the land were carefully surveyed by competent judges, in order that ,he young man might have a fitting bride in case fate did not determine for him a different destiny. Of course, everybody knew that the deed with which the accused was charged had been done. He had loved the princess, and neither he, she, nor any one else thought of denying the fact; but the king would not think of allowing any fact of this kind to interfere with the workings of the tribunal, in which he took such great delight and satisfaction. No matter how the affair turned out, the youth would be disposed of; and the king would take an aesthetic pleasure in watching the course of events, which would determine whether or not the young man had done wrong in allowing himself to love the princess.

The appointed day arrived. From far and near the people gathered, and thronged the great galleries of the arena; and crowds, unable to gain admittance, massed themselves against its outside walls. The king and his

court were in their places, opposite the twin doors,--those fateful portals, so terrible in their similarity.

All was ready. The signal was given. A door beneath the royal party opened, and the lover of the princess walked into the arena. Tall, beautiful, fair, his appearance was greeted with a low hum of admiration and anxiety. Half the audience had not known so grand a youth had lived among them. No wonder the princess loved him! What a terrible thing for him to be there!

As the youth advanced into the arena, he turned, as the custom was, to bow to the king: but he did not think at all of that royal personage; his eyes were fixed upon the princess, who sat to the right of her father. Had it not been for the moiety of barbarism in her nature, it is probable that lady would not have been there; but her intense and fervid soul would not allow her to be absent on an occasion in which she was so terribly interested. From the moment that the decree had gone forth, that her lover should decide his fate in the king's arena, she had thought of nothing, night or day, but this great event and the various subjects connected with it. Possessed of more power, influence, and force of character than any one who had ever before been interested in such a case, she had done what no other person had done, – she had possessed herself of the secret of the doors. She knew in which of the two rooms, that lay behind those doors, stood the cage of the tiger, with its open front, and in which waited the lady. Through these thick doors, heavily curtained with skins on the inside, it was impossible that any noise or suggestion should come from within to the person who should approach to raise the latch of one of them; but gold, and the power of a woman's will, had brought the secret to the princess.

And not only did she know in which room stood the lady ready to emerge, all blushing and radiant, should her door be opened, but she knew who the lady was. It was one of tile fairest and lovelies of the damsels of the court who had been selected as the reward of the accused youth, should he be proved innocent of the crime of aspiring to one so far above him; and the princess hated her. Often had she seen, or imagined that she had seen, this fair creature throwing glances of admiration upon the person of her lover, and sometimes she thought these glances were perceived and even returned. Now and then she had seen them talking together; it was but for a moment or two, but much can be said in a brief space; it may have been on

most unimportant topics, but how could she know that? The girl was lovely, but she had dared to raise her eyes to the loved one of the princess; and, with all the intensity of the savage blood transmitted to her through long lines of wholly barbaric ancestors, she hated the woman who blushed and trembled behind that silent door.

When her lover turned and looked at her, and his eye met hers as she sat there paler and whiter than any one in the vast ocean of anxious faces about her, he saw, by that power of quick perception which is given to those whose souls are one, that she knew behind which door crouched the tiger, and behind which stood the lady. He had expected her to know it. He understood her nature, and his soul was assured that she would never rest until she had made plain to herself this thing, hidden to all other lookers-on, even to the king. The only hope for the youth in which there was any element of certainty was based upon the success of the princess in discovering this mystery; and the moment he looked upon her, he saw she had succeeded, as in his soul he knew she would succeed.

Then it was that his quick and anxious glance asked the question: "Which?" It was as plain to her as if he shouted it from where he stood. There was not an instant to be lost. The question was asked in a Rash; it must be answered in another.

Her right arm lay on the cushioned parapet before her. She raised her hand, and made a slight, quick movement toward the right. No one but her lover saw her. Every eye but his was fixed on the man in the arena.

He turned, and with a firm and rapid step he walked across the empty space. Every heart stopped beating, every breath was held, every eye was fixed immovably upon that man. Without the slightest hesitation, he went to the door on the right, and opened it.

Now, the point of the story is this: Did the tiger come out of that door, or did the lady?

The more we reflect upon this question, the harder it is to answer. It involves a study of the human heart which leads us through devious mazes of passion, out of which it is difficult to find our way. Think of it, fair reader, not as if the decision of the question depended upon yourself, but upon that hot-blooded, semi-barbaric princess, her soul at a white heat beneath the combined fires of despair and jealousy. She had lost him, but who should have him?

How often, in her waking hours and in her dreams, had she started in wild horror, and covered her face with her hands, as she thought of her lover opening the door on the other side of which waited the cruel fangs of the tiger!

But how much oftener had she seen him at the other door! How in her grievous reveries had she gnashed her teeth, and torn her hair, when she saw his start of rapturous delight as he opened the door of the lady! How her soul had burned in agony when she had seen him rush to meet that woman, with her flushing cheek and sparkling eve of triumph; when she had seen him lead her forth, his whole frame kindled with the joy of recovered life; when she had heard the glad shouts from the multitude, and the wild ringing of the happy bells; when she had seen the priest, with his joyous followers, advance to the couple, and make them man and wife before her very eyes; and when she had seen them walk away together upon their path of flowers, followed by the tremendous shouts of the hilarious multitude, in which her one despairing shriek was lost and drowned!

Would it not be better for him to die at once, and go to wait for her in the blessed regions of semi-barbaric futurity?

And yet, that awful tiger, those shrieks, that blood!

Her decision had been indicated in an instant, but it had been made after days and nights of anguished deliberation. She had known she would be asked, she had decided what she would answer, and, without the slightest hesitation, she had moved her hand to the right.

The question of her decision is one not to be lightly considered, and it is not for me to presume to set myself up as the one person able to answer it. And so I leave it with all ow you: Which came out of the opened door, – the lady, or the tiger?

EXERCISES:

I. **Answer the following questions and do the given assignments**:

1. Find some information about the author and present it to the group.

2. **AUDIO AND VIDEO ASIGNMENTS:**

Watch a micro summary of the story and answer the questions asked in it (*a teacher stops the video after the questions to prevent the students from seeing the answers*).

3. What is the plot of the story? **4.** What is the theme of the story? **5.** Which do you think is behind the right-hand door? Is it a lady or a tiger? Ground your point of view. **6.** What is the problem raised in the story? **7.** What general truths about human nature does this story reveal? **8.** What is the direct characterization and indirect characterization of the main characters in the "The Lady or the Tiger"? **9.** What is an example of personification in "The Lady or the Tiger?" by Frank R. Stockton? **10.** What kinds of behavior and folklore is Frank Stockton satirizing in the story? **11.** Comment on the poem (define the main idea, speak on the emotional background) and explain how it may be related to our topic.

"Jealousy"

Can you see it coming
Sprouting through the buried soil
From the seed you unknowingly sow

Can you catch it as it grow
Spreading tender leaves green
Feeding on your sinister thoughts

Can you nip it off, can you?
before the sapling gains ground
Jealousy... Spreading its roots

(Lawanya Wijesekara)

II. **Comment and explain in the context of the story:**

He was greatly given to self-communing; and, when he and himself agreed upon any thing, the thing was done; nothing pleased him so much as to make the crooked straight, and crush down uneven places; by exhibitions of manly and beastly valor, the minds of his subjects were refined and cultured.

III. **Vocabulary work.**

1. Match the words in A with their synonyms in B.

A. a) florid; b) trammel; c) exuberant; d) bland; e) novel; f) exuberant; g) incorruptible; h) emanate; i) allegiance; j) procure; k) retribution.

B. 1) tedious; 2) buoyant; 3) emit; 4) compensation; 5) solicit; 6) fidelity; 7) hamper; 8) innovative; 9) honest; 10) ornate; 11) elated.

IV. **Writing.**

1). Write on the topic: "Do true feelings really exist in our world?"

7. **"Powder"**

by Tobias Wolff

Just before Christmas my father took me skiing at Mount Baker. He'd had to fight for the privilege of my company, because my mother was still angry with him for sneaking me into a nightclub during his last visit, to see Thelonious Monk.

