

Cynthia felt a wave of panic. Was she already late for school? Just how late was it?

She could see Todd's clock on his bedside table from where she stood. Just ten before eight. Nearly half an hour before she usually  
5 left for her first class.

The house was still.

She could usually hear her parents down in the kitchen about this time. Even if they weren't speaking to each other, which was often the case, there'd be the faint sounds of the fridge opening and  
10 closing, a spatula scraping against a frying pan, the muffled rattling of dishes in the sink. (...)

Weird.

She went into her room, closed the door. Pull it together, she told herself. Show up for breakfast like nothing ever happened. Pretend  
15 there wasn't a screaming match the night before. Act like her father hadn't dragged her out of her much older boyfriend's car and taken her home.

She glanced at her ninth grade math test sitting atop her open notebook on her desk.

↑ Linwood Barclay, **No Time For Goodbye** (2007)