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Факультет філології та журналістики

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**Сучасна література країн, мова яких
вивчається**

Частина 2

*Навчальний посібник для підготовки до семінарських занять студентів-
філологів, що вивчають англійську мову як фах*

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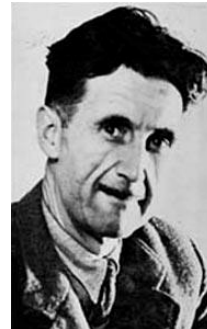
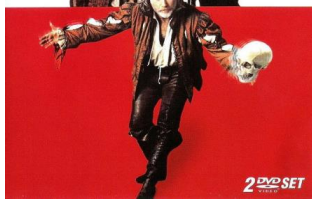
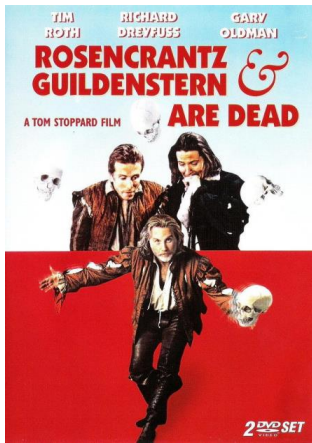
Криницька Н.І. Сучасна література країн, мова яких вивчається : навч. посіб. Ч. 2 : Навчальний посібник для підготовки до семінарських занять студентів-філологів, що вивчають англійську мову як фах. – Полтава : ПДПУ, 2009. – 120 с.

Завдання посібника – поглибити й систематизувати знання студентів із сучасної англійської літератури з метою практичного використання їх у самостійній навчальній та науково-дослідній роботі.

Посібник містить плани й завдання до семінарських занять, списки рекомендованої літератури та електронних ресурсів, тексти для вивчення, детальну навчально-методичну інформацію для самостійної підготовки до практичних занять.

ББК
УДК

The primary job of any writer is to tell you a story, a story out of human experience – I mean by that, universal, mutual experience, the anguishes and troubles and grief of the human heart, which is universal, without regard to race or time or condition. He wants to tell you something which has seemed to him so true, so moving, either comic or tragic, that it's worth repeating.



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Передмова

Для студентів іноземного відділення факультету філології та журналістики ПДПУ імені В.Г. Короленка вивчення сучасної англомовної літератури має особливе значення, адже літературна творчість є вищим ступенем володіння мовою, тому саме завдяки доробку сучасних письменників можна дослідити розвиток англійської мови протягом останніх десятиліть.

Оскільки підручники з даної дисципліни в Україні та країнах СНД відсутні, а навчально-методичні матеріали, видані в англомовних країнах, як правило, позбавлені цілісного й системного підходу, розробка навчального посібника із сучасної літератури англомовних країн є нагальною справою в підготовці студентів-філологів.

Курс сучасної літератури англомовних країн має подвійну мету, що складається з літературознавчого й мовного аспектів. У літературознавчому аспекті дисципліна має на меті дати майбутнім філологам якомога повне уявлення про стан літературного процесу даного періоду у Великій Британії, США й меншою мірою Канаді й Австралії, а також поширити знання, отримані на заняттях із теорії літератури, історії зарубіжної літератури, літературного аналізу тексту, стилістики, філософії тощо. У мовному аспекті метою курсу є закріплення й розвинення мовних навичок.

Основні завдання, що стоять перед студентом у процесі вивчення дисципліни, такі: 1) ознайомитися із загальними особливостями сучасних англомовних національних літератур та творчістю їх кращих представників; 2) усвідомлено розуміти зв'язок літературного процесу із соціально-історичною ситуацією; 3) знати концепції, що є провідними для зарубіжної культури другої половини ХХ століття; 4) володіти достатнім рівнем усної й письмової англійської мови; 5) мати навички власного підходу до розуміння, коментування й аналізу твору й літературного процесу взагалі; 6) уміти вести дискусії та обґрунтовувати думки; 7) компетентно проводити літературознавчий аналіз твору (уривку); 8) знати важливі для даного періоду літературні терміни.

Структура навчального посібника для підготовки до семінарських занять студентів-філологів синтезує матеріали різних наукових і довідкових джерел. Студентам пропонуються: плани й завдання до семінарських занять; списки рекомендованої літератури та електронних ресурсів до кожного семінару; тексти для вивчення, які ознайомлюють зі зразками сучасної прози великих, середніх і малих форм, поезії та драми; розгорнута навчальна інформація для самостійної підготовки до практичних занять, пов'язана із життям і творчістю представників англомовної літератури, характеристикою жанрів і напрямків, аналізом творів, поясненням літературознавчих термінів тощо. Переклади українською мовою більшості із запропонованих творів відсутні, тому майбутні філологи заохочуються й до власної творчої перекладацької діяльності.

Згідно із кредитно-модульною системою навчання, Модуль 1 “Сучасна британська література” охоплює семінари 1–4, а Модуль 2 “Сучасна американська, канадська та австралійська література” – семінари 5–8.

Module 1

Seminar 1

Modern British Poetry (John Betjeman, Philip Larkin, Ted Hughes, Seamus Heaney)

Plan

1. The main characteristics of poetry.
2. John Betjeman's conservatism in form and theme. *Winter Seascape*: the poet's brilliance at describing landscape (the literary analysis of the poem).
3. The Movement as an anti-modernist group tended towards anti-romanticism, rationality, and sobriety.
4. Philip Larkin's hybrid style between verse and prose. *Church Going* as an example of his philosophical lyrics.
5. Man and Woman: *Love Song* by Ted Hughes and *Mad Girl's Love Song* by Sylvia Plath (the comparative analysis of two poems).
6. Metaphysical works by Seamus Heaney: *Storm on the Island* (the literary analysis of the poem).

Literature and Resources

1. Дудченко М.М. Література Великобританії і США : навч. посіб. [для студ. вищ. навч. закл.] / Михайло Миколайович Дудченко. – 2-ге вид., доп. – Суми: ВТД “Університетська книга”, 2006. – 445 с. – С. 11–12, 222.
2. On John Betjeman's biography and works:
 - 1) Brooke Jocelyn. John Betjeman. – Online at : <http://www.ourcivilisation.com/smartboard/shop/brookej/btjmn/>.
 - 2) John Betjeman. – Online at : en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Betjeman.
 - 3) The Website about John Betjeman. – Online at : www.johnbetjeman.com.
3. On the Movement:

The Movement. – Online at : [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Movement_\(literature\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Movement_(literature)).
4. About Philip Larkin:
 - 1) Philip Larkin. – Online at : en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philip_Larkin.
 - 2) Philip Larkin. The overview of his works, his life, and his membership of “The Movement.” – Online at : www.kirjasto.sci.fi/larkin.htm.
 - 3) The Site about Philip Larkin. – Online at : www.philiplarkin.com.
5. About Ted Hughes:
 - 1) Earth-Moon : a Ted Hughes Website. – Online at : www.earth-moon.org.
 - 2) Ted Hughes. – Online at : en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ted_Hughes.
 - 3) Ted Hughes. – Online at : www.kirjasto.sci.fi/thughes.htm.
 - 4) Ted Hughes. – Online at : www.poemhunter.com/ted-hughes/poet-6616.
6. About Seamus Heaney:
 - 1) Poems by Seamus Heaney : A Study Guide. – Online at : www.universalteacher.org.uk/poetry/heaney.htm.
 - 2) Seamus Heaney. – Online at : nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1995/heaney-bio.html.
 - 3) Seamus Heaney – Online at : en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seamus_Heaney.

For further reading

1. Кружков Григорий. Глазок ватерпаса (О Шеймасе Хини) / Григорий Кружков // Ностальгия обелисков : Литературные мечтания. – М. : Новое литературное обозрение, 2001. – С. 477–486.
2. King Don W. Sacramentalism in the Poetry of Philip Larkin. – Online at : <http://www.montreat.edu/dking/General%20essays/SacramentalisminthePoetryofPhilipLarkin.htm>.

Bibliography (for the eagerest students)

1. Hillier Bevis. John Betjeman: New Fame, New Love / Bevis Hillier. – London: John Murray, 2002. – 736 p.
2. Hillier Bevis. Betjeman: The Bonus of Laughter / Bevis Hillier. – London: John Murray, 2004. – 784 p.
3. Hillier Bevis. Betjeman: The Biography / Bevis Hillier. – London: John Murray, 2006. – 608 p.

4. Morrison Blake. The Movement : English Poetry and Fiction of the 1950s / Blake Morrison. – Oxford University Press, 1980. – 326 p.
5. Maeve Brennan. The Philip Larkin I Knew / Brennan Maeve. – Manchester University Press, 2002. – 240 p.
6. Whalen Terry. Philip Larkin and English Poetry / Terry Whalen. – University of British Columbia Press, 1986. – 200 p.
7. Andrews Elmer. The Poetry of Seamus Heaney / Elmer Andrews. – Columbia University Press, 2000. – 192 p.
8. Vendler Helen. Seamus Heaney / Helen Vendler. – Harvard University Press, 2000. – 208 p.

Poems

John Betjeman Winter Seascap

The sea runs back against itself
With scarcely time for breaking wave
To cannonade a slated shelf
And thunder under in a cave.

Before the next can fully burst
The headwind, blowing harder still,
Smooths it to what it was at first –
A slowly rolling water-hill.

Against the breeze the breakers haste,
Against the tide their ridges run
And all the sea's a dappled waste
Criss-crossing underneath the sun.

Far down the beach the ripples drag
Blown backward, rearing from the shore,
And wailing gull and shrieking shag
Alone can pierce the ocean roar.

Unheard, a mongrel hound gives tongue,
Unheard are shouts of little boys;
What chance has any inland lung
Against this multi-water noise?

Here where the cliffs alone prevail
I stand exultant, neutral, free,
And from the cushion of the gale
Behold a huge consoling sea.

Philip Larkin Church Going

Once I am sure there's nothing going on
I step inside, letting the door thud shut.
Another church: matting, seats, and stone,
And little books; sprawlings of flowers, cut
For Sunday, brownish now; some brass and stuff
Up at the holy end; the small neat organ;
And a tense, musty, unignorable silence,
Brewed God knows how long. Hatless, I take off
My cycle-clips in awkward reverence.



Филип Ларкин Пер. Бориса Лейви Посещение храма

Я жду, когда утихнет все внутри –
И захожу в обитель пустоты.
Еще одна: дорожки у двери,
Ряды скамеек, книжечки; цветы
Уже завяли; где-то в глубине
Молчит опрятный маленький орган;
Необратимость тишины густой...
В смущеньи странном движусь, как во сне,
По церкви, с непокрытой головой.

Move forward, run my hand around the font.
From where I stand, the roof looks almost new –
Cleaned, or restored? Someone would know: I don't.
Mounting the lectern, I peruse a few
Hectoring large-scale verses, and pronounce
'Here endeth' much more loudly than I'd meant.
The echoes snigger briefly. Back at the door
I sign the book, donate an Irish sixpence,
Reflect the place was not worth stopping for.

Yet stop I did: in fact I often do,
And always end much at a loss like this,
Wondering what to look for; wondering, too,
When churches will fall completely out of use
What we shall turn them into, if we shall keep
A few cathedrals chronically on show,
Their parchment, plate and pyx in locked cases,
And let the rest rent-free to rain and sheep.
Shall we avoid them as unlucky places?

Or, after dark, will dubious women come
To make their children touch a particular stone;
Pick simples for a cancer; or on some
Advised night see walking a dead one?
Power of some sort will go on
In games, in riddles, seemingly at random;
But superstition, like belief, must die,
And what remains when disbelief has gone?
Grass, weedy pavement, brambles, buttress, sky,

A shape less recognisable each week,
A purpose more obscure. I wonder who
Will be the last, the very last, to seek
This place for what it was; one of the crew
That tap and jot and know what rood-lofts were?
Some ruin-bibber, randy for antique,
Or Christmas-addict, counting on a whiff
Of gown-and-bands and organ-pipes and myrrh?
Or will he be my representative,

Bored, uninformed, knowing the ghostly silt
Dispersed, yet tending to this cross of ground
Through suburb scrub because it held unspilt
So long and equably what since is found
Only in separation – marriage, and birth,
And death, and thoughts of these – for which was built
This special shell? For, though I've no idea
What this accoutered frowsty barn is worth,
It pleases me to stand in silence here;

A serious house on serious earth it is,
In whose blent air all our compulsions meet,
Are recognized, and robed as destinies.
And that much never can be obsolete,
Since someone will forever be surprising
A hunger in himself to be more serious,
And gravitating with it to this ground,

Купель нащупала рука моя.
Сверкает, словно новый, потолок.
Почищен? Кто-то ведает – не я.
На кафедре взобравшись, пару строк
Шепчу весомых. Много громче чем
Хотел, звучит "Доселе". Эха смех
Недолго. Постою у алтаря.
Монету брошу, распишусь. Зачем,
Спрошу, зашел? И сам отвечу: зря.

Но ведь зашел, и захожу всегда,
И знаю – бесполезен мой приход.
Я думаю о времени когда
Нужда в церквях навечно отпадет;
Во что их превратят; и, может быть,
Оставят пару действующих все ж?
А остальные будут для скота.
И, может, мы их будем обходить,
Как порчу наводящие места?

Но в церковь, верно, бабы с ребятей
Придут творить молитву у камней
Целительных, и в темноте глухой
Увидят, как мертвец идет по ней?
Магическая сила навсегда
Останется в считалках, играх, снах.
Как вера, суеверие умрет;
Но коль умрет безверье – что тогда? –
Заросшая тропа и небосвод,

И образ, узнаваемый трудней,
И назначенье непонятней. Кто
Последним самым будет видеть в ней
Первоначальный замысел? И что
Есть баптистерий сможет не забыть; –
Могильный вор – ценитель старины;
Чудак, пьяненный запахом свечным,
Рождественской молитвой? – Может быть,
Он будет представителем моим –

Неискушенным; знающим – забыть
Уже успели всё. Сюда тянуть
Не перестанет. Как же сохранить
Здесь удалось надолго эту суть,
Что есть в разлуке лишь – рождение, брак,
И смерть, и мысль об этом – понимай,
Как хочешь всё? Пусть неизвестно мне
К чему он, сей заброшенный сарай,
Но здесь побыть приятно в тишине.

Священный дом – на толочи земной,
Для наших общих действий место встреч,
Распознанных и названных судьбой.
Уж этому забвенья не предречь; –
Коль жажде посвящения – быть и впредь,
Кого-нибудь с ней, верно, занесет
На эту толочь и под этот кров,

Which, he once heard, was proper to grow wise in,
If only that so many dead lie round.

Где должно, так мы слышали, стареть –
Затем, что здесь довольно мертвецов.

Ted Hughes
Love Song

He loved her and she loved him.
His kisses sucked out her whole past and future or tried to
He had no other appetite
She bit him she gnawed him she sucked
She wanted him complete inside her
Safe and sure forever and ever
Their little cries fluttered into the curtains

Her eyes wanted nothing to get away
Her looks nailed down his hands his wrists his elbows
He gripped her hard so that life
Should not drag her from that moment
He wanted all future to cease
He wanted to topple with his arms round her
Off that moment's brink and into nothing
Or everlasting or whatever there was

Her embrace was an immense press
To print him into her bones
His smiles were the garrets of a fairy palace
Where the real world would never come
Her smiles were spider bites
So he would lie still till she felt hungry
His words were occupying armies
Her laughs were an assassin's attempts
His looks were bullets daggers of revenge
His glances were ghosts in the corner with horrible secrets
His whispers were whips and jackboots
Her kisses were lawyers steadily writing
His caresses were the last hooks of a castaway
Her love-tricks were the grinding of locks
And their deep cries crawled over the floors
Like an animal dragging a great trap
His promises were the surgeon's gag
Her promises took the top off his skull
She would get a brooch made of it
His vows pulled out all her sinews
He showed her how to make a love-knot
Her vows put his eyes in formalin
At the back of her secret drawer
Their screams stuck in the wall

Their heads fell apart into sleep like the two halves
Of a lopped melon, but love is hard to stop

In their entwined sleep they exchanged arms and legs
In their dreams their brains took each other hostage
In the morning they wore each other's face



A shot from *Sylvia* (Great Britain, 2003, dir. by Christine Jeffs). *Sylvia* – Gwyneth Paltrow, Ted – Daniel Craig

Sylvia Plath
Mad Girl's Love Song

"I shut my eyes and all the world drops dead;
I lift my lids and all is born again.
(I think I made you up inside my head.)

The stars go waltzing out in blue and red,
And arbitrary blackness gallops in:
I shut my eyes and all the world drops dead.

I dreamed that you bewitched me into bed
And sung me moon-struck, kissed me quite
insane.
(I think I made you up inside my head.)

God topples from the sky, hell's fires fade:
Exit seraphim and Satan's men:
I shut my eyes and all the world drops dead.

I fancied you'd return the way you said,
But I grow old and I forget your name.
(I think I made you up inside my head.)

I should have loved a thunderbird instead;
At least when spring comes they roar back again.
I shut my eyes and all the world drops dead.
(I think I made you up inside my head.)"

Seamus Heaney
Storm on the Island
from *Death of a Naturalist* (1991)

We are prepared: we build our houses squat,
Sink walls in rock and roof them with good slate.
This wizened earth has never troubled us
With hay, so, as you see, there are no stacks
Or stooks that can be lost. Nor are there trees
Which might prove company when it blows full
Blast: you know what I mean – leaves and branches
Can raise a tragic chorus in a gale
So that you listen to the thing you fear
Forgetting that it pummels your house too.
But there are no trees, no natural shelter.
You might think that the sea is company,
Exploding comfortably down on the cliffs,
But no: when it begins, the flung spray hits
The very windows, spits like a tame cat
Turned savage. We just sit tight while wind dives
And strafes invisibly. Space is a salvo,
We are bombarded by the empty air.
Strange, it is a huge nothing that we fear.

Любовная песня безумной девчки
Пер. Алексея Костричкина

Глаза закрою – мир умрет тотчас.
Я поднимаю веки – все по-новой.
(Мне кажется, я выдумала Вас).

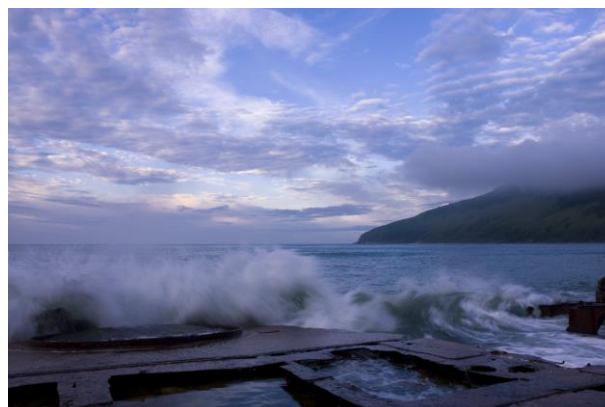
Танцуют звезды сине-красный вальс
Под беспросветным сумрачным покровом.
Глаза закрою – мир умрет тотчас.

Я к нежным поцелуям, блеску глаз
И к песням под луной была готова.
(Мне кажется, я выдумала Вас).

И Бога нет, и адский жар угас,
Исчезли ангелы и демоны. И снова
Глаза закрою – мир умрет тотчас.

Мне грезились обрывки Ваших фраз.
Я выросла и позабыла слово.
(Мне кажется, я выдумала Вас).

Влюбиться в птицу грома – в самый раз,
Весной она уже не так сурова.
Глаза закрою – мир умрет тотчас.
(Мне кажется, я выдумала вас).



Helpful Information

1. The main characteristics of poetry.

Perhaps the oldest kind of literature known to humanity, poetry in its earliest stages was told or sung, but during its long and continuing evolution it has become part of the written tradition and has been used for several purposes. Foremost among the many uses of poetry has been its ability as lyric, narrative, and epic to pay homage to the gods and to recount the history of specific groups of people.

Both European and American poets have been most influenced by Greek culture, in which the writers were known as poets, a title that carried both responsibility and praise. Greek literature consisted in large measure of plays that were written in poetry, a convention of the time. Roman poets adopted most of the rules of the Greeks, later revived during the Renaissance. Beginning with Geoffrey Chaucer, poetry in England flowered and spread throughout the English-speaking world and far beyond. Poetic forms are: verse, poem, song, ode, sonnet, ballad, elegy, parody, epigram, etc.

But what is poetry? According to William Wordsworth and Samuel Coleridge, the major role of poetry was to stand in opposition to science. Coleridge wrote: “poetry is not the proper antithesis to prose, but to science. Poetry is opposed to science.” A great and influential man of writing of the Romantic period wrote that “Poetry begins where matter of fact or science ceases...” The American poetess of the 19th century Emily Dickinson alludes nearly to the same thing:

*To clothe the fiery thought
In simple words succeeds,
For still the craft of genius is
To mask a king in weeds.*

Poetry is often full of ideas, too, and sometimes poems can be powerful experiences of the mind, but most poems are primarily about how people feel rather than how people think. Poetry can be the voice of our feelings.

Though prose and poetry have much in common and a number of poets also write prose fiction, nevertheless, commonly accepted differences between the two genres are that poetry is generally written in meter, thus creating rhythm, and prose is not; rhyme is a characteristic feature of poetry (though not required) which prose doesn't have. Poetry distills, compresses and refines knowledge through selective use of language, while prose is considered “ordinary” language. Poets are binding themselves in the chains of traditional poetic forms and *then* creating interaction between different elements of poetic technique. But nothing about poetry is as important as the way it makes us feel with the help of imagination, symbols and invention.

Sometimes poetry is freed from the old rules, evolves from confinement of rigid structure and sometimes content. This is what we now know as free verse – the kind of poetry which was fired a new kind of poet, epitomized by the great American poet Walt Whitman, poetry which relies heavily on imagery.

Poets employ various strategies and elements of poetic technique to frame their vision of human experience in verse, theme, diction, tone, imagery, symbolism, simile and metaphor, personification and apostrophe, metre, rhythm and rhyme, sound, structure and form.

2. John Betjeman's conservatism in form and theme. *Winter Seascape: the poet's brilliance at describing landscape.*



John Betjeman (1906–1984) achieved huge success during his lifetime and continues to retain his “National Treasure” status more than twenty years after his death. His gift for comic writing, his dazzling technical abilities and his combination of eccentricity and Englishness are all key ingredients in his enduring popularity. He was the son of a manufacturer of luxurious household goods, a background that provided him with a comfortable childhood but also left him socially insecure, conscious of his family's status as ‘trade’ in an era of more rigid social class distinctions. Sensitive and bullied at school, Betjeman only came into his own at Oxford where he threw himself into a party-going lifestyle. He perhaps enjoyed himself too much and was sent down for failing his exams. However, Oxford

contacts helped him secure a post on *The Architectural Review* which he left in 1933 to become a freelance journalist. During the war he worked for various government departments and then continued to make his living from journalism and broadcasting.

Betjeman's wide appeal and his conservatism in form and theme have tended to obscure his achievements as a serious poet, but he was rated highly by his contemporaries and no less a figure than

W. H. Auden edited a choice of Betjeman's verse in 1947. Some of his best qualities are presented in these two recordings: *Youth and Age on Beaulieu River* demonstrates Betjeman's brilliance at describing human figures in a landscape and deals with one of his abiding preoccupations, mortality, whilst *A Subaltern's Love Song* is Betjeman at his rollicking best, amorous and satirical as he pokes fun at himself and the upper middle class world he was from whilst celebrating its straightforward pleasures. A virtuoso performer with a keen sense of how to project an image, this recording captures him at his best, effortlessly charming his audience with his bravura renditions.

