

RILKE (Recondite Individuals' Literary Knowledge Extravaganza)

Edited by John Lawrence

Questions by John Lawrence, Nick Jensen, Caleb Kendrick, Sameen Belal, and Alston Boyd

Playoffs Round 4

1. In a story by this author, a woman decides to quit a “core group” of co-workers after seeing a Vietnam vet’s ear in a box on a date with the narrator at a “spade place” called the Off-Broadway. In another story by him, a black family waits around a hamburger wrapper-strewn table during their stabbed son’s operation. One of this author’s characters jokes about a strawberry pie’s soporific quality during his first time smoking pot. The vitamin saleswoman Donna has a brief affair with her boss Patti’s husband in a story by this author, who also wrote a story in which Howard and Ann are harassed by (*) phone calls from a bakery about their hospitalized son Scotty, who is hit by a car on his birthday. The wife of one of his narrators writes a poem about having her face touched by the blind Robert, who is inspired by a TV show on the Middle Ages to hold the narrator’s hand as he draws a building. For 10 points, name this alcoholic author of “A Small, Good Thing” and “Cathedral.”

ANSWER: Raymond Clevie Carver

2. In this story, several characters enjoy turning the sound off on the television whenever politicians are making speeches, to make them look ridiculous. A character in this story tears some bark off of a tree and eats it shortly after recalling finding his father’s corpse lying in a pool of his own blood. That character in this story imagines lining up “posh whores, penpushers, [and] army officers” against a wall and shooting them in one of many passages in which he defends an alternate definition of (*) “honesty”. The protagonist of this story is captured after a rainstorm causes money to start pouring out of the drainpipe where he stashed it. Its protagonist repeatedly distinguishes between authority-supporting “In-laws” and “Outlaws” like himself, who was arrested and put away for robbing a bakery with Mike. For 10 points, Smith lets Gunthorpe pass him in a race to spite the governor of the Borstal in what story by Alan Sillitoe?

ANSWER: *The Loneliness of the Long-Distance Runner*

3. In a poem with this title, the speaker is told, “The summer boils away” by a “legless beggar.” The narrator of a work with this title calls on “[his] lady Pity” to defend himself in a “maze” of conflicting thoughts. In a novel with this title, agents fighting the Great Conspiracy report to a pistol-collecting doctor who orders the murder of a cowboy comic author. A work with this title uses a poem divided into speaking, weeping and finding disconsolate women to mourn a death presaged by a vision of angels singing “Hosanna.” In a novel with this title, Uncle (*) Rifki’s nephew quits engineering to take bus trips pursuing the angelic Janan after his life is changed by reading a book. The numerology of nine punctuates a *prosimetrum* with this title that includes a *sonetto* to Guido Cavalcanti. For 10 points, give this title of an Orhan Pamuk novel about Osman’s obsession and an annotated collection of *canzoni* expressing Dante’s courtly love for Beatrice.

ANSWER: *The New Life* [accept *La vita nuova* or *Yeni Hayat*]

(The leadin is from “La Vita Nuova” by Weldon Kees.)

4. NOTE: specific English word required.

This is the name of a red-haired, black-toothed character who claims she was dragged ashore by whales, converses with an imaginary twin, and sees her stillborn baby yawn before it is sent downriver. In a Housman poem inspired by a naval cadet’s suicide, the speaker says, “Dust’s your wages, son of [this word],” which is the first title noun of a Yeats poem describing “man’s image and his cry.” Shelley’s “One word is too often profaned” ends by evoking “The devotion of something afar / From the sphere of [this emotion],” which is addressed in the “Song of the Indian Maid” from *Endymion*. A foundling in (*) Toni Morrison’s *A Mercy* shares this name with a baby whose mother baptizes him in the night surrounded by her singing siblings a few days before a vicar requires her to bury him in the suicide section of the graveyard. For 10 points, give this namesake emotion of the child conceived when Alec rapes Tess Durbeyfield.

ANSWER: (our) Sorrow

5. One character in this play reminisces about watching a gypsy girl do somersaults on a lawn near her house. Another character in his play claims that conscience is never really one's own but rather the imagined voices of other people inside of oneself. A character in this play repeatedly yells "You are a clown!" at a man who tries apologize to him, leading the latter to challenge the former to a duel. In this play, people discuss why a woman slept with the fiancé of the sister of the (*) sculptor that loved her, leading to the sculptor's suicide. This play ends with spectators debating its meaning and with a manager announcing to the audience that the play cannot finish. Francesco Savio and Doro Palegari keep changing sides of the argument while discussing the actions of Delia Morello in a play within this play. For 10 points, name this play by Luigi Pirandello that forms a trilogy with *Six Characters in Search of an Author* and *Tonight We Improvise*.