He wouldn't give up. He promised, hand on heart, to take good care of me and have me home for dinner on Christmas Eve, and she relented. But as we were checking out of the lodge that morning it began to snow, and in this snow he observed some rare quality that made it necessary for us to get in one last run. We got in several last runs. He was indifferent to my fretting. Snow whirled around us in bitter, blinding squalls, hissing like sand, and still we skied. As the lift bore us to the peak yet again, my father looked at his watch and said, "Criminy. This'll have to be a fast one."

By now I couldn't see the trail. There was no point in trying. I stuck to him like white on rice and did what he did and somehow made it to the bottom without sailing off a cliff. We returned our skis and my father put chains on the Austin Healey while I swayed from foot to foot, clapping my mittens and wishing I was home. I could see everything. The green tablecloth, the plates with the holly pattern, the red candles waiting to be lit.

We passed a diner on our way out. "You want some soup?" my father asked. I shook my head. "Buck up," he said. "I'll get you there. Right, doctor?"

I was supposed to say, “Right, doctor,” but I didn’t say anything.

A state trooper waved us down outside the resort. A pair of sawhorses were blocking the road. The trooper came up to our car and bent down to my father’s window. His face was bleached by the cold. Snow flakes clung to his eyebrows and to the fur trim of his jacket and cap.

“Don’t tell me,” my father said.

The trooper told him. The road was closed. It might get cleared, it might not. Storm took everyone by surprise. So much, so fast. Hard to get people moving. Christmas Eve. What can you do.

My father said, “Look. We’re talking about five, six inches. I’ve taken this car through worse than that.”

The trooper straightened up. His face was out of sight but I could hear him. “The road is closed.”

My father sat with both hands on the wheel, rubbing the wood with his thumbs. He looked at the barricade for a long time. He seemed to be trying to master the idea of it. Then he thanked the trooper, and with a weird, old-maidy show of caution turned the car around. “Your mother will never forgive me for this,” he said.

“We should have left before,” I said. “Doctor.”

He didn’t speak to me again until we were in a booth at the diner, waiting for our burgers. “She won’t forgive me,” he said. “Do you understand? Never.”

“I guess,” I said, but no guesswork was required; she wouldn’t forgive him.

“I can’t let that happen.” He bent toward me. “I’ll tell you what I want. I want us all to be together again. Is that what you want?”

“Yes, sir.”

He bumped my chin with his knuckles. “That’s all I needed to hear.”

When we finished eating he went to the pay phone in the back of the diner, then joined me in the booth again. I figured he’d called my mother, but he didn’t give a report. He sipped at his coffee and stared out the window at the empty road. “Come on, come on,” he said, though not to me. A little while later he said it again. When the trooper’s car went past, lights flashing, he got up and dropped some money on the check. “Okay. Vamanos.”

The wind had died. The snow was falling straight down, less of it now and lighter. We drove away from the resort, right up to the barricade. "Move it," my father told me. When I looked at him he said, "What are you waiting for?" I got out and dragged one of the sawhorses aside, then put it back after he drove through. He pushed the door open for me. "Now you're an accomplice," he said. "We go down together." He put the car into gear and gave me a look. "Joke, son."

Down the first long stretch I watched the road behind us, to see if the trooper was on our tail. The barricade vanished. Then there was nothing but snow: snow on the road, snow kicking up from the chains, snow on the trees, snow in the sky; and our trail in the snow. Then I faced forward and had a shock. The lay of the road behind us had been marked by our own tracks, but there were no tracks ahead of us. My father was breaking virgin snow between a line of tall trees. He was humming "Stars Fell on Alabama." I felt snow brush along the floorboards under my feet. To keep my hands from shaking I clamped them between my knees.

My father grunted in a thoughtful way and said, "Don't ever try this yourself."

"I won't."

"That's what you say now, but someday you'll get your license and then you'll think you can do anything. Only you won't be able to do this. You need, I don't know—a certain instinct."

"Maybe I have it."

"You don't. You have your strong points, but not this. I only mention it because I don't want you to get the idea this is something just anybody can do. I'm a great driver. That's not a virtue, okay? It's just a fact, and one you should be aware of. Of course you have to give the old heap some credit, too. There aren't many cars I'd try this with. Listen!"

I did listen. I heard the slap of the chains, the stiff, jerky rasp of the wipers, the purr of the engine. It really did purr. The old heap was almost new. My father couldn't afford it, and kept promising to sell it, but here it was.

I said, "Where do you think that policeman went to?"

"Are you warm enough?" He reached over and cranked up the blower. Then he turned off the wipers. We didn't need them. The clouds had brightened. A few sparse, feathery flakes drifted into our slipstream

and were swept away. We left the trees and entered a broad field of snow that ran level for a while and then tilted sharply downward. Orange stakes had been planted at intervals in two parallel lines and my father steered a course between them, though they were far enough apart to leave considerable doubt in my mind as to exactly where the road lay. He was humming again, doing little scat riffs around the melody.

"Okay then. What are my strong points?"

"Don't get me started," he said. "It'd take all day."

"Oh, right. Name one."

"Easy. You always think ahead."

True, I always thought ahead. I was a boy who kept his clothes on numbered hangers to insure proper rotation. I bothered my teachers for homework assignments far ahead of their due dates so I could draw up schedules. I thought ahead, and that was why I knew that there would be other troopers waiting for us at the end of our ride, if we even got there. What I did not know was that my father would wheedle and plead his way past them—he didn't sing "O Tannenbaum," but just about—and get me home for dinner, buying a little more time before my mother decided to make the split final. I knew we'd get caught; I was resigned to it. And maybe for this reason I stopped moping and began to enjoy myself.

Why not? This was one for the books. Like being in a speedboat, only better. You can't go downhill in a boat. And it was all ours. And it kept coming, the laden trees, the unbroken surface of snow, the sudden white vistas. Here and there I saw hints of the road, ditches, fences, stakes, but not so many that I could have found my way. But then I didn't have to. My father was driving. My father in his forty-eighth year, rumpled, kind, bankrupt of honor, flushed with certainty. He was a great driver. All persuasion, no coercion. Such subtlety at the wheel, such tactful pedalwork. I actually trusted him. And the best was yet to come—switchbacks and hairpins impossible to describe. Except maybe to say this: if you haven't driven fresh powder, you haven't driven.

EXERCISES:

I. **Answer the following questions and do the given assignments**:

1. Find some information about the author and present it to the group.

2. **AUDIO AND VIDEO ASIGNMENTS:**

Watch Tobias Wolff's interview, comment on the questions asked and answers given (*a teacher may stop the video at some moments to let the students comment on that part*).
3. What is the plot of the story? **4.** What conflicts are developed in the story? **5.** What is the theme of the story? **6.** What is the tone of the story? **7**. Does the title have significance or importance? How does this connect to the main idea of the story? **8.** State two examples of suspense that develop as part of the plot. **9.** What is the climax of the story? **10.** Characterize the son and the father. **11.** Why is the first-person narration effective in this story? **12.** Comment on the poem (define the main idea, speak on the emotional background) and explain how it may be related to our topic.

"Male Space"

The study all alone,
in the corner of the home,
where a man can think,
reflect and have a drink,
be free of charging kids,
of daily cares be rid,
read what ancients say,
this is a male space.

In the wood with a gun,
tracking deer that run,
putting his wits and wiles
up against the wild,
Field-dressing the game
in frozen winter rain,
embracing primal days,
feeling the male space.

On the battle field,
the consequences real,
has to take it all,
or is doomed to fall.

Gunning down the foe,
ever harsh to know,
sometimes you have to hate,
it's part of the male space.

In office or board-room,
facing ruin and doom,
competing for a prize,
Struggling to get by,
it's always looking grim,
yet he plays to win,
his family must be safe,
he stays in the male space.

Ye olde barber shop,
blades Ol' Charlie strops,
shaving with straight-edge
his best customer Fred.
chewing over local news,
the good stuff and the blues,
away from the rat race,
here in the male space.

Dimly-lit gentlemen's club,
up against him she rubs,
sells him simplicity,
an illusion for a fee.
For a moment he is sane,
not trying to play the game,
she throws them in his face,
He loves this male space.

