

**Interpretation of Literature 08G:001/Smith**  
**Quiz 2: *The Handmaid's Tale***

**Please answer *two* of the three questions below:**

**1.** In these chapters, a shift occurs in Offred's relationship with the commander. What does he ask of her? What does she (eventually) ask him for?

**2.** During one of their walks, Offred and Ofglen stop at a Soul Scrolls franchise. Briefly describe this business' purpose and what it does.

**3.** How does Moira escape from the women's training center? What effect does her departure have on the other Handmaids?

**Please answer *one* of the two questions below (on back):**

1. Throughout the novel, Offred's narration uses many plant/body metaphors and includes many descriptions of Serena's luxuriant garden. Two examples are below—one from early in the novel, and one from later on. Please comment on the passages in conversation, suggesting a couple of interpretations of the symbolic significance of the garden.

"I go out by the back door, into the garden, which is large and tidy: a lawn in the middle, a willow, weeping catkins; around the edges, the flower borders, in which the daffodils are now fading and the tulips are opening their cups, spilling out color. The tulips are red, a darker crimson toward the stem, as if they have been cut and are beginning to heal there...Many of the Wives have such gardens, it's something for them to order and maintain and care for" (12).

"There is something subversive about this garden of Serena's, a sense of buried things thrusting upwards, wordlessly, into the light, as if to point, to say: Whatever is silenced will clamor to be heard, though silently" (153).

2. The following passage refers to Moira's escape. I am not asking you to *explain* the quote—rather, extrapolate on its larger significance, not just to Moira's particular situation but in the wider world of the novel. How could this passage refer to many contexts at once? You may want to look closely at Atwood's word choice/wordplay as part of your analysis.

"Moira was out there somewhere. She was at large, or dead. What would she do? The thought of what she would do expanded till it filled the room. At any moment there might be a shattering explosion, the glass of the windows would fall inward, the doors would swing open...Moira had power now, she'd been set loose, she'd set herself loose. She was now a loose woman" (133).