Collected poems after WW II: *Slick but not Streamlined* (1947), *Selected Poems*: chosen with a preface by John Hanbury & Angus Sparrow (1950); *A Few Late Chrysanthemums* (1954); *Poems in the Porch* (1954); *John Betjeman's Collected Poems* (1958); *Altar and Pew, Church of England verses* (1959); *Summoned by Bells* (1960); *A Ring of Bells* (1962); *High and Low* (1966); *A Wembley Lad and The Crem* (1971); *A Nip in the Air* (1974); *Church poems* (1981), etc.

The literary analysis of the poem

Winter Seascape

The sea runs back against itself
With scarcely time for breaking wave
To cannonade a slated shelf
And thunder under in a cave.

Before the next can fully burst
The headwind, blowing harder still
Smooths it to what it was at first –
A slowly rolling water-hill.

Against the breeze the breakers haste,
Against the tide their ridges run
And all the sea's a dappled waste
Criss-crossing underneath the sun.

Far down the beach the ripples drag
Blown backward, rearing from the shore,
And wailing gull and shrieking shag
Alone can pierce the ocean roar.

Unheard, a mongrel hound gives tongue,
Unheard are shouts of little boys;
What chance has any inland lung
Against this multi-water noise?

Here where the cliffs alone prevail
I stand exultant, neutral, free,
And from the cushion of the gale
Behold a huge consoling sea.

Підрядковий (дослівний) переклад:

Море тікає само від себе,
Ледве встигаючи розбити хвилю,
Щоб вдарити залпом по синювато-сірому шельфу
Та вибухнути громом у печері.

До того, як уся наступна хвиля вибухне,
Зустрічний вітер, який дме все сильніше,
Розгладжує її і робить такою, якою вона була спочатку –
Водяною горою, що повільно котиться.

Поспішають проти бризу водяні буруни,
Біжать проти течії їхні гребінці,
І все море – це строката пустеля,
Що перехрестям лежить (сердиться) під сонцем.

Далеко внизу від пляжу тягнуться брижі,
Які здуваються назад, народжуючись від берега,
І лише чайка, що голосить, і баклан, що пронизливо
кричить,
Можуть пронизати рев океану.

Нечутна, подає голос дворняжка,
Нечутні крики маленьких хлопчиків,
Чи є шанс у будь-якої земної легені
Проти цього множинного водного шуму?

Тут, де царюють лише скелі,
Я стою піднесений, відсторонений, вільний
І під захистом (з повітряної подушки) бурі (шторму,
сильного вітру)
Споглядаю за величним заспокійливим морем.

John Betjeman invites us to look at his *Winter Seascape*, but the poet's marina is not only visual – it is full of sounds, which complete the image, because the sea cannot be silent.

The *sea* is the first word in the poem. This personified sea “runs back against itself” like people who try to escape their fate. Like a strong-willed person who doesn't want “to suffer / The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune” (William Shakespeare. *Hamlet*. Act III, Scene I) it breaks against “a slated shelf”, dying and arising again: it is a constant battle, a rhythm of existence, which is given by the poet with the help of a clear four-iambic metre, cross (alternate) and masculine rhyme. *Winter Seascape* begins with the sounds of this battle, which is depicted not only by the lexical devices (*to cannonade, thunder, burst*), but by the alliteration as well because there are a lot of plosives here: [t] (30), [d] (26), [b] (12), [g] (9), [p] (6), [k] (5).

The most frequent words (let alone *the*) are *against* (4) and *and* (5 times plus 2 more in *stand* and *inland*) that are associated with negation and unity, war and peace. The waves roar with [r] (22), rise and fall with [l] (32) and [w] (13), lap and whisper with [s] (26), [ð] (19), [z] (11), [ʃ] (6), [tʃ] (2), [θ] (2), [dʒ] (1), and breathe with [h] (8). In the line *A slowly rolling water-hill* an onomatopoeia is used. The anaphoras (*against* and *unheard*) also help to reproduce the constant rhythm of the sea. The events are given in the present for making them more vivid and dynamic.

The first three stanzas from Betjeman's six ones centre about the sea and its battle with the shore, and only in the second half of the poem the living beings are portrayed (the gull, the shag, the mongrel hound, the little boys, and, at last, the author (i.e. the lyrical hero). In this sense the use of the synecdoche *any inland lung* is proved in *Winter Seascape* because *lung* is connected with breathing which means life and particularly the life on the land. It looks as if the different stages of evolution are presented in the poem: from the sea as a cradle of life to the human beings – the children, then the adult. All the living beings except the author are fighting against the sea which is depicted in the fifth stanza not as the symbol of the brave human spirit, but as a hostile and unpredictable force. The last words of the stanza (*What chance has any inland lung/ Against this multi-water noise?*) are the statement of our helplessness in the face of the life and Nature in general. Nevertheless, in the sixth stanza it is conveyed that this statement is not a defeat because the author separates himself from the other living beings by mentioning the cliffs (the symbol of defence and indestructibility) and shows that it is possible to remain “exultant, neutral, free” even in the heart of the storm if you have at least a small island under your feet. The author achieved harmony because he realized that the sea was severe and wild, but he had not to be afraid of it and of the fate and life as well. Without our fear the sea is consoling even in its rage which is not the real rage but the natural rhythm of deaths and births. *Winter Seascape* ends with *sea* which is also the first word in the poem and the circle (a sea like a man – the sea is dangerous for the man – the man – the sea like the man) is closed.

3. The Movement as an anti-modernist group tended towards anti-romanticism, rationality, and sobriety.

The Movement was a term coined by J. D. Scott, literary editor of *The Spectator*, in 1954 to describe a group of writers including Kingsley Amis, Philip Larkin, Donald Davie, D.J. Enright, John Wain, Elizabeth Jennings, Thom Gunn, and Robert Conquest. The Movement was essentially English in character; poets in Scotland and Wales were not generally included.

Essentially The Movement was a reaction against the extreme romanticism of the previous identifiable major movement in British poetry, the New Apocalyptics (which overlapped with the Scottish Renaissance). Whereas the New Apocalyptics had been irrational, deliberately bordering on the incoherent, and outrageous or controversial, The Movement poets tended towards anti-romanticism (almost constituting a form of neo-classicism), rationality, and sobriety. John Press has described it as “a general retreat from direct comment or involvement in any political or social doctrine.”

The Movement produced two anthologies: *Poets of the 1950s* (1955) (editor D. J. Enright, published in Japan) and *New Lines* (1956). Conquest, who edited the *New Lines* anthology, described the connection between the poets as ‘little more than a negative determination to avoid bad principles.’ These ‘bad principles’ are usually described as excess, both in terms of theme and stylistic devices. The polemic introduction to *New Lines* targeted in particular the 1940s poets, the generation of Dylan Thomas and George Barker – though not by name. A second *New Lines* anthology appeared in 1963, by which time *The Movement* seemed to some a spent force, in terms of fashion; the ‘underground’ in the shape of The Group, and the more American-influenced style of the Al Alvarez anthology *The New Poetry* having come to the fore. Ironically, interest in “The Movement” renewed in the early nineties, primarily in America, with the rise of the New Formalism and increased public interest in the work of Philip Larkin.



4. Philip Larkin's hybrid style between verse and prose. *Church Going* as an example of his philosophical lyrics.

Philip Larkin (1922–1985) was born in Coventry in the family of Sydney and Eva Larkin. He attended the City's King Henry VIII School between 1930 and 1940. He started writing contributing to the school magazine. His first poem *Ultimatum* was published in the national Weekly *Listener* in 1940. Three other poems *A Stone Church Damaged by a Bomb*, *Mythological Introduction*, and *I Dreamed of an Out-thrust Arm of Land* appeared in 1943 in the collection *Oxford Poetry* (1942–1943). Then, he was educated at St John's College in Oxford where his friends were Kingsley Amis and Bruce Montgomery. He graduated in 1943 with a First Class Honour in English and soon was

appointed Librarian at Wellington where he studied to qualify as a professional librarian and continued writing poetry which in 1945 he included in the collection *The North Ship*.

While working in Belfast as Sub-Librarian at Queen's University Larkin privately published a small collection of poetry *XX Poems*. It was followed by his next collection *The Less Deceived* (1955). The collection won him reputation of one of the foremost figures in the XXth century poetry.

In 1964 Larkin published the collection of poems *The Whitsun Weddings* which was well received, widely acclaimed, and brought him the Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry. His next collection *High Windows* was published in 1974 and it confirmed Larkin as one of the finest poets in English literary history.

Philip Larkin is also known as a prose writer – a novelist and essayist. His two novels *Jill* and *A Girl in Winter* came out in succession in 1946 and 1947 respectively. His reviews of jazz recordings which he wrote for the *Daily Telegraph* were published in 1970 under the title *All What Jazz: a Record Diary 1961–1968*. He also edited *the Oxford Book of Twentieth Century English Verse* which was published in 1973.

Philip Larkin received many awards and prizes and he had been an Honorary Fellow of the Library Association and was made a Professor of the University of Hull. He was awarded the Order of the Companion of Honour but was unable to attend the ceremony at Buckingham Palace because of serious illness.

Philip Larkin died of cancer at the age of 63 on December 2, 1985.

Hybrid style between verse and prose

Larkin used a hybrid style between verse and prose, sometimes putting commonplace thoughts in commonplace language, and then slipping into an iambic verse for more serious reflections.

The opening lines of Church Going can be read:

Once **I** am **sure** | there's **nothing going on**

I step inside || **letting the door thud shut.**

But the stresses are not clearly marked, the speech rhythms imposing something more like:

Once I am sure there's **nothing going on**

I step inside | **letting the door thud shut.**

Making its very ordinariness seem sincerity:

Once I am sure there's nothing going on, I step inside, letting the door thud shut.

Another church: matting, seats, and stone and little books; sprawlings of flowers, cut for Sunday, brownish now. Some brass and stuff up at the holy end; the small neat organ; and a tense, musty, unignorable silence, brewed God knows how long.

Hatless, I take off my cycle-clips in awkward reverence.

Ordinary prose, or almost so, since *awkward reverence* is preparing us for the third stanza, which starts:

Yet stop I did: in fact I often do,

And always end much at a loss like this,

And by the final stanza the language is much more elevated – *blent, robed in destinies, hunger in himself, gravitating, ground, wise in, dead lie round* – and the assiduous student of rhetoric could identify:

Parenthesis: he once heard

Parallelism: In whose *blent* air all our compulsions *meet*

Anaphora: A *serious* house on *serious* earth

Anadiplosis: to be more *serious*

Procatlepsis: Are recognized

Litotes: proper to grow wise in

Metabasis: And that much never can be obsolete

Amplification: Since someone will forever...

Metanoia: If only that so many dead lie round

Metaphor: *robed* as destinies.

Personification: A *hunger* in himself to be more serious

Hyperbaton: earth it is

Pleonasm: gravitating with it to this ground

Alliteration: And *gravitating* with it to this *ground*.

Parataxis: If only that so many dead lie round.

Climax: If only that so many dead lie round.

From an everyday beginning though with some rhetoric – the poem moves to studied exactness, the more striking because of the ‘artless’ flatlands from which it rises. Only they’re not artless, but a conscious strategy.

5. Man and Woman: *Love Song* by Ted Hughes and *Mad Girl’s Love Song* by Sylvia Plath.

Edward James (Ted) Hughes (1930–1998) was born in Mytholmroyd, in the West Riding district of Yorkshire, on August 17, 1930. His childhood was quiet and dominantly rural. When he was seven years old his family moved to the small town of Mexborough in South Yorkshire, and the landscape of the moors of that area informed his poetry throughout his life.



After high school, Hughes entered the Royal Air Force and served for two years as a ground wireless mechanic. He then moved to Cambridge to attend Pembroke College on an academic scholarship. While in college he published a few poems, majored in Anthropology and Archaeology, and studied mythologies extensively.

Hughes graduated from Cambridge in 1954. A few years later, in 1956, he co-founded the literary magazine *St. Botolph’s Review* with a handful of other editors. At the launch party for the magazine, he met Sylvia Plath. A few short months later, on June 16, 1956, they were married.

Plath encouraged Hughes to submit his first manuscript, *The Hawk in the Rain*, to The Poetry Center’s First Publication book contest. The judges, Marianne Moore, W. H. Auden, and Stephen Spender, awarded the manuscript first prize, and it was published in England and America in 1957, to much critical praise.

Hughes lived in Massachusetts with Plath and taught at University of Massachusetts Amherst. They returned to England in 1959, and their first child, Freida was born the following year. Their second child, Nicholas, was born two years later.

In 1962, Hughes left Plath for Assia Gutmann Wevill. Less than a year later, Plath committed suicide. Hughes did not write again for years, as he focused all of his energy on editing and promoting Plath’s poems. He was also roundly lambasted by the public, who saw him as responsible for his wife’s suicide. Controversy surrounded his editorial choices regarding Plath’s poems and journals.

In 1965, Wevill gave birth to their only child, Shura. Four years later, like Plath, she also committed suicide, killing Shura as well. The following year, in 1970, Hughes married Carol Orchard, with whom he remained married until his death.

Hughes’s lengthy career included over a dozen books of poetry, translations, non-fiction and children’s books, such as the famous *The Iron Man* (1968). His books of poems include: *Wolfwatching* (1990), *Flowers and Insects* (1986), *Selected Poems 1957–1981* (1982), *Moortown* (1980), *Cave Birds* (1979), *Crow* (1971), and *Lupercal* (1960). His final collection, *The Birthday Letters* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1998), published the year of his death, documented his relationship with Plath.

Hughes’s work is marked by a mythical framework, using the lyric and dramatic monologue to illustrate intense subject matter. Animals appear frequently throughout his work as deity, metaphor, persona, and icon. Perhaps the most famous of his subjects is “Crow,” an amalgam of god, bird and man, whose existence seems pivotal to the knowledge of good and evil.

Hughes won many of Europe’s highest literary honors, and was appointed Poet Laureate of England in 1984, a post he held until his death. He passed away in October 28, 1998 in Devonshire, England, from cancer.

Selected Bibliography: *The Hawk in the Rain* (1957); *Pike* (1959); *Lupercal* (1960); *Crow* (1971); *Cave Birds* (1979); *Moortown* (1980); *Selected Poems 1957–1981* (1982); *Flowers and Insects* (1986); *Wolfwatching* (1990); *The Birthday Letters* (1998).

The comparative analysis of two poems

It’s quite difficult to establish a good comparison (a simple formal comparison would be easier) between these two poems, these two great works by two of the most representative writers in the English language in the twentieth century.

To begin with, both poems have almost the same title, *Love song*, adding Sylvia Plath a premonitory and at the same time autobiographical *Mad girl* (she was demented and died at the age of thirty: she was a little woman, she was still a girl).

Ted Hughes’s poem is much longer than his wife’s one. *Love song* contains forty-four verses divided into six stanzas: the first stanza has seven lines; the second one, eight lines; the third one (the longest) contains twenty-four; the fourth and fifth ones only have two lines and the last stanza is one single line.

The poem written by Sylvia Plath is composed of five stanzas with three lines and a sixth stanza with four lines.

The rhyme is very different in both works. While in *Love song* there are four lines with some kind of rhyme (*Her love-tricks were the grinding of locks/ And their deep cries crawled over the floors; and Like an animal dragging a great trop/ His promises were the surgeon's gag*), in Sylvia Plath's poem we can find several kinds of rhyme: in stanzas 1, 2, 3 and 5 the rhyme is ABA; in stanza number 4 the rhyme is ABB and in the last stanza, the only with four lines, the rhyme is ABAA.

Going on with the analysis of the form in the poems commented, we have to say that repetition is the most resource used: articles and possessive pronouns are often repeated: in Ted Hughes's poem the word *he* is said seven times: *she*, six times; *his* is written fourteen times, and *her*, nineteen times.

There are also words such as *were* or *their* which are repeated several times through the poem. All these words have great meaning in the message of the poem: for Ted Hughes love is a two-people thing. That's the reason why Hughes uses these words, despite *were* does not refer to *their* necessarily. I will explain this later.

Placing so many possessive pronouns and articles at the beginning of so many lines produces a kind of visual effect on the reader.

On the other hand, Sylvia Plath, despite repeating single words, works harder on content and repeats some whole lines, lines that have an important role on the meaning of the poem: *I shut my eyes and all the world drops dead*; and (*I think I made up inside my head*) are repeated four times through the poem.

The way in which Sylvia Plath writes is more the way a woman writes: *I dreamed that you bewitched me into bed/ And sung me moon-struck, kissed me quite insane* (lines 7 and 8) or *I fancied you'd return the way you said* (line 13).

For the girl, his beloved is an invention, she's only one person, while for Ted Hughes, in his poem, the lovers are two, a real man and a real woman, a real couple as Hughes writes in, for instance, the last line of the poem: *In the morning they wore each other's face*. Or in the lines where the word *their* is said: *In their entwined sleep they exchanged arms and legs*. *They* is, like *were* or *their*, words just commented before, a word that is repeated several times, and it symbolizes the fact that only one person cannot love or be loved.



Sylvia Plath has a more romantic, even fantastic vision of love, while Ted Hughes is more realistic and at the same time more optimistic in his lines. It's difficult to say what poem is better; it's a matter of personal taste.

6. Allegorical works by Seamus Heaney: *Storm on the Island*.

Seamus Heaney /ʃei'mas hi:'ni/ was born on April 13, 1939, on a farm in Castledawson, County Derry, Northern Ireland, the eldest of eight children. In 1963, he began teaching at St. Joseph's College in Belfast. Here he began to write, joining a poetry workshop with Derek Mahon, Michael Longley, and others under the guidance of Philip Hobsbaum. In 1965 he married Marie Devlin, and in 1966 year he published his first book of poetry, *Death of a Naturalist*. His other poetry includes *Door into the Dark* (1969), *Wintering Out* (1972), *North* (1979), *Selected Poems 1965–1975* (1980), *Station Island* (1984), *The Haw Lantern* (1987), *New Selected Poems 1966–1987* (1990) and *Seeing Things* (1991). In 1999 he published a new translation of the Old English heroic poem *Beowulf*.

Seamus Heaney is a Foreign Member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters. He was Professor of Poetry at Oxford from 1989 to 1994. In 1995 he received the Nobel Prize in Literature. Heaney has lived in Dublin since 1976. Since 1981 he has spent part of each year teaching at Harvard University, where he is a Professor of Rhetoric and Oratory. Writing about Heaney in 1968, Jim Hunter, said:

“His own involvement does not exclude us: there are few private references, and the descriptive clarity of his writing makes it easy to follow... Heaney's world is a warm, even optimistic one: his tone is that of traditional sanity and humanity.”

Storm on the Island considers the ideas of isolation and living so close to nature. But mainly it depicts the destructive powers of nature, amplified for the island-dweller. Heaney refers to three of the elements – earth, water and air. The poem challenges the idea that island life is idyllic – the sea is not “company” but like a cat, seemingly tame, yet apt to turn “savage” and spit. At the end of the poem comes the irony – we are fearful of “empty air”, or a “huge nothing”. So the poem appears to question whether our fears are real or imaginary (of course, physicists and meteorologists know that air is not “a huge nothing”). Heaney uses a series of military metaphors: the wind (like a fighter-bomber) “dives and strafes” while space is a “salvo” and air bombards (a metaphor from artillery or, more aptly here, naval gunnery).

The poem is written in iambic pentameter lines – mostly blank verse, but with half-rhyming couplets at the beginning and end. The poem opens confidently, explaining why the island dwellers trust in their preparations – but when the storm breaks, they can do nothing but “sit tight”.

Seminars 2–3

British Dystopian Genre: George Orwell's *1984* and Anthony Burgess's *A Clockwork Orange*

Plan

1. The definition of dystopian literature.
2. George Orwell's brief biography.
3. The plot and the structure of *1984*.
4. The analysis of Chapter 1.

Questions.

- 1) What details tell us that Oceania is a totalitarian state? What features of this country parallel the Stalinist Soviet Union? Adolf Hitler's Nazi Germany? Post-war Great Britain? Today's world?
- 2) What satirical elements can you find in the chapter?
- 3) Try to explain the slogans WAR IS PEACE, FREEDOM IS SLAVERY, IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH. Are they absurd or not?
- 4) Give a characterization of Winston Smith. What distinguishes him from the other citizens?
- 5) Find the examples of Newspeak in the excerpt. Why did the author create the special language for Oceania?
- 6) Who are the proles, to your mind?
5. Anthony Burgess's life and works.
6. The plot and the structure of *A Clockwork Orange*.
7. The analysis of Chapter 21.

Questions.

- 1) Try to characterize society where Alex lives. Is it more liberal than Oceania? Happier? Closer to the modern society?
- 2) What devices did Burgess use to describe the teenager subculture?
- 3) Find the examples of the Anglo-Russian invented teen slang of Nadsat in the British version and their equivalents in the Russian translation. Do you think the translator's variants to be apt? Can you offer your own variants of translation into Ukrainian?
- 4) How can we explain the changes in Alex's behavior in the final chapter? What does he begin to realize?
- 5) Are there the words in the fragment that help to understand the title of the novel?
8. Comparative analysis of the chapters.

Questions.

- 1) It is clear that Winston and Alex are very different. Can you find the features that unite them?
- 2) Are the writers' approaches to the nature of evil the same? Who or what is bad: the person or the society? Both?
- 3) What realist and modernist techniques are used in the excerpts?
- 4) Define the authors' technique of point of view (the omnipresent author, the first person narrative, the third person limited narrative, etc.)
- 5) Can these novels be called fantastic? Dystopian? Anti-utopian? Why?

Literature and Resources

1. About dystopia:

Dystopia. – Online at : en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dystopia.

2. About Orwell and *1984*:

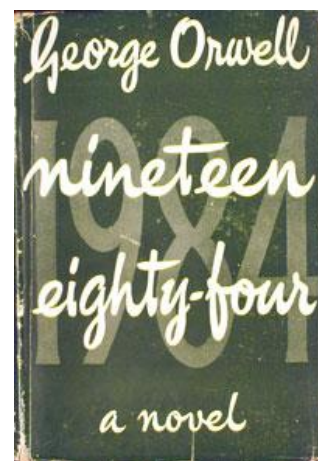
1) George Orwell. –

Online at : en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Orwell.

- 2) George Orwell. –
Online at : www.online-literature.com/orwell/.
- 3) The George Orwell Web Source. –
Online at : <http://www.netcharles.com/orwell/>.
- 4) George Orwell. –
Online at : <http://us.imdb.com/name/nm0000567/>.
- 5) Nineteen Eighty-Four. –
Online at : en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nineteen_Eighty-Four.

3. About Burgess and *A Clockwork Orange*:

- 1) Anthony Burgess. – Online at :
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anthony_Burgess.
- 2) Anthony Burgess. – Online at : www.kirjasto.sci.fi/burgess.htm.
- 3) Anthony Burgess. – Online at : www.anthonymburgess.org/.
- 4) *A Clockwork Orange*. – Online at :
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Clockwork_Orange.
- 5) Берджес Ентоні. Механічний апельсин / Ентоні Берджес ;
[пер. з англ. О. Буценка]. –
Online at : www.ukrcenter.com/library/read.asp?id=1740&page=8 (Увага! Розділ 21, запропонований для аналізу, у перекладі відсутній).



