

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 6

1. Harold Bloom appears in a “transcript” from this novel to remark on its *unheimlich* motif shortly after Camille Paglia hits on its female protagonist while claiming that womb envy explains her fear of darkness in response to an unsolicited copy of her video. The body of this novel is followed by a “contrary evidence” appendix, “exhibits” of instructions, letters from an asylum and “Pelican Poems.” In this novel, winning the Pulitzer for a photo of the starving Sudanese child Delial haunts (*) Karen’s estranged husband, who shoots the films “Exploration #4” and “The Five and a Half Minute Hallway.” Johnny Truant navigates this novel’s occasionally sideways text to record arcane footnotes documenting the blind poet Zamparò’s attempt to eradicate the Minotaur from *The Navidson Record*. For 10 points, name this meta-novel about a blue-text building that is larger inside than out, written by Mark Z. Danielewski.

ANSWER: Mark Z. Danielewski’s *House of Leaves*

2. One character in this play sees two others fighting and comments that “the cuckold and the cuckold-maker are at it”, before being challenged to fight by a bastard, and replying: “I love bastards: I am a bastard begot, bastard instructed, bastard in mind”. Another character in this play declares that “One touch of nature makes the whole world kin” in a speech that begins “Time hath, my lord, a wallet at his back / Wherein he puts alms for oblivion”. One character in this play witnesses a woman give away a (*) sleeve to another man, who promises to wear it in battle. In this play’s third act, Calchas asks to exchange Antenor for his daughter. Thersites’ jokes antagonize characters in this play, whose second title character flirts with Diomedes and is the niece of Pandarus. For 10 points, name this “problem play” by Shakespeare about a pair of Trojan lovers.

ANSWER: *Troilus and Cressida*

3. This poet says to the title figure of one poem: “You did see a jeweled Heaven / set in the wretched frame of men’s low lusts”. That poem by him describes a woodcutter whose “reins, sledge, night, his poor mount, / himself--will melt into a Scriptural dream”. One poem by him says: “In the little town out of which death sprawled over the classroom map / the cobblestones shine like scales that coat a carp”. He described someone sobbing in the snow whose “voice is needle-thin, / yet without thread” in one poem. He declared: “Freedom / is when you (*) forget the spelling of the tyrant’s name” in another poem. One poem by him begins by saying that the title poet “has sunk in sleep...All things beside are sleeping too”. Though not Tomas Tranströmer, the title poem of one of his collections begins: “I was born and grew up in the Baltic marshland”. For 10 points, name this Russian-Jewish poet of “Elegy for John Donne” and the collection *A Part of Speech*.

ANSWER: Joseph Brodsky

4. A character with this profession recalls the eighteen-hour flight that began with her work partner declaring his passionate love for her, as she later watches that work partner slip into a fatal diabetic coma. That character with this profession has an affair with an industrialist, but marries the industrialist’s translator after the industrialist is killed while shielding a young woman from the bullets of government troops. In that novel, this is the profession of the only female hostage not released by the (*) terrorists who take over the vice presidential mansion of an unnamed South American country. One character gains money to study for this profession from the life insurance of a train conductor named Ray who dies in a wreck. That character becomes enamored of the ruins of cliff-dwellers while in Panther Canyon, Arizona with Fred Ottenburg. For 10 points, name this profession of Roxanne Coss in Ann Patchett’s *Bel Canto* and Thea Kronborg in Willa Cather’s *The Song of the Lark*.

ANSWER: opera singer [prompt on “musician”]

5. NOTE: Specific phrase required.

In a novel named for this phrase, an oboist aid worker—whom the drunken narrator assaults after she reveals she sleeps on the floor—breaks her Saturday fast after stabbing a dying rabid dog. A novella titled for this phrase opens with a jerk who calls people “rank outsiders” going after the newly-resigned job of a youth who replaces a quinine thief who throws his violin into the sea. The narrator of a novel titled for this phrase hears of his cousin’s bullied doll Magda under an underground table representing a bombed house on Lymington Road. The cook (*) Ransome tends to the sick Mr. Burns during a storm off Singapore in a novella titled for this phrase that was based on the author’s command of the *Otago*. For 10 points, give this phrase titling a novel about the London-Calcutta connections of the Prices and Dattachaudharis by Amitav Ghosh, as well as a Conrad novella about a young sailor’s first command, named for youth and age’s boundary.

