

AUGUST 1999

PROVINCIAL EXAMINATION

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

ENGLISH 12

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Insert the stickers with your Student I.D. Number (PEN) in the allotted spaces above and on the **back** cover of this booklet. **Under no circumstance is your name or identification, other than your Student I.D. Number, to appear on this booklet.**
2. Ensure that in addition to this examination booklet, you have a **Readings Booklet** and an **Examination Response Form**. Follow the directions on the front of the Response Form.
3. **Disqualification** from the examination will result if you bring books, paper, notes or unauthorized electronic devices into the examination room.
4. All multiple-choice answers must be entered on the Response Form using an **HB pencil**. Multiple-choice answers entered in this examination booklet will **not** be marked.
5. For each of the written-response questions, write your answer in **ink** in the space provided in this booklet.
6. When instructed to open this booklet, **check the numbering of the pages** to ensure that they are numbered in sequence from page one to the last page, which is identified by

END OF EXAMINATION.

7. At the end of the examination, place your Response Form inside the front cover of this booklet and return the booklet and your Response Form to the supervisor.

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ENGLISH 12 PROVINCIAL EXAMINATION

- | | Value | Suggested Time |
|--|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. This examination consists of five parts: | | |
| PART A: Editing Skills | 10 | 10 |
| PART B: Reading Comprehension | 21 | 35 |
| PART C: Poetry | 20 | 30 |
| PART D: Prose | 25 | 50 |
| PART E: Composition | 24 | 55 |
| | Total: 100 marks | 180 minutes |
2. Electronic devices, including dictionaries and pagers, are **not** permitted in the examination room.
3. The **Readings Booklet** contains the prose and poetry passages you will need to answer certain questions on this examination.
4. The time allotted for this examination is **three hours**. *Use your time wisely.* Adequate writing space has been provided for average-sized writing. Do not attempt to determine the length of your answers by the amount of writing space available.

PART A: EDITING SKILLS

Total Value: 10 marks

Suggested Time: 10 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS: The following passage has been divided into numbered sentences which may contain problems in grammar, usage, word choice, spelling, or punctuation. One or more sentences may be correct. No sentence contains more than one error.

If you find an error, select the underlined part that must be changed in order to make the sentence correct and record your choice on the Response Form provided. Using an HB pencil, completely fill in the circle that corresponds to your answer. If there is no error, completely fill in circle D (no error).

DON'T LIKE BROCCOLI? BLAME IT ON YOUR GENES!

1. Notoriously picky eaters now have an excuse for they're seemingly self-indulgent eating habits. (D) no error
(A) (B) (C)
2. Scientists as they often tell fellow diners, have established that we enter this world with a genetically determined number of taste buds. (D) no error
(A) (B) (C)
3. Pat Kelly, a professor of biological sciences, says hormone fluctuations appears to influence the taste preferences of all people, particularly pregnant women. (D) no error
(A) (B) (C)
4. Kelly explains, "The tongue is hard-wired for sensitivity in ways scientists are now only beginning to understand". (D) no error
(A) (B) (C)

5. One portion of the population consists of the so-called supertasters, their sensitive
 (A) (B)
 tongues apparently have more than one thousand taste buds per square centimetre. (D) no error
 (C)
6. Nontasters, having as few as 11 buds per square centimetre, are
 (A)
another group. Whereas everyone else falls somewhere in the middle. (D) no error
 (B) (C)
7. Supertasters are unusually sensitive to sweet, sour, salty or bitter foods; this
 (A)
 sensitivity explains why they tended to avoid fruits and vegetables with exceptionally
 (B) (C)
 strong flavours. (D) no error
8. The good news for supertasters, most of who are thin, is that they are often
 (A) (B)
 associated with a low risk of cardiovascular disease. (D) no error
 (C)
9. The bad news is that if they reject substantial quantities of fruits and vegetables, they
 (A) (B)
 could be putting themselves at an increased risk of other diseases,
such as: cancer, allergies, and diabetes. (D) no error
 (C)
10. “So next time someone asks you why you’re not eating your broccoli, grapefruit or
 (A)
 raw cabbage, tell him or her that it’s not your fault and blame it on your genes,” Pat
 (B) (C)
 Kelly laughs. (D) no error

OVER

PART B: READING COMPREHENSION

Total Value: 21 marks

Suggested Time: 35 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS: Read “Bizarre Fish from the Amazon’s Depths” on pages 1 to 3 in the **Readings Booklet**. Select the **best** answer for each question and record your choice on the Response Form provided.