Some say it has to go,
like the men's clubs of old,
their ideology demands
that of men they are no fans,

they forget we undergo
troubles they'll never know,
to bring up boys that rate,
you've got to have male space.

If not, boys lose control,
don't live to grow old,
with no male sanctuary
they gang-bang on the street,
Oo they have worse luck,
become pansy, Beta-cucks,
with no pride and no place…
better to have male space.

These twelve acres are mine,
out in the country-side,
to teach my son things
a man should be knowing,
to hunt, to think, to drive,
to fake being civilized,
won't leave it up to fate,
don't tread on my male space.

(David Welch)

II. **Comment and explain in the context of the story:**

He'd had to fight for the privilege of my company; with a weird, old-maidy show of caution turned the car around; now you're an accomplice; bankrupt of honor; get me home for dinner, buying a little more time before my mother decided to make the split final; if you haven't driven fresh powder, you haven't driven.

III. **Vocabulary work.**

1. Match the words in A with their synonyms in B.

A. a) relent; b) accomplice; c) booth; d) bump; e) vanish; f) virtue; g) jerky; h) sparse; i) sway; j) vista; k) coercion.

B. 1) hut; 2) merit; 3) bang; 4) persuasion; 5) spectacle; 6) capitulate; 7) scant; 8) clout; 9) dissolve; 10) associate; 11) bouncy.

IV. **Writing.**

1). Write on the topic: “Keeping faith in dear people even when they fault.”

8. **“A Temporary Matter”**
by Jhumpa Lahiri

The notice informed them that it was a temporary matter: for five days their electricity would be cut off for one hour, beginning at eight P.M. A line had gone down in the last snowstorm, and the repairmen were going to take advantage of the milder evenings to set it right. The work would affect only the houses on the quiet tree-lined street, within walking distance of a row of brickfaced stores and a trolley stop, where Shoba and Shukumar had lived for three years.

"It's good of them to warn us," Shoba conceded after reading the notice aloud, more for her own benefit than Shukumar's. She let the strap of her leather satchel, plump with files, slip from her shoulders, and left it in the hallway as she walked into the kitchen.She wore a navy blue poplin raincoat over gray sweatpants and white sneakers, looking, at thirty-three, like the type of woman she'd once claimed she would never resemble.

She'd come from the gym. Her cranberry lipstick was visible only on the outer reaches of her mouth, and her eyeliner had left charcoal patches beneath her lower lashes. She used to look this way sometimes, Shukumar thought, on mornings after a party or a night at a bar, when she'd been too lazy to wash her face, too eager to collapse into his arms. She dropped a sheaf of mail on the table without a glance. Her eyes were still fixed on the notice in her other hand. "But they should do this sort of thing during the day."

"When I'm here, you mean," Shukumar said. He put a glass lid on a pot of lamb, adjusting it so only the slightest bit of steam could escape. Since January he'd been working at home, trying to complete

the final chapters of his dissertation on agrarian revolts in India. "When do the repairs start?"

"It says March nineteenth. Is today the nineteenth?" Shoba walked over to the framed corkboard that hung on the wall by the fridge, bare except for a calendar of William Morris wallpaper patterns. She looked at it as if for the first time, studying the wallpaper pattern carefully on the top half before allowing her eyes to fall to the numbered grid on the bottom. A friend had sent the calendar in the mail as a Christmas gift, even though Shoba and Shukumar hadn't celebrated Christmas that year.

"Today then," Shoba announced. "You have a dentist appointment next Friday, by the way."

He ran his tongue over the tops of his teeth; he'd forgotten to brush them that morning. It wasn't the first time. He hadn't left the house at all that day, or the day before. The more Shoba stayed out, the more she began putting in extra hours at work and taking on additional projects, the more he wanted to stay in, not even leaving to get the mail, or to buy fruit or wine at the stores by the trolley stop.

Six months ago, in September, Shukumar was at an academic conference in Baltimore when Shoba went into labor, three weeks before her due date. He hadn't wanted to go to the conference, but she had insisted; it was important to make contacts, and he would be entering the job market next year. She told him that she had his number at the hotel, and a copy of his schedule and flight numbers, and she had arranged with her friend Gillian for a ride to the hospital in the event of an emergency. When the cab pulled away that morning for the airport, Shoba stood waving goodbye in her robe, with one arm resting on the mound of her belly as if it were a perfectly natural part of her body.

Each time he thought of that moment, the last moment he saw Shoba pregnant, it was the cab he remembered most, a station wagon, painted red with blue lettering. It was cavernous compared to their own car. Although Shukumar was six feet tall, with hands too big ever to rest comfortably in the pockets of his jeans, he felt dwarfed in the back seat. As the cab sped down Beacon Street, he imagined a day when he and Shoba might need to buy a station wagon of their own, to cart their children back and forth from music lessons and dentist appointments. He imagined himself gripping the wheel, as Shoba turned around to hand the children juice boxes. Once,

these images of parenthood had troubled Shukumar, adding to his anxiety that he was still a student at thirty-five.

But that early autumn morning, the trees still heavy with bronze leaves, he welcomed the image for the first time.

A member of the staff had found him somehow among the identical convention rooms and handed him a stiff square of stationery. It was only a telephone number, but Shukumar knew it was the hospital. When he returned to Boston it was over. The baby had been born dead. Shoba was lying on a bed, asleep, in a private room so small there was barely enough space to stand beside her, in a wing of the hospital they hadn't been to on the tour for expectant parents. Her placenta had weakened and she'd had a cesarean, though not quickly enough. The doctor explained that these things happen. He smiled in the kindest way it was possible to smile at people known only professionally. Shoba would be back on her feet in a few weeks. There was nothing to indicate that she would not be able to have children in the future.

These days Shoba was always gone by the time Shukumar woke up. He would open his eyes and see the long black hairs she shed on her pillow and think of her, dressed, sipping her third cup of coffee already, in her office downtown, where she searched for typographical errors in textbooks and marked them, in a code she had once explained to him, with an assortment of colored pencils. She would do the same for his dissertation, she promised, when it was ready. He envied her the specificity of her task, so unlike the elusive nature of his. He was a mediocre student who had a facility for absorbing details without curiosity. Until September he had been diligent if not dedicated, summarizing chapters, outlining arguments on pads of yellow lined paper.

But now he would lie in their bed until he grew bored, gazing at his side of the closet which Shoba always left partly open, at the row of the tweed jackets and corduroy trousers he would not have to choose from to teach his classes that semester. After the baby died it was too late to withdraw from his teaching duties. But his adviser had arranged things so that he had the spring semester to himself. Shukumar was in his sixth year of graduate school. "That and the summer should give you a good push," his adviser had said. "You should be able to wrap things up by next September."

But nothing was pushing Shukumar. Instead he thought of how he and Shoba had become experts at avoiding each other in their three-bedroom house, spending as much time on separate floors as possible. He thought of how he no longer looked forward to weekends, when she sat for hours on the sofa with her colored pencils and her files, so that he feared that putting on a record in his own house might be rude. He thought of how long it had been since she looked into his eyes and smiled, or whispered his name on those rare occasions they still reached for each other's bodies before sleeping.

In the beginning he had believed that it would pass, that he and Shoba would get through it all somehow. She was only thirty-three. She was strong, on her feet again. But it wasn't a consolation. It was often nearly lunchtime when Shukumar would finally pull himself out of bed and head downstairs to the coffeepot, pouring out the extra bit Shoba left for him, along with an empty mug, on the countertop.

Shukumar gathered onion skins in his hands and let them drop into the garbage pail, on top of the ribbons of fat he'd trimmed from the lamb. He ran the water in the sink, soaking the knife and the cutting board, and rubbed a lemon half along his fingertips to get rid of the garlic smell, a trick he'd learned from Shoba. It was seven-thirty. Through the window he saw the sky, like soft black pitch. Uneven banks of snow still lined the sidewalks, though it was warm enough for people to walk about without hats or gloves. Nearly three feet had fallen in the last storm, so that for a week people had to walk single file, in narrow trenches. For a week that was Shukumar's excuse for not leaving the house. But now the trenches were widening, and water drained steadily into grates in the pavement.

