

# ENGLISH LITERATURE

## HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mr P Berry

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## Exam Board

AQA

## Specification

7712

## COURSE DETAILS

### Examination and Non-exam Assessment

The course is examined at the end of Year 13. Students complete two exams and one non-exam assessment, consisting of the creation of an extended 2,500 word comparative essay.

English Literature engages students in the in-depth study of English Literature in relation to the areas of Love Through the Ages and the Literature of either World War One or Modern Times. Students are required to study a variety of texts from different genres. In addition, students will prepare for unseen poetry comparisons and unseen prose extracts for the synoptic elements of each exam.

### All pupils will complete Paper One: Love Through the Ages

Students will prepare for the three exam questions on Othello, Tess of the D'Urbervilles and the Pre-1900 poetry comparison question, and a question on two unseen poems.

Pupils will also complete **either** WWI **or** Modern Times as their Paper 2, depending on their teacher:

### Paper Two Literature of WW1

Students will study a variety of texts from the period of WW1. These will include the novel Regeneration, the drama text The Wipers Times and poems written by women in the Scars Poetry Anthology of WW1. There will also be an unseen prose extract in the exam.

OR

### Paper Two Modern Times

Students will study A Streetcar Named Desire, One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, and Feminine Gospels by Carol Ann Duffy. There will also be an unseen prose extract in the exam.

### All pupils will also complete a Non-exam Assessment (NEA)

Students must produce a 2,500 word comparative essay and independent study on two texts of their choice (one text to be written pre-1900).

## SUMMERWORKFORINTRODUCTIONTOYEAR12

The best way to take notes on your key texts is to buy your own versions of the texts so that you can annotate them in lessons and independently.

**Please see below for ISBN numbers of the copies that you will have access to in the actual exams. It is vital that, if you are purchasing your own texts, they are the ones indicated below.**

You do not HAVE to buy the key texts, the school can lend you copies to use throughout the course but you CANNOT annotate them.

TOPIC	Details
<b>Love Through the Ages:  Tess of the D'Urbervilles</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Read the first three chapters of Thomas Hardy's novel <i>Tess of the D'Urbervilles</i>.</li><li>2. Write an <b>essay</b> answering the following question: How does Hardy present the character of Tess in chapters two and three of the novel? 800-1000 words. You will hand this essay in to your Love Through the Ages teacher in your first lesson.</li><li>3. <i>Tess of the D'Urbervilles</i> historical context research. Research Thomas Hardy and find out what inspired him to write his many novels. Research the settings for his novels and what life was like for rich and poor people living in Victorian times in rural areas such as the fictional 'Wessex'.</li><li>4. Visit The British Library website and access one of the free critical essays on the novel. Read the essay and summarise the arguments in your own words. You will hand your research and summary in to your Paper 1 teacher in your first lesson.</li></ol>
<b>Paper 2: World War One and Its Aftermath</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>5. Read the first chapter of the novel <i>Regeneration</i> by Pat Barker. Annotate (underline/ highlight and label) the text with analysis of the characters, setting, events and Barker's use of language, form and structure techniques. You will hand your annotated chapter in to your Paper 2 teacher in the first lesson. You will use these notes if your teacher is doing Paper 2 World War One and Its Aftermath.</li></ol>
<b>Paper 2: Modern Times</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>6. Read the first chapter of the novel <i>One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest</i>. Annotate (underline/ highlight and label) the text with analysis of the characters, setting, events and Kesey's use of language, form and structure techniques. You will hand your annotated chapter in to your Paper 2 teacher in the first lesson. You will use these notes if your teacher is doing Paper 2 Modern Times.</li></ol>

## WIDER READING TO PREPARE FOR COURSE

- Geddes, Julia. (2009) *Oxford Student Texts: Love Through the Ages*: Oxford University Press
- Giovanelli, Marcello (Series Editor) (2011) *A Level English Literature A for AQA Student Book*: Cambridge University Press
- PressMcBratney, Luke. (2016) *Study and Revise for AS/A-level: AQA Anthology: love poetry through the ages*: Hodder

## HELPFUL WEBSITES:

- The British Library: [Click here](#)
- The National Theatre: [Click here](#)
- The Royal Shakespeare Company: [Click here](#)

## PAPER 1: LOVE THROUGH THE AGES

- Buy *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* by Thomas Hardy [here](#) (ISBN-10: 9780141439594)
- Buy *Othello* by William Shakespeare [here](#) (ISBN: 1472571762)
- *Love Through the Ages* anthology is provided for pupils.