ANSWER: *The **Shadow-Line*** [or *The **Shadow Lines***; accept ***First Command***, the original title of the Conrad novella, before mentioned; prompt on partial answers such as “shadows”, “lines” or “commands”]

6. In one essay, this author outlined the nine possible plot moves that can occur in the storyline of a James Bond novel. This author of “Narrative Structures in Fleming” claimed that the puns in *Finnegan’s Wake* employ hidden metonymic connections in their metaphoric substitutions, thus providing the model for a Global Semantic System in “The Semantics of Metaphor”. He suggested that texts are networks of messages that are designed to be actualized by a Model Reader. One essay by him suggests that the LBJ library in Austin, the waxworks museums on Fisherman’s Wharf, (*) Superman’s Fortress of Solitude, and Disneyland inspire “faith in fakes”. This author of *The Role of the Reader* and “Travels in Hyperreality” wrote a novel whose protagonists use Colonel Ardeni’s manuscript about the Knights Templar as the basis for a fake conspiracy theory called The Plan. For 10 points name this Italian semiotician, who also wrote fiction works like *Foucault’s Pendulum*.

ANSWER: Umberto Eco

7. In one work set in this decade, one character recalls asking his father why he isn’t like Toussaint L’Ouverture, to which the father responds by kicking him in the mouth. In that play set in this decade, one character repeatedly says: “Wake up and give me the money” to which another replies: “Come here. Here go the money.”. In a novel set during this decade, the protagonist is subject to a hazing ritual called “The Treatment” as punishment for refusing to box for G company, because he accidentally blinded a previous sparring partner. (*) Milt Warden has an affair with the wife of Captain “Dynamite” Holmes in that novel set in this decade. Vera plans to go to Chicago with musician Floyd Barton before he is killed in a play set in this decade from the *Pittsburgh Cycle*. For 10 points, name this decade that is the setting for August Wilson’s *Seven Guitars* and for *From Here to Eternity*, which fictionalizes the attack on Pearl Harbor.

ANSWER: 1940’s

8. One poet with this first name discusses the notion that a “clown-faced woodpecker probing the dead sculpted trunk” is “some tragic falling off from a first world of undivided light”, and noted that a typo for “Action painting” would be “paining”, in a poem in which the last word is not completed in the phrase “The object of this poem is not to annihila—”. This is the first name of an author who described the title object as “A scalded toothless harp, uncrushed, unstrung.” in a poem that begins: “The tongue of the (*) waves tolled in the earth’s bell. / Blue rippled and soaked in the fire of blue.” A man with this first name wrote the poems “Meditation at Lagunitas” and “Time and Materials”. This the first name of the author of “The Want Bone”, who wrote a text-adventure interactive fiction called *Mindwheel* and used near and slant rhymes in *terza rima* in his 1994 verse translation of Dante’s *Inferno*. For 10 points, name this first name of the Californian poets Hass and Pinsky.

ANSWER: Robert

9. This condition titles a collection whose second novella follows an alcoholic contacting a newly deceased ex-rival through a midget medium. A woman who takes up running out of her fear of this condition learns about the once-in-a-century Weaver Festival Phenomenon from Urara. A girl with this title condition emanates the smell of milk in a secret club that operates on “trust.” A character who takes over four drugs in the hope of developing this condition believes it is the only thing that will save him from being tormented by the devil after he finds pages from *The (*) Brothers Karamazov* in his copy of *Crime and Punishment*. In Tanizaki’s *Quicksand*, Mitsuko tests the faith of Kotaru and Sonoko by forcing them to experience this condition, which eludes the narrator of Akutagawa’s “Cogwheels” and is induced by the medicine given to the girls Eguchi visits. For 10 points, name this condition affecting the virgins in a “house” of “beauties” created by Kawabata.

ANSWER: sleeping [accept (non-)REM or (non-)rapid eye movement sleep or other clear-knowledge equivalents; prompt on any answers related to “altered consciousness”]

(The first two clues are from Banana Yoshimoto’s *Asleep* and *Moonlight Shadow*.)

10. The narrator of one novel by this author slaps his lover after she reveals that they have been having sex in the room of the other woman he secretly loves at Ferns. One of this author’s characters briefly hears rain falling on the iron roof of the Picture-House when the projector is turned back on as he kisses a green-toothed girl. A monograph on Pierre Bonnard is never finished by that character, who breaks a wineglass in his hand at a funeral for a woman who takes visceral photographs of patients while hospitalized after meeting with the death consultant Mr. Todd. A (*) science historian explains to Clio why he abandons his book in a reworking of Goethe’s *Elective Affinities* by this author, who wrote a novel entwining the narrator’s memories of his dead wife Anna with those of his childhood games with the twins Myles and Chloe Grace at the Cedars. For 10 points, name this Irish author of *The Newton Letter* and *The Sea*.