"The lamb won't be done by eight," Shukumar said. "We may have to eat in the dark."

"We can light candles," Shoba suggested. She unclipped her hair, coiled neatly at her nape during the days, and pried the sneakers from her feet without untying them. "I'm going to shower before the lights go," she said, heading for the staircase. "I'll be down."

Shukumar moved her satchel and her sneakers to the side of the fridge. She wasn't this way before. She used to put her coat on a hanger, her sneakers in the closet, and she paid bills as soon as they came. But now she treated the house as if it were a hotel. The fact that the yellow chintz

armchair in the living room clashed with the blue-and-maroon Turkish carpet no longer bothered her. On the enclosed porch at the back of the house, a crisp white bag still sat on the wicker chaise, filled with lace she had once planned to turn into curtains.

While Shoba showered, Shukumar went into the downstairs bathroom and found a new toothbrush in its box beneath the sink. The cheap, stiff bristles hurt his gums, and he spit some blood into the basin. The spare brush was one of many stored in a metal basket. Shoba had bought
them once when they were on sale, in the event that a visitor decided, at the last minute, to spend the night.

It was typical of her. She was the type to prepare for surprises, good and bad. If she found a skirt or a purse she liked she bought two. She kept the bonuses from her job in a separate bank account in her name. It hadn't bothered him. His own mother had fallen to pieces when his father died, abandoning the house he grew up in and moving back to Calcutta, leaving Shukumar to settle it all. He liked that Shoba was different. It astonished him, her capacity to think ahead. When she used to do the shopping, the pantry was always stocked with extra bottles of olive and corn oil, depending on whether they were cooking Italian or Indian. There were endless boxes of pasta in all shapes and colors, zippered sacks of basmati rice, whole sides of lambs and goats from the Muslim butchers at Haymarket, chopped up and frozen in endless plastic bags. Every other Saturday they wound through the maze of stalls Shukumar eventually knew by heart. He watched in disbelief as she bought more food, trailing behind her with canvas bags as she pushed through the crowd, arguing under the morning sun with boys too young to shave but already missing teeth, who twisted up brown paper bags of artichokes, plums, gingerroot, and yams, and dropped them on their scales, and tossed them to Shoba one by one. She didn't mind being jostled, even when she was pregnant. She was tall, and broad-shouldered, with hips that her obstetrician assured her were made for childbearing. During the drive back home, as the car curved along the Charles, they invariably marveled at how much food they'd bought.

It never went to waste. When friends dropped by, Shoba would throw together meals that appeared to have taken half a day to prepare, from

things she had frozen and bottled, not cheap things in tins but peppers she had marinated herself with rosemary, and chutneys that she cooked on Sundays, stirring boiling pots of tomatoes and prunes. Her labeled mason jars lined the shelves of the kitchen, in endless sealed pyramids, enough, they'd agreed, to last for their grandchildren to taste. They'd eaten it all by now. Shukumar had been going through their supplies steadily, preparing meals for the two of them, measuring out cupfuls of rice, defrosting bags of meat day after day. He combed through her cookbooks every afternoon, following her penciled instructions to use two teaspoons of ground coriander seeds instead of one, or red lentils instead of yellow. Each of the recipes was dated, telling the first time they had eaten the dish together. April 2, cauliflower with fennel. January 14, chicken with almonds and sultanas. He had no memory of eating those meals, and yet there they were, recorded in her neat proofreader's hand. Shukumar enjoyed cooking now. It was the one thing that made him feel productive. If it weren't for him, he knew, Shoba would eat a bowl of cereal for her dinner.

Tonight, with no lights, they would have to eat together. For months now they'd served themselves from the stove, and he'd taken his plate into his study, letting the meal grow cold on his desk before shoving it into his mouth without pause, while Shoba took her plate to the living room and watched game shows, or proofread files with her arsenal of colored pencils at hand. At some point in the evening she visited him. When he heard her approach he would put away his novel and begin typing sentences. She would rest her hands on his shoulders and stare with him into the blue glow of the computer screen. "Don't work too hard," she would say after a minute or two, and head off to bed. It was the one time in the day she sought him out, and yet he'd come to dread it. He knew it was something she forced herself to do. She would look around the walls of the room, which they had decorated together last summer with a border of marching ducks and rabbits playing trumpets and drums. By the end of August there was a cherry crib under the window, a white changing table with mint-green knobs,and a rocking chair with checkered cushions.

Shukumar had disassembled it all before bringing Shoba back from the hospital, scraping off the rabbits and ducks with a spatula. For some reason the room did not haunt him the way it haunted Shoba. In January, when he stopped working at his carrel in the library, he set up his desk

there deliberately, partly because the room soothed him, and partly because it was a place Shoba avoided.

Shukumar returned to the kitchen and began to open drawers. He tried to locate a candle among the scissors, the eggbeaters and whisks, the mortar and pestle she'd bought in a bazaar in Calcutta, and used to pound garlic cloves and cardamom pods, back when she used to cook. He found a flashlight, but no batteries, and a half-empty box of birthday candles. Shoba had thrown him a surprise birthday party last May. One hundred and twenty people had crammed into the house – all the friends and the friends of friends they now systematically avoided. Bottles of vinho verde had nested in a bed of ice in the bathtub. Shoba was in her fifth month, drinking ginger ale from a martini glass. She had made a vanilla cream cake with custard and spun sugar. All night she kept Shukumar's long fingers linked with hers as they walked among the guests at the party.

Since September their only guest had been Shoba's mother. She came from Arizona and stayed with them for two months after Shoba returned from the hospital. She cooked dinner every night, drove herself to the supermarket, washed their clothes, put them away. She was a religious woman.

She set up a small shrine, a framed picture of a lavender-faced goddess and a plate of marigold petals, on the bedside table in the guest room, and prayed twice a day for healthy grandchildren in the future. She was polite to Shukumar without being friendly. She folded his sweaters with an expertise she had learned from her job in a department store. She replaced a missing button on his winter coat and knit him a beige and brown scarf, presenting it to him without the least bit of ceremony, as if he had only dropped it and hadn't noticed. She never talked to him about Shoba; once, when he mentioned the baby's death, she looked up from her knitting, and said, "But you weren't even there."

It struck him as odd that there were no real candles in the house. That Shoba hadn't prepared for such an ordinary emergency. He looked now for something to put the birthday candles in and settled on the soil of a potted ivy that normally sat on the windowsill over the sink. Even though the plant was inches from the tap, the soil was so dry that he had to water it first before the candles would stand straight. He pushed aside the things on the kitchen table, the piles of mail, the unread library books.

He remembered their first meals there, when they were so thrilled to be married, to be living together in the same house at last, that they would just reach for each other foolishly, more eager to make love than to eat. He put down two embroidered place mats, a wedding gift from an uncle in Lucknow, and set out the plates and wineglasses they usually saved for guests. He put the ivy in the middle, the white-edged, star-shaped leaves girded by ten little candles. He switched on the digital clock radio and tuned it to a jazz station.

"What's all this?" Shoba said when she came downstairs. Her hair was wrapped in a thick white towel. She undid the towel and draped it over a chair, allowing her hair, damp and dark, to fall across her back. As she walked absently toward the stove she took out a few tangles with her fingers. She wore a clean pair of sweatpants, a T-shirt, an old flannel robe. Her stomach was flat again, her waist narrow before the flare of her hips, the belt of the robe tied in a floppy knot. It was nearly eight. Shukumar put the rice on the table and the lentils from the night before into the microwave oven, punching the numbers on the timer.

"You made rogan josh," Shoba observed, looking through the glass lid at the bright paprika stew. Shukumar took out a piece of lamb, pinching it quickly between his fingers so as not to scald himself. He prodded a larger piece with a serving spoon to make sure the meat slipped easily from the bone. "It's ready," he announced. The microwave had just beeped when the lights went out, and the music disappeared.

"Perfect timing," Shoba said.

"All I could find were birthday candles." He lit up the ivy, keeping the rest of the candles and a book of matches by his plate.

"It doesn't matter," she said, running a finger along the stem of her wineglass. "It looks lovely."