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2. Lucas Scott. Orwell (Life & Time Series) / Scott Lucas. – London : Haus Publishing, 2003. – 180 p.
3. Meyers Jeffrey. A Reader's Guide to George Orwell / Jeffrey Meyers. – London : Thames and Hudson, 1975. – 192 p.

About Burgess and *A Clockwork Orange*:

1. Biswell Andrew. The Real Life of Anthony Burgess / Andrew Biswell. – London: Picador, 2005. – 400 p.
2. Lewis Roger. Anthony Burgess / Roger Lewis. – London: Faber and Faber, 2002. – 434 p.
3. Mathews Richard. The Clockwork Universe of Anthony Burgess / Richard Mathews. – London: Borgo Press, 1990. – 63 p.

Texts

George Orwell. 1984.

Part One

1

It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen. Winston Smith, his chin nuzzled into his breast in an effort to escape the vile wind, slipped quickly through the glass doors of Victory Mansions, though not quickly enough to prevent a swirl of gritty dust from entering along with him.

The hallway smelt of boiled cabbage and old rag mats. At one end of it a coloured poster, too large for indoor display, had been tacked to the wall. It depicted simply an enormous face, more than a metre wide: the face of a man of about forty-five, with a heavy black moustache and ruggedly handsome features. Winston made for the stairs. It was no use trying the lift. Even at the best of times it was seldom working, and at present the electric current was cut off during daylight hours. It was part of the economy drive in preparation for Hate Week. The flat was seven flights up, and Winston, who was thirty-nine and had a varicose ulcer above his right ankle, went slowly, resting several times on the way. On each landing, opposite the lift-shaft, the poster with the enormous face gazed from the wall. It was one of those pictures which are so contrived that the eyes follow you about when you move. BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU, the caption beneath it ran.

Inside the flat a fruity voice was reading out a list of figures which had something to do with the production of pig-iron. The voice came from an oblong metal plaque like a dulled mirror which formed part of the surface of the right-hand wall. Winston turned a switch and the voice sank somewhat, though the words were still distinguishable. The instrument (the telescreen, it was called) could be dimmed, but there was no way of shutting it off completely. He moved over to the window: a smallish, frail figure, the meagreness of his body merely emphasized by the blue overalls which were the uniform of the party. His

hair was very fair, his face naturally sanguine, his skin roughened by coarse soap and blunt razor blades and the cold of the winter that had just ended.

Outside, even through the shut window-pane, the world looked cold. Down in the street little eddies of wind were whirling dust and torn paper into spirals, and though the sun was shining and the sky a harsh blue, there seemed to be no colour in anything, except the posters that were plastered everywhere. The blackmoustachio'd face gazed down from every commanding corner. There was one on the house-front immediately opposite. **BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU**, the caption said, while the dark eyes looked deep into Winston's own. Down at streetlevel another poster, torn at one corner, flapped fitfully in the wind, alternately covering and uncovering the single word **INGSOC**. In the far distance a helicopter skimmed down between the roofs, hovered for an instant like a bluebottle, and darted away again with a curving flight. It was the police patrol, snooping into people's windows. The patrols did not matter, however. Only the Thought Police mattered.



Behind Winston's back the voice from the telescreen was still babbling away about pig-iron and the overfulfilment of the Ninth Three-Year Plan. The telescreen received and transmitted simultaneously. Any sound that Winston made, above the level of a very low whisper, would be picked up by it, moreover, so long as he remained within the field of vision which the metal plaque commanded, he could be seen as well as heard. There was of course no way of knowing whether you were being watched at any given moment. How often, or on what system, the Thought Police plugged in on any individual wire was guesswork. It was even conceivable that they watched everybody all the time. But at any rate they could plug in your wire whenever they wanted to. You had to live – did live, from habit that became instinct – in the assumption that every sound you made was overheard, and, except in darkness, every movement scrutinized.

Winston kept his back turned to the telescreen. It was safer, though, as he well knew, even a back can be revealing. A kilometre away the Ministry of Truth, his place of work, towered vast and white above the grimy landscape. This, he thought with a sort of vague distaste – this was London, chief city of Airstrip One, itself the third most populous of the provinces of Oceania. He tried to squeeze out some childhood memory that should tell him whether London had always been quite like this. Were there always these vistas of rotting nineteenth-century houses, their sides shored up with baulks of timber, their windows patched with cardboard and their roofs with corrugated iron, their crazy garden walls sagging in all directions? And the bombed sites where the plaster dust swirled in the air and the willow-herb straggled over the heaps of rubble; and the places where the bombs had cleared a larger patch and there had sprung up sordid colonies of wooden dwellings like chicken-houses? But it was no use, he could not remember: nothing remained of his childhood except a series of bright-lit tableaux occurring against no background and mostly unintelligible.

The Ministry of Truth – Minitrue, in Newspeak – was startlingly different from any other object in sight. It was an enormous pyramidal structure of glittering white concrete, soaring up, terrace after terrace, 300 metres into the air. From where Winston stood it was just possible to read, picked out on its white face in elegant lettering, the three slogans of the Party:

WAR IS PEACE

FREEDOM IS SLAVERY

IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH

The Ministry of Truth contained, it was said, three thousand rooms above ground level, and corresponding ramifications below. Scattered about London there were just three other buildings of similar appearance and size. So completely did they dwarf the surrounding architecture that from the roof of Victory Mansions you could see all four of them simultaneously. They were the homes of the four Ministries between which the entire apparatus of government was divided. The Ministry of Truth, which concerned itself with news, entertainment, education, and the fine arts. The Ministry of Peace, which concerned itself with war. The Ministry of Love, which maintained law and order. And the Ministry of Plenty, which was responsible for economic affairs. Their names, in Newspeak: Minitrue, Minipax, Miniluv, and Miniplenty.

The Ministry of Love was the really frightening one. There were no windows in it at all. Winston had never been inside the Ministry of Love, nor within half a kilometre of it. It was a place impossible to enter except on official business, and then only by penetrating through a maze of barbed-wire entanglements, steel doors, and hidden machine-gun nests. Even the streets leading up to its outer barriers were roamed by gorilla-faced guards in black uniforms, armed with jointed truncheons.

Winston turned round abruptly. He had set his features into the expression of quiet optimism which it was advisable to wear when facing the telescreen. He crossed the room into the tiny kitchen. By leaving the Ministry at this time of day he had sacrificed his lunch in the canteen, and he was aware that there was no food in the kitchen except a hunk of dark-coloured bread which had got to be saved for tomorrow's breakfast. He took down from the shelf a bottle of colourless liquid with a plain white label marked VICTORY GIN. It gave off a sickly, oily smell, as of Chinese ricespirit. Winston poured out nearly a teacupful, nerved himself for a shock, and gulped it down like a dose of medicine.

Instantly his face turned scarlet and the water ran out of his eyes. The stuff was like nitric acid, and moreover, in swallowing it one had the sensation of being hit on the back of the head with a rubber club. The next moment, however, the burning in his belly died down and the world began to look more cheerful. He took a cigarette from a crumpled packet marked VICTORY CIGARETTES and incautiously held it upright, whereupon the tobacco fell out on to the floor. With the next he was more successful. He went back to the living-room and sat down at a small table that stood to the left of the telescreen. From the table drawer he took out a penholder, a bottle of ink, and a thick, quarto-sized blank book with a red back and a marbled cover.

For some reason the telescreen in the living-room was in an unusual position. Instead of being placed, as was normal, in the end wall, where it could command the whole room, it was in the longer wall, opposite the window. To one side of it there was a shallow alcove in which Winston was now sitting, and which, when the flats were built, had probably been intended to hold bookshelves. By sitting in the alcove, and keeping well back, Winston was able to remain outside the range of the telescreen, so far as sight went. He could be heard, of course, but so long as he stayed in his present position he could not be seen. It was partly the unusual geography of the room that had suggested to him the thing that he was now about to do.

But it had also been suggested by the book that he had just taken out of the drawer. It was a peculiarly beautiful book. Its smooth creamy paper, a little yellowed by age, was of a kind that had not been manufactured for at least forty years past. He could guess, however, that the book was much older than that. He had seen it lying in the window of a frowsy little junk-shop in a slummy quarter of the town (just what quarter he did not now remember) and had been stricken immediately by an overwhelming desire to possess it. Party members were supposed not to go into ordinary shops ('dealing on the free market', it was called), but the rule was not strictly kept, because there were various things, such as shoelaces and razor blades, which it was impossible to get hold of in any other way. He had given a quick glance up and down the street and then had slipped inside and bought the book for two dollars fifty. At the time he was not conscious of wanting it for any particular purpose. He had carried it guiltily home in his briefcase. Even with nothing written in it, it was a compromising possession.

The thing that he was about to do was to open a diary. This was not illegal (nothing was illegal, since there were no longer any laws), but if detected it was reasonably certain that it would be punished by death, or at least by twenty-five years in a forced-labour camp. Winston fitted a nib into the penholder and sucked it to get the grease off. The pen was an archaic instrument, seldom used even for signatures, and he had procured one, furtively and with some difficulty, simply because of a feeling that the beautiful creamy paper deserved to be written on with a real nib instead of being scratched with an ink-pencil. Actually he was not used to writing by hand. Apart from very short notes, it was usual to dictate everything into the speakwrite which was of course impossible for his present purpose. He dipped the pen into the ink and then faltered for just a second. A tremor had gone through his bowels. To mark the paper was the decisive act. In small clumsy letters he wrote:

April 4th, 1984.

He sat back. A sense of complete helplessness had descended upon him. To begin with, he did not know with any certainty that this was 1984. It must be round about that date, since he was fairly sure that his age was thirty-nine, and he believed that he had been born in 1944 or 1945; but it was never possible nowadays to pin down any date within a year or two.

For whom, it suddenly occurred to him to wonder, was he writing this diary? For the future, for the unborn. His mind hovered for a moment round the doubtful date on the page, and then fetched up with a bump against the Newspeak word doublethink. For the first time the magnitude of what he had undertaken came home to him. How could you communicate with the future? It was of its nature impossible. Either the future would resemble the present, in which case it would not listen to him: or it would be different from it, and his predicament would be meaningless.

For some time he sat gazing stupidly at the paper. The telescreen had changed over to strident military music. It was curious that he seemed not merely to have lost the power of expressing himself, but even to have forgotten what it was that he had originally intended to say. For weeks past he had been making

ready for this moment, and it had never crossed his mind that anything would be needed except courage. The actual writing would be easy. All he had to do was to transfer to paper the interminable restless monologue that had been running inside his head, literally for years. At this moment, however, even the monologue had dried up. Moreover his varicose ulcer had begun itching unbearably. He dared not scratch it, because if he did so it always became inflamed. The seconds were ticking by. He was conscious of nothing except the blankness of the page in front of him, the itching of the skin above his ankle, the blaring of the music, and a slight booziness caused by the gin.

Suddenly he began writing in sheer panic, only imperfectly aware of what he was setting down. His small but childish handwriting straggled up and down the page, shedding first its capital letters and finally even its full stops:

April 4th, 1984. Last night to the flicks. All war films. One very good one of a ship full of refugees being bombed somewhere in the Mediterranean. Audience much amused by shots of a great huge fat man trying to swim away with a helicopter after him, first you saw him wallowing along in the water like a porpoise, then you saw him through the helicopters gunsights, then he was full of holes and the sea round him turned pink and he sank as suddenly as though the holes had let in the water, audience shouting with laughter when he sank. then you saw a lifeboat full of children with a helicopter hovering over it. there was a middle-aged woman might have been a jewess sitting up in the bow with a little boy about three years old in her arms. little boy screaming with fright and hiding his head between her breasts as if he was trying to burrow right into her and the woman putting her arms round him and comforting him although she was blue with fright herself, all the time covering him up as much as possible as if she thought her arms could keep the bullets off him. then the helicopter planted a 20 kilo bomb in among them terrific flash and the boat went all to matchwood. then there was a wonderful shot of a child's arm going up up up right up into the air a helicopter with a camera in its nose must have followed it up and there was a lot of applause from the party seats but a woman down in the prole part of the house suddenly started kicking up a fuss and shouting they didnt oughter of showed it not in front of kids they didnt it aint right not in front of kids it aint until the police turned her turned her out i dont suppose anything happened to her nobody cares what the proles say typical prole reaction they never –

Winston stopped writing, partly because he was suffering from cramp. He did not know what had made him pour out this stream of rubbish. But the curious thing was that while he was doing so a totally different memory had clarified itself in his mind, to the point where he almost felt equal to writing it down. It was, he now realized, because of this other incident that he had suddenly decided to come home and begin the diary today.

It had happened that morning at the Ministry, if anything so nebulous could be said to happen.

It was nearly eleven hundred, and in the Records Department, where Winston worked, they were dragging the chairs out of the cubicles and grouping them in the centre of the hall opposite the big telescreen, in preparation for the Two Minutes Hate. Winston was just taking his place in one of the middle rows when two people whom he knew by sight, but had never spoken to, came unexpectedly into the room. One of them was a girl whom he often passed in the corridors. He did not know her name, but he knew that she worked in the Fiction Department. Presumably – since he had sometimes seen her with oily hands and carrying a spanner she had some mechanical job on one of the novel-writing machines. She was a bold-looking girl, of about twenty-seven, with thick hair, a freckled face, and swift, athletic movements. A narrow scarlet sash, emblem of the Junior Anti-Sex League, was wound several times round the waist of her overalls, just tightly enough to bring out the shapeliness of her hips. Winston had disliked her from the very first moment of seeing her. He knew the reason. It was because of the atmosphere of hockey-fields and cold baths and community hikes and general clean-mindedness which she managed to carry about with her. He disliked nearly all women, and especially the young and pretty ones. It was always the women, and above all the young ones, who were the most bigoted adherents of the Party, the swallowers of slogans, the amateur spies and nosers-out of unorthodoxy. But this particular girl gave him the impression of being more dangerous than most. Once when they passed in the corridor she gave him a quick sidelong glance which seemed to pierce right into him and for a moment had filled him with black terror. The idea had even crossed his mind that she might be an agent of the Thought Police. That, it was true, was very unlikely. Still, he continued to feel a peculiar uneasiness, which had fear mixed up in it as well as hostility, whenever she was anywhere near him.

The other person was a man named O'Brien, a member of the Inner Party and holder of some post so important and remote that Winston had only a dim idea of its nature. A momentary hush passed over the group of people round the chairs as they saw the black overalls of an Inner Party member approaching. O'Brien was a large, burly man with a thick neck and a coarse, humorous, brutal face. In spite of his

formidable appearance he had a certain charm of manner. He had a trick of resettling his spectacles on his nose which was curiously disarming – in some indefinable way, curiously civilized. It was a gesture which, if anyone had still thought in such terms, might have recalled an eighteenth-century nobleman offering his snuffbox. Winston had seen O'Brien perhaps a dozen times in almost as many years. He felt deeply drawn to him, and not solely because he was intrigued by the contrast between O'Brien's urbane manner and his prize-fighter's physique. Much more it was because of a secretly held belief – or perhaps not even a belief, merely a hope – that O'Brien's political orthodoxy was not perfect. Something in his face suggested it irresistibly. And again, perhaps it was not even unorthodoxy that was written in his face, but simply intelligence. But at any rate he had the appearance of being a person that you could talk to if somehow you could cheat the telescreen and get him alone. Winston had never made the smallest effort to verify this guess: indeed, there was no way of doing so. At this moment O'Brien glanced at his wrist-watch, saw that it was nearly eleven hundred, and evidently decided to stay in the Records Department until the Two Minutes Hate was over. He took a chair in the same row as Winston, a couple of places away. A small, sandy-haired woman who worked in the next cubicle to Winston was between them. The girl with dark hair was sitting immediately behind.

The next moment a hideous, grinding speech, as of some monstrous machine running without oil, burst from the big telescreen at the end of the room. It was a noise that set one's teeth on edge and bristled the hair at the back of one's neck. The Hate had started.

As usual, the face of Emmanuel Goldstein, the Enemy of the People, had flashed on to the screen. There were hisses here and there among the audience. The little sandy-haired woman gave a squeak of mingled fear and disgust. Goldstein was the renegade and backslider who once, long ago (how long ago, nobody quite remembered), had been one of the leading figures of the Party, almost on a level with Big Brother himself, and then had engaged in counter-revolutionary activities, had been condemned to death, and had mysteriously escaped and disappeared. The programmes of the Two Minutes Hate varied from day to day, but there was none in which Goldstein was not the principal figure. He was the primal traitor, the earliest defiler of the Party's purity. All subsequent crimes against the Party, all treacheries, acts of sabotage, heresies, deviations, sprang directly out of his teaching. Somewhere or other he was still alive and hatching his conspiracies: perhaps somewhere beyond the sea, under the protection of his foreign paymasters, perhaps even – so it was occasionally rumoured – in some hiding-place in Oceania itself.

Winston's diaphragm was constricted. He could never see the face of Goldstein without a painful mixture of emotions. It was a lean Jewish face, with a great fuzzy aureole of white hair and a small goatee beard – a clever face, and yet somehow inherently despicable, with a kind of senile silliness in the long thin nose, near the end of which a pair of spectacles was perched. It resembled the face of a sheep, and the voice, too, had a sheep-like quality. Goldstein was delivering his usual venomous attack upon the doctrines of the Party – an attack so exaggerated and perverse that a child should have been able to see through it, and yet just plausible enough to fill one with an alarmed feeling that other people, less level-headed than oneself, might be taken in by it. He was abusing Big Brother, he was denouncing the dictatorship of the Party, he was demanding the immediate conclusion of peace with Eurasia, he was advocating freedom of speech, freedom of the Press, freedom of assembly, freedom of thought, he was crying hysterically that the revolution had been betrayed – and all this in rapid polysyllabic speech which was a sort of parody of the habitual style of the orators of the Party, and even contained Newspeak words: more Newspeak words, indeed, than any Party member would normally use in real life. And all the while, lest one should be in any doubt as to the reality which Goldstein's specious claptrap covered, behind his head on the telescreen there marched the endless columns of the Eurasian army – row after row of solid-looking men with expressionless Asiatic faces, who swam up to the surface of the screen and vanished, to be replaced by others exactly similar. The dull rhythmic tramp of the soldiers' boots formed the background to Goldstein's bleating voice.

Before the Hate had proceeded for thirty seconds, uncontrollable exclamations of rage were breaking out from half the people in the room. The self-satisfied sheep-like face on the screen, and the terrifying power of the Eurasian army behind it, were too much to be borne: besides, the sight or even the thought of Goldstein produced fear and anger automatically. He was an object of hatred more constant than either Eurasia or Eastasia, since when Oceania was at war with one of these Powers it was generally at peace with the other. But what was strange was that although Goldstein was hated and despised by everybody, although every day and a thousand times a day, on platforms, on the telescreen, in newspapers, in books, his theories were refuted, smashed, ridiculed, held up to the general gaze for the pitiful rubbish that they were in spite of all this, his influence never seemed to grow less. Always there were fresh dupes waiting to be seduced by him. A day never passed when spies and saboteurs acting under his directions were not unmasked by the Thought Police. He was the commander of a vast shadowy army, an underground network of conspirators

dedicated to the overthrow of the State. The Brotherhood, its name was supposed to be. There were also whispered stories of a terrible book, a compendium of all the heresies, of which Goldstein was the author and which circulated clandestinely here and there. It was a book without a title. People referred to it, if at all, simply as the book. But one knew of such things only through vague rumours. Neither the Brotherhood nor the book was a subject that any ordinary Party member would mention if there was a way of avoiding it.

In its second minute the Hate rose to a frenzy. People were leaping up and down in their places and shouting at the tops of their voices in an effort to drown the maddening bleating voice that came from the screen. The little sandy-haired woman had turned bright pink, and her mouth was opening and shutting like that of a landed fish. Even O'Brien's heavy face was flushed. He was sitting very straight in his chair, his powerful chest swelling and quivering as though he were standing up to the assault of a wave. The dark-haired girl behind Winston had begun crying out 'Swine! Swine! Swine!' and suddenly she picked up a heavy Newspeak dictionary and flung it at the screen. It struck Goldstein's nose and bounced off; the voice continued inexorably. In a lucid moment Winston found that he was shouting with the others and kicking his heel violently against the rung of his chair. The horrible thing about the Two Minutes Hate was not that one was obliged to act a part, but, on the contrary, that it was impossible to avoid joining in. Within thirty seconds any pretence was always unnecessary. A hideous ecstasy of fear and vindictiveness, a desire to kill, to torture, to smash faces in with a sledge-hammer, seemed to flow through the whole group of people like an electric current, turning one even against one's will into a grimacing, screaming lunatic. And yet the rage that one felt was an abstract, undirected emotion which could be switched from one object to another like the flame of a blowlamp. Thus, at one moment Winston's hatred was not turned against Goldstein at all, but, on the contrary, against Big Brother, the Party, and the Thought Police; and at such moments his heart went out to the lonely, derided heretic on the screen, sole guardian of truth and sanity in a world of lies. And yet the very next instant he was at one with the people about him, and all that was said of Goldstein seemed to him to be true. At those moments his secret loathing of Big Brother changed into adoration, and Big Brother seemed to tower up, an invincible, fearless protector, standing like a rock against the hordes of Asia, and Goldstein, in spite of his isolation, his helplessness, and the doubt that hung about his very existence, seemed like some sinister enchanter, capable by the mere power of his voice of wrecking the structure of civilization.

It was even possible, at moments, to switch one's hatred this way or that by a voluntary act. Suddenly, by the sort of violent effort with which one wrenches one's head away from the pillow in a nightmare, Winston succeeded in transferring his hatred from the face on the screen to the dark-haired girl behind him. Vivid, beautiful hallucinations flashed through his mind. He would flog her to death with a rubber truncheon. He would tie her naked to a stake and shoot her full of arrows like Saint Sebastian. He would ravish her and cut her throat at the moment of climax. Better than before, moreover, he realized why it was that he hated her. He hated her because she was young and pretty and sexless, because he wanted to go to bed with her and would never do so, because round her sweet supple waist, which seemed to ask you to encircle it with your arm, there was only the odious scarlet sash, aggressive symbol of chastity.

The Hate rose to its climax. The voice of Goldstein had become an actual sheep's bleat, and for an instant the face changed into that of a sheep. Then the sheep-face melted into the figure of a Eurasian soldier who seemed to be advancing, huge and terrible, his sub-machine gun roaring, and seeming to spring out of the surface of the screen, so that some of the people in the front row actually flinched backwards in their seats. But in the same moment, drawing a deep sigh of relief from everybody, the hostile figure melted into the face of Big Brother, black-haired, black-moustachio'd, full of power and mysterious calm, and so vast that it almost filled up the screen. Nobody heard what Big Brother was saying. It was merely a few words of encouragement, the sort of words that are uttered in the din of battle, not distinguishable individually but restoring confidence by the fact of being spoken. Then the face of Big Brother faded away again, and instead the three slogans of the Party stood out in bold capitals:

WAR IS PEACE

FREEDOM IS SLAVERY

IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH

But the face of Big Brother seemed to persist for several seconds on the screen, as though the impact that it had made on everyone's eyeballs was too vivid to wear off immediately. The little sandy-haired woman had flung herself forward over the back of the chair in front of her. With a tremulous murmur that sounded like 'My Saviour!' she extended her arms towards the screen. Then she buried her face in her hands. It was apparent that she was uttering a prayer.