## EITHER PAPER 2: WAR

- Buy *Regeneration* by Pat Barker [here](#) (ISBN: 9780141030937)
- Buy *The Wipers Times* by Ian Hislop and Nick Newman (Samuel French LTD published 2016) [here](#) (ISBN: 0573113513)
- Buy *Scars Upon My Heart selected* by Catherine Reilly [here](#) (ISBN: 9781844082254)

## OR PAPER 2: MODERN TIMES

- Buy *A Streetcar Named Desire* by Tennessee Williams [here](#) (ISBN: 1408106043)
- Buy *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* by Ken Kesey [here](#) (ISBN: 0141187883)
- Buy *Feminine Gospels* by Carol Ann Duffy [here](#) (ISBN: 1509852913)

## ENGLISH LITERATURE PAPER 2: WORLD WAR I AND ITS AFTERMATH

### SET TEXTS:

- **Barker, Pat:** Regeneration
- **Hislop, Ian & Newman, Nick:** The Wipers Times
- **Reilly, Catherine (ed.):** Scars Upon My Heart

### WIDER READING

#### NOVELS:

- **Barker, Pat:** Toby's Room
- **Barry, Sebastian:** A Long Long Way
- **Elton, Ben:** The First Casualty
- **Faulks, Sebastian:** Birdsong
- **Hill, Susan:** Strange Meeting
- **Remarque, Erich Maria:** All Quiet on the Western Front
- **Woolf, Virginia:** Jacob's Room

#### PLAYS:

- **Haig, David:** My Boy Jack
- **Sherriff, R.C:** Journey's End
- **Whelan, Peter:** The Accrington Pals

#### NON-FICTION:

- **Brittain, Vera:** Testament of Youth
- **Cowen, Ruth (ed.):** A Nurse at the Front (diaries of Sister Edith Appleton)
- **Graves, Robert:** Goodbye to All That
- **War Poetry:** Wilfred Owen, Siegfried Sassoon, Rupert Brooke, Robert Graves

### WATCH/LISTEN

- **BBC TV series:** The Crimson Field
- **Film (DVD/YouTube):** My Boy Jack
- **Film (DVD):** Testament of Youth
- **BBC Drama (DVD):** Birdsong
- **BBC Radio 4:** Great Lives, series 26, Vera Brittain ([Click here](#))
- **BBC (YouTube):** Jeremy Paxman documentary
- **Wilfred Owen:** A Remembrance Tale
- **2018 Peter Jackson documentary:** They Shall Not Grow Old
- **Film (DVD):** 1917

### WEBSITES

- **Imperial War Museum:** VoicesOfTheFirstWorldWar ([Click here](#))
- **British Library:** World War Once ([Click Here](#))

# GORDON'S SCHOOL KS5 READING LIST



## FICTION:

Della Owens: *'Where the Crawdads Sing'*  
Angela Carter: *'The Passion of New Eve'*  
A. S. Byatt: *'Elementals'*  
Thomas Hardy: *poetry available online and 'Far from the Madding Crowd'*  
Joseph Conrad: *'Heart of Darkness'*  
E. M. Forster: *'A Room with a View'*  
Toni Morrison: *'Beloved'*  
Jeanette Winterson: *'Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit'; 'The Passion'*  
Charlotte Perkins Gilman: *'The Yellow Wallpaper'*  
Sylvia Plath: *'The Bell Jar'*  
Irvine Welsh: *'Trainspotting'*  
Kazuo Ishiguro: *'Remains Of The Day'*  
Ian McEwan: *'Atonement'*  
D. H. Lawrence: *'The Virgin and the Gypsy'*  
Chinua Achebe: *'Things Fall Apart'*  
Margaret Atwood: *'The Handmaid's Tale'*  
Ken Kesey: *'One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest'*  
Jonathan Swift: *'Gulliver's Travels'*  
Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie: *'Half a Yellow Sun'*  
Stephen Fry: *'Heroes'; 'Mythos'*  
Elizabeth Strout: *'Olive Kitteridge'*  
George Eliot: *'The Mill on the Floss'*