In the dimness, he knew how she sat, a bit forward in her chair, ankles crossed against the lowest rung, left elbow on the table. During his search for the candles, Shukumar had found a bottle of wine in a crate he had thought was empty. He clamped the bottle between his knees while he turned in the corkscrew. He worried about spilling, and so he picked up the glasses and held them close to his lap while he filled them. They served themselves, stirring the rice with their forks, squinting as they extracted

bay leaves and cloves from the stew. Every few minutes Shukumar lit a few more birthday candles and drove them into the soil of the pot.

"It's like India," Shoba said, watching him tend his makeshift candelabra. "Sometimes the current disappears for hours at a stretch. I once had to attend an entire rice ceremony in the dark. The baby just cried and cried. It must have been so hot."

Their baby had never cried, Shukumar considered. Their baby would never have a rice ceremony, even though Shoba had already made the guest list, and decided on which of her three brothers she was going to ask to feed the child its first taste of solid food, at six months if it was a boy, seven if it was a girl.

"Are you hot?" he asked her. He pushed the blazing ivy pot to the other end of the table, closer to the piles of books and mail, making it even more difficult for them to see each other. He was suddenly irritated that he couldn't go upstairs and sit in front of the computer.

"No. It's delicious," she said, tapping her plate with her fork. "It really is."

He refilled the wine in her glass. She thanked him.

They weren't like this before. Now he had to struggle to say something that interested her, something that made her look up from her plate, or from her proofreading files. Eventually he gave up trying to amuse her. He learned not to mind the silences.

"I remember during power failures at my grandmother's house, we all had to say something," Shoba continued. He could barely see her face, but from her tone he knew her eyes were narrowed, as if trying to focus on a distant object. It was a habit of hers.

"Like what?"

"I don't know. A little poem. A joke. A fact about the world. For some reason my relatives always wanted me to tell them the names of my friends in America. I don't know why the information was so interesting to them. The last time I saw my aunt she asked after four girls I went to elementary school with in Tucson. I barely remember them now."

Shukumar hadn't spent as much time in India as Shoba had. His parents, who settled in New Hampshire, used to go back without him. The first time he'd gone as an infant he'd nearly died of amoebic dysentery. His father, a nervous type, was afraid to take him again, in case something

were to happen, and left him with his aunt and uncle in Concord. As a teenager he preferred sailing camp or scooping ice cream during the summers to going to Calcutta. It wasn't until after his father died, in his last year of college, that the country began to interest him, and he studied its history from course books as if it were any other subject. He wished now that he had his own childhood story of India.

"Let's do that," she said suddenly.

"Do what?"

"Say something to each other in the dark."

"Like what? I don't know any jokes."

"No, no jokes." She thought for a minute. "How about telling each other something we've never told before."

"I used to play this game in high school," Shukumar recalled.

"When I got drunk."

"You're thinking of truth or dare. This is different. Okay, I'll start."

She took a sip of wine.

"The first time I was alone in your apartment, I looked in your address book to see if you'd written me in. I think we'd known each other two weeks."

"Where was I?"

"You went to answer the telephone in the other room. It was your mother, and I figured it would be a long call. I wanted to know if you'd promoted me from the margins of your newspaper."

"Had I?"

"No. But I didn't give up on you. Now it's your turn."

He couldn't think of anything, but Shoba was waiting for him to speak. She hadn't appeared so determined in months. What was there left to say to her? He thought back to their first meeting, four years earlier at a lecture hall in Cambridge, where a group of Bengali poets were giving a recital. They'd ended up side by side, on folding wooden chairs. Shukumar was soon bored; he was unable to decipher the literary diction, and couldn't join the rest of the audience as they sighed and nodded solemnly after certain phrases. Peering at the newspaper folded in his lap, he studied the temperatures of cities around the world. Ninety-one degrees in Singapore yesterday, fifty-one in Stockholm. When he turned his head to the left, he saw a woman next to him making

a grocery list on the back of a folder, and was startled to find that she was beautiful.

"Okay" he said, remembering. "The first time we went out to dinner, to the Portuguese place, I forgot to tip the waiter. I went back the next morning, found out his name, left money with the manager."

"You went all the way back to Somerville just to tip a waiter?"

"I took a cab."

"Why did you forget to tip the waiter?"

The birthday candles had burned out, but he pictured her face clearly in the dark, the wide tilting eyes, the full grape-toned lips, the fall at age two from her high chair still visible as a comma on her chin. Each day, Shukumar noticed, her beauty, which had once overwhelmed him, seemed to fade. The cosmetics that had seemed superfluous were necessary now, not to improve her but to define her somehow.

"By the end of the meal I had a funny feeling that I might marry you," he said, admitting it to himself as well as to her for the first time. "It must have distracted me."

The next night Shoba came home earlier than usual. There was lamb left over from the evening before, and Shukumar heated it up so that they were able to eat by seven. He'd gone out that day, through the melting snow, and bought a packet of taper candles from the corner store, and batteries to fit the flashlight. He had the candles ready on the countertop, standing in brass holders shaped like lotuses, but they ate under the glow of the copper-shaded ceiling lamp that hung over the table.

When they had finished eating, Shukumar was surprised to see that Shoba was stacking her plate on top of his, and then carrying them over to the sink. He had assumed she would retreat to the living room, behind her barricade of files.

"Don't worry about the dishes," he said, taking them from her hands.

"It seems silly not to," she replied, pouring a drop of detergent onto a sponge. "It's nearly eight o'clock."

His heart quickened. All day Shukumar had looked forward to the lights going out. He thought about what Shoba had said the night before, about looking in his address book. It felt good to remember her as she was then, how bold yet nervous she'd been when they first met, how

hopeful. They stood side by side at the sink, their reflections fitting together in the frame of the window. It made him shy, the way he felt the first time they stood together in a mirror. He couldn't recall the last time they'd been photographed. They had stopped attending parties, went nowhere together. The film in his camera still contained pictures of Shoba, in the yard, when she was pregnant.

After finishing the dishes, they leaned against the counter, drying their hands on either end of a towel. At eight o'clock the house went black. Shukumar lit the wicks of the candles, impressed by their long, steady flames.

"Let's sit outside," Shoba said. "I think it's warm still."

They each took a candle and sat down on the steps. It seemed strange to be sitting outside with patches of snow still on the ground. But everyone was out of their houses tonight, the air fresh enough to make people restless. Screen doors opened and closed. A small parade of neighbors passed by with flashlights.

"We're going to the bookstore to browse," a silver-haired man called out. He was walking with his wife, a thin woman in a windbreaker, and holding a dog on a leash. They were the Bradfords, and they had tucked a sympathy card into Shoba and Shukumar's mailbox back in September. "I hear they've got their power."

"They'd better," Shukumar said. "Or you'll be browsing in the dark."

The woman laughed, slipping her arm through the crook of her husband's elbow. "Want to join us?"

"No thanks," Shoba and Shukumar called out together. It surprised Shukumar that his words matched hers.

He wondered what Shoba would tell him in the dark.

The worst possibilities had already run through his head. That she'd had an affair. That she didn't respect him for being thirty-five and still a student. That she blamed him for being in Baltimore the way her mother did. But he knew those things weren't true. She'd been faithful, as had he. She believed in him. It was she who had

insisted he go to Baltimore. What didn't they know about each other? He knew she curled her fingers tightly when she slept, that her body twitched during bad dreams. He knew it was honeydew she favored over cantaloupe. He knew that when they returned from the hospital the first thing she did when she walked into the house was pick out objects of theirs and toss them into a pile in the hallway: books from the shelves, plants from the windowsills, paintings from walls, photos from tables, pots and pans that hung from the hooks over the stove. Shukumar had stepped out of her way, watching as she moved methodically from room to room. When she was satisfied, she stood there staring at the pile she'd made, her lips drawn back in such distaste that Shukumar had thought she would spit. Then she'd started to cry.

He began to feel cold as he sat there on the steps. He felt that he needed her to talk first, in order to reciprocate.

"That time when your mother came to visit us," she said finally. "When I said one night that I had to stay late at work, I went out with Gillian and had a martini."

