

PASSAGE A: Questions 1-3 (Ch.2, p. 8)

A bed. Single, mattress medium-hard, covered with a flocked white spread. Nothing takes place in the bed but sleep; or no sleep. I try not to think too much. Like other things now, thought must be rationed. There's a lot that doesn't bear thinking about. Thinking can hurt your chances, and I intend to last. I know why there is no glass, in front of the watercolor picture of blue irises, and why the window only opens partly and why the glass in it is shatterproof. It isn't running away they're afraid of: We wouldn't get far. It's in those other escapes, the ones you can open in yourself, given a cutting edge.

PASSAGE B: Questions 4-6 (Ch.17, p. 98)

"What are you doing in here?"

I don't answer. He too is illegal, here, with me, he can't give me away. Nor I him; for the moment we are mirrors. He puts his hand on my arm, pulls me against him, his mouth on mine, what else comes from such denial? Without a word. Both of us shaking, how I'd like to. In Serena's parlor, with the dried flowers, on the Chinese carpet, his thin body. A man entirely unknown. It would be like shouting, it would be like shooting someone. My hand goes down, how about that, I could unbutton, and then. But it's too dangerous, he knows it, we push each other away, not far. Too much trust, too much risk, too much already.

PASSAGE C: Questions 7-9 (Ch. 11, p. 60)

The breathing comes nearer. I smell old smoke, aftershave, tobacco dust on hair. Then the voice, very soft, close to my head: that's him, bulging the sheet.

"I could help you," he says. Whispers.

"What?" I say.

"Shh," he says. "I could help you. I've helped others."

"Help me?" I say, my voice as low as his. "How?" Does he know something, has he seen Luke, has he found, can he bring back?

"How do you think?" he says, still barely breathing it. Is that his hand, sliding up my leg? He's taken off the glove. "The door's locked. No one will come in. They'll never know it isn't his."

PASSAGE D: Questions 10-12 (Ch. 28, p. 174)

I guess that's how they were able to do it, in the way they did, all at once, without anyone knowing beforehand. If there had still been portable money, it would have been more difficult.

It was after the catastrophe, when they shot the President and machine-gunned the Congress and the army declared a state of emergency. They blamed it on the Islamic fanatics, at the time.

Keep calm, they said on television. Everything is under control.

I was stunned. Everyone was, I know that. It was hard to believe. The entire government, gone like that. How did they get in, how did it happen?

That was when they suspended the Constitution. They said it would be temporary. There wasn't even any rioting in the streets. People stayed home at night, watching television, looking for some direction. There wasn't even an enemy you could put your finger on.

Passage E: Questions 13-16 (Ch. 47*, p. 311)

"Did our narrator reach the outside world safely and build a new life for herself? Or was she discovered in her attic hiding place, arrested, sent to the colonies or to Jezebel's, or even executed? Our document, though in its own way eloquent, is on these subjects mute."

Passage F: Questions 17-20 (Ch. 27, p. 168-169)

"I thought you were a true believer," Ofglen says.

"I thought you were," I say.

"You were always so stinking pious."

"So were you," I reply. I want to laugh, shout, hug her.

"You can join us," she says.

"Us?" I say. There is an us then, there's a we. I knew it.

"You didn't think I was the only one," she says.

I didn't think that. It occurs to me that she may be a spy, a plant, set to trap me; such is the soil in which we grow. But I can't believe it; hope is rising in me, like sap in a tree. Blood in a wound...

Passage G: Questions 21-23 (Ch.23, p . 139)

I win the first game, I let him win the second: I still haven't discovered what the terms are, what I will be able to ask for, in exchange.

Finally he tells me it's time for me to go home. Those are the words he uses: go home. He means to my room. He asks me if I will be all right, as if the stairway is a dark street. I say yes. We open his study door, just a crack, and listen for noises in the hall.

This is like being on a date. This is like sneaking into the dorm after hours.

Passage H: Questions 24-28 (Ch. 7, p. 37)

The night is mine, my own time, to do with as I will, as long as I am quiet. As long as I don't move. As long as I lie still. The difference between *lie* and *lay*. Lay is always passive. Even men used to say, I'd like to get laid. Though sometimes they said, I'd like to lay her. All this is pure speculation. I don't know what men used to say. I had only their words for it.

I lie, then, inside the room, under the plaster eye in the ceiling, behind the white curtains, between the sheets, neatly as they, and step sideways out of my own time. Out of time. Though this is time, nor am I out of it.

But the night is my time out. Where should I go?

Passage J: Questions 29-31 (Ch. 37, p. 249)

"Moira," I say. "You don't mean that." She is frightening me now, because what I hear in her voice is indifference, a lack of volition. Have they really done it to her then, taken away something - what? - that used to be so central to her? And how can I expect her to go on, with my idea of her courage, live it through, act it out, when I myself do not?

Passage K: Questions 32-34 (Ch. 13, p. 69)

I wait, washed, brushed, fed, like a prize pig. Sometime in the eighties they invented pig balls, for pigs who were being fattened in pens. Pig balls were large coloured balls; the pigs rolled them around with their snouts. The pig marketers said this improved their muscle tone; the pigs were curious, they liked to have something to think about... I wish I had a pig ball.