## NON-FICTION:

David Crystal: *'Let's Talk: How English Conversation Works'*  
Sigmund Freud: *'The Interpretation of Dreams'*  
Carl Jung: *'The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious'*

## POETRY:

Carol Ann Duffy: *'The World's Wife'*  
Any Bloodaxe Poetry Anthology e.g.: *'Making for Planet Alice'*  
Sylvia Plath: *'Ariel'*  
Kae Tempest: *'Let Them Eat Chaos'; 'Running Upon the Wires'*  
Allen Ginsberg: *'Howl'*  
William Shakespeare: *collected sonnets*  
Geoffrey Chaucer: *'The Canterbury Tales'*  
Owen Sheers: *'Skirrid Hill'*  
Samuel Taylor Coleridge: *'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner'*  
John Keats: *'Lamia'; 'Isabella' or 'The Pot of Basil'; 'The Eve of St Agnes'*

## DRAMA:

Martin McDonagh: *'The Pillowman'; 'The Leenane Trilogy'*  
Tennessee Williams: *'A Streetcar Named Desire'; 'The Rose Tattoo'*  
Henrik Ibsen: *'A Doll's House'*  
William Shakespeare: *'Much Ado About Nothing'; 'Othello'; 'Hamlet'*  
Christopher Marlowe: *'Dr Faustus'*  
Anton Chekhov: *'The Cherry Orchard'*  
Bertolt Brecht: *'The Caucasian Chalk Circle'*



*REGENERATION*  
BY **PAT BARKER**

CHAPTER 1

Finished with the War  
*A Soldier's Declaration*

I am making this statement as an act of wilful defiance of military authority, because I believe the war is being deliberately prolonged by those who have the power to end it.

I am a soldier, convinced that I am acting on behalf of soldiers. I believe that this war, upon which I entered as a war of defence and liberation, has now become a war of aggression and conquest. I believe that the purposes for which I and my fellow soldiers entered upon this war should have been so clearly stated as to have made it impossible to change them, and that, had this been done, the objects which actuated us would now be attainable by negotiation.

I have seen and endured the suffering of the troops, and I can no longer be a party to prolong these sufferings for ends which I believe to be evil and unjust.

I am not protesting against the conduct of the war, but against the political errors and insincerities for which the fighting men are being sacrificed.

On behalf of those who are suffering now I make this protest against the deception which is being practised on them; also I believe that I may help to destroy the callous complacency with which the majority of those at home regard the continuance of agonies which they do not share, and which they have not sufficient imagination to realize.

S. Sassoon  
July 1917

Bryce waited for Rivers to finish reading before he spoke again. 'The "S" stands for "Siegfried"'. Apparently, he thought that was better left out.'

'And I'm sure he was right.' Rivers folded the paper and ran his fingertips along the edge. 'So they're sending him here?'

Bryce smiled. 'Oh, I think it's rather more specific than that. They're sending him to *you*.'

Rivers got up and walked across to the window. It was a fine day, and many of the patients were in the hospital grounds, watching a game of tennis. He heard the *pok-pok* of rackets, and a cry of frustration as a ball smashed into the net. 'I suppose he is - "shell-shocked"?'

'According to the Board, yes.'

'It just occurs to me that a diagnosis of neurasthenia might not be inconvenient confronted with this.' He held up the Declaration.

'Colonel Langdon chaired the Board. *He* certainly seems to think he is.'

'Langdon doesn't believe in shell-shock.'

Bryce shrugged. 'Perhaps Sassoon was gibbering all over the floor.'

"Funk, old boy." I know Langdon.' Rivers came back to his chair and sat down. 'He doesn't *sound* as if he's gibbering, does he?'

Bryce said carefully, 'Does it matter what his mental state is? Surely it's better for him to be here than in prison?'

'Better for *him*, perhaps. What about the hospital? Can you imagine what our dear Director of Medical Services is going to say, when he finds out we're sheltering "conchies" as well as cowards, shirkers, scrimshankers and degenerates? We'll just have to hope there's no publicity.'

'There's going to be, I'm afraid. The Declaration's going to be read out in the House of Commons next week.'

'By?'