He looked at her profile, the slender nose, the slightly masculine set of her jaw. He remembered that night well; eating with his mother, tired from teaching two classes back to back, wishing Shoba were there to say more of the right things because he came up with only the wrong ones. It had been twelve years since his father had died, and his mother had come to spend two weeks with him and Shoba, so they could honor his father's memory together. Each night his mother cooked something his father had liked, but she was too upset to eat the dishes herself, and her eyes would well up as Shoba stroked her hand. "It's so touching,"

Shoba had said to him at the time. Now he pictured Shoba with Gillian, in a bar with striped velvet sofas, the one they used to go to after the movies, making sure she got her extra olive, asking Gillian for a cigarette. He imagined her complaining, and Gillian sympathizing about visits from in-laws. It was Gillian who had driven Shoba to the hospital.

"Your turn," she said, stopping his thoughts.

At the end of their street Shukumar heard sounds of a drill and the electricians shouting over it. He looked at the darkened facades of the houses lining the street. Candles glowed in the windows of one. In spite of the warmth, smoke rose from the chimney.

"I cheated on my Oriental Civilization exam in college," he said. "It was my last semester, my last set of exams. My father had died a few months before. I could see the blue book of the guy next to me. He was an American guy, a maniac. He knew Urdu and Sanskrit. I couldn't remember if the verse we had to identify was an example of a ghazal or not. I looked at his answer and copied it down."

It had happened over fifteen years ago. He felt relief now, having told her.

She turned to him, looking not at his face, but at his shoes — old moccasins he wore as if they were slippers, the leather at the back permanently flattened. He wondered if it bothered her, what he'd said. She took his hand and pressed it. "You didn't have to tell me why you did it," she said, moving closer to him.

They sat together until nine o'clock, when the lights came on. They heard some people across the street clapping from their porch, and televisions being turned on. The Bradfords walked back

down the street, eating ice-cream cones and waving. Shoba and Shukumar waved back. Then they stood up, his hand still in hers, and went inside.

Somehow, without saying anything, it had turned into this. Into an exchange of confessions — the little ways they'd hurt or disappointed each other, and themselves. The following day Shukumar thought for hours about what to say to her. He was torn between admitting that he once ripped out a photo of a woman in one of the fashion magazines she used to subscribe to and carried it in his books for a week, or saying that he really hadn't lost the sweater-vest she bought him for their third wedding anniversary but had exchanged it for cash at Filene's, and that he had gotten drunk alone in the middle of the day at a hotel bar. For their first anniversary, Shoba had cooked a tencourse dinner just for him. The vest depressed him. "My wife gave me a sweater-vest for our anniversary," he complained to the bartender, his head heavy with cognac. "What do you expect?" the bartender had replied. "You're married."

As for the picture of the woman, he didn't know why he'd ripped it out. She wasn't as pretty as Shoba. She wore a white sequined dress, and had a sullen face and lean, mannish legs. Her bare arms were raised, her fists around her head, as if she were about to punch herself in the ears. It was an advertisement for stockings. Shoba had been pregnant at the time, her stomach suddenly immense, to the point where Shukumar no longer wanted to touch her. The first time he saw the picture he was lying in bed next to her, watching her as she read. When he noticed the magazine in the recycling pile he found the woman and tore out the page as carefully as he could. For about a week he allowed himself a glimpse each day. He felt an intense desire for the woman, but it was

a desire that turned to disgust after a minute or two. It was the closest he'd come to infidelity.
He told Shoba about the sweater on the third night, the picture on the fourth. She said nothing as he spoke, expressed no protest or reproach. She simply listened, and then she took his hand, pressing it as she had before. On the third night, she told him that once after a lecture they'd attended, she let him speak to the chairman of his department without telling him that he had a dab of pâté on his chin. She'd been irritated with him for some reason, and so she'd let him go on and on, about securing his fellowship for the following semester, without putting a finger to her own chin as a signal. The fourth night, she said that she never liked the one poem he'd ever published in his life, in a literary magazine in Utah. He'd written the poem after meeting Shoba.
She added that she found the poem sentimental.

Something happened when the house was dark. They were able to talk to each other again. The third night after supper they'd sat together on the sofa, and once it was dark he began kissing her awkwardly on her forehead and her face, and though it was dark he closed his eyes, and knew that she did, too. The fourth night they walked carefully upstairs, to bed, feeling together for the final step with their feet before the landing, and making love with a desperation they had forgotten.
She wept without sound, and whispered his name, and traced his eyebrows with her finger in the dark. As he made love to her he wondered what he would say to her the next night, and what she would say, the thought of it exciting him. "Hold me," he said, "hold me in your arms," By the time the lights came back on downstairs, they'd fallen asleep.

The morning of the fifth night Shukumar found another notice from the electric company in the mailbox. The line had been repaired ahead of schedule, it said. He was disappointed. He had planned on making shrimp malai for Shoba, but when he arrived at the store he didn't feel like cooking anymore. It wasn't the same, he thought, knowing that the lights wouldn't go out. In the store the shrimp looked gray and thin. The coconut milk tin was dusty and overpriced. Still, he bought them, along with a beeswax candle and two bottles of wine.

She came home at seven-thirty. "I suppose this is the end of our game," he said when he saw her reading the notice.

She looked at him. "You can still light candles if you want."

She hadn't been to the gym tonight. She wore a suit beneath the raincoat. Her makeup had been retouched recently.

When she went upstairs to change, Shukumar poured himself some wine and put on a record, a Thelonius Monk album he knew she liked.

When she came downstairs they ate together. She didn't thank him or compliment him. They simply ate in a darkened room, in the glow of a beeswax candle. They had survived a difficult time. They finished off the shrimp. They finished off the first bottle of wine and moved on to the second. They sat together until the candle had nearly burned away. She shifted in her chair, and Shukumar thought that she was about to say something. But instead she blew out the candle, stood up, turned on the light switch, and sat down again.

"Shouldn't we keep the lights off?" Shukumar asked.

She set her plate aside and clasped her hands on the table. "I want you to see my face when I tell you this," she said gently.

His heart began to pound. The day she told him she was pregnant, she had used the very same words, saying them in the same gentle way, turning off the basketball game he'd been watching on television. He hadn't been prepared then. Now he was.

Only he didn't want her to be pregnant again. He didn't want to have to pretend to be happy. "I've been looking for an apartment and I've found one," she said, narrowing her eyes on something, it seemed, behind his left shoulder. It was nobody's fault, she continued. They'd been through enough. She needed some time alone. She had money saved up for a security deposit. The apartment was on Beacon Hill, so she could walk to work. She had signed the lease that night before coming home.

She wouldn't look at him, but he stared at her. It was obvious that she'd rehearsed the lines. All this time she'd been looking for an apartment, testing the water pressure, asking a Realtor if heat and hot water were included in the rent. It sickened Shukumar, knowing that she had spent these past evenings preparing for a life without him. He was relieved and yet he was sickened. This was what she'd been trying to tell him for the past four evenings. This was the point of her game. Now it was his turn to speak. There was something he'd sworn he would never tell her, and for six months he had done his best to block it from his mind. Before the ultrasound she had asked the doctor not to tell her the sex of their child, and Shukumar had agreed. She had wanted it to be a surprise.

Later, those few times they talked about what had happened, she said at least they'd been spared that knowledge. In a way she almost took pride in her decision, for it enabled her to seek refuge in a mystery. He knew that she assumed it was a mystery for him, too. He'd arrived too late from Baltimore — when it was all over and she was lying on the hospital bed. But he hadn't. He'd arrived early enough to see their baby, and to hold him before they cremated him. At first he had recoiled at the suggestion, but the doctor said holding the baby might help him with the process of grieving. Shoba was asleep. The baby had been cleaned off, his bulbous lids shut tight to the world.

"Our baby was a boy," he said. "His skin was more red than brown. He had black hair on his head. He weighed almost five pounds. His fingers were curled shut, just like yours in the night." Shoba looked at him now,

her face contorted with sorrow. He had cheated on a college exam, ripped a picture of a woman out of a magazine. He had returned a sweater and got drunk in the middle of the day instead. These were the things he had told her. He had held his son, who had known life only within her, against his chest in a darkened room in an unknown wing of the hospital. He had held him until a nurse knocked and took him away, and he promised himself that day that he would never tell Shoba, because he still loved her then, and it was the one thing in her life that she had wanted to be a surprise.