At this moment the entire group of people broke into a deep, slow, rhythmical chant of 'B-B! ...B-B!'— over and over again, very slowly, with a long pause between the first 'B' and the second—a heavy, murmurous sound, somehow curiously savage, in the background of which one seemed to hear the stamp of

naked feet and the throbbing of tom-toms. For perhaps as much as thirty seconds they kept it up. It was a refrain that was often heard in moments of overwhelming emotion. Partly it was a sort of hymn to the wisdom and majesty of Big Brother, but still more it was an act of self-hypnosis, a deliberate drowning of consciousness by means of rhythmic noise. Winston's entrails seemed to grow cold. In the Two Minutes Hate he could not help sharing in the general delirium, but this sub-human chanting of 'B-B! ...B-B!' always filled him with horror. Of course he chanted with the rest: it was impossible to do otherwise. To dissemble your feelings, to control your face, to do what everyone else was doing, was an instinctive reaction. But there was a space of a couple of seconds during which the expression of his eyes might conceivably have betrayed him. And it was exactly at this moment that the significant thing happened – if, indeed, it did happen.

Momentarily he caught O'Brien's eye. O'Brien had stood up. He had taken off his spectacles and was in the act of resettling them on his nose with his characteristic gesture. But there was a fraction of a second when their eyes met, and for as long as it took to happen Winston knew – yes, he knew! – that O'Brien was thinking the same thing as himself. An unmistakable message had passed. It was as though their two minds had opened and the thoughts were flowing from one into the other through their eyes. 'I am with you,' O'Brien seemed to be saying to him. 'I know precisely what you are feeling. I know all about your contempt, your hatred, your disgust. But don't worry, I am on your side!' And then the flash of intelligence was gone, and O'Brien's face was as inscrutable as everybody else's.

That was all, and he was already uncertain whether it had happened. Such incidents never had any sequel. All that they did was to keep alive in him the belief, or hope, that others besides himself were the enemies of the Party. Perhaps the rumours of vast underground conspiracies were true after all – perhaps the Brotherhood really existed! It was impossible, in spite of the endless arrests and confessions and executions, to be sure that the Brotherhood was not simply a myth. Some days he believed in it, some days not. There was no evidence, only fleeting glimpses that might mean anything or nothing: snatches of overheard conversation, faint scribbles on lavatory walls – once, even, when two strangers met, a small movement of the hand which had looked as though it might be a signal of recognition. It was all guesswork: very likely he had imagined everything. He had gone back to his cubicle without looking at O'Brien again. The idea of following up their momentary contact hardly crossed his mind. It would have been inconceivably dangerous even if he had known how to set about doing it. For a second, two seconds, they had exchanged an equivocal glance, and that was the end of the story. But even that was a memorable event, in the locked loneliness in which one had to live.

Winston roused himself and sat up straighter. He let out a belch. The gin was rising from his stomach.

His eyes re-focused on the page. He discovered that while he sat helplessly musing he had also been writing, as though by automatic action. And it was no longer the same cramped, awkward handwriting as before. His pen had slid voluptuously over the smooth paper, printing in large neat capitals –

DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER
DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER
DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER
DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER
DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER

over and over again, filling half a page.

He could not help feeling a twinge of panic. It was absurd, since the writing of those particular words was not more dangerous than the initial act of opening the diary, but for a moment he was tempted to tear out the spoiled pages and abandon the enterprise altogether.

He did not do so, however, because he knew that it was useless. Whether he wrote DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER, or whether he refrained from writing it, made no difference. Whether he went on with the diary, or whether he did not go on with it, made no difference. The Thought Police would get him just the same. He had committed – would still have committed, even if he had never set pen to paper – the essential crime that contained all others in itself. Thoughtcrime, they called it. Thoughtcrime was not a thing that could be concealed for ever. You might dodge successfully for a while, even for years, but sooner or later they were bound to get you.

It was always at night – the arrests invariably happened at night. The sudden jerk out of sleep, the rough hand shaking your shoulder, the lights glaring in your eyes, the ring of hard faces round the bed. In the vast majority of cases there was no trial, no report of the arrest. People simply disappeared, always during the night. Your name was removed from the registers, every record of everything you had ever done was wiped out, your one-time existence was denied and then forgotten. You were abolished, annihilated:



vaporized was the usual word. For a moment he was seized by a kind of hysteria. He began writing in a hurried untidy scrawl:

theyll shoot me i don't care theyll shoot me in the back of the neck i dont care down with big brother they always shoot you in the back of the neck i dont care down with big brother –

He sat back in his chair, slightly ashamed of himself, and laid down the pen. The next moment he started violently. There was a knocking at the door.

Already! He sat as still as a mouse, in the futile hope that whoever it was might go away after a single attempt. But no, the knocking was repeated. The worst thing of all would be to delay. His heart was thumping like a drum, but his face, from long habit, was probably expressionless. He got up and moved heavily towards the door.

Anthony Burgess. A Clockwork Orange. (British version).

Final Chapter (21)

“What’s it going to be then, eh?”



A shot from *A Clockwork Orange* (1971, USA, Great Britain, dir. by Stanley Kubrick).
Alex – Malcolm McDowell

There was me. Your Humble Narrator, and my three droogs that is Len. Rick, and Bully, Bully being called Bully because of his bolshy big neck and very gromky goloss which was just like some bolshy great bull bellowing auuuuuuuuh. We were sitting in the Korova Milkbar making up our rassoodocks what to do with the evening, a flip dark chill winter bastard though dry. All round were chelloveks well away on milk plus vellocet and synthemesc and drencrom and other veshches which take you far far far away from this wicked and real world into the land to viddy Bog And All His Holy Angels And Saints in your left sabog with lights bursting and spurring all over your mozg. What we were peeling was the old moloko with knives to it, as we used to say, to sharpen you up and make you ready for a bit of dirty twenty-to-one, but I’ve told you all that before.

We were dressed in the height of fashion, which in those days was these very wide trousers and a vefy loose black shiny leather like jerkin over an open-necked shirt with a like scarf tucked in. At this time too it was the height of fashion to use the old britva on the gulliver, so that most of the gulliver was like bald and there was hair only on the sides. But it was always the same on the old nogas – real horrorshow bolshy big boots for kicking litsos in.

What’s it going to be then, eh?’ I was like the oldest of we four and they all looked up to me as their leader, but I got the idea sometimes that Bully had the thought in his gulliver that he would like to take over this being because of his bigness and the gromky goloss that bellowed out of him when he was on the warpath. But all the ideas came from Your Humble, O my brothers, and also there was this veshch that I had been famous and had had my picture and articles and all that cal in the gazettas. Also I had by far the best job of all we four, being in the National Gramodisc Archives on the music side with a real horrorshow carman full of pretty polly at the week’s end and a lot of nice free discs for my own malenky self on the side.

This evening in the Korova there was a fair number of vecks and pitsas and devotchkas and malchicks smecking and peeling away and cutting through their govoreeting and the burbling of the in-the-landers with their ‘Gorgor fallatuke and the worm sprays in filltip slaughterballs’ and all that cal you could slooshy a popdisc on the stereo this being Ned Achimota singing That Day, yeah, That Day. At the counter were three devotchkas dressed in the heighth of nadsat fashion, that is to say long uncombed hair dyed white and false groodies sticking out a inetre or more and very very tight short skirts with ?? like frothy white underneath, and Bully kept saying: “Hey, get in there we could, three of us. Old Len is not interested. Leave old Len alone with his God. And Len kept saying: ‘Yarbles yarbles. Where is die spirit of all for one and one for all, eh boy?’ ” Suddenly I felt both very very dred and also full of ringly energy, and I said:

“Out out out out out”.

“Where to?” said Rick who had a litso like a frog’s.

“Oh, just to viddy what’s doing in the great outside”, I said. But somehow, my brothers, I felt very bored and a bit hopeless, and I had been feeling that a lot these days. So I turned to the chelloveck nearest me on the big plush seat dial ran right round the whole mesto, a chelloveck, that is, who was burbling away under the influence, and I fisted him real skorry ack ack ack in the belly. But he felt it not, brothers, only

burbling away with his 'Cart cart virtue. Where in toptails lieth the pop-poppicorns?' So we scatted out into the big winter nochy.

We walked down Marghanita Boulevard and there were no millicents patrollihg that way, so when we met a starry veck coming away from a news-kiosk where he had been kupetting a gazetta I said to Bully: "All right, Bully boy, thou canst if thou like wishest". More and more these days I had been just giving the orders and standing back to viddy them being carried out. So Bully cracked into him er er er, and the other two tripped hftn and kicked at him, smecking away, while he was down and then let him crawl off to where he lived, like whickering to himself. Bully said:

"How about a nice yummy glass of something to keep out the cold, O Alex?" For we were not too far from the Duke of New York. The other two nodded yes yes yes but all looked at me to viddy whether that was all right. I nodded too and so off we itted. Inside the snug there were these starry ptitsas or sharps or baboochkas you will remember from the beginning and they all started on their: "Evening, lads. God bless you, boys, best lads living, that's what you are," waiting for us to say: "What's it going to be, girls?" Bully rang the collocoll and a waiter came in rubbing his rookers on his grazzy apron. "Cutter on the table, droogies", said Bully, pulling out his own rattling and chinking mound of deng. "Scotchmen for us and the same for the old baboochkas. eh?" And then I said:

"Ah, to hell. Let them buy their own." I didn't know what it was, but these last days I had become like mean. There had come into my gulliver a like desire to keep all my pretty polly to myself, to like hoard it all up for some reason. Bully said:

"What gives, bratty? What's coming over old Alex?"

"Ah, to hell." I said. "I don't know. I don't know. What it is is I don't like just throwing away my hard-earned pretty polly, that's what it is."

"Earned?" said Rick. "Earned? It doesn't have to be earned, as well thou knowest, old droogie. Took, that's all. Just took, like." And he smecked real gromky and I viddied one or two of his zoobies weren't all that horrorshow.

"Ah," I said, "I've got some thinking to do." But viddying these baboochkas looking an eager like for some free ale, I like shrugged my pletchoes and pulled out my own cutter from my trouser carman, notes and coin all mixed together, and plonked it tinkle crackle on die table.

"Scotchmen all round, right." said the waiter. But for some reason I said:

"No, boy, for me make it one small beer, right." Len said:

"This I do not much go for," and he began to put his rooker on my gulliver, like kidding I must have fever, but I like snarled doggy-wise for him to give over skorry. "All right, all right, droog," he said. "As thou like sayest." But Bully was having a smot with his rot open at something that had come out of my carman with the pretty polly I'd put on the table. He said:

"Well well well And we never knew."

Give me that, I snarled and grabbed it skorry. I couldn't explain how it had got there, brothers, but it was a photograph I had scissored out of the old gazetta and it was of a baby. It was of a baby gurgling goo goo with all like moloko dribbling from its rot and looking up and like smecking at everybody, and it was all nagoy and its flesh was like in all folds with being a very fat baby. There was then like a bit of haw haw struggling to get hold of this bit of paper from me, so I had to snarl again at them and I grabbed the photo and tore it up into tiny teeny pieces and let it fall like a bit of snow on to the floor. The whisky came in then and the starry baboochkas said: "Good health, lads. God bless you, boys, the best lads living, that's what you are," and all that cal. And one of them who was all lines and wrinkles and no zoobies in her shrunken old rot said:

"Don't tear up money, son. If you don't need it give it them as does," which was very bold and forward of her. But Rick said:

"Money that was not, baboochka. It was a picture of a dear little itsy witsy bitsy bit of a baby." I said:

"I'm getting just that bit tired, that I am. It's you who's the babies, you lot. Scoffing and grinning and all you can do is smeck and give people bolshy cowardly tolchocks when they can't give them back." Bully said:

"Well now, we always thought it was you who was the king of that and also the teacher. Not well, that's the trouble with thou, old droogie."

I viddied this sloppy glass of beer I had on the table in front of me and felt like all vomity within, so I went "Aaaaah" and poured all die frothy vonny cal all over the floor. One of the starry ptitsas said:

"Waste not want not" I said:

“Look, droogies, listen. Tonight I am somehow just not in the mood. I know not why or how it is, but there it is. You three go your own ways this nightwise, leaving me out. Tomorrow we shall meet same place same time, me hoping to be like a lot better.

“Oh,” said Bully, “right sorry I am.” But you could viddy a like gleam in his glazzies, because now he would be taking over for this nochy. Power power, everybody like wants power. “We can postpone till tomorrow”, said Bully “what we in mind had. Namely, that bit of shop-crasting in Gagarin Street. Flip horror-show takings there, droog, for the having”.

“No” I said. “You postpone nothing. You just carry on in your own like style. Now, I said, I itty off.” And I got up from my chair.

“Where to, then?” asked Rick.

“That know I not”, I said. “Just to be on like my own and sort things out.” You could viddy the old baboochkas were real puzzled at me going out like that and like all morose and not the bright and smecking malchickiwick you will remember. But I said: “Ah, to hell, to hell” and scatted out all on my oddy knocky into the street.

It was dark and there was a wind sharp as a nozh getting up, and there were very very few lewdies about. There were these patrol cars with brutal rozzes inside them like cruising about, and now and then on the comer you would viddy a couple of very young millicents stamping against the bitchy cold and letting out steam breath on the winter air. O, my brothers. I suppose really a lot of the old ultra-violence and crasting was dying out now, the rozzes being so brutal with who they caught, though it had become like a fight between naughty nadsats and the rozzes who could be more skorry with die nozh and the britva and the stick and even the gun. But what was the matter with me these days was that I didn’t like care much. It was like something soft getting into me and I could not pony why. What I wanted these days I did not know. Even the music I liked to slooshy in my own malenky den was what I would have smecked at before, brothers. I was slooshying more like malenky romantic songs, what they call *Lieder*, just a goloss and a piano very quiet and like yearny, different from when it had been all bolshy orchestras and me lying on the bed between the violins and the trombones and kettledrums. There was something happening inside me and I wondered if it was like some disease of if it was what they had done to me that time upsetting my gulliver and perhaps going to make me real bezoomny.

So thinking like this with my gulliver bent and my rookers stuck in my trouser carmans I walked the town, brothers, and at last I began to feel very tired and also in great need of a nice bolshy chasha of milky chai. Thinking about this chai I got a sudden like picture of me sitting before a bolshy fire in an armchair peeting away at this chai, and what was funny and very very strange was that I seemed to have turned into a very starry chelloveck about seventy years old, because I could viddy my own voloss which was very grey and I also had whiskers, and these were very grey too. I could viddy myself as an old man sitting by a fire, and then the like picture vanished. But it was very like strange.

I came to one of these tea-and-coffee mestos, brothers, and I could viddy through die long long window that it was full of very dull lewdies, like ordinary, who had these very patient and expressionless litsos and would do no harm to no one, all sitting there and govoreeting like quietly and peeting away at their nice harmless chai and coffee. I ittied inside and wait up to the counter and bought me a nice hot chai with plenty of moloko, then I ittied to one of these tables and sat down to peet it. There was a like young couple at this table, peeting and smoking filter-tip cancers, and govoreeting and smecking very quietly between themselves, but I took no notice of them and just went on peeting away and like dreaming and wondering what it was in me that was like changing and what was going to happen to me. But I viddied that the devotchka at this table who was with this chelloveck was real horrorshow, not the sort you would want to like throw down and give the old in-out in out to, but with a horrorshow plott and litso and a smiling rot and very very fair voloss and all that cal. And then the veck with her, who had a hat on his gulliver and had his litso like turned away from me, swivelled round to viddy the bolshy big clock they had on the wall in this mesto, and then I viddied who he was and then he viddied who I was. It was Pete, one of my three droogs from those days when it was Georgie and Dim and him and me. It was Pete like looking a lot older though he could not now be more than nineteen and a bit, and he had a bit of a moustache and an ordinary day-suit and this hat on. I said:

“Well well well, droogie, what gives? Very very long time no viddy.” He said:

“It’s little Alex, isn’t it?”

“None other,” I said. “A long long long time since those dead and gone good days. And now poor Georgie, they told me, is underground and old Dim is a brutal millicent, and here is thou and here is I, and what news hast thou, old droogie?”

“He talks funny, doesn’t he?” said this devotchka, like giggling.

"This," said Pete to the devotchka, "is an old friend. His name is Alex. May I, he said to me, introduce my wife?"

My rot fell wide open then. "Wife?" I like gaped. Wife wife wife? Ah no, that cannot be. Too young art thou to be married, old droog. Impossible impossible.

"Did you used to talk like that too?"

"Well," said Pete, and he like smiled. "I'm nearly twenty. Old enough to be hitched, and it's been two months already. You were very young and very forward, remember."

"Well" I like gaped still. "Over this get can I not, old droogie. Pete married. Well well well."

"We have a small flat," said Pete. "I am earning very small money at State Marine Insurance, but things will get better, that I know. And Georgina here —"

"What again is that name?" I said, rot still open like bezoomny. Pete's wife (wife, brothers) like giggled again.

"Georgina" said Pete. "Georgina works too. Typing, you know. We manage, we manage." I could not, brothers, take my glazzies off him, really. He was like grown up now, with a grown-up goloss and all. "You must" said Pete "come and see us sometime. You still," he said, "look very young, despite all your terrible experiences. Yes yes yes, we've read all about them. But, of course, you are very young still."

"Eighteen," I said, "Just gone."

"Eighteen, eh?" said Pete. "As old as that well well well. Now, he said, we have to be going." And he like gave this Georgina of his a like loving look and pressed one of her rookers between his and she gave him one of these looks back, O my brothers. "Yes", said Pete, turning back to me. "We're off to a little party at Greg's."

"Greg?" I said.

"Oh, of course" said Pete "you wouldn't know Greg, would you? Greg is after your time. While you were away Greg came into the picture. He runs little parties, you know. Mostly wine-cup and word-games. But very nice, very pleasant, you know. Harmless, if you see what I mean."

"Yes." I said. "Harmless. Yes. yes. I viddy that real horror-show." And this Georgina devotchka giggled again at my slovos. And then these two ittied off to their vonny word games at this Greg's, whoever he was. I was left all on my oddi knocky with my milky chai, which was getting cold now like thinking and wondering.

Perhaps that was it, I kept thinking. Perhaps I was getting too old for the sort of jeezny I had been leading, brothers. I was eighteen now, just gone. Eighteen was not a young age. At eighteen old Wolfgang Amadeus had written concertos and symphonies and operas and oratorios and all that cal. No, no cal, heavenly music. And then there was old Felix M. with his *Midsummer Night's Dream* Overture. And there were others. And there was this like French poet set by old Benjy Britt who had done all his best poetry by the age of fifteen, O brothers. Arthur, his first name. Eighteen was not all the young an age, then. But what was I going to do?

Wafting the dark chill bastards of winter streets after ittying off from this chai and coffee mesto I kept viddying like visions like these cartoons in the gazettas. There was Your Humbi Narrator Alex coming home from work to a good hot plate dinner, and there was this pritsa welcoming and greeting like loving. But I could not viddy her all that horrorshow, brothers. I could not think who it might be. But I had the sudden very strong idea that if I walked into the room next this room where the fire was burning away and my hot dinner laid on the table, there I should find what I really wanted, an now it all tied up, that picture scissored out of the gazetta and meeting old Pete like that. For in that other room in a cot was laying gurgling goo goo my son. Yes yes yes, brothers, my son. And now I felt this bolshy big hollow inside my ploti feeling very surprised too at myself. I knew what was happening, O my brothers. I was like growing up.

Yes yes yes, there it was. Youth must go, ah yes. But youth is only being in a way like it might be an animal. No, it is not just like being an animal so much as being like one of these malenky toys you viddy being sold in the streets, like little chellovecks made out of tin and with a spring inside and then a winding handle on the outside and you wind it up grrr grrr grrr and off it itties like walking, O my brothers. But it itties in a straight fine and bangs straight into things bang bang and it cannot help what it is doing. Being young is like being like one of these malenky machines.

My son, my son. When I had my son I would explain all that to him when he was starry enough to like understand. But then I knew he would not understand or would not want to understand at all and would do all the veshches I had done, yes perhaps even killing some poor starry forella surrounded with mowing kots and koshkas, and I would not be able, to really stop him. And nor would he be able to stop his own son, brothers. And so it would itty on to like the end of the world, round and round and round, like some bolshy

gigantic like chelloveck, like old Bog Himself (by courtesy of Korova Milkbar) turning and turning and turning a vonny grahzny orange in his gigantic rookers.

But first of all, brothers, there was this veshch of finding some devotchka or other who would be a mother to this son. I would have to start on that tomorrow. I kept thinking. That was something like new to do. That was something I would have to get started on, a new like chapter beginning.

That's what it's going to be then, brothers, as I come to the like end of this tale. You have been everywhere with your Humble droog Alex, suffering with him, and you have viddied some of the most grahzny bratchnies old Bog ever made, all on to your old droog Alex. And all it was was that I was young. But now as I end this story, brothers, I am not young, not no longer, oh no. Alex tike groweth up, oh yes.

But where I itty now, O my brothers, is on my oddy knocky, where you cannot go. Tomorrow is all like sweet flowers and the turning vonny earth and the stars and the old Luna up there and your old droog Alex all on his oddy knocky seeking like a mate. And all that cal. A terrible grahzny vonny world, really, O my brothers. And so farewell from your little droog. And to all others in this story profound shooms of lip-music brrrrrr. And they can kiss my sharres. But you, O my brothers, remember sometimes thy little Alex that was. Amen. And all that cal.

Энтони Берджесс. Заводной апельсин.

Пер. В.Бошняка

– Ну, что же теперь, а?

Теперь представьте себе меня, вашего скромного повествователя, с тремя koeshami – Леном, Риком и Бугаем, которого так прозвали за толстую bytshju шею и громкий bytshi kritsh – гыыыыыыыы! Сидим, стало быть, в молочном баре “Korova”, шеvelя mozgoi насчет того, куда бы убить вечер – подлый такой, холодный и сумрачный зимний вечер, хотя и сухой. Вокруг народ в отrade – tastshatsia от молока плюс велосет, синтемеск, дренкром и всяких прочих shtu-tshek, от которых идет тихий baldiozh, и ты минут пятнадцать чувствуешь, что сам Господь Бог со всем его святым воинством сидит у тебя в левом ботинке, а сквозь mozg проскакивают искры и фейерверки. Но мы не это пили, мы пили “молоко с ножами”, как это у нас называлось, – от него идет tortsh, и хочется dratsing, хочется gasitt кого-нибудь по полной программе, одного всей kodloi, но это я уже объяснял в самом начале.

Каждый из нас четверых был одет по последней моде, что в то время означало пару широченных штанов и просторную, сияющую черным лаком кожаную kurtenn, надетую на рубашку с открытым воротом, под которым намотан шейный платок. Еще в то время было модно брить tykvu, чтобы посередине все было лысо, а volosnia только по бокам. Что же касается обувки, тут ничего нового не наматилось: все те же мощные govnodavu, чтобы пинаться. – Ну, что же теперь, а? Я был как бы за главаря в нашей четверке, kogesha видели во мне предводителя, но мне иногда казалось, что Бугай vtihariя подумывает о том, чтобы взять верх, – ведь он такой большой и сильный и у него такой громкий kritsh на тропе войны. Однако все идеи исходили от вашего скромного повествователя, бблин, а кроме того, играло свою роль и то, что я был вроде как знаменитость; все-таки фото в газетах, статьи про меня и всякий прочий kal. К тому же я куда как лучше всех был устроен в смысле работы – служил в национальном архиве грамзаписи, в музыкальном отделе, и в конце каждой недели карманы у меня ломались от babok, да еще и диски имел бесплатно для моего собственного услаждения.