'Lees-Smith.'

Rivers made a dismissive gesture.

'Yes, well, I know. But it still means the press.'

'And the minister will say that no disciplinary action has been taken, because Mr Sassoon is suffering from a severe mental breakdown, and therefore not responsible for his actions. I'm not sure I'd prefer that to prison.'

'I don't suppose he was offered the choice. Will you take him?'



'You mean I *am* being offered a choice?'

'In view of your case load, yes.'

Rivers took off his glasses and swept his hand down across his eyes. 'I suppose they *have* remembered to send the file?'

Sassoon leant out of the carriage window, still half-expecting to see Graves come pounding along the platform, looking even more dishevelled than usual. But further down the train, doors had already begun to slam, and the platform remained empty.

The whistle blew. Immediately, he saw lines of men with grey muttering faces clambering up the ladders to face the guns. He blinked them away.

The train began to move. Too late for Robert now. Prisoner arrives without escort, Sassoon thought, sliding open the carriage door.

By arriving an hour early he'd managed to get a window seat. He began picking his way across to it through the tangle of feet. An elderly vicar, two middle-aged men, both looking as if they'd done rather well out of the war, a young girl and an older woman, obviously travelling together. The train bumped over a point. Everybody rocked and swayed, and Sassoon, stumbling, almost fell into the vicar's lap. He mumbled an apology and sat down. Admiring glances, and not only from the women. Sassoon turned to look out of the window, hunching his shoulder against them all.

After a while he stopped pretending to look at the smoking chimneys of Liverpool's back streets and closed his eyes. He needed to sleep, but instead Robert's face floated in front of him, white and twitching as it had been last Sunday, almost a week ago now, in the lounge of the Exchange Hotel.

For a moment, looking up to find that khaki-clad figure standing just inside the door, he thought he was hallucinating again.

'Robert, what on earth are *you* doing here?' He jumped up and ran across the lounge. 'Thank God you've come.'

'I got myself passed fit.'

'Robert, *no*.'

'What else could I do? After getting *this*.' Graves dug into his tunic pocket and produced a crumpled piece of paper. 'A covering letter would have been nice.'

'I wrote.'

'No, you didn't, Sass. You just sent me this. Couldn't you at least have *talked* about it first?'

'I thought I'd written.'

They sat down, facing each other across a small table. Cold northern light streamed in through the high windows, draining Graves's face of the little colour it had.

'Sass, you've got to give this up.'

'Give it up? You don't think I've come this far, do you, just to give in now?'

'Look, you've made your protest. For what it's worth, I agree with every word of it. But you've had your say. There's no point making a martyr of yourself.'

'The only way I can get publicity is to make them court-martial me.'

'They won't do it.'

'Oh, yes, they will. It's just a matter of hanging on.'

'You're in no state to stand a court-martial.' Graves clasped his clenched fist. 'If I had Russell here now, I'd *shoot* him.'

'It was my idea.'

'Oh, pull the other one. And even if it was, do you think anybody's going to understand it? They'll just say you've got cold feet.'

'Look, Robert, you think exactly as I do about the war, and you *do . . . nothing*. All right, that's your choice. But don't come here lecturing *me* about *cold feet*. This is the hardest thing I've ever done.'

Now, on the train going to Craiglockhart, it still seemed the hardest thing. He shifted in his seat and sighed, looking out over fields of wheat bending to the wind. He remembered the silvery sound of shaken wheat, the shimmer of light on the stalks. He'd have given anything to be out there, away from the stuffiness of the carriage, the itch and constriction of his uniform.

On that Sunday they'd taken the train to Formby and spent the afternoon wandering aimlessly along the beach. A dull, wintry-looking sun cast their shadows far behind them, so that every gesture either of them made was mimicked and magnified.

'They won't let you make a martyr of yourself, Sass. You should have accepted the Board.'

The discussion had become repetitive. For perhaps the fourth time, Sassoon said, 'If I hold out long enough, there's nothing else they can do.'

'There's a lot they can do.' Graves seemed to come to a decision. 'As a matter of fact, I've been pulling a few strings on your behalf.'

Sassoon smiled to hide his anger. 'Good. If you've been exercising your usual tact, that ought to get me at least two years.'

'They won't court-martial you.'

