

CAHOOTS

Impossible Balkan Literature Packet

1. A large part of the second section of this work is taken up with a trial for murder, for which the son of the main character is accused and for which he is sentenced to three years, after delivering his own defense against the advice of his lawyer Kassianopoulos. The narrator of this novel was alienated from her first husband on the third night after their wedding, when she saw him having sex with her brother Dino; nonetheless, that narrator was impregnated with her monstrous daughter, Maria, by that husband, Fotis. Other husbands in this novel include the policeman Sotiri, who marries the main character's daughter Polyxene; that of the main character, who left her for her cousin Phroso, Yannis; and the eldest son of that main character, Theodore, who weds the narrator after the death of her second husband, Anthoni, and the death of his mother, which was brought on by the loss of her beloved son Dimitri. Nina relates the life story of her friend and posthumous mother-in-law, Hekuba, in, FTP, what novel by Kostas Takhtsis? ANSWER: *The Third Wedding Wreath* [or *The Third Wreath* or *To Trito Stefani*]

2. In one essay, this writer compared the siege of Sarajevo and the novel *Hunger*, "Hamsun's Baedeker", while in a longer essay, he compared the Yugoslav wars with *Time Regained*, "Diary of an Apatrid". In one short story by this author, the title characters include a woman known as Lonya Bondarenko's mom, who is killed when she lays her head under the track of a passing tank. That story, "Russians by Trade" and the collection it appeared in, *Tale of the Trades*, inspired the style of this author's most famous work. That novella by this author includes a scene in which the title characters put on an ad-libbed play for Jovo Axe, Comrade Abas, and Lt. Vaculic, before the loss of several chorus uniforms by the narrator and pictures on the wall of dead family members, who were all priests, results in the title characters being relegated to a single-room flat. That novella by this author opens in the 1930s and closes after the Communist takeover of Yugoslavia. FTP, name this author of *My Family's Role in the World Revolution*.

ANSWER: Bora Cosic

3. After being fired as a translator of technical manuals, this novel's narrator leaves a preserving jar of feces on the doorstep of the factory foreman's house, a rare act of defiance, and briefly takes a job as a German tutor. Another character in this novel dates a doctor who refuses to examine her, causing her to sleep with him only with her shirt on so that he does not see the tumor growing under her arm. The latter character, Tereza, copies the narrator's house key, after the latter flees to Germany, for the secret policeman, Captain Pjele. Other characters in this novel include Georg, who was thrown out of a window in Frankfurt, and Kurt, who works at a slaughterhouse and is obsessed with his coworkers' habit of drinking fresh blood. The narrator meets Georg, Edgar, and Kurt after her college roommate, Lola, commits suicide by hanging herself with the narrator's belt at the start of this novel. Relating the additional oppression felt by the German minority of Romania, this is, FTP, what novel by Herta Müller?

ANSWER: *The Land of Green Plums* [or *Herztier* or *Heart-Animal* or *Heart-Beast*]

4. One recurring character in the works of this author is the farmhand Uncle Mitoush, who relates to animals like the spirited horse Aya and the Yellow Dog in "The Younger Sister" and "The Wanderer" and whose death comes at the end of "With His Own Folk". This author wrote of Palazov, who joins a circus as a clown, and Batashki, who killed himself after failing to kill his beloved, an innkeeper's daughter. Those stories, "The Private Teacher" and "Kalmuk Slumbers" appear in a collection centered on the title locale run by Sarandovitsa, *The Inn at Antimovo*. Other works by this author include one in which an outlaw gives up banditry to wed Rada, only to be gunned down upon entering the village and another in which Rousi cheers on his son, Miloush, and other youth rising against the Turks, only to refuse to identify him when his head is brought back to the village. Those stories, "Shibil" and "Heroes' Heads" appear in the collection *Legends of Stara Planina* set in Zheravna, the native village of, FTP, what Bulgarian author?