11. In paragraph 1, the word “intrepid” means
- A. old.
 - B. fearless.
 - C. careless.
 - D. experienced.
12. In paragraph 2, the phrase “plumbing the Amazon’s depths” implies
- A. clearing the river.
 - B. dredging the river.
 - C. searching the river.
 - D. piping out the river.
13. Another area besides the Amazon River that is home to an extreme diversity of creatures is
- A. Canadian lakes.
 - B. Mexican harbours.
 - C. the Amazon rain forest.
 - D. the United States’ tributaries.
14. Lundberg’s major contribution to scientific research will likely be his
- A. discovery of new species.
 - B. work with Richard Robins.
 - C. extensive search of the Amazon.
 - D. originating the science of ichthyology.
15. The least dominant sense of a catfish is
- A. taste.
 - B. sight.
 - C. smell.
 - D. hearing.

16. One of the world's smallest fish to reach sexual maturity is less vulnerable than expected because it is
- A. fast.
 - B. invisible.
 - C. armoured.
 - D. aggressive.
17. In certain South American countries, the local inhabitants believe that the scientists are
- A. exploiting them.
 - B. engaging in drug traffic.
 - C. spying on the drug traffic.
 - D. destroying the environment.
18. One small group of fish that lives along the banks of the river remains intriguing because it
- A. is extremely small.
 - B. lives on dead wood.
 - C. lives under the banks.
 - D. is blind and transparent.
19. In paragraph 25, the word "abyss" means a
- A. mystery.
 - B. rare fish.
 - C. deep hole.
 - D. fast-moving current.
20. The primary purpose of this article is to
- A. inform.
 - B. caution.
 - C. persuade.
 - D. entertain.
21. The intended audience for this article is likely
- A. students.
 - B. scientific experts.
 - C. the general public.
 - D. commercial fishers.

Bizarre Fish from the Amazon's Depths
(pages 1 to 3 in the **Readings Booklet**)

INSTRUCTIONS: Use the space provided in this booklet for written-response questions. Write your answers in **ink**. You may quote **or** paraphrase. Complete sentences are **not** required in this section.

1. State a main idea which is introduced in paragraphs 1 to 8 of this passage. From these paragraphs, identify **two supporting quotations** as evidence for your statement.

Main idea: _____
_____ (1 mark)

Quotation 1: _____
_____ (1 mark)

Quotation 2: _____
_____ (1 mark)

2. From paragraphs 9 to 11, list **three** reasons why electric fish are unique.

a) _____
_____ (1 mark)

b) _____
_____ (1 mark)

c) _____
_____ (1 mark)

3. Researching the Amazon basin is a challenging task. From paragraphs 16 to 25, identify **four** factors that support this statement.

a) _____
_____ (1 mark)

b) _____
_____ (1 mark)

c) _____
_____ (1 mark)

d) _____
_____ (1 mark)

PART C: POETRY

Total Value: 20 marks

Suggested Time: 30 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the poem “Portrait of a Lady” on page 4 in the **Readings Booklet**. Select the **best** answer for each question and record your choice on the Response Form provided.

22. In lines 2 and 5, the quotation marks indicate
- A. slang.
 - B. dialogue.
 - C. flashbacks.
 - D. parenthetical elements.
23. In line 7, the phrase “people with an eye on the sky” means
- A. curiosity.
 - B. superstition.
 - C. interest in astrology.
 - D. interest in the weather.
24. Line 10 contains an example of
- A. satire.
 - B. simile.
 - C. personification.
 - D. understatement.
25. In line 12, “interstices” means
- A. soil.
 - B. worm trails.
 - C. small spaces.
 - D. interruptions.
26. Lines 17 and 18 contain
- A. metonymy.
 - B. alliteration.
 - C. apostrophe.
 - D. onomatopoeia.