In spite of himself, Sassoon began to feel afraid. 'What, then?'

'Shut you up in a lunatic asylum for the rest of the war.'

'And that's the result of your string-pulling, is it? Thanks.'

'No, the result of my string-pulling is to get you another Board. You must take it this time.'

'You can't put people in lunatic asylums just like that. You have to have reasons.'

'They've got reasons.'

'Yes, the Declaration. Well, that doesn't prove me insane.'

'And the hallucinations? *The corpses in Piccadilly?*'

A long silence. 'I had rather hoped my letters to you were private.'

'I had to persuade them to give you another Board.'

'They won't court-martial me?'

'No. Not in any circumstances. And if you go on refusing to be boarded, they *will* put you away.'

'You know, Robert, I wouldn't believe this from anybody else. Will you *swear* it's true?'

'Yes.'

'On the Bible?'

Graves held up an imaginary Bible and raised his right hand. 'I swear.'

Their shadows stretched out behind them, black on the white sand. For a moment Sassoon still hesitated. Then, with an odd little gasp, he said, 'All right then, I'll give way.'

In the taxi, going to Craiglockhart, Sassoon began to feel

frightened. He looked out of the window at the crowded pavements of Princes Street, thinking he was seeing them for the first and last time. He couldn't imagine what awaited him at Craiglockhart, but he didn't for a moment suppose the inmates were let out.

He glanced up and found the taxi-driver watching him in the mirror. All the local people must know the name of the hospital, and what it was for. Sassoon's hand went up to his chest and began pulling at a loose thread where his MC ribbon had been.

*For conspicuous gallantry during a raid on the enemy's trenches. He remained for 1½ hours under rifle and bomb fire collecting and bringing in our wounded. Owing to his courage and determination, all the killed and wounded were brought in.*

Reading the citation, it seemed to Rivers more extraordinary than ever that Sassoon should have thrown the medal away. Even the most extreme pacifist could hardly be ashamed of a medal awarded for *saving* life. He took his glasses off and rubbed his eyes. He'd been working on the file for over an hour, but, although he was now confident he knew all the facts, he was no closer to an understanding of Sassoon's state of mind. If anything, Graves's evidence to the Board – with its emphasis on hallucinations – seemed to suggest a full-blown psychosis rather than neurasthenia. And yet there was no other evidence for that. Misguided the Declaration might well be, but it was not deluded, illogical or incoherent. Only the throwing away of the medal still struck him as odd. That surely had been the action of a man at the end of his tether.

Well, we've all been there, he thought. The trouble was, he was finding it difficult to examine the evidence impartially. He *wanted* Sassoon to be ill. Admitting this made him pause. He got up and began pacing the floor of his room, from door to window and back again. He'd only ever encountered one similar case, a man who'd refused to go on fighting on religious grounds. Atrocities took place on both sides, he'd said. There was nothing to choose between the British and the Germans.

The case had given rise to heated discussions in the MO's common room – about the freedom of the individual conscience in wartime, and the role of the army psychiatrist in 'treating' a

man who refused to fight. Rivers, listening to those arguments, had been left in no doubt of the depth and seriousness of the divisions. The controversy had died down only when the patient proved to be psychotic. That was the crux of the matter. A man like Sassoon would always be trouble, but he'd be a lot less trouble if he were ill.

Rivers was roused from these thoughts by the crunch of tyres on gravel. He reached the window in time to see a taxi draw up, and a man, who from his uniform could only be Sassoon, get out. After paying the driver, Sassoon stood for a moment, looking up at the building. Nobody arriving at Craiglockhart for the first time could fail to be daunted by the sheer gloomy, cavernous bulk of the place. Sassoon lingered on the drive for a full minute after the taxi had driven away, then took a deep breath, squared his shoulders, and ran up the steps.

Rivers turned away from the window, feeling almost ashamed of having witnessed that small, private victory over fear.

*ONE FLEW OVER THE  
CUCKOO'S NEST*  
**BY KEN KESEY**

**CHAPTER 1**

Theyre out there.

Black boys in white suits up before me to commit sex acts in the hall and get it mopped up before I can catch them.