ANSWER: (William) John Banville [accept Benjamin Black, his crime novel nom de plume]

11. One character in this play suggests that jokes about yogurt on the sitcom Little Margie are proof that yogurt is not health food. One character in this play claims that another character spilled his Fresca as a diversion to cheat during their poker game, and that he stole a pig iron from another character. One character in this play gets beaten up after he mistakenly claims that a character who had his jaw broken by a gang of Mexicans was taken to Masonic Hospital, instead of Columbus Hospital. Two characters in this play argue about whether an unseen character will have the (*) combination for his safe written down somewhere in his house. That character, Bobby, was supposed to help this play’s protagonists with a job, before they opted for Fletcher instead. For 10 points, name this play by David Mamet in which Don and Teach abort their attempted robbery of a man who bought the titular nickel.

ANSWER: American Buffalo

12. One character in this novel remembers horoscopes all day to confirm that they have come true, in sharp contrast to a doctor who denies his guilt with statements like, “Not to my knowledge.” In this novel, a housekeeper uses gum to make imprints of keyholes while burning potatoes distract her household, and later tails her employer on his visits to an actress whom he pays to expose her garter-tips. A poet in this novel rants that taking up with Dylan Thomas has damned Lisa Brooke to hell at her cremation party, which kicks off a dispute over her will based on her bigamous marriage to the critic (*) Guy Leet. In this novel, Mrs Pettigrew attempts to blackmail Godfrey Colston, who along with his novelist wife Charmian is observed as a case study by the gerontologist Alec Warner. For 10 points, name this novel in which many elderly people receive phone calls saying, “Remember you must die,” a work by Muriel Spark.

ANSWER: Memento Mori

13. In a novel with this title, a character who divides his self into “meat” and “soul” is rejected by an elderly NYU teacher for a portfolio without passion after he stops carrying messages for a Mussolini sympathizer. After a character with this name goes on a business trip, his new wife nearly breaks her neck on the stairs while her friends admire their gold and silver. In a novel with this title, Edith is told to hold her husband’s wake in the potato barn housing the horrific WWII scene *Now It’s the Women’s Turn*, the only non-Sateen Dura-Luxe painting left by an (*) Armenian abstract expressionist whose life is shaken up by Circe Berman. The “autobiography” of Rabo Karabekian shares this title with the central Aarne-Thompson type 312 folktale, which includes the variant “The Brahmin Girl that Married a Tiger.” For 10 points, name this story about a nobleman who keeps a locked room full of his dead wives, a folktale modernized by Charles Perrault.

ANSWER: “Bluebeard” [or “La Barbe bleue”]

14. In this novel, a woman who distrusts the fashion for “Bible jokes” is coaxed to play her husband music by Wagner, whom he loves for his anti-Semitism. On beach walks with this novel’s protagonist, a man fated to die a soldier’s death by a “gypsy prophecy” narrates a version of Heine’s romance about Don Pedro starring the faithful dog Rollo. After learning that her husband has a history of telling ghost stories, this novel’s protagonist begins to resent his “educating” her to fear the Chinese sailor’s grave near their “haunted” house in Kessin, where she is advised by the Catholic servant (*) Roswitha. After a sleigh gets stuck in the “Slough” returning from the patriotic Forester Ring’s banquet, this novel’s protagonist kisses a Major whom her husband duels six years later. For 10 points, name this novel tracing the consequences of a lonely Prussian baroness’s affair with Crampas after her teenage marriage to Geert von Innstetten, a work by Theodor Fontane.

ANSWER: Effi Briest

15. In a play by this author, a character cuts the stems off of some roses to make them fit into a vase in which he has hidden an incriminating shoe. A character created by him declares: “God is a gentleman. He prefers blondes.”, after a box containing another character’s stomach explodes, destroying the only evidence in a murder case. In a play by him, a policeman who has been given an accidental overdose of pills wanders around in a leopard-print dress while trying to recover the lost penis of (*) Winston Churchill. Nurse McMahon poisons Mrs. McLeavy, whose coffin is used by her son to hide the money he robbed from a bank in a play by him. Dr. Prentice’s mental hospital is inspected by Dr. Rance in a farce by this author that was premiered after he was murdered by his lover, Kenneth Halliwell. For 10 points, name this 20th-century British playwright of such ultra-dark comedies as *Loot* and *What the Butler Saw*.

