

Shutter Island
by Dennis Lehane (2003)

In this extract, Dr. Lester Sheehan is writing a journal entry on May 3rd, 1993 and discusses Shutter Island where he used to work.

I haven't laid eyes on the island in several years. The last time was from a friend's boat that ventured into the outer harbour, and I could see it off in the distance, past the inner ring, shrouded in the winter rain, a careless smudge of paint against the grey sky.

5 I haven't stepped foot on it in more than two decades, but Emily says (sometimes joking, sometimes not) that she's not sure I ever left. She said once that time is nothing to me but a series of bookmarks that I used to jump back and forth through the text of my life, returning again and again to the events that mark me. In the eyes and words of my more astute colleagues, I bore all the characteristics of the classic melancholic.

Emily may be right. She is so often right.

10 Soon I will lose her too. A matter of months, Dr. Axelrod told us Thursday. Take that trip, he advised. The one you're always talking about. To Florence and Rome, Venice in the spring. Because Lester, he added, you're not looking too well yourself.

15 I suppose I'm not. I misplace things far too often these days, my glasses more than anything. My car keys. I enter stores and forget what I've come for, leave the theatre with no recollection of what I've just seen. If time for me really is a series of bookmarks, then I feel as if someone has shaken the book and those yellowed slips of paper, torn matchbook covers and flattened coffer stirrers have fallen to the floor, and the dog-eared corner flaps have been pressed smooth.

20 Ashecliffe Hospital sat on the central plain of the island's northwestern side. Sat benignly, I might add. It looked nothing like a hospital for the criminally insane and even less like the military barracks it had been before that. Its appearance reminded most of us, in point of fact, of a boarding school. Jutting out of the southern cliff face, a fort rose that had been standing long before the hospital was built. Its shadow clawed out over the stretch of charcoal black rock towards to singular, lonely, disused lighthouse.

25 From the sea, the island didn't look like much. You have to picture it the way Teddy Daniels saw it on that calm morning in September of 1954 when the boat pulled silently into the harbour. Barely an island, you'd think, more the idea of one. What purpose could it have, he may have thought. What purpose.

30 Standing on the wet harbour boards, I witnessed a rat flee up the planks towards to sharp, black rock face. In that moment I thought of Teddy. I thought of Teddy and his poor dead wife, Dolores Chanel, and those twin terrors, Rachel Solando and Andrew Laeddis, the havoc they wreaked on us all.

If only that week had not happened, maybe the island would still be inhabited.

Section A – Reading

Answer **all** questions in this section.
You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this section.

Q1: Read again **lines 13 to 17** of the source.

List **four** things that we find out about **the narrator**. [4 marks]

Q2: Read again **lines 13 to 18**, where the island is described.

How does the writer use **language** here to describe the island? [8 marks]

Q3: Now read the whole of the passage. The extract is taken from the opening of the novel.

How has the writer **structured** the text to **interest** you as a reader? [8 marks]

Q4: Focus this part of your answer **from line 25 to the end** of the extract.

A student, having read this part of the text, remarked:

“I like the way the author makes this section of the text very mysterious and thought provoking.”

To what extent do you agree? In your answer, you should:

- Write about the ways the author develops the tension
- Evaluate how the writer makes this moment dramatic
- Support your ideas with quotations

[20 marks]