Theyre mopping when I come out the dorm, all three of them sulky and hating everything, the time of day, the place theyre at here, the people they got to work around. When they hate like this, better if they dont see me. I creep along the wall quiet as dust in my canvas shoes, but they got special sensitive equipment detects my fear and they all look up, all three at once, eyes glittering out of the black faces like the hard glitter of radio tubes out of the back of an old radio.

Heres the Chief. The *soo-pah* Chief, fellas. Ol Chief Broom. Here you go, Chief Broom.

Stick a mop in my hand and motion to the spot they aim for me to clean today, and I go. One swats the backs of my legs with a broom handle to hurry me past.

Haw, you look at im shag it? Big enough to eat apples off my head an he mine me like a baby.

They laugh and then I hear them mumbling behind me, heads close together. Hum of black machinery, humming hate and death and other hospital secrets. They dont bother not talking out loud about their hate secrets when Im nearby because they think Im deaf and dumb. Everybody thinks so. Im cagey enough to fool them that much. If my being half Indian ever helped me in any way in this dirty life, it helped me being cagey, helped me all these years.

Im mopping near the ward door when a key hits it from the other side and I know its the Big Nurse by the way the lockworks cleave to the key, soft and swift and familiar she been around locks so long. She slides through the door with a gust of cold and locks the door behind her and I see her fingers trail across the polished steel tip of each finger the same color as her lips. Funny orange. Like the tip of a soldering iron. Color so hot or so cold if she touches you with it you cant tell which.

Shes carrying her woven wicker bag like the ones the Umpqua tribe sells out along the hot August highway, a bag shape of a tool box with a hemp handle. Shes had it all the years I been here. Its a loose weave and I can see inside it; theres no compact or lipstick or woman stuff, shes got that bag full of thousand parts she aims to use in her duties today wheels and gears, cogs polished to a hard glitter, tiny pills that gleam like porcelain, needles, forceps, watchmakers pliers, rolls of copper wire

She dips a nod at me as she goes past. I let the mop push me back to the wall and smile and try to foul her equipment up as much as possible by not letting her see my eyes they cant tell so much about you if you got your eyes closed.

In my dark I hear her rubber heels hit the tile and the stuff in her wicker bag clash with the jar of her walking as she passes me in the hall. She walks stiff. When I open my eyes shes down the hall about to turn into the glass Nurses Station where shell spend the day sitting at her desk and looking out her window and making notes on what goes on out in front of her in the day room during the next eight hours. Her face looks pleased and peaceful with the thought.

Then she sights those black boys. Theyre still down there together, mumbling to one another. They didnt hear her come on the ward. They sense shes glaring down at them now, but its too late. They should of knew bettern to group up and mumble together when she was due on the ward. Their faces bob apart, confused. She goes into a crouch and advances on where theyre trapped in a huddle at the end of the corridor. She knows what they been saying, and I can see shes furious clean out of control. Shes going to tear the black bastards limb from limb, shes so furious. Shes swelling up, swells till her backs splitting out the white uniform and shes let her arms section out long enough to wrap around the three of them five, six times. She looks around her with a swivel of her huge head. Nobody up to see, just old Broom Bromden the half-breed Indian back there hiding behind his mop and cant talk to call for help. So she

really lets herself go and her painted smile twists, stretches to an open snarl, and she blows up bigger and bigger, big as a tractor, so big I can smell the machinery inside the way you smell a motor pulling too big a load. I hold my breath and figure, My God this time theyre gonna do it! This time they let the hate build up too high and overloaded and theyre gonna tear one another to pieces before they realize what theyre doing!

But just as she starts crooking those sectioned arms around the black boys and they go to ripping at her underside with the mop handles, all the patients start coming out of the dorms to check on whats the hullabaloo, and she has to change back before shes caught in the shape of her hideous real self. By the time the patients get their eyes rubbed to where they can halfway see what the rackets about, all they see is the head nurse, smiling and calm and cold as usual, telling the black boys theyd best not stand in a group gossiping when it *is* Monday morning and there *is* such a lot to get done on the first morning of the week.

mean old Monday morning, you know, boys

Yeah, Miz Ratched

and we have quite a number of appointments this morning, so perhaps, if your standing here in a group talking isnt *too urgent*

Yeah, Miz Ratched

She stops and nods at some of the patients come to stand around and stare out of eyes all red and puffy with sleep. She nods once to each. Precise, automatic gesture. Her face is smooth, calculated, and precision-made, like an expensive baby doll, skin like flesh-colored enamel, blend of white and cream and baby-blue eyes, small nose, pink little nostrils everything working together except the color on her lips and fingernails, and the size of her bosom. A mistake was made somehow in manufacturing, putting those big, womanly breasts on what would of otherwise been a perfect work, and you can see how bitter she is about it.

