

## Appendix F - EXCERPT USED IN THE WORD-CHECKING TASK (STUDY 1)

looking scarf of furry tails fastened on one side by a dangling gilt chain.

I never really understood Hilda. She was six feet tall, with huge, slanted, green eyes and thick red lips and a vacant, Slavic expression. She made hats. She was apprenticed to the Fashion Editor, which set her apart from the more literary ones among us like Doreen and Betsy and I myself, who all wrote columns, even if some of them were only about health and beauty. I don't know if Hilda could read, but she made startling hats. She went to a special school for making hats in New York and every day she wore a new hat to work, constructed by her own hands out of bits of straw or fur or ribbon or veiling in subtle, bizarre shades.

'That's amazing,' I said. 'Amazing.' I missed Doreen. She would have murmured some fine, scalding remark about Hilda's miraculous furpiece to cheer me up.

I felt very low. I had been unmasked only that morning by Jay Cee herself, and I felt now that all the uncomfortable suspicions I had about myself were coming true, and I couldn't hide the truth much longer. After nineteen years of running after good marks and prizes and grants of one sort and another, I was letting up, slowing down, dropping clean out of the race.

'Why didn't you come along to the fur show with us?' Betsy asked. I had the impression she was repeating herself, and that she'd asked me the same question a minute ago, only I couldn't have been listening. 'Did you go off with Doreen?'

'No,' I said, 'I wanted to go to the fur show, but Jay Cee called up and made me come into the office.' That wasn't quite true about wanting to go to the show, but I tried to convince myself now that it was true, so

I could be really wounded about what Jay Cee had done.

I told Betsy how I had been lying in bed that morning planning to go to the fur show. What I didn't tell her was that Doreen had come into my room earlier and said, 'What do you want to go to that assy show for, Lenny and I are going to Coney Island, so why don't you come along? Lenny can get you a nice fellow, the day's shot to hell anyhow with that luncheon and then the film première in the afternoon, so nobody'll miss us.'

For a minute I was tempted. The show certainly did seem stupid. I have never cared for furs. What I decided to do in the end was to lie in bed as long as I wanted to and then go to Central Park and spend the day lying in the grass, the longest grass I could find in that bald, duck-ponded wilderness.

I told Doreen I would not go to the show or the luncheon or the film première, but that I would not go to Coney Island either, I would stay in bed. After Doreen left, I wondered why I couldn't go the whole way doing what I should any more. This made me sad and tired. Then I wondered why I couldn't go the whole way doing what I shouldn't, the way Doreen did, and this made me even sadder and more tired.

I didn't know what time it was, but I'd heard the girls bustling and calling in the hall and getting ready for the fur show, and then I'd heard the hall go still, and as I lay on my back in bed staring up at the blank, white ceiling the stillness seemed to grow bigger and bigger until I felt my eardrums would burst with it. Then the phone rang.

I stared at the phone for a minute. The receiver shook a bit in its bone-coloured cradle, so I could tell it was really ringing. I thought I might have given my phone