

<b>EAE 0422 A</b>	<b>Sujet Jury</b>	<b>Sujet Candidat</b>	<b>Code Sujet</b>	<b>CLG 14</b>
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**Your main commentary should be focused on -ING forms. Other topics may also be addressed.**

'Why exactly are you driving to Shetland, anyway?' she asked.

And so I began telling her about Trevor, and Guest  
Toothbrushes, and Lindsay Ashworth, I told her about Lindsay's  
'We Reach Furthest' campaign, about the four salesmen all setting  
5 off in different directions for the extreme points of the United  
Kingdom, and the two prizes we were supposed to be competing  
for. And then I got sidetracked and told her about my detour to  
Lichfield to see my father's flat, how eerie and desolate it had felt;  
about Miss Erith, and her fascinating stories, and her sadness at  
10 the passing of the old ways of life; her weird, solemn, almost  
inexpressible gratitude when I had made her a gift of one of my  
toothbrushes. I told Alison, too, about the bin liner full of postcards  
from my father's mysterious friend Roger, which was now in the  
boot of my car, and the blue ring binder full of my father's poems  
15 and other bits of writing. Then I told her about driving on from  
Lichfield and stopping in Kendal to see Lucy and Caroline, and how  
I'd planned to get the ferry from Aberdeen the next day, but Mr  
and Mrs Byrne had persuaded me to come to Edinburgh instead.

'Well, Max,' she said, holding my gaze for a few moments. 'I'm  
20 glad you came, whatever the reason. It's been too long since we  
saw each other—even if it's only happened because my parents  
steamrollered us into it.'

I smiled back, uncertain where this was leading. Rather than  
responding to everything I had just told her about my journey, it  
25 felt as though Alison was getting ready to move the conversation  
into a different gear altogether; but then she seemed to think  
better of it. She arranged her knife and fork neatly on her plate and  
said:

'We're a strange generation, aren't we?'

30 'How do you mean?'

'I mean that we've never really grown up. We're still tied to our  
parents in a way that would have seemed inconceivable to people  
born in the 1930s or 1940s. I'm fifty, now, for God's sake, and I  
still feel that I have to ask my mother's... *permission*, half the time,  
35 just to live my life the way that I want to. Somehow I still haven't

managed to get out from under my parents' shadow. Do you feel  
the same?'

I nodded, and Alison went on:

'Just the other day I was listening to a programme on the radio.  
40 It was about the Young British Artists. They'd got three or four of  
them together and they were all reminiscing about the first shows  
they'd done together—those first shows at the Saatchi Gallery,  
back in the late nineties. And not only did none of them have  
anything interesting to say about their own work, but the main  
45 thing they talked about—apart from the fact that they'd all been  
shagging each other—was how "shocking" it had been, and how  
worried they were about what their parents were going to say when  
they saw it. "What did your mum say when she saw that painting?"  
one of them kept being asked. And I thought, you know, maybe  
50 I'm wrong, but I'm sure that when Picasso painted Guernica, with  
its graphic depictions of the horrors of modern warfare, the main  
thing going through his mind wasn't what his mum was going to  
say when she saw it. I kind of suspect that he'd gone beyond that  
some time ago.'

55 'Yes—I've been thinking the same thing,' I said, eagerly. 'Take  
Donald Crowhurst: he already had four kids when he set out to sail  
around the world, even though he was only thirty-six. You're right,  
people were so... so grown-up in those days.'

60 'What days?' Alison asked; and I realized, of course, that she  
had no idea who Donald Crowhurst was.

Perhaps it was a bad idea to start telling her the story.