В тот вечер в “Korove” собралось множество vekov, kis, devotshk и malltshikov, которые пили, смеялись и посреди разговора vupadali, раздражаясь чем-нибудь вроде “Горгорская приятуха, когда червяк вдрызг натюльпанит по кабыздохам”, а из динамиков стереустановки несся всякий эстрадный kal типа Неда Ахимоты, который тогда как раз пел “Эх, денек, ух, денек, йе-йе-йе”. У бара стояли три devotshki, прикинутые по последней моде nadtsatyh: длинные нечесанные patly, крашенные в белый цвет, накладные grudi, торчащие вперед на полметра, и коротюсенькие юбочки в обтяжку с торчащими из-под них беленькими кружавчи-ками, на которые все поглядывал Бугай, вновь и вновь повторяя: “Эй вы, пошли к тем лошадам, есть шанс проехаться, ну, хоть троим из нас. Все равно ведь Лену это не нужно. Пускай сидит тут, своему богу молится”. А Лен не соглашался; “Nafig-nafig, как же тогда дух товарищества, как же тогда один за всех и все за одного, а, дружище?” Я же, ощутив одновременно dikuju усталость и вместе с тем щекочущий прилив энергии, сказал:

– Ноги-ноги-ноги!

– Куда? – спросил Рик, у которого litso было как у лягушки.

– Да так, поглядим просто, что там происходит в стране великих возможностей, – ответил я. Но при этом, блин, я ощущал ужасную скуку и какую-то вроде как безнадежность, причем это уже не в первый раз так бывало за последние дни. Я повернулся к ближайшему hanuge – он сидел на бархатном сиденье, которое вкруговую шло вдоль стен zavedeniĵa, к тому то есть, кто бормотал v ofrade, и vrezal ему – хрясь, хрясь, хрясь – в ruzo. Но он ничего не почувствовал, блин, и продолжал бормотать свое: “Катится, катится колбасиной псиной балбарбасиной, а может дулдырдубиной?” С тем мы и выкатились в зимнюю необъятную notsh.

Пошли сперва по бульвару Марганита, ментов видно не было, поэтому, когда нам встретился starikashka, который как раз отошел от киоска, где он покупал газету, я сказал Бугаю: “Давай, Бугаек, прояви способности, коли желаешь”. Все чаще и чаще в последнее время я только отдавал распоряжения, а потом отходил назад поглядеть, как их выполняют. Ну, Бугай vrezal ему – бац, бац, бац, – другие двое повалили и с хохотом принялись пинать, а потом мы дали ему уползти, стена и голоса, к месту проживания. Бугай говорит:

– Как насчет стаканчика чего-нибудь покрепче для sugreva, а, Алекс? – Потому что мы были уже совсем близко от бара “Дюк-оф-Нью-Йорк”. Другие двое закивали – да, да, – а сами на меня смотрят, дескать, как я к этому отнесусь. Я тоже кивнул, и мы двинулись. Заходим, сидят те же старые ptitsy, или, по-нашему, sumki или babushki, про которых в начале было, и сразу же они завели свое:

– Добрый вечер, ребятки, дай Бог вам здоровья, мальчики, и какие же вы чудные, и какие хорошие, – а сами ждут, когда мы скажем: “Ну, что девушкам заказать?” Бугай позвонил в kolokol, и пришел официант, на ходу вытирая rukery o griazni фартук.

– Капусту на стол, ребята! – скомандовал Бугай, звякнув вынутой из карманов горстью монет. – Виски для нас и то же самое старым babushkam. Годится? А я говорю:

– К черту. Пускай на свои пьют. – Не знаю, что на меня накатило, но в последние дни я что-то был не в себе. Какая-то злость вступила в голову, хотелось, чтобы деньги мои оставались при мне, мне их зачем-то вроде как копить приспичило. Бугай удивился: – Что за дела, koresh? Что это с нашим Алексом? – Да ну к черту, – скривился я. – Не знаю. Сам не знаю. С нашим Алексом то, что он не хочет швыряться деньгами, которые с таким трудом заработал, вот и все.

– Заработал? – вскинулся Рик. – Заработал? Да ведь их же не надо зарабатывать, и ты это сам лучше нашего знаешь, старина. Братъ, и все тут, просто вроде как братъ, да и все. – И он громко расхохотался, так что я увидел, что два или три из его zubbjev были порченые.

– Это, – проговорил я, – надо еще подумать. – Однако, видя, как эти babusi прямо аж трясутся в предвкушении бесплатной выпивки, я вроде как пожал плечами, вынул капусту из кармана, где у меня монеты были вперемешку с бумажками, и бросил – deng-deng-hrust-deng – их все на стол.

– Значит, всем виски? – сказал официант. Но я зачем-то возразил:

– Нет, парень, мне только маленькую пива. – На что Лен, озабоченно нахмурившись, отозвался так:

– Ну, ты, блин, vashtshee! – И, плюнув на ладонь, потянулся приложить ее к моему лбу – дескать, аж шипит, до чего перегрелся, но я рыкнул на него, как злой pios, чтобы он это дело бросил. – Хорошо, хорошо, не буду, – сказал он. – Все putiom. Все, как скажешь. – А Бугай в это время, открыв got, уставился на фото, которое я случайно вытащил из кармана вместе с деньгами. – Так-так-так-так, – говорит. – А мы и не знали.

– Дай сюда! – рявкнул я и выхватил у него фотографию. Я и сам не знаю, как она попала ко мне в карман, однако я ее зачем-то собственноручно вырезал ножницами из старой газеты, а изображен на ней был младенец. Младенец чего-то там гулюкал, на губах у него пузырилось moloko, – в общем, вид у него был такой, будто он радуется всем и каждому; он был pag и весь подернут складчатым жирком, потому что это был очень упитанный младенец. Тут начались smeshki, попытки вырвать у меня фотку, так что пришлось снова рявкнуть, выхватить у них этот кусок газеты, после чего я разодрал его на множество мелких обрывков, которые снежинками полетели на пол. Тут подоспело виски, и babushki опять принялись нас благословлять, желать нам здоровья и долголетия, провозглашая нас всяческую хвалу и прочий kal. А одна из них, вся морщинистая и без единого зуба во ввалившемся gtu, сказала:

– Не надо рвать деньги, сынок. Если они не нужны тебе, отдай друзьям, – что с ее стороны было очень смело. Но Рик ей ответил:

– Это вовсе не деньги были, babushka. Это была картинка с младенчиком-симпампунчиком. А я говорю:

во времена, когда само слово “друзья” означало меня, его, Тема и Джорджика. Пит выглядел очень постаревшим, хотя ему вряд ли могло быть больше девятнадцати с небольшим; он отрастил себе усики, а одет был в обычный деловой костюм. Я говорю:

– Так-так-так-так, koresh, как делишки? Давненько не videliss. А он говорит:

– Коротышка Алекс, если я не ошибся? – Ничуть не ошибся, – отвечаю. – Как много воды-то утекло с тех давних прекрасных денечков. Бедняга Джорджик, я слышал, уже в могиле, а старина Тем ssutshilsia, ментом стал, только мы двое и ostaliss, ты б хоть povedal мне, что у тебя новенького, koresh.

– Как странно он говорит, не правда ли? – проговорила devotshka, вроде как хихикнув.

– Это, – пояснил ей Пит, – мой старый друг. Его зовут Алекс. Разреши, – обратился он ко мне, – я представлю тебе мою жену. Я даже got открыл.

– Жену? – выдохнул я. – Как так жену? Быть не может! Для брачных из ты вроде как чересчур jun, koresh. Да этого просто быть не mozhet!

Девушка, которую Пит представил мне как свою жену (в голове не укладывается), снова хихикнула и говорит Питу:

– Ты что, раньше тоже так разговаривал? – Ну, – пожал плечами Пит, – мне ведь все-таки скоро двадцать. Вполне уже можно остепениться, что я и сделал два месяца назад. Не забудь, ты ведь был младше нас – из молодых, да ранний.

– Так-так-так. – Я все еще сидел с открытым gotom. – Прямо никак... perevaritt... не в состоянии, koresh. Пит, и вдруг женился! Так-так-так.

– У нас своя квартирка, – сказал Пит. – Работаю в страховой фирме Госфлота, денег, правда, платят маловато, но со временем все образуется, это точно. А Джорджина...

– Как-как? – проговорил я, все еще ошарашено разевая got. Жена Пита (жена, блин!) снова хихикнула.

– Джорджина, – повторил Пит. – Она тоже работает. Машинисткой – ну, на машинке печатает. Ничего, кое-как перебиваемся. – А я на него, блин, как уставился, так и глаз не могу отвести. Он вроде как и ростом стал повыше, и даже голос стал взрослый, и вообще.

– Ты бы, – сказал Пит, – зашел к нам как-нибудь, посидели бы. А ты по-прежнему совсем мальчишкой смотришься, несмотря на все твои злоключения. Да-да-да, мы про тебя все читали. Хотя ты ведь и впрямь еще совсем молод.

– Мне восемнадцать, – сказал я. – Только что исполнилось.

– Восемнадцать, говоришь? – Пит поднял брови. – Ого. Так-так-так. Ну, нам пора. – И он бросил на эту свою Джорджину нежный и влюбленный взгляд, взял ее руку в свои, и она тоже на него поглядела так, что прямо – о, блин! – Пока, – бросил мне напоследок Пит, – мы спешим к Грегу на вечеринку. – К Грегу?

– А, ну конечно! – улыбнулся Пит. – Ты ведь не можешь знать его, естественно. При тебе его еще не было. Ты исчез, и тут появился Грег. Он иногда вечеринки небольшие устраивает. Так, чепуха: коктейли, салонные игры. Но очень мило, очень прилично. Как бы это тебе объяснить – безобидно, что ли.

– Ага, – отозвался я. – Безобидно. Что ж, я это ponimaju. Baldiozhnaja tusovka. – И снова эта самая Джорджина захихикала над моей манерой выражаться. А потом они рука об руку отправились заниматься своими voniutshimi салонными играми у этого Грега, кто бы он ни был. А я остался в odinotshestve допивать tshai, который уже остывал, остался думать и удивляться.

Наверное, в этом все дело, думал я. Наверное, я просто слишком стар становлюсь для той zhizni, блин, которую вел все это время. Восемнадцать – это совсем немало. В восемнадцать лет у Вольфганга Амадеуса уже написаны были концерты, симфонии, оперы, оратории и всякий прочий kal... хотя нет, не kal, а божественная музыка. Потом еще Феликс М. со своей увертюрой “Сон в летнюю ночь”. Да и другие. Еще был французский поэт, которого положил на музыку Бенджи Бритт – у того вообще все стихи к пятнадцати годам, блин, уже были написаны. Артур его звали. Стало быть, восемнадцать лет – это не такой уж и молодой возраст. Но мне-то теперь что делать?

Выйдя из кофейни, я долго слонялся по отчаянно холодным зимним улицам, и передо мной возникали все новые и новые видения, разворачиваясь и сменяя друг друга, будто в газетных комиксах. Вот ваш скромный повествователь возвращается с работы домой, а его там ждет накрытый стол и горячий обед, причем подает его этакая kisa, вся довольная и радостная и вроде как любящая. Но хорошенько разглядеть ее мне не удавалось, блин, и я не мог представить себе, кто это такая. Однако вдруг возникало очень ясное ощущение, что если я перейду из комнаты, где горит камин и накрыт стол, в соседнюю, то там как раз и обнаружу то, что мне на самом деле нужно, и тут все

сошлось воедино – и картинка, вырезанная ножницами из газеты, и случайная встреча с Питом. Потому что в соседней комнате в колыбельке лежал гулюкающий младенец, мой сын. Да, да, да, блин, мой сын. И вот уже я чувствую, как в груди появляется сосущая пустота, и сам же этому ощущению удивляюсь. И вдруг я понял, что со мной, блин, происходит. Я просто вроде как повзрослел.

Да, да, да, вот оно. Юность не вечна, о да. И потом, в юности ты всего лишь вроде как животное, что ли. Нет, даже не животное, а скорее какая-нибудь игрушка, что продаются на каждом углу, – вроде как жестяной человечек с пружиной внутри, которого ключиком снаружи заведешь – др-др-др, и он пошел вроде как сам по себе, блин. Но ходит он только по прямой и на всякие *vestshi* натывается – бац, бац, к тому же если уж он пошел, то остановиться ни за что не может. В юности каждый из нас похож на такую *malennkuju* заводную *shtutshku*.

Сын, сын, мой сын. У меня будет сын, и я объясню ему все это, когда он подрастет и сможет понять меня. Однако только лишь подумав это, я уже знал: никогда он не поймет, да и не захочет он ничего понимать, а делать будет все те же *vestshi*, которые и я делал, – да-да, он, может быть, даже убьет какую-нибудь старую *ptitsu*, окруженную мяукающими *kotami* и *koshkami*, и я не смогу остановить его. А он не сможет остановить своего сына. И так по кругу до самого конца света – по кругу, по кругу, по кругу, будто какой-то огромный великан, какой-нибудь Бог или *Gospodd* (спасибо бару “*Korova*”) все крутит и крутит в огромных своих ручищах *voniuutshi griaznyu* апельсин.

Но ведь еще найти надо такую *kisu*, блин, которая бы стала матерью моему сыну! Я решил, что займусь этим с завтрашнего утра. Вот и чудесно: новый азарт, есть чем заняться. А кстати и рubeж, ворота в новую, неведомую полосу *zhizni*.

Как я все время спрашивал? “Что же теперь?” Стало быть, вот что, блин, причем на этом я и закончу свой рассказ. Вы побывали всюду, куда швыряло коротышку Алекса, страдали вместе с ним, видели кое-кого из самых *griaznyh vyrodkov* на *Vozhjem* белом свете, и все были против вашего *druga* Алекса. А причина тому одна-единственная, и состоит она в том, что я был *jun*. Но теперь, после всех событий, я не *jun*, о нет, блин, уже не *jun* больше! Алекс стал большой, блин, вырос наш Алекс.

Туда, куда я теперь пойду, блин, я пойду *odinoki*, вам туда со мной нельзя. Наступит завтра, расцветут *tsvetujotshki*, еще раз провернется гадкая *voniuutshaja* земля, опять взойдет луна и звезды, а ваш старый *drug* Алекс отправится искать себе пару и всякий прочий *kal*. Все-таки сволочной этот мир, *griazni*, *podli* и *voniuufshi*, блин. Так что попрощайтесь со своим *junym drugom*. А всем остальным в этой истории сотворим салют, сыграв им на губах самую красноречивую в мире музыку: пыр-дыр-дыр-дыр. И пусть они целуют меня в *jami*. Но ты, о мой сочувственный читатель, вспоминай иногда коротышку Алекса, каким ты его запомнил. Аминь. И всякий прочий *kal*.

Helpful Information

1. The definition of dystopian literature.

A **dystopia** (alternatively, *cacotopia*, *kakotopia* or *anti-utopia*) is a fictional society that is the antithesis of *utopia*. It is usually characterized by an oppressive social control, such as an authoritarian or totalitarian government.

Some academic circles distinguish between *anti-utopia* and *dystopia*. A *dystopia* does not pretend to be good, while an *anti-utopia* appears to be *utopian* or was intended to be so, but a fatal flaw or other factor has destroyed or twisted the intended *utopian* world or concept, as is evidenced with *Ingsoc* in George Orwell’s *1984* and Huxley’s *Brave New World*.

The first known use of the term *dystopia* appeared in a parliamentary speech by John Stuart Mill in 1868. His knowledge of Greek suggests that he was referring to a bad place, rather than simply the opposite of *Utopia*. The Greek prefix *dys* (*δυσ-*) signifies “ill”, “bad” or “abnormal”; Greek *topos* (*τόπος*) meaning “place”; and Greek *ou-* (*ου*) meaning “not”. Thus, *Utopia* means “nowhere”, and is a pun on “*Eutopia*” meaning “happy place” – the prefix *eu* means “well”.

2. George Orwell’s brief biography.

“If you want a picture of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face – for ever.”

– from *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

The British author **George Orwell**, pen name of Eric Arthur Blair, (b. Motihari, India, June 25, 1903 – d. London, Jan. 21, 1950) achieved prominence in the late 1940s as the author of two brilliant satires attacking



totalitarianism. Familiarity with the novels, documentaries, essays, and criticism he wrote during the 1930s and later has since established him as one of the most important and influential voices of the century.

Orwell's parents were members of the Indian Civil Service, and, after an education at Eton College in England, Orwell joined (1922) the Indian Imperial Police in Burma, an experience that later found expression in the novel *Burmese Days* (1934). His first book, *Down and Out in Paris and London* (1933), was a non-fictional account – moving and comic at the same time – of several years of self-imposed poverty he had experienced after leaving Burma. He published three other novels in the 1930s: *A Clergyman's Daughter* (1935), *Keep the Aspidochelone Flying* (1936), and *Coming Up for Air* (1939). His major works of the period were two documentaries: *The Road to Wigan Pier* (1937), a detailed, sympathetic, and yet objective study of the lives of nearly impoverished miners in the Lancashire town of Wigan; and *Homage to Catalonia* (1938), which recounts his experiences fighting for the Loyalists in the Spanish Civil War. Orwell was wounded, and, when the Communists attempted to eliminate their allies on the far left, fought against them and was forced to flee for his life.

Orwell's two best-known books reflect his lifelong distrust of autocratic government, whether of the left or right: *Animal Farm* (1945), a modern beast-fable attacking Stalinism, and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949), a dystopian novel setting forth his fears of an intrusively bureaucratized state of the future. The pair of novels brought him his first fame and almost his only remuneration as a writer. His wartime work for the BBC (published in the collections George Orwell: *The Lost Writings*, and *The War Commentaries*) gave him a solid taste of bureaucratic hypocrisy and may have provided the inspiration for his invention of “newspeak,” the truth-denying language of Big Brother's rule in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

Orwell's reputation rests not only on his political shrewdness and his sharp satires but also on his marvelously clear style and on his superb essays, which rank with the best ever written. “Politics and the English Language” (1950), which links authoritarianism with linguistic decay, has been widely influential. The four-volume *Collected Essays, Journalism, and Letters of George Orwell* was published in 1968.

3. The plot and the structure of 1984.

Nineteen Eighty-Four (commonly written as *1984*) is an anti-utopian novel published in 1949. The book tells the story of Winston Smith and his degradation by the totalitarian state in which he lives.

Written while Orwell was dying and based on the work of the Russian author Yevgeny Zamyatin, it is a chilling depiction of how the power of the state could come to dominate the lives of individuals through cultural conditioning. Perhaps the most powerful science fiction novel of the twentieth century, this apocalyptic satire shows with grim conviction how Winston Smith's individual personality is wiped out and how he is recreated in the Party's image until he does not just obey but even loves Big Brother. Some critics have related Winston Smith's sufferings to those Orwell underwent at preparatory school, experiences he wrote about just before *1984*. Orwell maintained that the book was written with the explicit intention “to alter other people's idea of the kind of society they should strive after.”

Along with Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, and Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*, it is among the most famous and cited dystopias in literature.

It has been translated into 62 languages and has left a profound impression upon the English language itself. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, its terminology and its author have become bywords when discussing privacy and state-security issues. The term “Orwellian” has come to describe actions or organizations reminiscent of the totalitarian society depicted in the novel.

Nineteen Eighty-Four has, at times, been seen as revolutionary and politically dangerous and therefore was banned by many libraries in various countries, not mentioning totalitarian regimes.

Originally Orwell titled the book *The Last Man in Europe*, but his publisher, Frederic Warburg, suggested a change to assist in the book's marketing. Orwell did not object to this suggestion. The reasons for selection of this particular year are not known. Orwell may have only switched the last two digits of the year in which he wrote the book. Alternatively, he may have been alluding to the centenary of the Fabian Society, a socialist organization founded in 1884. The allusion may have also been to Jack London's novel *The Iron Heel* (in which the power of a political movement reaches its height in 1984), to G. K. Chesterton's *The Napoleon of Notting Hill* (also set in that year), or to a poem by his wife, Eileen O'Shaughnessy, called *End of the Century, 1984*. A final supposed explanation is that his original re-titling was to be *1980*; however, with his illness the book was taking a long time to write, so he felt obliged to push the story further and further into the future.

The novel focuses on Winston Smith, who stands, seemingly alone, against the corrupt reality of his world: hence the work's original working name *The Last Man in Europe*. Although the storyline is unified, it could be described as having three parts (it has been published in three parts by some publishers). The first part deals with the world of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* as seen through the eyes of Winston; the second part deals

with Winston's forbidden sexual relationship with Julia and his eagerness to rebel against the Party; and the third part deals with Winston's capture by the Party and his imprisonment in the Ministry of Love.

Winston Smith, a member of the Outer Party, lives in the ruins of London, the chief city of Airstrip One – a front-line province of the totalitarian superstate Oceania. He grew up in post-World War II United Kingdom, during the revolution and civil war. When his parents disappeared during the civil war, he was picked up by the growing Ingsoc (Newspeak for "English Socialism") movement, placed into an orphanage and eventually given a job in the Outer Party.

Winston lives a squalid existence in a one-room apartment in "Victory Mansions", and eats black bread, synthetic meals served at his workplace, and drinks industrial-grade "Victory Gin." He is discontented with his life, and keeps a journal of his negative thoughts and opinions about the Party. This journal, along with any other eccentric behaviour, if found, would result in his torture and death through the dealings of the Thought Police (he starkly explains the very definite result of his "thoughtcrime" in a journal entrance: "Thoughtcrime does not entail death. Thoughtcrime IS death"). The Thought Police have telescreens in every Party household and public area, as well as hidden microphones and informers in order to catch potential thoughtcriminals who could endanger the sanctity of the Party. Children are carefully indoctrinated from birth to report any suspected thought criminal, even – especially – their parents.

The Ministry of Truth, which exercises complete control over all mass media in Oceania, employs Winston at the Records Department, where he doctors historical records in order to comply with the Party's version of the past. Since the events of the present constantly shape the perception of the past, the task is a never-ending one.

While Winston likes his work, especially the intellectual challenge involved in fabricating a complete historical anecdote from scratch, he is also fascinated by the real past, and eagerly tries to find out more about the forbidden truth. At the Ministry of Truth, he encounters Julia, a mechanic on the novel-writing machines, and the two begin a necessarily clandestine relationship, regularly meeting up in the countryside (away from surveillance) or in a room above an antique shop in the Proles' area of the city. The owner of the shop exchanges various facts on the mysterious pre-revolutionary past with Winston and sells him artifacts from this period, as well as renting the room to them. Julia and Winston find their new hiding place a paradise, as they believe that there is no telescreen and so they believe themselves completely alone and safe.