ANSWER: *Each in his Own Way* [or *Ciascuno a suo modo*]

6. One of this author's protagonists finds Rubens' portrait of Cleopatra when left to wander in a gallery, and is dismayed at how fat Cleopatra appears. That one of this author's protagonists believes herself to be haunted by the ghost of a nun that was buried alive under a pear tree for failing to keep her vows. A character created by this author provides the title for a book that claims that 19th-century English literature tends to treat women as either "angels" or "monsters"; that book is the most famous work of Sandra (*) Gilbert and Susan Gubar. In one novel by her, John Bretton and Paul Emanuel are the romantic options Lucy Snowe chooses between in the title Belgian city. *The Madwoman in the Attic* is titled for a character created by this author of *Villette*; that character burns Thornfield Hall down, blinding her husband Edward Rochester. For 10 points, name this author of *Jane Eyre*.

ANSWER: Charlotte Bronte [prompt on "Bronte"]

7. One of this author's essay collections begins with reflections on a critic's complaint that he habitually uses the pronoun "we" to refer to different groups of people. An effort to explain why 150 students applied for his course on the title author merges into an analysis of Clifford Geertz's hermeneutics in his final, unfinished essay, "Why We Read Jane Austen". He argued against the claim that the title Wordsworth poem is "a dirge sung over departing powers" in his essay "The Immortality Ode". With Harold (*) Bloom, he co-edited the Romantic and Victorian volumes of *The Oxford Anthology of English Literature*. His most famous collection of essays argues that literature combats the title leftist reduction of art to social ideology, by revealing the "variousness and possibility" of human activity. For 10 points, name this Columbia University-based cultural critic, who wrote *Beyond Culture* and *The Liberal Imagination*.

ANSWER: Lionel (Mordecai) Trilling

8. In one novel by this author, a girl who conflates Percy the Chick's fall with *Paradise Lost* after she is forced to copy it out has a son who plays with "shy Myrmidons." In that novel, homicidal rage inspires an unhappy husband to compose nocturnes like *This Marriage is Dead* in Shirley Jackson's former home. One of this author's characters hides forbidden marbles under her house and attends other people's funerals after learning about death. A bizarre creature living in a mound gives up hunting honeybees in the title story of a collection by her that opens with a long (*) list of instructions warning a "Girl" not to become a "slut." In one of her novels, the narrator is torn between friendships with Gwen and the Red Girl before she leaves the island whose tourism this author critiqued in "A Small Place." For 10 points, name this allegedly "angry" author of *See Now Then*, *At the Bottom of the River* and *Annie John*.

ANSWER: Jamaica Kincaid [or Elaine Cynthia Potter Richardson]

9. While sitting hidden in an unobserved chair, this character watches two men thrust a ruler under a woman's skirts to measure her ankles. This character ruins an attempted seduction by yelling "How dare you?! ..You silly, common girl!" when the woman he tried to seduce playfully smacks him on the bottom, shortly after he offered her a confection called the Nipples of Venus. At the end of the first act of the play in which he appears, he asks: "What use, after all, is Man, if not to teach (*) God His lessons?". This character learns rumors through characters called the Venticelli. He encourages another character to include the Masonic rituals in a *singspiel*, thus enraging Baron von Sweiten and ruining the man who vies with him for the approval of Emperor Joseph. For 10 points, name this fictionalization of a historical composer, the villain-protagonist of Peter Shaffer's *Amadeus*.

ANSWER: Antonio Salieri

10. NOTE: This answer has two components: a character and an action.

This character seeking this action imagines another character's eyes saying: "Suppose I tell him to turn. He will do what I say.", to which she responds by imagining stabbing that character. While hoping for this action, this character repeatedly thinks the phrase: "You could do so much for me if you just would" about a man who had to be pulled up a hill on a plowline. This character seeks this action because of a game whose result depended on whether her sack was or was not full of cotton. (*) Moseley refuses the ten dollars this character's boyfriend gave her to pay for this action. While this character is attempting this action, she is conned with the phrase "hair of the dog" into having sex with a young pharmacist named Peabody. Meant to relieve a condition resulting from a dalliance with Lafe, for 10 points, name this operation that a certain member of the Bundren family seeks, in order to end her pregnancy.