ANSWER: Yordan Stefanov Yovkov

5. One character in this work reports on the contents of several letters between another character and Count Thopia, which detail the title character's incestuous love for his sister, whom he had married to a Bohemian to keep her from himself. That marriage to a Bohemian is the subject of a great debate between two factions advocating distant and local marriages, which results in the murder of the inbred Palok the Idiot. Early in this novel, two characters die, including an old woman known as Lady Mother, who had seen the death of each of her nine sons as a result of a war against a plague-ridden army, a fact which prevented one of those sons, the title character, from fulfilling his besa to bring his sister back to his mother whenever she wished to see her, though she does mysteriously arrive on the night

of October 11. Opening with the county police chief, Stres, investigating first the arrival, and then the death, of that girl, this is, FTP, what novel by Ismail Kadare, retelling the Albanian legend of Kostandin and Doruntine?

ANSWER: *The Ghost Rider* [or *Who Brought Doruntine Back?* or *Kush e solli Doruntinen?*; accept *Doruntine* before it is said; accept any logically equivalent answer to “Who Brought Doruntine Back?”]

6. A quote from The The’s “Uncertain Smile” opens one work by this author. One collection of “very short stories” by this author includes one in which a man loses his father’s ashes before he can spread them in the desert, “Stains” and one in which a grandchild wonders if his grandmother slept with Mick Jagger after watching concert footage of her jumping on stage at a Rolling Stones’ concert. That collection is *You Do Understand*. One story by this author about a youth called to school, only to be sent back home titles an anthology of Slovene short stories, *The Day That Tito Died*. In one short story by this author, an American tourist challenges an American teaching tea-drinking in the title city to eat a caterpillar, a task that the latter fails; in another, Peter’s wife Diana moves in with Roman, messing up the latter’s records, taking over his bathroom, and causing him to lose his job. Those two stories, “Kyoto” and “Scratches on the Back”, are in *Skinswaps*, a collection of short stories by, FTP, what contemporary Slovene author?

ANSWER: Andrej Blatnik

7. One character in this work illegally translates French novels under the penname Sofia Markovic, while another, Nora, is called “ours” by the narrator and survived an attack on her village by hiding in a ditch covered in hay. This novel is occasionally interrupted by comments from the Armenian grocer-turned-major, Baronian and hypothetical discussions that the narrator has about word-choice with her daughter Marija. This novel’s narrator often reminisces about the Thomas Chippendale-designed furniture, which was confiscated by the Communists, as well as a painting she received from the artist Sava Sumanovic, “Bathing”, both of which were taken by her former lover, Pavle Zec, after her husband, Dusan, was arrested by the Partisans for collaboration with the quisling government of Milan Nedic. Written with a fragmented narrative covering the interwar period, World War II, and life in Communist Yugoslavia as seen by Milica Pavlovic, this is, FTP, what novel by Serbian author Svetlana Velmar-Jankovic?

ANSWER: *Dungeon* [or *Lagum*]

8. One recurring character in the works of this writer is Constantine Negovan, whose death in a lime pit is reported to one character by a newspaper reporter in one novel, and whose funeral sees fighting between the young hothead Fedor and an eccentric property owner in another novel. This author wrote a novel about a lifeguard who only ever saves one drowning man, a German SS officer overseeing the occupation of Yugoslavia in a novel which takes its title from a collection of dialogs by Plato. In addition to *The Defense and the Last Days*, this author wrote a novel about Arsenie, who conceives of the houses that he owns as women, but is unaware that he no longer owns them after the Communist takeover after World War II. In addition to *The Houses of Belgrade*, this author wrote another in which the former leper Egla and the former blind man Bartimaeus regret their encounters with a miracle worker, whose death is brought about by Jehuda. FTP, name this Yugoslavian author of *The Time of Miracles*.

ANSWER: Borislav Pekic

9. One character in this novel holds up Jamail, a man with extremely strong arms who drunkenly stabs his own legs, crippling himself, as representative of all of his countrymen. Another character in this story, Kara-Zaim, is a spy for the title character and is a wounded former soldier who wishes that he were remembered for any of his feats on the battlefield. One character in this novel was a child when his mother, an innkeeper, was killed by soldiers for having sex with the enemy; that character, Mullah-Yusuf, betrays the title character twice, including late in this novel when he forges an order for a prisoner to be moved to Travnik, resulting in that prisoner’s escape and the title character’s execution. That prisoner, Hassan, is the best friend of the title sheikh, who became kadi after a revolt that he helped to instigate by having the popular Hadji-Sinanudin arrested. Harun’s arrest and execution spark the crisis that ends with the death of Ahmed Nuruddin, the title character of, FTP, what novel set in Sarajevo by Mesa Selimovic?