The men are still standing and waiting to see what she was onto the black boys about, so she remembers seeing me and says, And since it *is* Monday, boys, why dont we get a good head start on the week by shaving poor Mr. Bromden first this morning, before the after-breakfast rush on the shaving room, and see if we cant avoid some of the ah disturbance he tends to cause, dont you think?

Before anybody can turn to look for me I duck back in the mop closet, jerk the door shut dark after me, hold my breath. Shaving before you get breakfast is the worst time. When you got something under your belt youre stronger and more wide awake, and the bastards who work for the Combine arent so apt to slip one of their machines in on you in place of an electric shaver. But when you shave *before* breakfast like she has me do some mornings six-thirty in the morning in a room all white walls and white basins, and long-tube-lights in the ceiling making sure there arent any shadows, and faces all round you trapped screaming behind the mirrors then what chance you got against one of their machines?

I hide in the mop closet and listen, my heart beating in the dark, and I try to keep from getting scared, try to get my thoughts off someplace else try to think back and remember things about the village and the big Columbia River, think about ah one time Papa and me were hunting birds in a stand of cedar trees near The Dalles. But like always when I try to place my thoughts in the past and hide there, the fear close at hand seeps in through the memory. I can feel that least black boy out there coming up the hall, smelling out for my fear. He opens out his nostrils like black funnels, his outsized head bobbing this way and that as he sniffs, and he sucks in fear from all over the ward. Hes smelling me now, I can hear him snort. He dont know where Im hid, but hes smelling and hes hunting around. I try to keep still.

(Papa tells me to keep still, tells me that the dog senses a bird somewheres right close. We borrowed a pointer dog from a man in The Dalles. All the village dogs are no-count mongrels, Papa says, fish-gut eaters and no class a-tall; this here dog, he got *insteek!* I dont say anything, but I already see the bird up in a scrub cedar, hunched in a gray knot of feathers. Dog running in circles underneath, too much



smell around for him to point for sure. The bird safe as long as he keeps still. Hes holding out pretty good, but the dog keeps sniffing and circling, louder and closer. Then the bird breaks, feathers springing, jumps out of the cedar into the birdshot from Papas gun.)

The least black boy and one of the bigger ones catch me before I get ten steps out of the mop closet, and drag me back to the shaving room. I dont fight or make any noise. If you yell its just tougher on you. I hold back the yelling. I hold back till they get to my temples. Im not sure its one of those substitute machines and not a shaver till it gets to my temples; then I cant hold back. Its not a will-power thing any more when they get to my temples. Its a *button*, pushed, says Air Raid Air Raid, turns me on so loud its like no sound, everybody yelling at me, hands over their ears from behind a glass wall, faces working around in talk circles but no sound from the mouths. My sound soaks up all other sound. They start the fog machine again and its snowing down cold and white all over me like skim milk, so thick I might even be able to hide in it if they didnt have a hold on me. I cant see six inches in front of me through the fog and the only thing I can hear over the wail Im making is the Big Nurse whoop and charge up the hall while she crashes patients outta her way with that wicker bag. I hear her coming but I still cant hush my hollering. I holler till she gets there. They hold me down while she jams wicker bag and all into my mouth and shoves it down with a mop handle.

(A bluetick hound bays out there in the fog, running scared and lost because he cant see. No tracks on the ground but the ones hes making, and he sniffs in every direction with his cold red-rubber nose and picks up no scent but his own fear, fear burning down into him like steam.) Its gonna burn me just that way, finally telling about all this, about the hospital, and her, and the guys and about McMurphy. I been silent so long now its gonna roar out of me like floodwaters and you think the guy telling this is ranting and raving my *God*; you think this is too horrible to have really happened, this is too awful to be the truth! But, please. Its still hard for me to have a clear mind thinking on it. But its the truth even if it didnt happen.

