ANSWER: **Dewey Dell's abortion** [accept any equivalent for "abortion" that involves terminating pregnancy, before the last line]

11. One character in this novel uses the phrase "word of honor" to demand honesty from the protagonist, who attempts to prove his sanity by checking calculations up to four decimal points. After pouring acid on blood, this novel's protagonist proposes a neutrino-based composition for the "Phi-creatures," which include a "visitor" who attempts suicide by drinking liquid oxygen. The *Little Apocrypha* records the pilot Berton's encounter with an uncanny child-shaped mimoid years before the events of this novel, during which Dr. (*) Sartorius barricades himself in his lab after Snow's X-ray bombardment experiments trigger the manifestation of anthropomorphic forms like the protagonist's dead lover Rheya. For 10 points, name this epistemological novel that opens with the *Prometheus* bringing Gibarian's replacement Kris Kelvin to a research station on a sentient ocean planet, a work by Stanisław Lem.

ANSWER: **Solaris**

12. After settling at one of these places, the speaker of one poem recalls a man who has forgotten his way home muttering under a tree for over ten years. That poem's author described a "naked bug" holding scrolls on the Way and its Power in one of hundreds of poems about one of these places, which translator Gary Snyder paired with his *Riprap*. After looking at one of these places both horizontally and at an angle, the Song dynasty polymath Su Shi concluded that his very familiarity with it blocked him from knowing its "true (*) face." A Du Fu poem ends, "Tomorrow [these places] will separate us / After tomorrow who can say?" After "All the birds have flown up and gone / A lonely cloud floats leisurely by," the speaker of a Li Bai poem concludes that he and one of these places "never tire of looking at each other." Moving to a "cold" place of this type inspired the pen name of the poet Hanshan. For 10 points, name these places paired with rivers in the *shanshui* genre of classical landscape poetry.

ANSWER: **mountains** [accept equivalents]

13. In a poem titled for a color and this substance, the speaker concludes, "The only only thing is to believe in everything" after deciding to join the "masked ball." The speaker lists "the glass side of a building lit up at night" in this substance as a "[marriage]... worth celebrating" in "Freely Espousing" by James Schuyler, who called this substance "greasy sense-eclipsing" while describing someone who can't see in "The Crystal Lithium." "The Great Depression had entered our souls like" this substance in a pantoum by Donald Justice. Elizabeth Bishop's (*) "Moose" evokes "the white hens' feathers, / in gray glazed cabbages" of this "shifty, salty, thin" substance, which another poem claims, "sits looking / over harbor and city / on silent haunches / and then moves on" after coming in "on little cat feet." For 10 points, name this title substance of a Sandburg poem, which "rubs its back upon the window-panes" in "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock."

ANSWER: frontal **fog** [accept word forms like **foggy**; prompt on "**precipitation**"]

(The leadin is from "The Foggy, Foggy Blue" by Delmore Schwartz)

14. This activity is put on trial by the fictional Pope Pius XV in response to its popularity among cardinals as a path from “Becoming to Being.” “Lusers” among “scholars” are obsessed with this activity at a boarding school where it is regarded as a pastime either for kindergarteners or “gods and supermen” by a failed visiting hospitant. A call for international language in the essay “Chinese Warning Cry” inspires Jocolator Basiliensis to create universal symbols for this activity, whose “esoteric” “inner voice” is evoked by a talented character in letters to a teacher explaining his choice to put it aside in favor of free study of the (*) *I Ching*. A seminal article by Ziegenhals cites the League of Journeymen to the East as a Feuilletonistic Age-precursor of this activity, which draws chiefly from math and music to establish themed interdisciplinary connections. For 10 points, name this activity whose mastery at the Waldzell school in Castalia can culminate in appointment as Magister Ludi. ANSWER: playing the Glass Bead Game [or das Glasperlenspiel spielen; accept clear-knowledge equivalents; I guess prompt on answers about “music” or arguably any other area of intellectual inquiry]

15. This author used his experience of reading *Things Fall Apart* to explain fiction’s power to sway politics in a recent *New York Times* Bookends column. In a novel by this author, a “matriarch” will only pay for the surgery portion of thyroid cancer treatment for the mother of a university organization member. Learning about the Janissaries from a Valparaiso book publisher convinces the narrator of another novel by him to leave a job that earlier sends him to the Philippines. An unnamed “pretty girl” flits in and out of the urban life of a (*) bottled water entrepreneur in a novel by this author structured as a self-help book. In another novel by him, Erica’s grief over the lung cancer victim Chris haunts her relationship with the Princeton-educated ex-Underwood Samson analyst Changez, who grows a beard and moves back to Lahore after 9/11. For 10 points, name this Pakistani author of *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. ANSWER: Mohsin Hamid