ANSWER: *Death and the Dervish* [or *The Dervish and Death* or *Dervis i smrt*]

10. In one section of this work, the narrator describes a game in which prisoners lure lice with their stench; that part ends with safecracker Eagle killing Karl Taube for two-fingered Monkey after losing a card game. In another part, a Jewish cloth merchant is dragged over Languedoc after his forced conversion by the Pastoureaux. In another section of this work, a man skins a live skunk, and as a result is blacklisted, causing him to join a revolutionary group; in the end, he kills and disembowels a woman that he is told is an informant. In this work’s namesake section, the title character is wed on a torpedo boat after escaping a British patrol and he dreams of building a powerful, walnut-sized bomb; Fedukin interrogates that title character, known by the pseudonym Novsky, before the latter dies in an escape

attempt from a gulag. Consisting of interconnected, historical vignettes like “A Knife with a Rosewood Handle”, this is, FTP, what work about communists killed during the Stalinist purges, a work by Yugoslav author Danilo Kis?
ANSWER: *The Tomb of Boris Davidovich* [or *Grobnica za Borisa Davidovica*]

11. The narrator of this work compares his doomed position in a court case with a sculpture of Justice with a broken right arm, so that it is unable to hold scales, but only the sword in its left hand. After being convicted, the narrator of this work is sent to prison, where he befriends the noble peasant Valent Polenta, teaching him about Buddhism. Late in this novel, the narrator receives a news article informing him of the suicide of a lover, Jadviga Jesenska, an affair with whom was used as evidence in a divorce with his wife Agnes, who had an affair with a baritone. The narrator’s fall comes at a dinner party, where Dr. Hugo-Hugo claims that the narrator mistook a cigarette case as a gun pulled by the head of an industrial concern producing chamber pots. Earlier at that dinner party, the narrator insulted that industrialist, Domacinski, when he declared Domacinski’s boast of killing four burglars criminal, starting the legal proceedings against him and his public ostracism. So goes the plot of, FTP, what novel by Miroslav Krleža?
ANSWER: *On the Edge of Reason* [or *Na Rubu Pameti*]

12. One of this work’s title characters accidentally kills a fellow soldier, when a tree he is chopping slides down a mountain, crushing that man, as he was unable to understand the word for rotten that title character used. Uncle Kote helps this work’s two title characters when they appear from a barn in the village of Livadje, but they are forced to work in the fields of the corrupt, Greek-collaborating mayor there. This work’s title characters struggle to learn the French phrase “Monsieur, laissez-nous voir nos enfants” from the translator Ljake, who is also from their village. One of this work’s title characters has his name changed to Bugarin by the Bulgarian army, because his real name sounds like their enemies, while the other title character has a compulsion to keep a small, perfectly rounded pebble in a shoe polish tin, so that it will rattle while he walks. Srbin and Shishman are the title characters of, FTP, what novel by Meto Jovanovski about two villagers trying to return to their Macedonian village during World War I?
ANSWER: *Cousins* [or *Budaletniki* or *Simpletons*; accept logical synonyms of *Simpletons*]

13. This author wrote a work in which a devil-praising music tutor and a serene Whirling Dervish, Vebhi Effendi, battle for the soul of one of the title characters, who is raised by her violently austere Imam grandfather, while her father, a cross-dressing actor, serves exile in the reign of Abdulhamid II. The two title characters of that work of this author are Rabia, who weds Peregrini, and her father Tewfik. Besides *The Clown and His Daughter*, this author wrote a work in which the narrator is shot in the arm by a guerrilla in love with Kezban; later, that guerrilla, Mahmoud Chavoush arranges an ambush for Ihsan, whom Kezban loves, though Ihsan, like the narrator, Peyami, are in love with the sister of Djemal, Ayesha, who spurred them all to join the Revolutionary Army to retake Smyrna from the Greeks. That novel is variously translated as *The Daughter of Smyrna* and *The Shirt of Flame*. FTP, name this feminist Turkish writer, better known in the West for her memoirs and the political work *Turkey Faces West*?
ANSWER: Halide *Edib Adivar* [or Halide *Edip Adivar*; accept either underlined answer; prompt on “Halide Hanum”]