As their relationship progresses, Winston's views begin to change, and he finds himself relentlessly questioning Ingsoc. Unknown to the two (or to the reader), he and Julia are under surveillance by the Thought Police. When he is approached by Inner Party member O'Brien, Winston believes that he has made contact with the Resistance or Brotherhood which is opposed to the ideals of the Party. O'Brien gives Winston a copy of "the book", a searing criticism of Ingsoc believed to have been written by the dissident Emmanuel Goldstein, leader of the Brotherhood. This book explains the nature of the perpetual war, and exposes the truth behind the Party's slogan, "War Is Peace; Freedom is Slavery; Ignorance is Strength."

Winston and Julia are eventually apprehended by the Thought Police in their supposed sanctuary, which actually contains a hidden telescreen, and are then interrogated separately in the Ministry of Love, where opponents of the regime are tortured and usually executed but sometimes released (only to be executed at a later time). O'Brien appears at the Ministry of Love, and reveals that he will help Winston "be cured" of his hatred for the Party, by subjecting Winston to numerous torture sessions. During one of these sessions, he explains to Winston that the purpose of the torture is not to extract a fake confession, but to alter the way Winston thinks. O'Brien also assures Winston that once he is cured, meaning that he accepts reality as described by the Party, he will be executed.

The party intends to achieve this with a combination of torture and electroshocks, continuing until O'Brien decides that Winston is "cured". Eventually, Winston is sent into Room 101, the most feared room in the Ministry of Love, where a person's greatest fear is forced upon them as the final step in their "re-education." Since Winston is morbidly afraid of rats, a cage of the hungry vermin is placed over his eyes, so that when the door is opened, they will eat their way through his skull. In terror, as the cage is placed onto his head, he screams, "Do it to Julia!", breaking his vow to never betray her, in order to stop the torture.

Near the end, Winston and Julia again meet in a park, by chance. They remember, with distaste, the "bad" feelings they once shared. Both acknowledge having betrayed the other, and find themselves apathetic. We finally see that the torture and "reprogramming" have been successful; Winston loves Big Brother.

Near the beginning of the novel, Winston was sitting in a café, the Chestnut Tree Café. While he was there, he saw three early dissidents of the Party: Jones, Aaronson, and Rutherford. These three men were the last relics of the Party's beginnings. When Winston saw them, they were sitting isolated from everyone else ("It was not wise even to be seen in the neighborhood of such people"), drinking the café's specialty, gin

flavored with cloves. Only Rutherford is described in detail. He is said to be a large broken-down man, giving the impression of having once been powerful. He and Aaronson both had broken noses. There is a chessboard on the table by them, and the waiter automatically refills their glasses. A song starts playing over the telescreen, beginning with a discordant note, one Winston calls a yellow note. "Under the spreading chestnut tree/I sold you and you sold me:/There lie they, and here lie we/Under the spreading chestnut tree." This song is thought to be an adaptation of Longfellow's poem, *The Village Blacksmith*. Winston notices that Rutherford's eyes are full of tears.

At the very end, Winston himself is again in the Chestnut Tree Cafe. He has been released from the Ministry of Love. Winston is sitting in his usual corner, with a glass of gin and a chessboard. The waiter automatically refills his glass for him. Winston is thinking about the military problems in Africa, and his recent meeting with Julia, and $2+2=5$. A yellow note sounds, and the telescreen starts playing "Under the spreading chestnut tree/I sold you and you sold me —". Winston's eyes fill with tears. He remembers an afternoon when he was a child, playing with his mother, but dismisses it as a false memory. The telescreen announces a great victory in Africa, and Winston is reconciled with Big Brother. The novel ends with the line "He loved Big Brother."

The novel is followed by an Appendix on Newspeak.

4. The analysis of Chapter 1.

The world described in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* parallels the Stalinist Soviet Union and Adolf Hitler's Nazi Germany. There are thematic similarities: the betrayed revolution, with which Orwell had famously dealt in *Animal Farm*; the subordination of individuals to "the Party"; and the rigorous distinction between the Inner Party, Outer Party, and everyone else. There are also direct parallels of the activities within the society: leader worship, such as that towards Big Brother, who can be compared to dictators like Joseph Stalin and Adolf Hitler; Joycamps, which are a reference to concentration camps or gulags; Thought Police, a reference to the Gestapo or NKVD; daily exercise reminiscent of Nazi propaganda movies; and the Youth League, reminiscent of Hitler Youth or Little Octobrists/Young Pioneers.

Orwell based many aspects of Oceanian society on the Stalin-era Soviet Union. The "Two Minutes' Hate", for instance was based on Stalinism's habitual demonisation of its enemies and rivals, and the description of Big Brother himself bears a physical resemblance to Stalin. The Party's proclaimed great enemy, Emmanuel Goldstein, resembles Leon Trotsky, in part because both are Jewish, had the same physical description and the Trotsky's real last name was Bronstein. ("Emmanuel Goldstein" could also be an allusion to anarchist Emma Goldman.)

The world of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* also reflects various aspects of the social and political life of both the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Orwell is reported to have said that the book described what he viewed as the situation in the United Kingdom in 1948, when the British economy was poor, the British Empire was dissolving at the same time as newspapers were reporting its triumphs, and wartime allies such as the USSR were rapidly becoming peacetime foes ("Eurasia is the enemy. Eurasia has always been the enemy").

In many ways, Oceania is indeed a future metamorphosis of the British Empire (although Orwell is careful to state that, geographically, it also includes the United States, and that the currency is the dollar). It is, as its name suggests, an essentially naval power. Much of its militarism is focused on veneration for sailors and seafarers, serving on board "floating fortresses" which Orwell evidently conceived of as the next stage in the growth of ever-bigger warships, after the Dreadnoughts of WWI and the aircraft carriers of WWII; and much of the fighting conducted by Oceania's troops takes place in defense of India (the "Jewel in the Crown" of the British Empire).

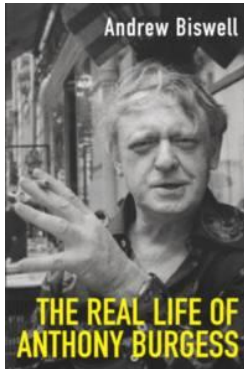
The three slogans of the Party, on display everywhere, are:

- WAR IS PEACE
- FREEDOM IS SLAVERY
- IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH

Each of these is of course either contradictory or the opposite of what is normally believed, and in 1984, the world is in a state of constant war, no one is free, and everyone is ignorant. The slogans are analysed in Goldstein's book. Though logically insensible, the slogans do embody the Party. For instance, through constant "war", the Party can keep domestic peace; when freedom is brought about, the people are enslaved to it, and the ignorance of the people is the strength of the Party. If anybody (like Winston) becomes too smart, they are whisked away for fear of rebellion. Through their constant repetition, the terms become meaningless, and the slogans become axiomatic. This type of misuse of language, and the deliberate self-deception with which the citizens are encouraged to accept it, is called doublethink.

Under Ingsoc, society is composed of three levels:

1. The Inner Party, which makes policy decisions and runs the government, which is referred to as simply The Party.
2. The Outer Party, which works in the state jobs and is the middle class of the society. “Members are allowed no vices other than cigarettes and Victory Gin.” The Outer Party is also under the most scrutiny, being constantly monitored by two-way telescreens and other implements of surveillance.
3. The Proles, which form the vast lower class, the rabble that is kept happy and sedate with beer, gambling, sports, casual sex and prolefeed (“rubbishy texts”). The proles are named for the proletariat, the Marxist term for the working class. The Proles make up 85% of the population of Oceania.



5. Anthony Burgess's life and works.

Anthony Burgess (1917–1993) was a British novelist, critic and composer. He was also active as a librettist, poet, playwright, screenwriter, journalist, essayist, travel writer, broadcaster, translator, and educationalist.

Born in Manchester in northwest England, he lived and worked variously in Southeast Asia, the United States and Mediterranean Europe.

Burgess's fiction includes the Malayan trilogy (*The Long Day Wanes*) on the dying days of Britain's empire in the East, the Enderby quartet of comic novels about a reclusive poet and his muse, the classic speculative recreation of Shakespeare's love-life *Nothing Like the Sun*, the cult exploration of the nature of evil *A Clockwork Orange* (1962), another dystopia *The Wanting Seed* (1962) and his masterpiece *Earthly Powers*, a panoramic saga of the 20th century.

He wrote critical studies of Joyce, Hemingway, Shakespeare and Lawrence, produced the treatises on linguistics *Language Made Plain* and *A Mouthful of Air*, and was a prolific journalist, writing in several languages. The translator and adapter of *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Oedipus the King*, and *Carmen* for the stage, he scripted *Jesus of Nazareth* and *Moses the Lawgiver* for the screen, invented the prehistoric language spoken in *Quest for Fire*, and composed the *Sinfoni Melayu*, the *Symphony (No. 3) in C*, and the opera *Blooms of Dublin*.

6. The plot and the structure of *A Clockwork Orange*.

A Clockwork Orange is a speculative fiction novel by Anthony Burgess, published in 1962, and later the basis for a 1971 film adaptation by Stanley Kubrick.

Inspired initially by an incident during World War II in which his wife Lynne was allegedly robbed and assaulted in London during the blackout by deserters from the U.S. Army (an event that may have contributed to a miscarriage she suffered), the book was an examination of free will and morality. The young anti-hero, Alex, captured after a career of violence and mayhem, is given aversion conditioning to stop his violence. It makes him defenseless against other people and unable to enjoy the music (especially Beethoven, and more specifically the Ninth Symphony) that, besides violence, had been an intense pleasure for him.

Explanation of the novel's title

Burgess wrote that the title was a reference to an alleged old Cockney expression “as queer as a clockwork orange”. Due to his time serving in the British Colonial Office in Malaya, Burgess thought that the phrase could be used punningly to refer to a mechanically responsive (clockwork) human (orang, Malay for “person”). It is possible, however, that Burgess invented the phrase as a play upon the expression “a work of pith and moment”.

Burgess wrote in his later introduction, *A Clockwork Orange Resucked*, that a creature who can only perform good or evil is “a clockwork orange – meaning that he has the appearance of an organism lovely with colour and juice, but is in fact only a clockwork toy to be wound up by God or the Devil; or the almighty state.”

In his essay “Clockwork Oranges”, Burgess asserts that “this title would be appropriate for a story about the application of Pavlovian, or mechanical, laws to an organism which, like a fruit, was capable of colour and sweetness”. This title alludes to the protagonist's negatively conditioned responses to feelings of evil which prevent the exercise of his free will.

Plot.

Part 1: Alex's world

Set in a dystopian future, the novel opens with the introduction of protagonist, fifteen-year-old Alex (the character's surname is never revealed in the novel) who, with his gang members (known as “droogs”) Dim, Georgie and Pete, roam the streets at night, committing crimes for enjoyment.

Essentially, the first part of the novel is a character study of our protagonist. We learn that Alex is articulate and clever, enjoys classical music (that particularly of Beethoven) and finds amusement during the evenings in committing crimes and acts of sexual violence – justifying himself through his narrative voice.

We learn that Alex and his “droogs” have their own language known as Nadsat, and their own hierarchy, in which Alex is the leader. There is a general disregard for the law or for older generations – creating an image of a youth movement which is taking control of this fictional future. (This of course being the exaggeration of the concern that came with the changing values of the 1960s, in which teenagers were becoming decidedly more unruly and rebellious.)

Part 1 involves Alex reflecting on his illegal activity (which involves the rape of two 10-year-old girls, and also the wife of writer F. Alexander) and describes the treachery of the droogs which results in Alex’s arrest and then later, prison sentence.

The use of lyrical language and Nadsat somewhat masks the horrible imagery of Alex’s actions, and, to some extent, Alex is able to draw empathy from the reader, through his friendly nature towards his audience (referring to them as his “only friends”, etc.)

Part 2: The Ludovico Technique

After being sentenced to 14 years for murder, Alex gets a job as an assistant to the prison chaplain. He feigns interest in religion, and amuses himself by reading the Bible for its lurid descriptions of “the old yahoodies (Jews) tolchocking (beating) each other”, imagining himself taking part in “the nailing-in” (the Crucifixion of Jesus). Alex hears about an experimental rehabilitation programme called “the Ludovico Technique”, which promises that the prisoner will be released upon completion of the two-week treatment, and will not commit crimes afterwards.

Partially by taking part in the fatal beating of a cellmate, Alex manages to become the subject in the first full-scale trial of the Ludovico Technique. The technique itself is a form of aversion therapy, in which Alex is given a drug that induces extreme nausea while being forced to watch graphically violent films for 2 weeks. Among the films shown are propaganda films such as *Triumph of the Will*, which includes Alex’s beloved Beethoven. He asks them to take out the music, and they do not. At the end of the treatment, Alex is unable to carry out or even contemplate violent acts without crippling nausea. He is also unable to listen to Beethoven without experiencing the same jarring physical reaction.

Part 3: After prison

Alex gets his release, but upon returning home, finds that he is not welcome: his personal belongings have been confiscated (sold, so that the money made might go towards the care of the cats of the woman Alex murdered, as well as other victims), and his parents have taken in a lodger, Joe. Dejected and suddenly with no place in the world, Alex begins to contemplate suicide in a way that will not be painful or cause any more nausea – and visits the public library in order to discover what sort of poison he might take to end his life. There he is spotted by one of his former victims, the librarian, who, accompanied by his friends, exacts his revenge (this is referred to as the aged attacking the youth). Alex is unable to strike back for an overpowering fear of sickness over being beaten – the police are alerted. The police who arrive are his old cohort Dim as well as Billyboy, the former leader of a rival gang whom Alex fought earlier. Alex is taken out onto the edge of town and is beaten harshly – left alone in the desolate nothing on the outskirts of the city.

Alex stumbles to the nearest house for help, which turns out to be that of F. Alexander, whose wife Alex had raped and beaten earlier in the book. At first Alex is not recognized. Though as he stays with his guest, it becomes clear that F. Alexander begins to suspect something: memories of names that Alex accidentally mentions, etc. Alex discovers that F. Alexander’s wife has died, apparently through sickness, though her still living husband insists that it was her rape that killed her, when she died several months later. Because of his grief, F. Alexander has become obsessed with bringing down the State that has failed him, and, upon hearing Alex’s tale, intends to use him as a tool against the government; being an example of the terrible things that the State are capable of. It is unclear as to whether F. Alexander’s friends lock Alex in a room and play the fictitious “Symphony Number 3 Of The Danish veck Otto Skadelig” at full volume. Whether it was revenge or not, it does seem extremely likely that their intention was for Alex to be in great pain after listening to the music. Alexander’s cohorts successfully “prove” that such government-sanctioned conditioning should not be supported.

Unable to stand the pain, Alex throws himself out of the window attempting suicide. He survives the fall with broken bones and wakes in a hospital, informed that his tormentors have been arrested. When he hit the road after jumping, Alex hit his head on the road, effectively ending the hold that Ludovico’s Technique had over him. Alex realizes this after imagining himself murdering and torturing his tormentors without inducing feelings of nausea. The chapter ends with “I was cured all right”. (This is the point at which the U.S. edition of the book ended, implying that Alex would return to his ways of violent delinquency.)

The actual final chapter begins identically to the first; Alex has formed a new gang and reverted to his previous criminality. On this particular night, however, he decides not to join them and goes for a walk

on his own instead. In a café, he bumps into the last of his old gang members, Pete. To Alex's astonishment, Pete is now married and has become a respectable member of society.

After conversing with Pete and his wife, Alex has an epiphany, renouncing violence on the one hand, but on the other concluding that his behaviour was an unavoidable part of youth, and that if he had a son, he would not be able to stop him from doing what he himself did.

Structure

The novel is separated into three parts of seven chapters. Each part has a different setting or motive for the main character, but keeps to certain conventions across three parts. For example, each part begins with a character repeating the phrase "What's it going to be then, eh?" The number of chapters is relevant to Western Civilization's age of maturity, and as Burgess said in his introduction to later versions of the novel, "21 is the symbol of human maturity, or used to be, since at age 21 you got to vote and assumed adult responsibility. Whatever its symbology, the number 21 was the number I started out with...that number has to mean something in human terms when they handle it."

A Clockwork Orange is written in first person perspective from a seemingly biased and unreliable source. Alex never justifies his actions in the narration, giving a good sense that he is somewhat sincere; a narrator who, as unlikable as he may attempt to seem, evokes pity from the reader through the telling of his unending suffering and later through his realization that cycle will never end. Alex's perspective is effective in that the way that he describes events is easy to relate to even if the situations themselves are not. He uses words that are common in speech as well as Nadsat, the speech of the younger generation.

7. The analysis of Chapter 21.

The book, narrated by Alex, contains many words in a slang dialect which Burgess invented for the book, called **Nadsat**. It is a mix of modified Slavic words, Cockney rhyming slang, and words invented by Burgess himself. One of Alex's doctors explains the language to a colleague as "Odd bits of old rhyming slang; a bit of gypsy talk, too. But most of the roots are Slav propaganda. Subliminal penetration."

Nadsat may serve various functions: first, Burgess, while wanting to provide his young characters with their own register, did not want to use contemporary slang, fearing that this would date the book too much.

Second, the novel graphically describes horrific scenes of violence, which would be shocking even by today's standards, so Nadsat is used as a "linguistic veil" to distance the reader from the action on the page. Third, the Soviet Union being a big political power at the time, Burgess wanted to show that its culture had influenced slang, just as English influences other languages because of the U.S.' being a big political power.

Seminar 4

Contemporary British Drama

Plan

1. Drama: the main characteristics.
2. The theatre of absurd.
3. Harold Pinter: biography and plays.
4. Tom Stoppard's life and plays.
5. The plot and the synopsis of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*.
6. The themes of the play.
7. The analysis of Act II.

Questions.

- 1) Take the text of *Hamlet* (Act II, Scene 2) and compare the behavior of R&G in fragments by Shakespeare and Stoppard.
- 2) What postmodernist ideas (sensibility, uncertainty, decentration and fragmentation, incredulity towards metanarrative, intertextuality, parody, mixture of tragedy and farce, reflection and self-reflection, etc.) do you see in the text by Stoppard?
- 3) What symbols predominate in the play?

Literature and Resources

1. About the Theatre of the Absurd:

- 1) Culik Jan. The Theatre of Absurd. – Online at : www.arts.gla.ac.uk/Slavonic/Absurd.htm.
 - 2) The Theatre of the Absurd. – Online at : en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theatre_of_the_Absurd.
 - 3) The Theatre of the Absurd. – Online at : dana.ucc.nau.edu/sek5/classpage.html.
 - 4) The Theatre of the Absurd. – Online at : www.answers.com/topic/theatre-of-the-absurd.
2. About Harold Pinter:
- 1) Harold Pinter. – Online at : www.kirjasto.sci.fi/hpinter.htm.
 - 2) Harold Pinter. – Online at : en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harold_Pinter.
3. About Tom Stoppard and *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*:
- 1) Стоппард Том. “Розенкранц и Гильденстерн мертвы” и другие пьесы / Том Стоппард ; [пер. с англ. И. Бродский]. – СПб. : Азбука, 2002. – 312 с. –
Online at : www.lib.ru/PXESY/STOPPARD/r_g.txt.
 - 2) Jenkins Anthony. Critical Essays on Tom Stoppard / Anthony Jenkins. – Boston: G. K. Hall, 1990. – 230 p.
 - 3) Johnston Ian. Lecture on Stoppard, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* / Ian Johnston. – Online at : www.mala.bc.ca/~Johnstoi/introser/stoppard.htm.
 - 4) *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*. – Online at : www.enotes.com/rosencrantz-guildenstern/.
 - 5) Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead. –
Online at : en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosencrantz_&_Guildenstern_Are_Dead.
 - 6) Tom Stoppard. – Online at : en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tom_Stoppard.
 - 7) Tom Stoppard. – Online at : www.imagi-nation.com/moonstruck/clsc46.html.
 - 8) Tom Stoppard. *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*. –
Online at : www.lib.ru/PXESY/STOPPARD/r_g_engl.txt.

Text

Tom Stoppard. *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*.

Act Two.

HAMLET, ROS and GUIL talking, the continuation of the previous scene. Their conversation, on the move, is indecipherable at first. The first illegible line is HAMLET's, coming at the end of a short speech? see Shakespeare Act II, scene II.

HAMLET: S'blood, there is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could take it out.

(A flourish from the TRAGEDIANS' band.)

GUIL: There are the players.

HAMLET: Gentlemen, you are welcome in Elsinore. Your hands, come then. *(He takes their hands.)* The appurtenance of welcome is fashion and ceremony. Let me comply with you in this garb, lest my extent to the players (which I tell you must show fairly outwards) should more appear like entertainment than yours. You are welcome. *(About to leave.)* But my uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceived.

GUIL: In what, my dear lord?

HAMLET: I am but mad north north-west; when the wind is southerly I know a hawk from a handsaw.

(POLONIUS enters, as GUIL turns away.)

POLONIUS: Well be you gentlemen.

HAMLET *(to ROS)*: Mark you, Guildenstern *(uncertainly to GUIL)* and you too; at each ear a hearer. That great baby you see there is not yet out of swaddling clouts... *(He takes ROS upstage with him, talking together.)*

POLONIUS: My Lord! I have news to tell you.

HAMLET *(releasing ROS and mimicking)*: My lord, I have news to tell you... When Rocius was an actor in Rome...

(ROS comes down to re-join GUIL.)

POLONIUS *(as he follows HAMLET out)*: The actors are come hither my lord.

HAMLET: Buzz, buzz.

(Exeunt HAMLET and POLONIUS.)

(ROS and GUIL ponder. Each reluctant to speak first.)

GUIL: Hm?

ROS: Yes?

GUIL: What?

ROS: I thought you...

GUIL: No.

ROS: Ah.

(Pause.)

GUIL: I think we can say we made some headway.

ROS: You think so?

GUIL: I think we can say that.

ROS: I think we can say he made us look ridiculous.

GUIL: We played it close to the chest of course.

ROS *(derisively)*: “Question and answer. Old ways are the best ways”! He was scoring off us all down the line.

GUIL: He caught us on the wrong foot once or twice, perhaps, but I thought we gained some ground.

ROS *(simply)*: He murdered us.

GUIL: He might have had the edge.

ROS *(roused)*: Twenty-seven – three, and you think he might have had the edge?! He *murdered* us.

GUIL: What about our evasions?

ROS: Oh, our evasions were lovely. “Were you sent for?” he says. “My lord, we were sent for...” I didn’t where to put myself.

GUIL: He had six rhetorical –

ROS: It was question and answer, all right. Twenty-seven questions he got out in ten minutes, and answered three. I was waiting for you to *delve*. “When is he going to start *delving*?” I asked myself.

GUIL: – And two repetitions.

ROS: Hardly a leading question between us.

GUIL: We got his *symptoms*, didn’t we?

ROS: Half of what he said meant something else, and the other half didn’t mean anything at all.

GUIL: Thwarted ambition – a sense of grievance, that’s my diagnosis.

ROS: Six rhetorical and two repetitions, leaving nineteen of which we answered fifteen. And what did we get in return? He’s depressed!... Denmark’s a prison and he’d rather live in a nutshell; some shadow-play about the nature of ambition, which never got down to cases, and finally one direct question which might have led somewhere, and led in fact to his illuminating claim to tell a hawk from a handsaw.

(Pause.)

GUIL: When the wind is southerly.

ROS: And when the weather is clear.

GUIL: And when it isn’t he can’t.

ROS: He’s at the mercy of the elements. *(Licks his finger and holds it up – facing audience.)* Is that southerly?

(They stare at the audience.)

