AMERICAN HORROR - Five Terrifying Tales

THE OVAL PORTRAIT

A. Comprehension check: Decide whether the following statements are true (T) or false (F), and then correct the false ones.

Statement	T	F	Correction
1. The narrator went into the castle to see the paintings.			
2. The narrator's perceptions and thinking were affected by his illness.			
3. The narrator found a book on the history of art in Italy.			
4. The narrator became attracted by one painting in particular.			
5. The painting of the girl startled him because the girl was so beautiful.			
6. The painter was already secretly married when he married the girl.			
7. The girl enjoyed life and living.			
8. At first, the girl tried not to pose.			
9. The painter wanted the painting of his wife to be like a wild dream.			
10. The girl never mentioned to her husband that her health was getting worse.			
11. The painter was the only one who appreciated his painting.			
12. The girl died shortly before the painting was finished.			

LIVEWORKSHEETS

B. Obsessions – ***The Birthmark*:** You are going to read an adaptation of a short story by Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804–1864), which is often compared to Poe's "The Oval Portrait". Seven sentences have been removed from the story. Choose from sentences A–H the one which fits each gap (1–7). There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

During the late 1700s the discovery of electricity and similar mysteries appeared to many as miracles. However, a scientist named Aylmer left his love of science to marry a woman named Georgiana.

(1) _____. Sadly, though, one day Aylmer noticed that Georgiana had a small hand-shaped birthmark on her cheek. "If I can remove the birthmark," he said, "the world will have an example of perfect beauty." Aylmer became increasingly disturbed and disgusted by it. (2) _____. "My dear husband," she said, "please remove it, even if I must risk my life!" "Don't worry," he continued, "I am certain that I can do it. And when I have removed it, it will be as if I had created perfect beauty, as if I had created life!"

So, they both went to live in his laboratory. (3) _____. When he heard the plan, Aminadab said, "If she were my wife, I would never eliminate that birthmark."

(4) _____ "Because," he answered, "I have discovered that your birthmark is not superficial. It is connected with the heart of your being and existence. (5) _____." "I don't care," said Georgiana. "The only thing that matters to me is to eliminate that horrible birthmark!"

Aylmer then left her and returned with a glass holding a clear liquid. (6) _____ Aylmer watched her face as she slept. Slowly, the horrible birthmark began to disappear. Finally, she awoke and saw that Aylmer was worried. (7) _____ You tried to obtain the best in heaven, and so rejected the best on this earth. Aylmer, dearest Aylmer, I am dying.

A. There she met Aminadab, Aylmer's assistant.

B. I do not think I will ever be able to eliminate it because it would be too dangerous.

C. Do not be sad, my poor Aylmer!

D. One day Georgiana saw that her husband was worried and she asked him why.

E. She drank it and then fell asleep.

F. I have now one medicine for you to try, but it is dangerous!

G. Georgiana herself wished to eliminate it.

H. She was very beautiful.

LIVEWORKSHEETS