Shukumar stood up and stacked his plate on top of hers. He carried the plates to the sink, but instead of running the tap he looked out the window. Outside the evening was still warm, and the Bradfords were walking arm in arm. As he watched the couple the room went dark, and he spun around. Shoba had turned the lights off. She came back to the table and sat down, and after a moment Shukumar joined her. They wept together, for the things they now knew.

EXERCISES:

I. **Answer the following questions and do the given assignments**:

1. Find some information about the author and present it to the group.

2. **AUDIO AND VIDEO ASIGNMENTS:**

Watch a video on the story you have read and Jhumpa Lahiri's video-monologue on her writing, comment on both (*a teacher may stop the video at some moments to let the students comment on that part*).

3. What is the plot of the story? **4.** What conflict is developed in the story? **5.** What is the theme of the story? **6.** What is the tone of the story? **7**. Comment on the title. How does it connect to the main idea of the story? **8.** How does the stillbirth of their child affect the relationship between Shoba and Shukumar? **9.** What is the significance of Shukumar seeing the neighbours walking past? **10.** How would you explain the symbolism shown in the short story "A Temporary Matter"? **11.** Why did Shukumar keep a photo torn out of a magazine? **12.** Discuss the relationship between Shoba and Shukumar in "A Temporary Matter." **13.** What indications in the story prepare us for the eventual breakdown in the relationship? **14.** Why do Shoba and Shukumar fail to reconnect? Do you think they still can be together after you have read the ending? **15.** What is the climax of the

story? **16.** Characterize the main characters. **17.** Comment on the poem (define the main idea, speak on the emotional background) and explain how it may be related to our topic.

"Life's Scars"

They say the world is round, and yet
I often think it square,
So many little hurts we get
From corners here and there.
But one great truth in life I've found,
While journeying to the West-
The only folks who really wound
Are those we love the best.

The man you thoroughly despise
Can rouse your wrath, 'tis true;
Annoyance in your heart will rise
At things mere strangers do;
But those are only passing ills;
This rule all lives will prove;
The rankling wound which aches and thrills
Is dealt by hands we love.

The choicest garb, the sweetest grace,
Are oft to strangers shown;
The careless mien, the frowning face,
Are given to our own.
We flatter those we scarcely know,
We please the fleeting guest,
And deal full many a thoughtless blow
To those who love us best.

Love does not grow on every tree,
Nor true hearts yearly bloom.
Alas for those who only see

This cut across a tomb!
But, soon or late, the fact grows plain
To all through sorrow's test:
The only folks who give us pain
Are those we love the best.

(Ella Wheeler Wilcox)

II. **Comment and explain in the context of the story:**

The more Shoba stayed out, the more she began putting in extra hours at work and taking on additional projects, the more he wanted to stay in, not even leaving to get the mail, or to buy fruit or wine at the stores by the trolley stop; these days Shoba was always gone by the time Shukumar woke up; now she treated the house as if it were a hotel; she was the type to prepare for surprises, good and bad; he set up his desk there deliberately, partly because the room soothed him, and partly because it was a place Shoba avoided; something happened when the house was dark ..they were able to talk to each other again; he promised himself that day that he would never tell Shoba, because he still loved her then; they wept together, for the things they now knew.

III. **Vocabulary work.**

1. Match the words in A with their synonyms in B.

A. a) infidelity; b) indicate; c) elusive; d) mediocre; e) diligent; f) consolation; g) obstetrician; h) decipher.

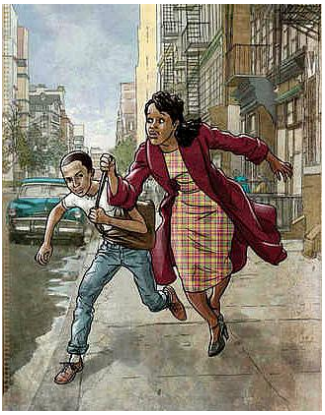
B. 1) tricky; 2) conscientious; 3) solace; 4) decode; 5) betrayal; 6) accoucheuse; 7) undistinguished; 8) pinpoint.

IV. **Writing.**

1). Write the composition on Georges Bernanos's quote: "No one ever discovers the depths of his own loneliness."

9. "Thank You, M'am"

by Langston Hughes



She was a large woman with a large purse that had everything in it but hammer and nails. It had a long strap, and she carried it slung across her shoulder. It was about eleven o'clock at night, and she was walking alone, when a boy ran up behind her and tried to snatch her purse. The strap broke with the single tug the boy gave it from behind. But the boy's weight and the weight of the purse combined caused him to lose his balance so, intsead of taking off full blast as he had hoped, the boy fell on his back on the sidewalk, and his legs flew up. The large woman simply turned around and kicked him right square in his blue-jeaned sitter. Then she reached down, picked the boy up by his shirt front, and shook him until his teeth rattled.

After that the woman said, "Pick up my pocketbook, boy, and give it here."

She still held him. But she bent down enough to permit him to stoop and pick up her purse. Then she said, "Now ain't you ashamed of yourself?"

Firmly gripped by his shirt front, the boy said, "Yes'm."

The woman said, "What did you want to do it for?"

The boy said, "I didn't aim to."

She said, "You a lie!"

By that time two or three people passed, stopped, turned to look, and some stood watching.

"If I turn you loose, will you run?" asked the woman.

"Yes'm," said the boy.

"Then I won't turn you loose," said the woman. She did not release him.

"I'm very sorry, lady, I'm sorry," whispered the boy.

"Um-hum! And your face is dirty. I got a great mind to wash your face for you. Ain't you got nobody home to tell you to wash your face?"

"No'm," said the boy.

"Then it will get washed this evening," said the large woman starting up the street, dragging the frightened boy behind her.

He looked as if he were fourteen or fifteen, frail and willow-wild, in tennis shoes and blue jeans.

The woman said, "You ought to be my son. I would teach you right from wrong. Least I can do right now is to wash your face. Are you hungry?"

"No'm," said the being dragged boy. "I just want you to turn me loose."

"Was I bothering you when I turned that corner?" asked the woman.

"No'm."

"But you put yourself in contact with me," said the woman. "If you think that that contact is not going to last awhile, you got another thought coming. When I get through with you, sir, you are going to remember Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones."

Sweat popped out on the boy's face and he began to struggle. Mrs. Jones stopped, jerked him around in front of her, put a half-nelson about his neck, and continued to drag him up the street. When she got to her door, she dragged the boy inside, down a hall, and into a large kitchenette furnished room at the rear of the house. She switched on the light and left the door open. The boy could hear other roomers laughing and talking in the large house. Some of their doors were open, too, so he knew he and the woman were not alone. The woman still had him by the neck in the middle of her room.

She said, "What is your name?"

"Roger," answered the boy.

"Then, Roger, you go to that sink and wash your face," said the woman, whereupon she turned him loose – at last. Roger looked at the door – looked at the woman – looked at the door – and went to the sink.

Let the water run until it gets warm," she said. "Here's a clean towel."

"You gonna take me to jail?" asked the boy, bending over the sink.

"Not with that face, I would not take you nowhere," said the woman. "Here I am trying to get home to cook me a bite to eat and you snatch my pocketbook! Maybe, you ain't been to your supper either, late as it be. Have you?"

"There's nobody home at my house," said the boy.

"Then we'll eat," said the woman, "I believe you're hungry or been hungry – to try to snatch my pocketbook."

"I wanted a pair of blue suede shoes," said the boy.

"Well, you didn't have to snatch my pocketbook to get some suede shoes," said Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones. "You could of asked me."

"M'am?"

The water dripping from his face, the boy looked at her. There was a long pause. A very long pause. After he had dried his face and not knowing what else to do dried it again, the boy turned around, wondering what next. The door was open. He could make a dash for it down the hall. He could run, run, run, run, run!

The woman was sitting on the day-bed. After a while she said, "I were young once and I wanted things I could not get."

There was another long pause. The boy's mouth opened. Then he frowned, but not knowing he frowned.