27. Line 19 suggests that in some way the speaker's neighbour is

- A. violent.
- B. fanatical.
- C. suffering.
- D. adaptable.

28. This poem is primarily

- A. didactic.
- B. satirical.
- C. narrative.
- D. descriptive.

29. The dominant mood of the poem is

- A. angry.
- B. euphoric.
- C. nostalgic.
- D. reflective.

PART D: PROSE

Total Value: 25 marks

Suggested Time: 50 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the story entitled “Anita’s Dance” on pages 5 to 9 in the **Readings Booklet**. Select the **best** answer for each question and record your choice on the Response Form provided.

30. In paragraph 1, the phrase “enough coffee to float an army” is an example of
- A. simile.
 - B. metaphor.
 - C. hyperbole.
 - D. synecdoche.
31. From paragraph 1, we realize that Anita can be described best as
- A. selfish.
 - B. resentful.
 - C. considerate.
 - D. independent.
32. Anita’s university boyfriend could be considered
- A. round.
 - B. dynamic.
 - C. sympathetic.
 - D. stereotypical.
33. In paragraph 3, the phrase “The something that is between us is nothing” is an example of
- A. sarcasm.
 - B. paradox.
 - C. metonymy.
 - D. understatement.
34. In paragraph 43, Anita suggests the main reason for Jack’s poor behaviour is
- A. because of his sisters.
 - B. his disrespect for nature.
 - C. because he never went out.
 - D. his lack of parental guidance.

35. Anita's attitude toward her family is

- A. loving.
- B. strained.
- C. forgiving.
- D. indifferent.

36. The point of view of the passage is

- A. objective.
- B. omniscient.
- C. first person.
- D. limited omniscient.

PART E: COMPOSITION

Value: 24 marks

Suggested Time: 55 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS: Using standard English, write a coherent, unified, multi-paragraph composition of 300-500 words on the **topic** below. In your composition, you may apply any effective and appropriate method of development which includes **any combination** of exposition, persuasion, description, and narration.

Use the page headed **Organization and Planning** for your rough work. Write your composition in **ink** on the pages headed **Finished Work**.

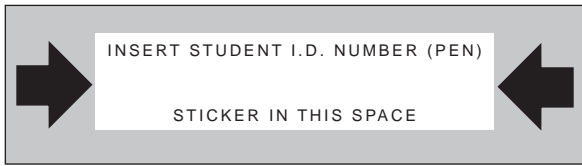
9. Write a multi-paragraph composition on the topic below. Your response may draw upon any aspect of your life: your reading, your own experiences, the experiences of others, and so on.

Topic: Determination

OVER

Organization and Planning





ENGLISH 12

August 1999

Course Code = EN

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Score for
Question 1:

1. _____
(3)

Score for
Question 8:

8. _____
(6)

Score for
Question 2:

2. _____
(3)

Score for
Question 9:

9. _____
(24)

Score for
Question 3:

3. _____
(4)

Score for
Question 4:

4. _____
(6)

Score for
Question 5:

5. _____
(6)

Score for
Question 6:

6. _____
(6)

Score for
Question 7:

7. _____
(6)

ENGLISH 12
READINGS BOOKLET
AUGUST 1999

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PART B: READING COMPREHENSION

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the following passage and answer the questions on pages 4 to 7 of the examination booklet.

