**11AP Lang. & Comp.**

**Practice with Tone**

The January/February 2008 issue of *Poets & Writers* characterizes the prose of the novelist Susan Choi as “poetic.” The author of this article explains that “There is a lyricism on every page, as in the following passage from *A Person of Interest* in which she uses language and setting equally well to illuminate the anxiety of a man who is suddenly suspected of something he didn’t do” (42).

Excerpt:

At home that afternoon, every object seemed to have struck up a position of combat. The lunch meat in his fridge was rancid. He had used up his tea. He stubbed an untrimmed toe on the leg of a dining-room chair, and the yellowed nail tore; he swore from the pain and knocked everything out of his medicine cabinet…Upstairs in his study – where he hoped to rise above hunger and thirst, above toenail pain…something was terribly wrong with his desk. The same malevolent interference he had sensed in his office also seemed present here. The whole room was so spare, and the desk’s surface so bare, that a stranger might think no attention had ever been paid to the relative sites of the very few objects involved. But to the person who maintained that desk as a Buddhist priest maintains an altar, one slight alteration could have an enormous effect. Lee sat gripping the arms of his chair and bending a furious gaze on the objects he cherished as if they’d betrayed him.

Carefully read and annotate the passage above and answer the following questions:

1. What is your immediate, personal impression? Cite words/phrases, etc. that led you to this impression.

2. In a word or brief phrase, characterize *he*. Cite words/phrases that support your characterization.

3. Why wait until the end of the passage to name *he*?

4. Why use third person nouns so frequently?

5. What is being foreshadowed in this passage? Cite words/phrases to support your claim.