16. One of this author's speakers says: “But my eyes would rather cry / And nobody knows the pain / My poor heart endures” in a poem that begins with the line “I sing behind a veil”. This author wrote a ballade with the refrain “Alone am I and without a friend remain”. Though not Boccaccio, this author wrote a work that tells the stories of Carmentis and Almathea and that opens with the narrator reading *The Lamentations of Mathéolus*. Jean Gerson joined forces with this author in a debate through letters with (*) Gontier Col and Jean de Montreuil about the obscenity of another poet’s popular allegory. In the most famous work of this opponent of the *Romance of the Rose*, Reason, Rectitude, and Justice appear to her in a vision to tell her to fight misogyny by telling the stories of great women throughout history. For 10 points, name this author of *The Book of the City of Ladies*, the first successful Medieval French female poet. ANSWER: Christine de Pizan [accept either name]

17. A man who saves the false teeth his sister wore for this kind of place’s national beauty pageant accuses his brother-in-law of being a “park ranger” for its “endangered species.” A visitor to one of these places is told to go home “on the cousin [he] rode in on” before revealing he learned of its high TB rate from his major at UW-Madison. While defecating, a bigamist dying of lung disease recites his acceptance speech for honorary mayor of one of these places, whence his daughter moves to Boston to publish cookbooks with her cultural fetishist husband Ross. The adopted tourist (*) Benjamin debates identity with the panhandling violinist Ronnie in a play titled *Trying to Find* [this type of place], where the “topguide” Fred and his gangster brother Johnny put on fake accents to give holiday tours. For 10 points, name this kind of neighborhood exemplified by the San Francisco setting of Frank Chin’s *The Year of the Dragon*. ANSWER: Chinatown [accept Little Canton; accept Little Fuzhou or Doyers Street; prompt on San Francisco or California or other less specific answers that plausibly refer to San Francisco’s Chinatown; prompt on “Manhattan” or “NYC” or the “Big Apple” or “New York” or other less specific answers that refer to a New York Chinatown]

18. This work declares: “Like leaves on trees the race of man is found-- / Now green in youth, now withering on the ground”. Matthew Arnold criticized lines in this work, such as: “The life which others pay, let us bestow, / And give to fame what to nature we owe” for using an antithesis unsuited to the feeling of the poem. Samuel Johnson called this work “a performance which no age or nation can pretend to equal”. Its creator’s reputation was tarnished when half of its sequel was ghostwritten by (*) Elijah Fenton and William Broome. This work uses phrases like “wat’ry waste” for an epithet now more commonly rendered as “wine-dark sea”. This work, which was completed in 1720, begins: “Achilles’ wrath, to Greece the direful spring / Of woes unnumber’d, heavnly goddess, sing!”. For 10 points, name this translation of an Ancient Greek epic by the English poet of *The Dunciad*.

ANSWER: Alexander **Pope**’s translation of Homer’s *Iliad* [prompt on “*Iliad*”; if they buzz on the first clue, you may specifically ask: “which version?”]

19. Teju Cole narrates a pilgrimage inspired by this work in the *New Yorker* article “Always Returning.” This work’s narrator recalls the parable of the mad Gadarene while stroking a pig before making his first of many references to “Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius.” A hurricane that levels a forest like Dutch elm disease is recalled by this work’s narrator, who encounters a mad Chinese quail at an estate whose gardener is haunted by a map of Germany after learning about the Allied carpet-bombing. The panorama at (*) Waterloo, herring fishing, and Edward FitzGerald preoccupy this work’s narrator, who shares many “elective affinities” with the Hölderlin translator Michael Hamburger. Discussions of sericulture recur in this work, which depicts *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Tulp* and Thomas Browne’s skull in some of its many interspersed photographs. For 10 points, name this rummage through the dustbin of history via a walking tour of Suffolk, a work by W. G. Sebald.

ANSWER: *The **Rings of Saturn**: An English Pilgrimage* [or *Die **Ringe des Saturn**: Eine englische Wallfahrt*]

20. This author wrote: “There is nothing worse for our trade than to be in style” in a poem that declares: “Senora, it is true the Greeks are dead”. This author described Teeny “about to cough / In waltz-time” in a poem that describes: “Vasserot / The armless ambidextrian [...] lighting / A match between his great and second toe”. He wrote: “To feel creep up the curving east / The earthy chill of dusk” in a poem that begins: “And here face down beneath the sun / And here upon earth’s noonward height”. This poet of (*) “Invocation to the Social Muse” and “The End of the World” described an object that is “Dumb / as old medallions to the thumb” in a work that declares: “A poem should not mean / But be”. He wrote a play in which Nickles and Zuss make a bet as to how the title banker will react if they ruin his life, in a retelling of the biblical tale of Job. For 10 points, name this American poet of “You, Andrew Marvell”, “Ars Poetica”, and the verse drama *J.B.*

ANSWER: Archibald **MacLeish**