ANSWER: (John Kingsley) “Joe” Orton

16. This character explains a dream in which she dives for a can of Medaglia d’Oro coffee at the bottom of a swimming pool, shortly before she tells a story about covering a blackboard with quotations from Epictetus. She is touched when she finds out her brothers secretly watched her play Pegeen in *Playboy of the Western World*. She accuses her boyfriend of talking like a “section man” when he describes his essay on Flaubert while they have lunch. Reading the Russian book *The Way of the* (*) *Pilgrim* causes this character to have an existential breakdown about reciting the Jesus prayer. That breakdown causes her to faint while on a date with Lane Coutell, worrying her mother: retired vaudevillian Bessie. She is cured by a phone call in which one of her siblings impersonates their eldest living brother, Buddy. For 10 points, name this youngest sibling in the J.D. Salinger’s Glass family, whose title story is paired with that of Zooey.

ANSWER: Frances “Franny” Glass [accept “Frances Glass”; prompt on “Glass”]

17. This character says that every day he asks the mantis god Kaggen to forgive him for pulling off a locust’s leg while watching the sunset with his cousin, to whom he quotes Lucky’s speech from *Waiting for Godot* after their car breaks down. After a teacher’s question makes him claim to be Roman Catholic, this Russophile is nonetheless ostracized as a Jew by his Worcester peers. This awful dancer bonds with his sick father over Tebaldi records and cricket scores at Tokai Road. (*) Voëlfontein farm is the favorite place of this Ezra Pound fan, who studies math with Paul in London before resigning from IBM. Mr. Vincent interviews the Brazilian dancer Adriana Nascimento after the death of this vegetarian, who co-teaches a course on African literature with Sophie Denoël, though she does not see herself in his novel *In the Heart of the Country*. For 10 points, name this protagonist of the “autobiographical” trilogy *Boyhood*, *Youth* and *Summertime*, the real-life author of *Disgrace*.

ANSWER: J(ohn) M(axwell) Coetzee [accept John]

18. After a failed attempt to do this action, one character accidentally says: “My words must have a strong effect on you, since you remember them so well” twice to a countess, who mocks him for referring to their capital city as Babylon. One character performs this action after trying to figure out how to explain the feeling of arguing with a man and then suddenly understanding what it is that your opponent loves. A man who plans to do this is haunted by the memory of Marie, and instead asks the difference between white boletus and a birch boletus. That attempt to do this is abandoned by (*) Sergei Ivanovich while mushroom-picking with Varenka. The novel’s only successful instance of this action occurs after one character writes the initial letters of a question in chalk on a table. For 10 points, name this action performed twice by Levin in *Anna Karenina*, which Kitty rejects the first time and accepts the second time.

ANSWER: proposing marriage [accept words forms and obvious equivalents]

19. One poem by this author describes “balsam-pines that are blue with the grey-blue blueness of / things from the sea” that “stand so still / in the thunder air.” A poem by this author set “By the Isar, in the twilight” ends with the speaker watching the “white, unfolding petals” of a woman’s wet shoulders flashing “As if roses fought with roses.” The speaker asks, “How could murder, even self-murder / ever a quietus make?” in a poem by him that opens with the image of “apples (*) falling like great drops of dew / to bruise themselves an exit from themselves.” In another poem by this author, the “honoured” pyjama-clad speaker hears “The voice of [his] education” say, “If you were a man / You would take a stick and break” a “king in exile” “from the burning bowels of the earth.” In that poem by him, a man misses his “chance with one of the lords / Of life” by throwing a “clumsy log” at a visitor to his water-trough. For 10 points, name this author of “Ship of Death” and “Snake.”

ANSWER: D(avid) H(erbert) Richards Lawrence

20. When told to try to “understand”, this character erupts into a long speech about every time in her childhood when she was asked to “understand.” In one scene, this character caresses the cheek of an old woman whom she calls a “red apple” and whom she has upsets by jokingly claiming to have wandered out of bed to meet a lover. This character recalls a paper flower that her brother gave her from a nightclub he went to, which she looked upon before performing a deed with a toy (*) shovel. This character names a play containing a chorus beginning “Wonders are many, and none is more wonderful than man”. Haemon kills himself out of love for this character, whose story Jean Anouilh updated in an allegory about Vichy France. She is sealed in a cave for a crime that her sister Ismene refused to help her commit. Burying her brother Polynices incurs the wrath of Creon upon, for 10 points, what title character of the last play in Sophocles’ Oedipus trilogy?

ANSWER: Antigone