Bizarre Fish from the Amazon's Depths

by Carol Kaesuk Yoon

- 1 Since the middle of the last century, the Amazon River and its tributaries have provided passage to many an intrepid adventurer heading into South America's interior rain forests. But despite the fact that scientifically minded explorers have been floating down these waterways for more than 100 years, life in the river itself has remained largely unknown.
- 2 A handful of scientists have now begun the difficult work of plumbing the Amazon's depths, casting down their nets to unveil the deep-water world below. With each haul, long-hidden inhabitants of the Amazon, the largest tropical river system on Earth, are coming to light, including oddities like transparent catfish and electric fish that subsist solely on the tails of other electric fish.
- 3 "We've now gone close to 4,000 kilometres over the Amazon and its tributaries," said John Lundberg, an ichthyologist—fish specialist—at the University of Arizona. "We've come up with drastically different kinds of fish."
- 4 Richard Robins, professor emeritus of ichthyology at University of Miami, said, "Lundberg's work has been pioneering. No one knew what was going on down there. It's a big breakthrough."
- 5 Like the Amazon rain forest, the Amazon River is home to creatures of extreme diversity, helping to make South America the continent with more fish species than any other in the world. So far, the Amazon and its tributaries are estimated to harbour at least 2,000 freshwater fish species, twice the number in Canada, the United States and Mexico.
- 6 "It's just an overwhelming diversity," said William Fink, an ichthyologist at the University of Michigan, "and how all this came to be is a really interesting question. The deep-water faunas are especially odd and the most challenging to get to. You get into strange and interesting new worlds."
- 7 So far, Lundberg and his collaborators have amassed 125,000 fish, and their ever-rising species count is at 240. What they have uncovered at the greatest depths is a murky, nearly lightless world inhabited by a proliferation of two kinds of creatures: electric fish and catfish.
- 8 "The Amazon water is muddy," Fink said. "It's hard to see just a few metres down, and six metres down, it's really black." Researchers say that may explain why two sorts of fish ready-made for life without light lurk at the bottom.
- 9 Electric fish can hunt and navigate without vision, using electric organs to generate electric fields around their bodies to sense where things are. Catfish are also electroreceptive, and they have taste buds all over their bodies, allowing other senses to dominate over sight.

- 10 The most peculiar among the electric fish found by Lundberg and his colleagues are two species of tail-eaters. When researchers examined the fish, their stomachs were filled entirely with the tails of other electric fish. Lundberg said that while the researchers know the fish eat the tails of other species, they may eat the tails of members of their own species as well.
- 11 The electric fish can rapidly regenerate lost parts, which makes the meal of choice of these species both plentiful and renewable.
- 12 Lundberg and his colleagues also found many eyeless catfish and electric fish. Among the blind fish, researchers netted a tiny transparent catfish that was bearing eggs when it was just 75 millimetres long—close to the world record for the smallest fish at sexual maturity. Though tiny, blind and transparent, this species may not be as vulnerable as it sounds; it has greatly thickened bones and armour plates on its sides.
- 13 The researchers have found some novel features on some fish that they cannot explain. An electric fish found in only one small area of the Rio Negro, a tributary of the Amazon, has a unique tongue-like projection just above its chin.
- 14 “It’s not a tooth—it’s a soft organ,” Lundberg said, adding that nothing like it had been seen on any electric fish before.
- 15 The team has lost a lot of equipment. Motoring along the Amazon, researchers drop a weighted trawl net that has a wide mouth and a mesh fine enough to capture the tiniest fish.
- 16 These nets sink out of sight into water that is racing by at speeds of two metres or more per second. After towing the net, researchers must carefully retrieve it from depths of nine to 45 metres below the surface. But they must avoid tearing the nets on the debris-covered bottom, spiked with dead trees, or on the water-logged branches that can be racing by at any depth in the river.
- 17 Should any equipment come loose, it is gone, as the current sweeps everything quickly away. And there is no way to jump into these waters to work.
- 18 “That far from shore, you’d get swept away downstream,” Lundberg said.
- 19 But it is not just rushing waters that have kept the fish in the Amazon and its tributaries mysterious.
- 20 One problem is the sheer size of the Amazon basin, which stretches over some 6.5 million square kilometres of equatorial South America. Moreover, some stretches of river are very remote.
- 21 And as Richard Vari, a research zoologist at the National Museum of Natural History at the Smithsonian Institution, explains, scientist-explorers are not always welcome.
- 22 “In Peru and Equador, and Colombia in particular,” he said, “people think this must be some sort of cover for spying on the drug traffic. They find it very difficult to believe that you’re really out there in these remote areas just to collect small fish.”