14. In one account of this character, he founds, along with Taki, a brewer, and Tanas Dochoolu, a tavern-owner, a temperance society, which as its first order of business after electing this man chairman, gets drunk in a wine cellar. In another story, this character founded the newspaper “The National Grandeur” to promote lies about his neighbor, and the political opposition. In a story about the author’s run for political office in his native Svishtov, this character organizes a mob led by Danko the Thug to attack opposition supporters during the vote, securing his own election as a representative of the National Party of real-life Prime Minister Stoilov. Other stories about this character tell of his encounters with American mourners at a funeral for his sister in Dresden, and his meeting with the Czech historian Konstantin Jirichek, wherein this character always looks for a free meal and promotes Bulgarian nationalism. The subject of a series of satirical stories about Bulgarians, this is, FTP, what character created by Aleko Konstantinov?
ANSWER: *Bai Ganyo* Balkanski [prompt on any partial answer]

15. In one book in which this person appears, he reports that his father mysteriously had him mail a letter while on a visit to Rome, which is cited as evidence to confirm that his father was a traitor conspiring to bring down the state’s Communist leader, known only as the Guide. One character in a novel written by this author taunts a former friend and current political rival with promises of a hunting trip, despite working on an investigation to topple Ferhat; other characters in that work by this author include the one-eyed Qemal, a Sigirumi agent equated with Polyphemos, Mira, an internal exile equated with Nausikaa, and Viktor Dragoti, a poet shot while trying to flee Albania, whose return to see a girl he had never spoken to before echoes that of the title mythical figure, as well as Odysseus. This author is a

character in a novel about the mysterious death, of his father, the second-in-command to Enver Hoxha in 1981, Ismail Kadare's *The Successor*. FTP, name this author of *The Last Journey of Ago Ymeri* and the son of Mehmet.
ANSWER: Bashkim Shehu

16. One minor character in this work is the functionally illiterate Father Mico, who performs his duties by memory. Early in this work, Knez Rogan and Skender-Aga symbolically take opposite sides in a cock fight, Rogan choosing the smaller and Skender the larger, shortly after violence almost erupts when Vuk Mandusic refuses to be a kum to Arslan-Aga Muhadinovic's son without a baptism. One lengthy digression in this work is Voivode Drasko's account of Venice, and the turning point of this work comes with the dirge sung by the "Sister of Batric", which along with Abbot Stefan's sermon prompts this work's central action. Late in this work, the vizier blackmails an old woman to sow discord by identifying witches, which results in a massacre of Cetinje. Bishop Danilo briefly tries to reconcile Christians and Muslims in the beginning, but ultimately sides with the former during the so-called "extermination of the Turkish converts" in, FTP, what epic verse drama by Petar II Petrovic-Njegos, the national epic of Montenegro?
ANSWER: The Mountain Wreath [or Gorski Vijenac]

17. Early in this work, the protagonist has a dream wherein she alone has utensils as she eats a never-ending Wiener schnitzel, and later she recalls a dream in which she burned herself on a pot of boiling milk to recognize the smell of burned flesh coming from the courtyard outside. One character in this novel dies after her forehead, back, and chest are carved up by a group of soldiers with a cross and four Cyrillic S's, and another leaves a suicide note in which she admits stealing jewelry from the title character in an attempt to save her daughter. Maj and her son Britt are the only characters in this novel to have names, as everyone else, including the nurse E. and the thirteen-year-old A. are called only by initials. This novel's title character is rounded up with the other women of her village and brought to a concentration camp, where she is placed in the "women's room" with eight others and raped repeatedly by Serb soldiers. FTP, name this novel about the plight of women during the Bosnian War, a work by Slavenka Drakulic.
ANSWER: S.: *A Novel About the Balkans* [or As If I'm Not There or Kao Da Me Nema; accept near equivalents to "As Though I'm Gone"]

