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Sneak Peek

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Sneak Peek

I'm supposed to be asleep,
But my door is open a crack, enough
to see and hear our black and white TV.
I prop my head on my arm
as a film with a dark-haired girl begins.

She looks my age, nearly thirteen, and smart.
She has an older sister, Margo.
Why is she leaving her home, her school?
Why are there police in the streets with rifles?
Officers in our town smile and wave.
I'm supposed to look for them if in trouble.
Why is she wearing a star on her coat?
It stands out grainy white.
Why go live in an attic?

Anne likes movie stars, too.
She puts pictures on her new wall.
I have Sandra Dee, Bobby Darin, Annette,
Liz and Debbie on mine.

Others are moving in now, like when
Auntie had surgery and came to live with us.
I had to give up this bed.
Mrs. van Daan pets her fur coat.
My aunt says she's too old for a new one.
No fake teeth for my uncle, either,
but he can chew apples with his gums.

There's Peter.
Anne feels changes in her body.
Like I feel.
She loves Peter.

That siren. Ours don't sound like that,
the wail going up and down.

It can't mean they are coming for them,
Margo, their mom and dad, that dentist
and all the others, Peter,
even Anne.
How did they discover that book case
that hides the door?

Did they hear Mouskie, Peter's cat?
My cat, Nick, sleeps at the foot of my bed.

I muffle my cries in my pillow.

Nick lifts his head, looks around.
Could even a cat betray you?
Anne and the rest are so quiet.
The police use their weapons to break down the door.

No one ever told me
that war might not care about a girl like me.
Wouldn't care whether I grew up,
kissed a boy, grew old, cried.

Mary Langer Thompson is a secondary English teacher privileged to introduce many students to *The Diary of Anne Frank*. She believes in the power of story to transform lives.