

## Camping

Mel and her family were going camping in the forest, far beyond the hustle and bustle of the city. Her exams were coming up soon; the peace and tranquility would be a huge relief. It wasn't only the noises of the city that wore Mel down: those inside her head didn't help.

Alongside Mel, her mum, dad and older brother Mitch were going to be staying in their brand new, four-berth tent. Her dad had picked it up in a sale online over the winter, and they were all keen to try it out. "It was an absolute steal," her dad told anybody who would listen.

It took them around an hour to reach the campsite, mostly driving along narrow country lanes bristling with low-hanging bushes and darting pheasants. More than once, Mitch screamed and leapt across the back seat, knocking Mel's revision guides all over the floor. "Quit it," she moaned each time, only for her parents to moan at her for not relaxing! Didn't they realise how much she had to get done?

When the vast open field finally rose into view over the crest of yet another undulating hill, Mel was ready for a break from both her family and her books. She left the rest of them faffing about with the tent while she went to explore the densely wooded area that bordered the field on its eastern side.

Within only a few steps, she was immersed in shadow. The towering beech and oak trees allowed very little sunlight to reach the floor, and the air was cooler but somehow damp. It smelled of fresh moss and ferns. Mel loved it.

With gleeful abandon, she set off deeper into the woods. Suddenly, she heard a soft tinkling sound, almost as though somebody was bumping delicate glass ornaments together. She stopped and turned her head this way and that to try to work out where it was coming from. Sound travelled differently underneath the canopy, and she struggled to place it. At once, it appeared to come from every direction.

Softly, careful not to make too much noise, she pressed on. Ahead, she spotted a clearing where the trees had naturally left space for the sunlight to stab at the undergrowth. Mel stepped into the pool of light, and everything around her changed subtly.

Where once there had been dark trees and shadowy bushes, there were now ornately wrought iron gates, glittery in a mysterious light. The forest appeared to have disappeared, to be replaced by a magical and somewhat disturbing land.

As she took it all in, a lithe figure stepped from between two gates and moved effortlessly towards her. His ears, pointed and high on his head, twitched as if listening, and long golden hair flowed over his shoulders and forehead, barely covering piercing green eyes. Mel stared at him, instantly besotted.

Just as she felt the last drips of resistance edge away, she heard the man speaking to her in a soft voice. "Welcome to the land of the faeries."



**1**

Look at the first paragraph.

**Find** and **copy a phrase** that describes the city as being busy and noisy.

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1 mark

**2**

a) What was Mel doing in the car?

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1 mark

b) What do you learn about her personality from the text? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

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2 marks

**3**

*As she took it all in, a lithe figure stepped from between two gates...*

What does **lithe** mean in this sentence?

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1 mark

**4**

Using information from the text, tick one box in each row to show whether each statement is **true** or **false**.

|   | True | False |
|---|------|-------|
| The forest was dark and damp.                     |      |       |
| Mel was transported to another place.             |      |       |
| She was in complete control when she met the man. |      |       |
| Mel's sister went with them.                      |      |       |

2 marks



**5**

Look at the paragraph beginning: ***With gleeful abandon, she set off deeper into the woods.***

What does the phrase *gleeful abandon* tell you about how Mel was feeling?

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1 mark

**6**

Look at the paragraph beginning: 'As she took it all in, a lithe figure stepped from between two gates...'

Which words link best to Mel's condition at the end of the paragraph?

Tick **two**.

Trance

Alert

Infatuated

Startled

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2 marks