18. In one work by this author, the title figure meets a blind man in his old home who tries to give him a mirror that the title character looked in for hours as a child; that same title character is confronted by his interlocutor with his sexual desire first for Clara Maria and then for Johannes Casearius, whom he teaches Cartesian philosophy and his own theory of substance, attributes, and modes. In addition to *Conversations with Spinoza*, this author wrote a work in which one character raises her brother's 14 sons, all by different women and all named Gustav; that woman, Klara, shares a room in an asylum known as "the Nest" with the title character. The title character of that work by this author aborts her child by Rainer, after the latter commits suicide, and is haunted by her mother's repeated rebukes that she should have never been born. That novel opens with the title character and her sisters abandoned in Vienna after the Anschluss by her brother Sigmund. FTP, name this Macedonian author of *Freud's Sister*.
ANSWER: Goce Smilevski

19. In one short story by this author, the title character writes letters to the narrator in out-of-date orthography, believing it to be 60 years earlier than it is; the title figure of that story shares his name with a character who leads a symposium under the name of Socrates, in which Eryximachus talks about defecating in his pants the first time he was alone with a girl. "Gaustine" and "The Man of Many Names" are in his collection *And Other Stories*. The narrator of a novel by this author discusses his ability to translate from the language of flies by watching their flight patterns and another figure in that novel attempts to balance the world by locking away the words which will bring about the apocalypse in a palm-wood trunk. The narrator of that novel by this author travels around with a rocking chair, which he bought despite his poverty, and describes his increasing insanity after his divorce from his wife because Emma became pregnant by another man. FTP, name this Bulgarian author of *Natural Novel*.
ANSWER: Georgi Gospodinov

20. One character in this work, after losing his arm, is tied to a mast so that birds can peck at the bloody stump; that man is Simon the Gull, who wipes up the feces on deck. One recurrent image in this work is the millipede, which the narrator uses to describe the crowds milling about an unnamed provincial city during Leopold's visit. On that visit, Leopold tries to have sex with Dorotea, who obstinately refuses, because the Emperor keeps a stuffed Indian dwarf in bed for good luck. This work's protagonist is fascinated with a magic charm reading SATAN ADAMA TABAT AMADA NATAS, which leads in part to his first arrest and trial at the hands of the inquisitor Lampretic. Later, the protagonist is arrested in a Venetian city and charged with being a poisoner working for Magic Jack by the name of

Hans Debelak; this conviction results in that character becoming the title prisoner. Ending with Johan Ot dying of plague in the same town that he arrives in at the novel's beginning, this is, FTP, what work by Drago Jancar?
ANSWER: *The Galley Slave* [or *Galjot*]

21. In one part of this work, the narrator describes the sex he has with a green-haired woman with the phrase "Take Me" written in marker on her butt as a meeting with the ghost of a countess while on a trip to Ireland, and in another section of this work, the narrator tells of his study of semiotics, including a summer recording children rearranging nonsensical poems. In addition to "Irish Cream" and "The Great Sincu", other stories in this collection include one which recalls the story of a love affair between the singer Cristian Vasile and the title girl killed by the mob at the request of his singing rival, "Zaraza"; in another story in this collection, the narrator tells of losing his virginity to an ugly woman who becomes a member of the secret police, "Nabokov in Brasov". Part of a "trilogy of innocence" with yet-to-appear-in-English collections *The Encyclopedia of Dragons* and *Beautiful Strangers*, this is, FTP, what short story collection by Mircea Cartarescu about narrators' encounters with members of the opposite sex?
ANSWER: *Why We Love Women* [or *De Ce Iubim Femeile*]