- 23 As a result, even many intriguing and easily caught species remain poorly known. For example, there is a small group of fish that lives along the banks of the Amazon that eats driftwood. Scott Schaefer, associate curator of fishes at the American Museum of Natural History in New York, said those fish are the only vertebrates known to live by eating dead wood, yet “we know nothing about their biology.”
- 24 There is one point in the Amazon—a huge, gaping hole near the mouth of the Rio Negro—where the river bottom drops more than 100 metres. Lundberg’s response to the suggestion that this might hold the most interesting of fish?
- 25 “I’m not going to put a net down in that thing,” he said. That abyss is out of even his depth, leaving the Amazon, for the moment, to keep at least one last mystery to itself.

PART C: POETRY

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the following poem and answer the questions on pages 8 to 11 of the examination booklet.

Portrait of a Lady

by Sharon H. Nelson

- 1 The soil warms through long afternoons and cools at night.
“This June has been too cool for basil or early flowering of roses.”
The tulips lost their heads, as usual, to early heat, but that has passed.
We had a dry spring, and then this long coolness, humidity in the air, wetness of earth.
- 5 “Our seasons, like our weather lately, seem remarkable.”
- We are people who speak of gardens, the shoots of tender growth,
the particular, Latin names of plants. We are people with an eye on the sky,
concerned with weather, the rate that water falls, the textures of the earth,
its insufficiencies, its separate parts: clay, sand, humus, compost, peat.
- 10 We make our beds meticulously, careful as a surgical nurse.
- The late night air is cool. A Beethoven concerto drifts
across my consciousness, fills the interstices between my thoughts
as if a garden fork had shifted earth, aerating it.
Now I have worms on the brain, “a sign of life,” my neighbour says.
- 15 A clever wife, she nurses children, husband, plants, and keeps her silences,
and feeds the earth in her small plot, and walks her dog and runs with it enough
for its good health, and watches where the earth worms trek, following with her eyes
where worms abide. She is a woman who never says what she thinks,
but her hands scratch at the dry earth, cool or warm, with a desperation that speaks.
- 20 We have discussed columbine, the growth of weeds.
She never tans; her garden’s mostly in the shade,
but as her skin tautens on her face,
her eyes fade. She does not speak of this or anything
besides the growth of flowers, condition of the soil, local weather.
- 25 Whatever grief is in her moves, like worms, within the compost of her heart
where it is always quiet, cool, and dark.

PART D: PROSE

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the following selection and answer the questions on pages 12 to 16 of the examination booklet.

adapted from **Anita's Dance**

by Marian Engel

- 1 It was a morning fit to convert any pessimist, and a Sunday to boot. Anita spent part of it in the garden virtuously weeding; then she poured enough coffee to float an army into her special mug and brought it out into the garden. Instead of reading, she sat stretching her neck to the sun and thinking how lucky she was; nothing to do but please herself all day. From time to time friends lectured her about being selfish and set in her ways, an old maid. And it was true she was sometimes lonely. She had, however, no reason to feel sorry for herself when she compared her life to theirs. She had a house, a garden, a car, a piano. A good job. A greedy, bad-tempered cat. Two eyes, a nose, and ten fingers, all in good working order. What did she have to feel sorry about? And was happiness selfish?
- 2 She mused over her library book. She had never really wanted to get married, except for a brief and embarrassing episode when she was at university. A boy she was very fond of had wanted her to drop her scholarship, marry him and put him through law school. Her fondness had ceased abruptly when he argued that, being male, he had more right to an education than she had. Winning the argument had hurt a lot.
- 3 Those days were over, she thought, and if she was wrong, she had no daughter to tell her so in exemplary form. I have my house, she thought, my garden with delphiniums and daisies and poppies. My piano, on which I have taught myself to play the simplest and saddest waltzes of Chopin. I have company in the form of a bad-tempered cat. What is more, I have a date with Clive this afternoon. I feel good with Clive. The something that is between us is nothing; there is no self-consciousness. We swim towards each other as if the water were our element. All's right with the world.
- 4 She had wanted to study literature but on practical grounds had chosen economics instead.
- 5 She had never wanted her mother's life, one of flying elbows and fits of bad temper and aspirations that were a muddle of impulses. Her mother had never seemed to be able to think anything through, she was always anemic from childbearing and exhausted from scrubbing; crying out, "You girls..." Get this, fetch that, turn off the soup, scrub the sink, do the dishes, iron that. When she was an old woman they had bought her an automatic washing machine with a window in the door and found her sitting on the basement steps watching it like television. "I was remembering the day Lanie got her hair caught in the wringer," she said.
- 6 Anita shuddered: that dream of cosy domesticity was a male dream; she'd been living in a man's world too long. The real thing she'd lived through and it was what had made her so happy to get a scholarship to university. Never mind that she'd had to char¹ and work in a grocery store to put herself through.