GUIL: It doesn’t *look* southerly. What made you think so?

ROS: I didn’t *say* I think so. It could be northerly for all I know.

GUIL: I wouldn’t have thought so.

ROS: Well, if you’re going to be dogmatic.

GUIL: Wait a minute – we came from roughly south according to a rough map.

ROS: I see. Well, which way did we come in? *(GUIL looks around vaguely.)* Roughly.

GUIL *(clears his throat)*: In the morning the sun would be easterly. I think we can assume that.

ROS: That it’s morning?

GUIL: If it is, and the sun is over *there* *(his right as he faces the audience)* for instance, *that* *(front)* would be northerly. On the other hand, if it’s not morning and the sun is over *there* *(his left)*... *that*... *(lamely)* would *still* be northerly. *(Picking up.)* To put it another way, if we came from down there *(front)* and it is morning, the sun would be up there *(his left)*, and if it is actually over *there* *(his right)* and it’s still morning, we must have come from up *there* *(behind him)*, and if *that* is southerly *(his left)* and the sun is really over *there* *(front)*, then it’s afternoon. However, if none of these is the case –

ROS: Why don’t you go and have a look?

A shot from *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern are Dead* (Great Britain, 1990, dir. by T. Stoppard).



Guild – Tim Roth, Ros – Gary Oldman

Guild – Tim Roth, Roz – Garry Oldman

GUIL: Pragmatism?! – is that all you have to offer? You seem to have no conception of where we stand! You won't find the answer written down for you in the bowl of a compass – I can tell you that. *(Pause.)* Besides, you can never tell this far north – it's probably dark out there.

ROS: I merely suggest that the position of the sun, if it is out, would give you a rough idea of the time; alternatively, the clock, if it is going, would give you a rough idea of the position of the sun. I forget which you're trying to establish.

GUIL: I'm trying to establish the direction of the wind.

ROS: There isn't any wind. *Draught*, yes.

GUIL: In that case, the origin. Trace it to the source and it might give us a rough idea of the way we came in – which might give us a rough idea of south, for further reference.

ROS: It's coming up through the floor. *(He studies the floor.)* That can't be south, can it?

GUIL: That's not direction. Lick your toe and wave it around a bit.

(ROS considers the distance to his foot.)

ROS: No, I think you'd have to lick it for me.

(Pause.)

GUIL: I'm prepared to let the whole matter drop.

ROS: Or I could lick yours, of course.

GUIL: No thank you.

ROS: I'll even wave it around for you.

GUIL *(down ROS's throat):* What in God's name is the matter with you?

ROS: Just being friendly.

GUIL *(retiring):* Somebody might come in. It's what we're counting on, after all. Ultimately.

(Good pause.)

ROS: Perhaps they've all trampled each other to death in the rush. Give them a shout. Something provocative. *Intrigue* them.

GUIL: Wheels have been set in motion, and they have their own pace, to which we are... condemned. Each move is dictated by the previous one – that is the meaning of order. If we start being arbitrary it'll just be a shambles: at least, let us hope so. Because if we happened, just happened to discover, or even suspect, that our spontaneity was part of their order, we'd know that we were lost. *(He sits.)* A Chinaman of the T'ang Dynasty – and, by which definition, a philosopher – dreamed he was a butterfly, and from that moment he was never quite sure that he was not a butterfly dreaming it was a Chinese philosopher. Envy him, in his two-fold security.

(A good pause. ROS leaps up and bellows at the audience.)

ROS: Fire!

(GUIL jumps up.)

GUIL: Where?

ROS: It's all right – I'm demonstrating the misuse of free speech. To prove that it exists. *(He regards the audience, that is the direction, with contempt – and other directions, then front again.)* Not a move. They should burn to death in their shoes.

(ROS takes out one of his coins. Spins it. Catches it. Looks at it. Replaces it.)

GUIL: What was it?

ROS: What?

GUIL: Heads or tails?

ROS: Oh. I didn't look.

GUIL: Yes you did.

ROS: Oh, did I? *(He takes a coin, studies it.)* Quite right – it rings a bell.

GUIL: What's the last thing you remember?

ROS: I don't wish to be reminded of it.

GUIL: We cross our bridges when we come to them and burn them behind us, with nothing to show our progress except a memory of the smell of smoke, and a presumption that once our eyes watered.

(ROS approaches him brightly, holding a coin between finger and thumb. He covers it with the other hand, draws his fist apart and holds them for GUIL. GUIL considers them. Indicates the left hand, ROS opens it to show it empty.)

ROS: No.

(Repeat process. GUIL indicates left hand again. ROS shows it empty.)

Double bluff!

(Repeat process – GUIL taps one hand, then the other hand, quickly. ROS inadvertently shows that both are empty. ROS laughs as GUIL turns upstage. ROS stops laughing, looks around his left, pats his clothes, puzzled.)

(POLONIUS breaks that up by entering upstage followed by the TRAGEDIANS and HAMLET.)

POLONIUS *(entering)*: Come, sirs.

HAMLET: Follow him, friends. We'll hear a play tomorrow.

(Aside to the PLAYER, who is the last of the TRAGEDIANS.)

Dost thou hear me, old friend? Can you play "The Murder of Gonzago"?

PLAYER: Ay, my lord.

HAMLET: We'll ha't tomorrow night. You could for a need study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines which I would set down and insert in't, could you not?

PLAYER: Ay, my lord.

HAMLET: Very well. Follow that lord, and look you mock him not.

(The PLAYER crossing downstage, notes ROS and GUIL. Stops. HAMLET crossing downstage addresses them without a pause.)

HAMLET: My good friends, I'll leave you till tonight. You are welcome to Elsinore.

ROS: Good, my lord.

(HAMLET goes.)

GUIL: So you've caught up.

PLAYER *(coldly)*: Not yet, sir.

GUIL: Now mind your tongue, or we'll have it out and throw the rest of you away, like a nightingale at a Roman feast.

PLAYER: Took the very words out of my mouth.

GUIL: You'd be *lost* for words.

ROS: You'd be tongue-tied.

GUIL: Like a mute in a monologue.

ROS: Like a nightingale at a Roman feast.

GUIL: Your diction will go to pieces.

ROS: Your lines will be cut.

GUIL: To dumbshows.

ROS: And dramatic pauses.

GUIL: You'll never *find* your tongue.

ROS: Lick your lips.

GUIL: Taste your tears.

ROS: Your breakfast.

GUIL: You won't know the difference.

ROS: There won't be any.

GUIL: We'll take the very words out of your mouth.

ROS: So you've caught up.

GUIL: So you've caught up.

PLAYER *(tops)*: Not yet! *(Bitterly.)* You left us.

GUIL: Ah! I'd forgotten – you performed a dramatic spectacle by the wayside – a thing much thought of in the New Testament. How did yours compare as an impromptu?

PLAYER: Badly – neither witnessed nor reported.

GUIL: Yes, I'm sorry we had to miss it. I hope you didn't leave anything out – I'd be furious to think I didn't miss all of it.

(The PLAYER, progressively aggrieved, now burst out.)

PLAYER: We can't look each other in the face! *(Pause, more in control.)* You don't understand the humiliation of it – to be tricked out of a single assumption, which makes our existence viable – that somebody is *watching*... The plot was two corpses gone before we caught sight of ourselves, stripped naked in the middle of nowhere and pouring ourselves down a bottomless well.

ROS: Is *that* thirty eight?

PLAYER *(lost)*: There we are – demented children mincing about in clothes that no one ever wore, speaking as no man ever spoke, swearing love in wigs and rhymed couplets, killing each other with wooden swords, hollow protestations of faith hurled after empty promises of vengeance – and every gesture, every pose, vanishing into the thin unpopulated air. We ransomed our dignity to the clouds, and the uncomprehending birds listened. *(He rounds on them.)* Don't you see?! We're *actors* – we're the opposite of

people! (*They recoil nonplussed, his voice calms.*) Think, in your head, *now*, think of the most... *private... secret... intimate...* thing you have ever done secure in the knowledge of its privacy... (*He gives them – and the audience – a good pause. ROS takes a shifty look.*) Are you thinking of it? (*He strikes with his voice and his head.*) *Well, I saw you do it!*

(*ROS leaps up, dissembling madly.*)

ROS: You never! It's a lie! (*He catches himself with a giggle in a vacuum and sits down again.*)

PLAYER: We're actors... We pledged our identities, secure in the conventions of our trade; that someone would be watching. And then, gradually, no one was. We were caught, high and dry. It was not until the murder's long soliloquy that we were able to look around; frozen we were in the profile, our eyes searched you out, first confidently, then hesitantly, then desperately as each patch of turf, each log, each exposed corned in every direction proved uninhabited, and all the while the murderous King addressed the horizon with his dreary interminable guilt... Our heads began to move, wary as lizards, the corpse of unsullied Rosalinda peeped through his fingers, and the King faltered. Even then, habit and a stubborn trust that our audience spied upon us from behind the nearest bush, forced our bodies to blunder on long after they had emptied of meaning, until like runaway carts they dragged to a halt. No one came forward. No one shouted at us. The silence was unbreakable, it imposed itself upon us; it was obscene. We took off our crowns and swords and cloth of gold and moved silent on the road to Elsinore.

(*Silence. Then GUIL claps solo with slow measured irony.*)

GUIL: Brilliantly re-created – if these eyes could weep!... Rather strong on metaphor, mind you. No criticism – only a matter of taste. And so here you are – with a vengeance. That's a figure of speech... isn't it? Well let's say we've made up for it, for you may have no doubt whom to thank for your performance at the court.

ROS: We are counting on you to take him out of himself. You are the pleasures which we draw him on to – (*he escapes a fractional giggle but recovers immediately*) and by that I don't mean your usual filth; you can't treat royalty like people with normal perverted desires. They know nothing of that and you know nothing of them, to your mutual survival. So give him a good clean show suitable for all the family, or you can rest assured you'll be playing the tavern tonight.

GUIL: Or the night, after.

ROS: Or not.

PLAYER: We already have an entry here. And always have had.

GUIL: You've played for him before?

PLAYER: Yes, sir.

ROS: And what's *his* bent?

PLAYER: Classical.

ROS: Saucy!

GUIL: What will you play?

PLAYER: "The Murder of Gonzago".

GUIL: Full of fine cadence and corpses.

PLAYER: Pirated from the Italian...

ROS: What is it about?

PLAYER: It's about a King and Queen...

GUIL: Escapism! What else?

PLAYER: Blood –

GUIL: – Love and rhetoric.

PLAYER: Yes. (*Going.*)

GUIL: Where are you going?

PLAYER: I can come and go as I please.

GUIL: You're evidently a man who knows his way around.

PLAYER: I've been here before.

GUIL: We're still finding our feet.

PLAYER: I should concentrate on not losing your heads.

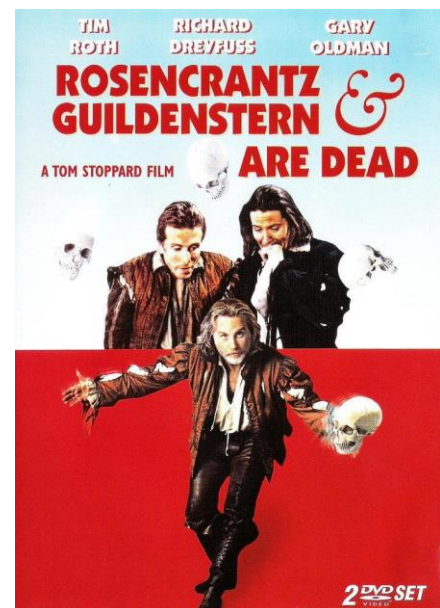
GUIL: Do you speak from knowledge?

PLAYER: Precedent.

GUIL: You've been here before.

PLAYER: And I know which way the wind is blowing.

GUIL: Operating on two levels, are we?! How clever! I expect it comes naturally to you, being in the business so to speak.



(The PLAYER's grave face does not change. He makes to move off again. GUIL for the second time cuts him off.)

The truth is, we value your company, for want of any other. We have been left so much to our own devices – after a while one welcomes the uncertainty of being left to other people's.

PLAYER: Uncertainty is the normal state. You're nobody special. *(He makes to leave again. GUIL loses his cool.)*

GUIL: But for God's sake what are we supposed to *do*?

PLAYER: Relax. Respond. That's what people do. You can't go through life questioning your situation at every turn.

GUIL: But we don't know what's going on, or what to do with ourselves. We don't know how to *act*.

PLAYER: Act natural. You know why you're here at least.

GUIL: We only know what we're told, and that's little enough. And for all we know it isn't even true.

PLAYER: For all anyone knows, nothing is. Everything has to be taken on trust; truth is only that which is taken to be true. It's the currency of living. There may be nothing behind it, but it doesn't make any difference so long as it is honoured. One acts on assumptions. What do you assume?

ROS: Hamlet is not himself, outside or in. We have to glean what afflicts him.

GUIL: He doesn't give much away.

PLAYER: Who does, nowadays?

GUIL: He's – melancholy.

PLAYER: Melancholy?

ROS: Mad.

PLAYER: How is he mad?

ROS: Ah. *(To GUIL.)* How is he mad?

GUIL: More morose than mad, perhaps.

PLAYER: Melancholy.

GUIL: Moody.

ROS: He has moods.

PLAYER: Of moroseness?

GUIL: Madness. And yet.

ROS: Quite.

GUIL: For instance.

ROS: He talks to himself, which might be madness.

GUIL: If he didn't talk sense, which he does.

ROS: Which suggests the opposite.

PLAYER: Of what?

(Small pause.)

GUIL: I think I have it. A man talking sense to himself is no madder than a man talking nonsense not to himself.

ROS: Or just as mad.

GUIL: Or just as mad.

ROS: And he does both.

GUIL: So there you are.

ROS: Stark raving sane.

(Pause.)

PLAYER: Why?

GUIL: Ah. *(To ROS.)* Why?

ROS: Exactly.

GUIL: Exactly what?

ROS: Exactly why.

GUIL: Exactly *why what*?

ROS: What?

GUIL: *Why*?

ROS: Why what, exactly?

GUIL: Why is he mad?!

ROS: *I don't know!*

(Beat.)

PLAYER: The old man thinks he's in love with his daughter.

ROS (*appalled*): Good God! We're out of our depth here.

PLAYER: No, no, no – *he* hasn't got a daughter – the old man thinks he's in love with *his* daughter.

ROS: The old man is?

PLAYER: Hamlet, in love with the old man's daughter, the old man thinks.

ROS: Ha! It's beginning to make sense! Unrequited passion!

(*The PLAYER moves.*)

GUIL (*Fascist*): Nobody leaves this room! (*Pause, lamely.*) Without a *very* good reason.

PLAYER: Why not?

GUIL: All this strolling about is getting too arbitrary by half – I'm rapidly losing my grip. From now on reason will prevail.

PLAYER: I have lines to learn.

GUIL: Pass!

(*The PLAYER passes into one of the wings. ROS cups his hands and shouts into the opposite one.*)

ROS: Next!

(*But no one comes.*)

GUIL: What did you expect?

ROS: Something ... someone ... nothing. (*They sit facing front.*)

Are you hungry?

GUIL: No, are you?

ROS (*thinks*): No. You remember that coin?

GUIL: No.

ROS: I think I lost it.

GUIL: What coin?

ROS: I don't remember exactly.

(*Pause.*)

GUIL: Oh, that coin ... clever.

ROS: I can't remember how I did it.

GUIL: It probably comes natural to you.

ROS: Yes, I've got a show-stopper there.

GUIL: Do it again.

(*Slight pause.*)

ROS: We can't afford it.

GUIL: Yes, one must think of the future.

ROS: It's the normal thing.

GUIL: To have one. One is, after all, having it all the time... now... and now... and now....

ROS: It could go on for ever. Well, not for *ever*, I suppose. (*Pause.*)

Do you ever think of yourself as actually *dead*, lying in a box with a lid on it?

GUIL: No.

ROS: Nor do I, really... It's silly to be depressed by it. I mean one thinks of it like being *alive* in a box, one keeps forgetting to take into account the fact that one is *dead* ... which should make a difference ... shouldn't it? I mean, you'd never *know* you were in a box, would you? It would be just like being *asleep* in a box. Not that I'd like to sleep in a box, mind you, not without any air – you'd wake up dead, for a start and then where would you be? Apart from inside a box. That's the bit I don't like, frankly. That's why I don't think of it...

(*GUIL stirs restlessly, pulling his cloak round him.*)

Because you'd be helpless, wouldn't you? Stuffed in a box like that, I mean you'd be in there for ever. Even taking into account the fact that you're dead, really ... *ask* yourself, if I asked you straight off – I'm going to stuff you in this box now, would you rather be alive or dead? Naturally, you'd prefer to be alive. Life in a box is better than no life at all. I expect. You'd have a chance at least. You could lie there thinking – well, at least I'm not dead! In a minute someone's going to bang on the lid and tell me to come out. (*Banging on the floor with his fists.*) "Hey you, whatsyername! Come out of there!"

GUIL (*jumps up savagely*): You don't have to flog it to death!

(*Pause.*)

ROS: I wouldn't think about it, if I were you. You'd only get depressed. (*Pause.*) Eternity is a terrible thought. I mean, where's it going to end? (*Pause, then brightly.*) Two early Christians chanced to meet in Heaven. "Saul of Tarsus yet!" cried one. "What are *you* doing here?!" ... "Tarsus-Schmarsus", replied the other, "I'm Paul already."

(*ROS stands up restlessly and flaps his arms.*)

They don't care. We count for nothing. We could remain silent till we're green in the face, they wouldn't come.

GUIL: Blue, red.

ROS: A Christian, a Moslem and a Jew chanced to meet in a closed carriage... "Silverstein!" cried the Jew, "Who's your friend?" ... "His name's Abdullah", replied the Moslem, "but he's no friend of mine since he became a convert." (*He leaps up again, stamps his foot and shouts into the wings.*) All right, we know you're in there! Come out talking! (*Pause.*) We have no control. None at all... (*He paces.*) Whatever became of the moment when one first knew about death? There must have been one, a moment, in childhood when it first occurred to you that you don't go on for ever. It must have been shattering – stamped into one's memory. And yet I can't remember it. It never occurred to me at all. What does one make of that? We must be born with an intuition of mortality. Before we know the words for it, before we know that there are words, out we come, bloodied and squalling with the knowledge that for all the compasses in the world, there's only one direction, and time is its only measure. (*He reflects, getting more desperate and rapid.*) A Hindu, a Buddhist and a lion-tamer chanced to meet, in a circus on the Indo-Chinese border. (*He breaks out.*) They're taking us for granted! Well, I won't stand for it! In future, notice will be taken. (*He wheels again to face into the wings.*) Keep out, then! I forbid anyone to enter! (No one comes – Breathing heavily.) That's better...

Helpful information

1. Drama: the main characteristics.

Drama can be divided into serious drama, tragedy, comic drama, melodrama, and farce.

Drama differs from other forms of literature in that it demands a stage and performances. It can be enjoyed by both spectators and readers. But the fact is that most plays are written to be produced and must be performed. The word "drama" comes from the Greek meaning "a thing done". The playwright supplies dialogues for the characters to speak and stage directions that give information about costumes, lighting, scenery, properties, the setting, music, sound effects, and the characters' movements and ways of speaking. From its beginnings, drama, like other forms of literature, was meant to tell the story of humankind in conflict with the world. A play is human action or human experience dramatized for stage production. Poetic elements of technique and strategies in a play must be made visible. Through plot, a playwright "imitates" movements of existence, adjusting the rhythm to fit the mode of presentation, whether that mode is comedy or farce, tragedy or melodrama, tragicomedy or pantomime.

2. The Theatre of the Absurd, or Theater of the Absurd (French: "Le Théâtre de l'Absurde") is a designation for particular plays written by a number of primarily European playwrights in the late 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s, as well as to the style of theatre which has evolved from their work.

The term was coined by the critic Martin Esslin, who made it the title of a 1962 book on the subject. Esslin saw the work of these playwrights as giving artistic articulation to Albert Camus' philosophy that life is inherently without meaning, and so one must find one's own meaning as illustrated in his work *The Myth of Sisyphus*.

The "Theatre of the Absurd" is thought to have its origins in Dadaism, nonsense poetry and avant-garde art of the 1910s–1920s. Despite its critics, this genre of theatre achieved popularity when World War II highlighted the essential precariousness of human life.

The expression "Theater of the Absurd" has been criticized by some writers, and one also finds the expressions "Anti-Theater" and "New Theater". According to Martin Esslin, the four defining playwrights of the movement are Eugène Ionesco, Samuel Beckett, Jean Genet, and Arthur Adamov, although each of these writers has entirely unique preoccupations and techniques that go beyond the term "absurd". Other writers often associated with this group include Tom Stoppard, Friedrich Dürrenmatt, Fernando Arrabal, Harold Pinter, Edward Albee and Jean Tardieu. Playwrights who served as an inspiration to the movement include Alfred Jarry, Luigi Pirandello, Stanislaw Ignacy Witkiewicz, Guillaume Apollinaire, the surrealists and many more.

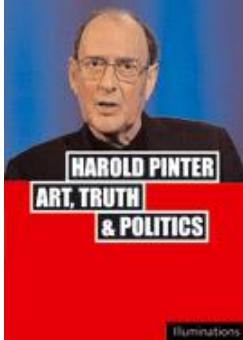
The "Absurd" or "New Theater" movement was, in its origin, a distinctly Paris-based (and left bank) avant-garde phenomenon tied to extremely small theaters in the Quartier Latin; the movement only gained international prominence over time.

In practice, The Theatre of the Absurd departs from realistic characters, situations and all of the associated theatrical conventions. Time, place and identity are ambiguous and fluid, and even basic causality frequently breaks down. Meaningless plots, repetitive or nonsensical dialogue and dramatic non-sequiturs are often used to create dream-like, or even nightmare-like moods. There is a fine line, however, between the

careful and artful use of chaos and non-realistic elements and true, meaningless chaos. While many of the plays described by this title seem to be quite random and meaningless on the surface, an underlying structure and meaning is usually found in the midst of the chaos.

The New York based theater company Untitled Theater Company # 61 purports to present a “modern theater of the absurd,” consisting of new plays in the genre and classic plays interpreted by new directors. Among their projects was the Ionesco Festival, a festival of the complete works of Eugène Ionesco, and the Havel Festival, the complete works of Václav Havel.

3. Harold Pinter: biography and plays.



Harold Pinter (10 October 1930 – 24 December 2008) is a British playwright, screenwriter, poet, actor, director, author, and political activist, best known for his plays *The Birthday Party* (1957), *The Caretaker* (1959), *The Homecoming* (1964), and *Betrayal* (1978), and for his screenplay adaptations of novels by others, such as *The Servant* (1963), *The Go-Between* (1970), *The French Lieutenant's Woman* (1980), and *The Trial* (1993).

He achieved international success as one of the most complex post-World War II dramatists. Harold Pinter's plays are noted for their use of silence to increase tension, understatement, and cryptic small talk. Equally recognizable are the 'Pinteresque' themes – nameless menace, erotic fantasy, obsession and jealousy, family hatred and mental disturbance. In 2005, Pinter was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature.

“I don't know how music can influence writing, but it has been very important for me, both jazz and classical music. I feel a sense of music continually in writing, which is a different matter from having been influenced by it.” (Harold Pinter in *Playwrights at Work*, ed. by George Plimpton, 2000).