The woman said, "Um-hum! You thought I was going to say but, didn't you? You thought I was going to say, but I didn't snatch people's pocketbooks. Well, I wasn't going to say that." Pause. Silence. "I have done things, too, which I would not tell you, son – neither tell God, if he didn't already know. So you set down while I fix us something to eat. You might run that comb through your hair so you will look presentable."

In another corner of the room behind a screen was a gas plate and an icebox. Mrs. Jones got up and went behind the screen. The woman did not watch the boy to see if he was going to run now, nor did she watch her

purse which she left behind her on the day-bed. But the boy took care to sit on the far side of the room where he thought she could easily see him out of the corner of her eye, if she wanted to. He did not trust the woman not to trust him. And he did not want to be mistrusted now.

"Do you need somebody to go to the store," asked the boy, "maybe to get some milk or something?"

"Don't believe I do," said the woman, "unless you just want sweet milk yourself. I was going to make cocoa out of this canned milk I got here."

"That will be fine," said the boy.

She heated some lima beans and ham she had in the icebox, made the cocoa, and set the table. The woman did not ask the boy anything about where he lived, or his folks, or anything else that would embarrass him. Instead, as they ate, she told him about her job in a hotel beauty-shop that stayed open late, what the work was like, and how all kinds of women came in and out, blondes, red-heads, and Spanish. Then she cut him a half of her ten-cent cake.

"Eat some more, son," she said.

When they were finished eating she got up and said, "Now, here, take this ten dollars and buy yourself some blue suede shoes. And next time, do not make the mistake of latching onto my pocketbook nor nobody else's – because shoes come by devilish like that will burn your feet. I got to get my rest now. But I wish you would behave yourself, son, from here on in."

She led him down the hall to the front door and opened it. "Good-night! Behave yourself, boy!" she said, looking out into the street.

The boy wanted to say something else other than "Thank you, m'am" to Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones, but he couldn't do so as he turned at the barren stoop and looked back at the large woman in the door. He barely managed to say "Thank you" before she shut the door. And he never saw her again.

EXERCISES:

I. **Answer the following questions and do the given assignments**:

1. Find some information about the author and present it to the group.

2. **AUDIO AND VIDEO ASIGNMENTS:**

a). Listen to Langston Hughes' reading one of his earliest poems "The Negro Speaks of Rivers". What provoked him to write it? What feelings does it arise in you after you have learned about its writing background?

I've known rivers:
I've known rivers ancient as the world and older than the
flow of human blood in human veins.

My soul has grown deep like the rivers.

I bathed in the Euphrates when dawns were young.
I built my hut near the Congo and it lulled me to sleep.
I looked upon the Nile and raised the pyramids above it.
I heard the singing of the Mississippi when Abe Lincoln
went down to New Orleans, and I've seen its muddy
bosom turn all golden in the sunset.

I've known rivers:
Ancient, dusky rivers.

My soul has grown deep like the rivers.

b). Now watch a short video about Langston Hughes and point out the most important facts mentioned in it. **c)**. Watch the video on the phenomenon of Harlem Renaissance and comment on it (*the teacher may stop the video at some moments to let the students comment on that part – not to miss anything important*).

3. Give a short account of the events. **4**. In "Thank You, M'am," a boy learns an important lesson about kindness and trust from a surprising source. Before reading, think about an unexpected act of kindness you have done for someone or someone has done for you. **5**. "Thank You, M'am," by Langston Hughes, is set in Harlem, a community in New York. Like many urban areas, Harlem experienced rapid population growth early in the twentieth century. Many single-family buildings were converted into small apartments. The character Mrs. Jones lives in one of these "kitchenette" apartments. How does the main characters' background account for their deeds? **6**. "Thank You, M'am" has an implied theme about the effects of

kindness and trust. Themes of kindness and trust appear in literature of all time periods. As you read "Thank You, M'am," identify what message this contemporary short story communicates. **7**. What does Mrs. Jones do when Roger tries to steal her purse? What can you tell about her character from this action? How are her actions connected to her past experiences? **8**. The theme or message that is suggested by characters' actions often depends on a character's motives – the reasons for his or her actions. In this story, a boy snatches a purse because he wants money to buy shoes. By the end of the story, he discovers he wants something much more valuable. When his motives change, so do his actions. Use these focus questions to help you recognize characters' motives in "Thank You, M'am": a) How do Roger's actions change during the story? b) Why do they change? **9**. Reading a story is more enjoyable if you become involved with the people in it. One way to do this is to respond to the characters' actions. Ask yourself, • "Would I do that?" • "Do I think the character should do that?" • "How would I feel if that happened to me?" **10**. How does their first dialogue in the street point to the author's message? **11**. What are Mrs. Jones's reasons for helping Roger? **12**. Do you think Mrs. Jones is wise or foolish to trust Roger? Why? **13**. What does Roger do when Mrs. Jones leaves him alone with her purse? Why does he do this? Compare and Contrast: How have Roger's behavior and attitude changed? **14**.What do Mrs. Jones and Roger talk about during their meal? Draw Conclusions: Why doesn't Mrs. Jones ask Roger any personal questions? **15**. What does Roger say when he leaves the apartment? What more does he wants to say? Why can't he say more? **16**. Predict: What effect will Mrs. Jones's actions have on Roger's future? Make a Judgment: Does Mrs. Jones make good choices about how to treat Roger? **17**. How does the title "Thank you, M'am" relate to the theme? **18**. Describe your responses to both characters at the end of the story. **19**. Social Studies Connection: Compare Mrs. Jones's treatment of Roger to the punishment for stealing in the American West in the 1800s. **20.** Take a Position: What do you think is the most effective treatment for criminals? Explain. **21.** Comment on the poem (define the main idea, speak on the emotional background) and explain how it may be related to our topic.

"I See More Light"

What about the road accident you walked by?
Pretending as if nothing had happened
Too scared to save a life?
Can you hear the pained breath of crushed lungs?
Can you smell fresh blood on the pavement?
Or the scratch of finger nails, as hands lose their strength?

Take a look, take a look.
If you can see, do not be blind.

What about the the guy you saw in the metro
Pressing up against the helpess girl -
Clicking pictures without her consent?
A thousand eyes, all glazed?
Do you hear the rise in heartbeats -
One of anxiety, one of pleasure?
Do you smell the sweat of worry dripping?
Do you not sense anything wrong?

Take a look, take a look.
If you can see , do not be blind.

What about the homeless child you saw the other day?
He sat in the dust, tied down by hunger.
With a book, that he held upside down.
You just walked by.
Didn't you hear the flicker of pages, back and forth, in vain?
Didn't you smell unbathed skin and soiled clothes?
How could you not sense the hope he needed?

Take a look, take a look.
If you have eyes, do not be blind.
For even in my darkness, I see more light

Than those who purposely draw the curtains.
(Rhiddhit Paul)

II. **Comment and explain in the context of the story:**

..a large purse that had everything in it but hammer and nails; a large kitchenette furnished room at the rear of the house; He did not trust the woman not to trust him; shoes come by devilish like that will burn your feet.

III. **Vocabulary work.**

Find in the text equivalents for the following words and phrases and make up your own sentences with them.

In proper order for being seen, met, etc., by others; grasping or attaching oneself to; sterile, empty; wrestling hold using one arm.

IV. **Writing.**

Write on the topic: "The everyday encounters that may change your life."

Для нотаток

Навчальне видання

ТЕКСТИ ТА ЗАВДАННЯ ДЛЯ ДОМАШНЬОГО ЧИТАННЯ
(для здобувачів ступеня «магістр»
факультету іноземної філології)

НАВЧАЛЬНИЙ ПОСІБНИК
ДЛЯ СТУДЕНТІВ ТА ВИКЛАДАЧІВ ВИЩИХ НАВЧАЛЬНИХ ЗАКЛАДІВ

Укладачі:
Курята Ю. В., Касаткіна-Кубишкіна О.В.

Відповідальна за випуск:
Курята Ю.В.

Технічний редактор:
Курята Ю.В.

Комп'ютерна верстка та макет:
Курята Ю.В.

Формат 60/84 1/16.
Ум. др. арк. 11,8.