¹ char: *to do housework by the day or hour*

- 7 She stretched lazily. The cat was scowling at her through the kitchen window; he didn't like her to be happy. Too bad for him. She was going to enjoy this day. Clive and she weren't meeting until two and she didn't even have to change.
- 8 She heard scuffling footsteps on the gravel, the footsteps of her brother Jack. "Oh!" she thought. "He's found me."
- 9 "Hi, Nita, how's tricks?"
- 10 "Where did you come from, Jack?"
- 11 He was big and he was stupid, something of a bad dream: the one who hadn't succeeded. "Oh well, you know," he said plunking himself down on the chaise longue so it clicked and shivered. "I was wondering if you had any jobs for me, like."
- 12 "Broke again, eh? Want some coffee?"
- 13 "Sure."
- 14 She slammed the kitchen door as she went in. The cat gave her a satisfied look, pleased that her moment of glory was over. She poured Jack a coffee, creamed and sugared it, and stumbled as she went out, staining her white summer pants. "Here," she thrust it at him.
- 15 He sat up like a patient in bed and began not so much to drink as to inhale it. "What have you been doing lately?" she asked.
- 16 "I been doing...well, littla this, littla that. Delivering leaflets. You know."
- 17 She knew. He was no good, Jack, and that was that.
- 18 "I keep up with the work around here myself," she said. "I don't really have anything for you to do."
- 19 "There must be something, the way you lie around reading all the time."
- 20 She refused to rise to the bait.
- 21 "Lanie's poorly," he said. "I was there yesterday."
- 22 He must be making the rounds again, she thought, borrowing from all of us.
- 23 "She's got cancer," he said, almost with satisfaction: the voice of the child at school announcing family bad news for current events class. "She looks awful, and she can hardly move."
- 24 "She's doing all right," Anita said.
- 25 "Gotta get worse before you get better, eh? I don't think she'll get better. Ross is scared out of his wits. You should take the kids."
- 26 "I can't. I go out to work, remember?"

- 27 "I remember," he said and continued to stare at her, trying to put her in the wrong before he asked her for money.
- 28 "I wrote to Rosie but she's just had an operation. Kit's on the sick list too. Bill won't open the door to me. In the old days, a family stuck together."
- 29 "Maybe we still do," she said evenly, furious with him. "Look, I have to go out and see a man about a dog. If ten dollars would do you, I could see you on your way."
- 30 "Drop me off somewhere?"
- 31 It wasn't the clothes he was wearing, it was the condition he was in: tousled and dirty. "Ten bucks and a subway ticket. That's it, Jack."
- 32 She went inside again, slamming the door, and pounded to the front of the house so hard that the petals shivered off the poppies she had set in a bowl in the front hall. She dashed upstairs and changed into another pair of trousers. As she went down again she made sure the front door was locked, then the back. "Here," she said handing him ten dollars and a ticket. "You can stay and finish your coffee. I have to be off." She put her library book in her purse and strode off without looking behind her.
- 33 She was meeting Clive at the end of the subway line and they were going out in the country to browse through antique shops. That way he wouldn't have to drive downtown to her place first. That way, she thought grimly, he avoided Jack.
- 34 She saw him swing into the parking lot and smiled to herself. He got out of the car and came towards her, a smile on his face. He had a wide, rather shy smile, a funny walk. "Hi," she said, and ran towards him. "Marvelous day."
- 35 "Wonderful." He put her into the car like the gentleman he was, said, "Belt up, now," and headed north.
- 36 Ordinarily, this act of merely strapping herself in beside him made her happy, but today it was different. Jack niggled and danced in her mind. Being mean to Jack made her feel like the mean, ignorant child she no doubt had been, that Jack still was.
- 37 "What's the matter?" Clive said. "You're twitchy."
- 38 "I'm mean-tempered today," she said. "As bad as Martha the cat. My brother Jack turned up. The no-good one."
- 39 "You have one of those, have you? Most people do. I always used to wonder why they felt sorry for me being an only child. How much did you give him?"
- 40 So that was on her face too. He read her well. "I was having such a good time," she said, "reading in the garden. Then in stomped Jack, and I still feel shattered."
- 41 "Look, about your brother, you'd better tell me about him and get it off your mind. No use having a day in the country if we're not in good spirits. Was he mother's blue-eyed boy?"

