

EAE 0422 A	Sujet Jury	Sujet Candidat		Code Sujet	CLG 25
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Your main commentary should be focused on *finite subordinate clauses*. Other topics may also be addressed.

5 Larry and Marylynne Hollis had moved up from West Hartford to the Berkshires after he'd retired from a lifelong position as an attorney with a Hartford insurance company. Larry was two years my junior, a meticulous finicky man who seemed to believe that life was safe only if everything in it was punctiliously planned and whom, during the months when he first tried to draw me into his life, I did my best to avoid. I submitted eventually, not only because he was so dogged in his desire to alleviate my solitude but because I had never known anyone like him, an adult whose sad childhood biography had, by his own estimate, determined every choice he had made since his mother had died of cancer when he was ten, a mere four years after his father, who owned a Hartford linoleum store, had been bested no less miserably by the same disease. An only child, Larry was sent to live with relatives on the Naugatuck River southwest of Hartford, just outside bleak, industrial Waterbury, Connecticut, and there, in a boy's diary of "Things to Do", he laid out a future for himself that he followed to the letter for the rest of his life; from then on, everything undertaken was deliberately causal. He was content with no grade other than A and even as an adolescent vigorously challenged any teacher who'd failed to accurately estimate his achievements. He attended summer sessions to accelerate his graduation from high school and get to college before he turned seventeen; he did the same during his summers at the University of Connecticut, where he had a full-tuition scholarship and worked in the library boiler room all year round to pay for his room and board so he could get out of college and change his name from Irwin Golub to Larry Hollis (as he'd planned to do when he was only ten) and join the air force, to become a fighter pilot known to the world as Lieutenant Hollis and qualify for the GI Bill; on leaving the service, he enrolled at Fordham and, in return for this three years in the air force, the government paid for his three years of law school. As an air force pilot stationed in Seattle he vigorously courted a pretty girl just out of high school who was named Collins and who met exactly his

35 specifications for a wife, one of which was that she be of Irish extraction, with curly dark hair and with ice-blue eyes like his own. "I did not want to marry a Jewish girl. I did not want my children to be raised in the Jewish religion or have anything to do with Jews." "Why?" I asked him. "Because that's not what I wanted for them" was his answer. That he wanted what he wanted and didn't want what he didn't want was the answer he gave to virtually every question I asked him about the utterly conventional structure he'd made of his life after all those years of rushing and planning to build it. When he first knocked on my door to introduce himself – only a few days after he and Marylynne had moved into the house nearest to mine, some half mile down our dirt road – he immediately decided that he didn't want me to eat alone every night and that I had to take dinner at his house with him and his wife at least once a week. He didn't want me to be alone on Sundays – he couldn't bear the thought of anyone's being as alone as he'd been as an orphaned child, fishing in the Naugatuck on Sundays with his uncle, a dairy inspector for the state – and so he insisted that every Sunday morning we had a hiking date or, if the weather was bad, Ping-Pong matches, Ping-Pong being a pastime that I could barely tolerate but that I obliged him by playing rather than have a conversation with him about the writing of books. He asked me deadly questions about writing and was not content until I had answered them to his satisfaction. "Where do you get your ideas?" "How do you know if an idea is a good idea or a bad idea?"