22. One character in this work tries to buy a cello for Gelsomina, but as he lacks money for the bow, he must buy an egg on credit, which, when cracked, will let him skip a bad day for that written on the egg's shell. In addition to Dr. Isailo Suk, another character in this work is eaten alive by his dead wife Kalina and other ghosts in a Roman theater; that man, Petkutin, was made of mud by Avram Brankovich, who daily dreams the life of a Dubrovnik Jew, Samuel Cohen. Cohen and Brankovich are tied inextricably to another character, Yusuf Masudi, an Arab who hunts dreams, a former practice of the priests of the title people. Those priests served Ateh, a princess of the title people who aided one of Farabi ibn Kora, Isaac Sangari, or St. Cyril during the "Polemic" named for the title race. Male and female versions of this book were produced and it consists of three color-coded sections representing Christianity, Islam, and Judaism. FTP, name this encyclopedic novel about the conversion of the title race, a work by Milorad Pavic?
ANSWER: *Dictionary of the Khazars* [or *Hazarski Recnik*]

23. One title character of a work by this author complains of his mistreatment despite honorable service during the Crimean War, and tells of his love for Russia after his capture by them at Plevna. The title character of that work by this author, "Moscov-Selim", was raised as a girl, a motif found in another work by this author, whose protagonist was raised as a girl until he was wedded to a playmate, Hrusi, to save him from the devshirme. In addition to "The Only Journey of His Life", this author wrote a work in which Kyamil goes mad, when he failed to avenge his blood-brother's murder and instead accidentally killed the narrator's older brother Hristakis, whose mother had saved his own life. That story, "Who Was My Brother's Killer?", shares many characters with another autobiographical story by this author, in which a mother prays that God kill her son and not his sister, before telling that son that she had accidentally killed her first daughter. FTP, name this katharevousa Greek short story writer of "My Mother's Sin".
ANSWER: Georgios *Vizyenos* [or *Georgios* Michael Surmas *Michaelides*; both the first name and patronymic are necessary, unless the person answers "Vizyenos"]

24. In this novel's second part, Willowy and Linear are the names given to two nurses, who have sex in a beer-filled hot tub with Dr. Topolanek, a spa-owner obsessed with extreme old age. The narrator of this novel's first part travels to Bulgaria to take pictures of Varna for her mother, only to be constantly followed by the former student, Aba, who is obsessed with the former's novels. Other characters include Mevlo, whose penis is always erect after a bomb blast in Bosnia and a woman buried in an egg-shaped coffin, because her arms and legs are stuck in odd positions. That woman, Pupa, with her elderly friends Kukla and Beba, travel to a spa in Czechia in this novel's second part, while the first features an unnamed narrator, who may be the author, observing her mother with Alzheimer's and the third part features a detailed discussion of this novel's title mythical figure, ostensibly by folklorist Aba Bagay. Published as part of Canongate's *Myth Series*, this is, FTP, what book by Dubravka Ugresic, named for a Russian witch?
ANSWER: *Baba Yaga Laid an Egg* [or *Baba Jaga Je Snijela Jaje*]

25. At this place, Bukus Gaon violates the Sabbath to dislodge a gold coin, known as the "devil's coin", becoming a gambler; that coin is lost in a game of okuz bir at this place in which Milan Glasicanin nearly gambles away his life with a mysterious man. Jelenka helps Jakov, disguised as an old woman, to sneak past this place, resulting in Gregor Fedun committing suicide, and this place was also the site of Fata's suicide because of her refusal to wed Nail-beg. After being stopped from defending it against the Austrians, Osman Karamanli humiliates Alihodja by nailing his ear to a wooden pillar, which had once been part of a blockhouse built on the kapia of this structure during a Serbian revolt. Built under the direction of Abidaga, this structure was the site of Radisav's execution by impalement for

sabotaging it, and this structure was blown up by Habsburg forces at the end of the novel of which it is the focus. Found spanning a river outside of the town of Visegrad, this is, FTP, what title structure of a novel by Ivo Andric?
ANSWER: *The **Bridge on the Drina*** [or *The **Bridge Over the Drina*** or ***Na Drini Cuprija*** or **Mehmed Pasha Sokolovic Bridge**; accept **Visegrad** until it is mentioned; prompt on “Bosnia”]