- 42 Suddenly she heard her mother yell, “You girls, Nita, Rosie, look after that Jackie and make sure he don’t fall in the well.” She hunched herself and said, “First, you have to understand we were small-town people and not what you’d call well off.” She had used the genteel phrase for so long it didn’t surprise her any more.
- 43 “There were four girls, then Jackie and Bill. Jackie tore the wings off flies and drowned our kitten in the rain barrel: we hated him. He was an awful kid and he’s an awful man. We were no help to him, you know. He needed a lot of attention from adults, not sisters who’d rather be doing something else.”
- 44 “Where is he now?”
- 45 “In my backyard on the chaise, I suppose. I gave him ten bucks and a subway ticket. But there’s no real hope he’s gone yet.”
- 46 Clive looked at her and slowed the car down. “I think,” he said, “that we’d better go back...” He turned the car and drove very fast down the half-empty Sunday highway into town. They were home in twenty minutes.
- 47 They went in the front door and found Jack reclining with his work boots on the white corduroy sofa.
- 48 “Jack!” she roared.
- 49 “Snob,” he said with an impish smile. “So you caught me, you and your fine feller here. Nice coat he’s got on. You’re coming up and up and up in the world, aren’t you, girl? Ma would be proud of you.” But he swung his boots off the chesterfield.
- 50 “I think you’d better go,” Clive said. “You’re bothering Anita.”
- 51 “Do you think so, Mr. Prettyboy? What are you doing hanging around our Nita? Don’t you know she’s our Educated Woman, too good for a man? Why, all she cares about is white velvet and books and doilies. She don’t even go to visit the sick and the dying, she...” He spoke in a stage Irishman’s accent. Anita’s blood began to rise and she could hear children in the background chanting, “Nita’s a nitwit, Nita’s a nobody...”
- 52 “Jack,” she said. “Get out.”
- 53 “And why would I want to get out, with a fine house to come to and a fine sister to look after me?”
- 54 “You should go,” said Clive, being reasonable, trying, being also, Anita thought, very sweet and middle class, “because your sister has asked you to go.”
- 55 “Oh, I never did nothing Nita told me. It was Rosie had the good left hook. Nita was nothing, all skin and bone. No wonder she never got married or nothing.”

- 56 On the one hand, Anita wanted to laugh because he was being a self-defeating grotesque, asking for punishment, exile, anything: he had always been like that. But she was also very, very angry. The rest of us reclaimed ourselves, she thought, as Mother wanted us to. We got out of misery and brutality. We stopped swearing, read books, got at least a smattering of education: cleaned up the family act.
- 57 Anita sat trying to pull herself together. She sat up and sighed. She looked at Clive. Thought desperately: now he knows. It's over.
- 58 Clive smiled at her and said, "Perfection drives everybody up the wall. I don't care what happens between us; I know it won't bore me."
- 59 Anita managed to look up at him and smile back.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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