Harold Pinter was born in Hackney, a working-class neighborhood in London's East End, the son of a tailor. Both of his parents were Jewish, born in England. As a child Pinter got on well with his mother, but he didn't get on well with his father, who was a strong disciplinarian. On the outbreak of World War II Pinter was evacuated from the city to Cornwall; to be wrenched from his parents was a traumatic event for Pinter. He lived with 26 other boys in a castle on the coast. At the age of 14, he returned to London. “The condition of being bombed has never left me,” Pinter later said.

Pinter was educated at Hackney Downs Grammar School, where he acted in school productions. At school one of Pinter's main intellectual interests was English literature, particularly poetry. He also read works of Franz Kafka and Ernest Hemingway.

After two unhappy years Pinter left his studies at London's Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts. In 1949 Pinter was fined by magistrates for having, as a conscientious objector, refused to do his national service. Pinter had two trials. “I could have gone to prison – I took my toothbrush to the trials – but it so happened that the magistrate was slightly sympathetic, so I was fined instead, thirty pounds in all. Perhaps I'll be called up again in the next war, but I won't go.” (from *Playwrights at Work*). Pinter's father paid the fine in the end, a substantial sum of money.

In 1950 Pinter started to publish poems in *Poetry* (London) under the name Harold Pinta. He worked as a bit-part actor on a BBC Radio program, *Focus on Football Pools*. He also studied for a short time at the Central School of Speech and Drama and toured Ireland from 1951 to 1952 with a Shakespearean troupe. In 1953 he appeared during Donald Wolfit's 1953 season at the King's Theatre in Hammersmith.

After four more years in provincial repertory theatre under the pseudonym David Baron, Pinter began to write for the stage. *The Room* (1957), originally written for Bristol University's drama department, was finished in four days. *A Slight Ache*, Pinter's first radio piece, was broadcast on the BBC in 1959. His first full-length play, *The Birthday Party*, was first performed by Bristol University's drama department in 1957 and produced in 1958 in the West End. The play, which closed with disastrous reviews after one week, dealt in a Kafkaesque manner with an apparently ordinary man who is threatened by strangers for an unknown reason. He tries to run away but is tracked down. Although most reviewers were hostile, Pinter produced in rapid succession the body of work which made him the master of “the comedy of menace.” “I find critics on the whole a pretty unnecessary bunch of people,” Pinter said decades later in an interview. “We don't need critics to tell the audiences what to think.”

Pinter's major plays originate often from a single, powerful visual image. They are usually set in a single room, whose occupants are threatened by forces or people whose precise intentions neither the characters nor the audience can define. The struggle for survival or identity dominates the action of his characters. Language is not only used as a means of communication but as a weapon. Beneath the words, there is a silence of fear, rage and domination, fear of intimacy.

“Pinter’s dialogue is as tightly – perhaps more tightly – controlled than verse,” Martin Esslin writes in *The People Wound* (1970). “Every syllable, every inflection, the succession of long and short sounds, words and sentences, is calculated to nicety. And precisely the repetitiousness, the discontinuity, and the circularity of ordinary vernacular speech are here used as formal elements with which the poet can compose his linguistic ballet.” Pinter refuses to provide rational justifications for action, but offers existential glimpses of bizarre or terrible moments in people’s lives.

ASTON – You said you wanted me to get you up.

DAVIES – What for?

ASTON – You said you were thinking of going to Sidcup.

DAVIES – Ay, that’d be a good thing, if I got there.

ASTON – Doesn’t look like much of a day.

DAVIES – Ay, well, that’s shot it, en’t it? (from *The Caretaker*)

In 1960 Pinter wrote *The Dumb Waiter*. With his second full-length play, *The Caretaker* (1960), Pinter made his breakthrough as a major modern talent, although in Düsseldorf the play was booed. *The Caretaker* was followed by *A Slight Ache* (1961), *The Collection* (1962), *The Dwarfs* (1963), *The Lover* (1963).

The Homecoming (1965) is perhaps the most enigmatic of all Pinter’s early works. It won a Tony Award, the Whitbread Anglo-American Theater Award, and the New York Drama Critics’ Circle Award. In the story an estranged son, Teddy, brings his wife Ruth home to London to meet his family, his father Max, a nagging, aggressive ex-butcher, and other tough members of the all-male household. At the end Teddy returns alone to his university job in America. Ruth stays as a mother or whore to his family. Everyone needs her. – Similar motifs – the battle for domination in a sexual context – recur in *Landscape and Silence* (both 1969), and in *Old Times* (1971), in which the key line is “Normal, what’s normal?” After *The Homecoming* Pinter said that he “couldn’t any longer stay in the room with this bunch of people who opened doors and came in and went out.”

Several of Pinter’s plays were originally written for British radio or TV. In the 1960s he also directed several of his dramas. After *Betrayal* (1978) Pinter wrote no new full-length plays until *Moonlight* (1994). Short plays include *A Kind of Alaska* (1982), inspired by the case histories in Oliver Sack’s *Awakenings* (1973).

From the 1970s Pinter has directed a number of stage plays and the American Film Theatre production of *Butler* (1974). In 1977 he published a screenplay based on Marcel Proust’s *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu*. Closely associated with the director Peter Hall, he became an associate director of the National Theatre after Hall was nominated as the successor of Sir Lawrence Olivier. Pinter has received many awards, including the Berlin Film Festival Silver Bear in 1963, BAFTA awards in 1965 and in 1971, the Hamburg Shakespeare Prize in 1970, the Cannes Film Festival Palme d’Or in 1971, and the Commonwealth Award in 1981. He was awarded a CBE in 1966, but he later turned down John Major’s offer of a knighthood. In 1996 he was given the Laurence Olivier Award for a lifetime’s achievement in the theatre. In 2002 he was made a Companion of Honour for services to literature.

Pinter was married from 1956 to the actress Vivien Merchant. For a time, they lived in Notting Hill Gate in a slum. Eventually Pinter managed to borrow some money and move away. Although Pinter said in an interview in 1966, that he never has written any part for any actor, his wife Vivien frequently appeared in his plays. After his first marriage dissolved in 1980, Pinter married the biographer Lady Antonia Fraser. Vivien Merchant died in 1982. The divorce separated Pinter from his son Daniel, a writer and musician.

Pinter work include a number of screenplays, including *The Servant* (1963), *The Accident* (1967), *The Go-Between* (1971), *The Last Tycoon* (1974, dir. by Elia Kazan), *The French Lieutenant’s Woman* (1981, novel by John Fowles), *Betrayal* (1982), *Turtle Diary* (1985), *Reunion* (1989), *The Handmaid’s Tale* (1990), *The Comfort of Strangers* (1990), and *The Trial* by Franz Kafka (1990). In the 1990s Pinter became more active as a director than as a playwright. He oversaw David Mamet’s *Oleanna* and several works by Simon Gray.

Since the overthrow of Chile’s President Allende in 1973, Pinter has been active in human rights issues, but his opinions have often been controversial. During the Kosovo crisis in 1999, Pinter condemned Nato’s intervention, and said it will “only aggravate the misery and the horror and devastate the country”. In 2001 Pinter joined The International Committee to Defend Slobodan Milosevic, which also included former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark. Milosevic was arrested by the U.N. war crimes tribunal. In January 2002 Pinter was diagnosed with cancer of the oesophagus. In his speech to an anti-war meeting at the House of Commons in November 2002 Pinter joined the world-wide debate over the so-called “preventive war” against Iraq: “Bush has said: ‘We will not allow the world’s worst weapons to remain in the hands of the

world's worst leaders.' Quite right. Look in the mirror chum. That's you." In February 2005 Pinter announced in an interview that he has decided to abandon his career as a playwright and put all his energy into politics. "I've written 29 plays. Isn't that enough?"



4. Tom Stoppard's life and plays.

Sir Tom Stoppard (born Tomáš Straussler on July 3, 1937) is an Academy Award winning British playwright. Born in Czechoslovakia, he is famous for plays such as *The Real Thing* and *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead*, and for the screenplays of *Brazil* and *Shakespeare in Love*.

Stoppard was born in Zlín, Czechoslovakia (now the Czech Republic), into a Jewish family. To avoid persecution, the Strausslers fled Czechoslovakia to Singapore with other Jewish doctors on March 15, 1939, the day the Nazis invaded. However, in 1941 the family had to be evacuated to India to avoid the Japanese invasion of Singapore. His father, Eugene Straussler, remained behind and was killed.

In India, Stoppard received an English education. His mother Martha married a British army major named Kenneth Stoppard, who gave the boy his English surname. The family eventually moved to England in 1946.

Stoppard left school at seventeen and began work as a journalist for Western Daily Press. By 1960 he had completed his first play *A Walk on the Water*, which was later produced as *Enter a Free Man*. From September 1962 until April 1963, Stoppard worked in London as a drama critic for *Scene*, writing reviews and interviews both under his name and under the pseudonym William Boot (taken from Evelyn Waugh's *Scoop*).

By 1977, Stoppard had become concerned with human rights issues, in particular with the situation of political dissidents in Central and Eastern Europe. In February 1977, he visited the Soviet Union with a member of Amnesty International. In June, Stoppard met Vladimir Bukovsky in London and travelled to Czechoslovakia (then under communist control), where he met Václav Havel, at that time a dissident playwright. Stoppard became involved with Index on Censorship, Amnesty International, and the Committee against Psychiatric Abuse and wrote various newspaper articles and letters about human rights. Stoppard was also instrumental in translating Havel's works into English. The Tom Stoppard Prize was created in 1983 (in Stockholm, under the Charter 77 Foundation) and is awarded to authors of Czech origin. In August 2005 Stoppard visited Minsk to give a seminar on playwriting, and to learn first-hand about various human rights and political problems in Belarus.

He was appointed CBE in 1978 and knighted in 1997. He has been co-opted into the Outrapo group. He has been married twice, to Josie Ingle (1965–72), a nurse, and to Miriam Stoppard (née Miriam Moore-Robinson), (1972–92), whom he left to begin a relationship with actress Felicity Kendal. He has two sons from each marriage, including the actor Ed Stoppard.

Works for the theatre

Stoppard's plays are plays of ideas that deal with philosophical issues, yet he combines the philosophical ideas he presents with verbal wit and visual humor. His linguistic complexity, with its puns, jokes, innuendo, and other wordplay, is a chief characteristic of his work. Many also feature multiple timelines.

(1967) *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead* is one of Stoppard's most famous works – a comedic play which casts two minor characters from Hamlet as its leads, but with the same lack of power to affect their world or exterior circumstances as they have in Shakespeare's original. Hamlet's role is similarly reversed in terms of his stage time and lines, but it is in his wake that the heroes drift helplessly toward their inevitable demise. Rather than shaping events, they pass the time playing witty word games and pondering their predicament. It is similar in many ways to Samuel Beckett's absurdist *Waiting for Godot*, particularly in the main characters' lack of purpose and (in)comprehension of their situation.

(1968) *Enter a Free Man*.

(1968) *The Real Inspector Hound* is one of his best-known short plays. In it two theatre critics are watching a *Country House Murder Mystery*, and become involved in the action by accident. The viewer is watching a play within a play. In a particularly Stoppardian touch, he based the whodunit the critics are watching very closely on Agatha Christie's *The Mousetrap*, knowing full well that the producers of that play (still running in London's West End) couldn't complain without drawing attention to the very thing they want to conceal, that Stoppard's play (even its title alone) gives away their "surprise" ending.

(1970) *After Magritte* is a surreal piece which manages to place the characters, through perfectly rational means, into situations worthy of a Magritte painting. It features a husband-and-wife dance team, the

rather confused mother of one of them, a detective named Foot and a constable named Holmes; Stoppard notes that it is frequently performed as a companion piece to *The Real Inspector Hound*.

(1972) *Jumpers* explores the field of academic philosophy, likening it to a highly skilful competitive gymnastics display. *Jumpers* raises questions such as what do we know? Where do values come from? It is set in an alternate reality where some British astronauts have landed on the moon and “Radical Liberals” (read Communists) have taken over the British government.

(1974) *Travesties* is a parody of Oscar Wilde’s *The Importance of Being Earnest*. The play starts from the fact that Tristan Tzara, Vladimir Lenin, and James Joyce were all in Zürich, Switzerland, in 1917 (in fact they were there at slightly different times, but Stoppard gets round this by telling the story through the memory of a confused old man, Henry Carr – hence also the facts getting mixed up with the plot of *The Importance of Being Earnest*, which Carr performed in at the time). There are clear relationships between Joyce’s literary work and Tzara’s dada art. The relation to Lenin’s ideas is less well explained.

(1976) *Dirty Linen and New-Found-Land* combines two works. *Dirty Linen* is a farce that portrays a special committee of the British House of Commons, appointed to investigate reports that a large number of Members of Parliament have been having sex with the same woman. Naturally it contains implied commentary on the government, its workings, its members, and its relationship to the press and to the public. *New-Found-Land* is a brief interlude in which two government officials try to decide whether to give British citizenship to an eccentric American (based on one of Stoppard’s acquaintances), and contains an imaginative rhapsody about America.

(1977) *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour* is one of Stoppard’s most unusual works. It was written at the request of André Previn and was inspired by a meeting with Russian exile Viktor Fainberg. The play calls for a small cast, but also a full orchestra, which not only provides music throughout the play but also forms an essential part of the action. The play concerns a dissident under an oppressive regime (obviously meant to be taken for a Soviet-controlled state) who is imprisoned in a mental hospital, from which he will not be released until he admits that his statements against the government were caused by a (non-existent) mental disorder.

(1978) *Night and Day* is about journalism. Set in a fictional African country governed by the tyrant Mageeba, the plot involves the interactions of two British reporters and a British photographer and the family of a British mine owner during a period of unrest in the country.

(1979) *Dogg’s Hamlet, Cahoot’s Macbeth* are two works. In *Dogg’s Hamlet* we find the actors speaking a language called Dogg, which consists of ordinary English words but with meanings completely different from the ones we assign them. Three schoolchildren are rehearsing a performance of *Hamlet* in English, which is to them a foreign language. *Cahoot’s Macbeth* is usually performed with *Dogg’s Hamlet*, and shows a shortened performance of *Macbeth* carried out under the eyes of a secret policeman who suspects the actors of subversion against the state.

(1979) *15-Minute Hamlet*. The entire play of *Hamlet*, only in fifteen minutes. An excerpt from *Dogg’s Hamlet*, it is often performed and published on its own.

(1979) *Undiscovered Country* is an adaptation of *Das Weite Land* by the esteemed Austrian playwright Arthur Schnitzler.

(1981) *On the Razzle* is a comedic farce based on a play by 19th-century Austrian playwright Johann Nestroy, *Einen Jux will er sich machen* (which is the source for Thornton Wilder’s *The Matchmaker* and the musical *Hello, Dolly!* as well).

(1982) *The Real Thing* examines love and fidelity, and makes extensive use of play within a play.

(1984) *Rough Crossing*.

(1986) *Dalliance*.

(1988) *Hapgood* mixes the themes of espionage and quantum mechanics, especially exploring the idea that in both fields, observing an event changes the nature of the event. Stoppard also compares the dual nature of light (is it a wave that sometimes seems like particles, or vice versa) with a double agent who is not sure which side he is really working for.

(1993) *Arcadia* alternates between a pair of present day researchers investigating an early 19th century literary mystery and the real incident they are investigating.

(1995) *Indian Ink* is based on his radio play *In The Native State*, and examines British rule in India from both sides.

(1997) *The Invention of Love* investigates the life and death of Oxford poet and classicist A. E. Housman, especially his repressed homosexual love for his friend Moses Jackson, contrasting Housman with Oscar Wilde’s public fall from grace.

(2002) *The Coast of Utopia* is a trilogy about the origins of modern political radicalism in 19th-century Russia. The central figures in the action are Michael Bakunin, Vissarion Belinsky, and Alexander Herzen. The work consists of three plays: *Voyage*, *Shipwreck*, and *Salvage*.

(2006) *Rock 'n' Roll* which spans the years from 1968 to 1990 from the double perspective of Prague, where a rock 'n' roll band comes to symbolise resistance to the Communist regime, and of Cambridge where the verities of love and death are shaping the lives of three generations in the family of a Marxist philosopher. Stoppard gives the character Max Morrow a surprising number of lines relating to fish pie, thought to be a way of teasing Brian Cox (who played Morrow in the first performances) about an embarrassing TV ad for *Young's Fish Pie* he had done many years before. Its first public performance (a preview) was 3 June, 2006 at the Royal Court Theatre. It was a controversial addition to the Royal Court's 50th anniversary season, due to the left-leaning nature of much of the Royal Court's work and the anti-communist nature of much of Stoppard's work (including *Rock 'n' Roll* itself).

Work for radio, film, and TV

In his early years Stoppard wrote extensively for BBC radio, in many cases introducing a touch of surrealism. Some of his better known radio works include: *If You're Glad, I'll Be Frank*; *Albert's Bridge*; *The Dog it was that Died*; and *Artist Descending a Staircase*, a story told by means of multiple levels of nested flashback. He returned to the medium for *In the Native State* (1991), a story set both in colonial India and present-day England, and examines the relationship of the two countries. Stoppard later expanded the work to become the stage play *Indian Ink* (1995).

In his television play *Professional Foul* (1977), an English philosophy professor visits Prague, officially to speak at a colloquium, unofficially to watch a football international between England and Czechoslovakia. He meets one of his former students and is persuaded to smuggle the student's dissident thesis out of the country.

He has also adapted many of his own plays for film and TV, notably the 1990 production of *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead*. Tom Stoppard has written extensively for film and television. Some of his better-known scripts and adaptations include:

(1975) *Three Men in a Boat* (adaptation of Jerome K. Jerome's novel for BBC Television);

(1975) *The Boundary* (co-authored by Clive Exton, a 30 minute BBC television play written, rehearsed and performed within a week);

(1977) *Professional Foul* (dedicated to fellow playwright Václav Havel);

(1985) *Brazil* (co-authored with Terry Gilliam, script nominated for an Academy Award);

(1987) *Empire of the Sun*;

(1990) *The Russia House*;

(1998) *Shakespeare In Love* (co-authored with Marc Norman, script won an Academy Award);

(2001) *Enigma*;

(2005) *His Dark Materials* (a draft screenplay, subsequently rejected);

(2005) *Star Wars: Episode III – Revenge of the Sith* (rumoured uncredited rewrite);

(2007) *The Bourne Ultimatum* (in pre-production).

It is rumoured that Stoppard assisted George Lucas in polishing up some of the dialogue for Indiana Jones and *the Last Crusade* and *Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith*, though Stoppard received no official or formal credit in this role. He worked in a similar capacity with Tim Burton on his film *Sleepy Hollow*. He is also rumoured to be writing the script for the 22nd James Bond film, currently under the title of Bond 22.

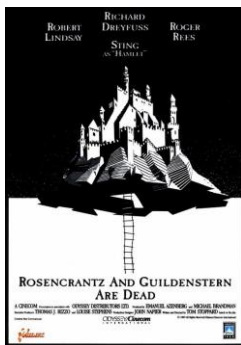
Stoppard has written one novel, *Lord Malquist and Mr Moon* (1966). It is set in contemporary London and its cast includes not only the eighteenth century figure of the dandified Malquist and his ineffectual Boswell, Moon, but also a couple of cowboys with live bullets in their six-shooters, a lion (banned from the Ritz) and a donkey-borne Irishman claiming to be the Risen Christ.

5. The plot and the synopsis of *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead*.

Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead is a humorous, absurdist, tragic and existentialist play by Tom Stoppard, first staged at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe August 26, 1966. A 1990 film version starred Gary Oldman and Tim Roth as the title characters and featured Richard Dreyfuss as the Player. The play expands upon

the exploits of two minor characters from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

The play opens with the title characters alone on stage, placing bets on the toss of a coin while traveling toward Elsinore, the castle of Danish King Claudius and their childhood friend, Prince Hamlet.



Guilkenstern is perturbed that the coin has come down heads eighty-five times in a row. This seems ominously significant to him. Rosencrantz sees nothing particularly amiss.

R&G inhabit a world completely beyond their comprehension. Unsure of where they are going (and even of who they are and where they come from), they depend upon others to give their lives meaning. While awaiting instructions, they fall back upon games – word play and simple wagers – that rarely achieve their intended goals.

Instructed by the King and Queen to “glean what afflicts” poor Hamlet, the boys attempt to cross-examine the prince but end up only more confused. Neither do they have the wit to see their own deaths foretold when the Player and his Tragedians rehearse the melodramatic tragedy, *The Murder of Gonzago*, which includes the execution of “two smiling accomplices – friends – courtiers – two spies” who accompany a prince to England, only to be betrayed by a purloined letter. After Hamlet kills Polonius, R&G are dispatched to retrieve the body, but they of course bungle the job. They are then dispatched to England with the prince. During the ocean voyage, R&G discover that the letter they carry from Claudius calls for the immediate cutting off of Hamlet’s head. Before they can decide what to do with the letter, it is stolen from them by Hamlet and replaced with another. After the ship is attacked by pirates and Hamlet escapes overboard in a barrel, R&G open the letter again, only to learn that it is now they who must be killed when they arrive in England.

The Player and his band are also on the ship, but he is not especially surprised to learn of this treacherous turn of events, saying, “In our experience, most things end in death.” Infuriated, Guilkenstern plunges a knife into the Player’s throat and watches him die spectacularly. After a moment, the Player jumps up, brushes himself off and reveals the knife to be a spring-loaded fake. Guilkenstern is too distraught to be impressed, saying, “Dying is not romantic, and death is not a game which will soon be over...Death is not anything...death is not...It’s the absence of presence, nothing more...the endless time of never coming back...a gap you can’t see, and when the wind blows through it, it makes no sound...”

In the end, R&G resign themselves to their fate, although Guilkenstern says, “There must have been a moment, at the beginning, when we could have said – no. But somehow we missed it.” Perhaps. But the play ends with two ambassadors from England informing Horatio that, at long last, Rosencrantz and Guilkenstern are dead.

The play concerns the misadventures and musings of Rosencrantz and Guilkenstern, focusing on their actions while the events of Hamlet occur as background. *Rosencrantz and Guilkenstern Are Dead* is structured as the inverse of Hamlet; the title characters are the leads, not minor players, and Hamlet himself has only a small part. The duo appears on stage here when they are off-stage in Shakespeare’s play, with the exception of a few short scenes in which the dramatic events of both plays coincide. In *Hamlet*, Rosencrantz and Guilkenstern are used by the king in an attempt to find out about Hamlet’s motives and to plot against him. Hamlet, however, mocks them derisively and outwits them, so that they, rather than he, are killed in the end. Thus from Rosencrantz and Guilkenstern’s perspective, the action in *Hamlet* does not make much sense.

The two characters, brought into being within the puzzling universe of the play, by an act of the playwright’s creation, and those they encounter, often confuse their names, as they have interchangeable yet periodically unique identities. They are portrayed as two clowns or fools in a world that is beyond their understanding; they cannot identify any reliable feature or the significance in words or events. Their own memories are not reliable or complete and they misunderstand each other as they stumble through philosophical arguments while not realizing the implications to them. They often state deep philosophical truths during their nonsensical ramblings, however they depart from these ideas as quickly as they come to them. At times Guilkenstern appears to be more enlightened than Rosencrantz; at times both of them appear to be equally confounded by the events occurring around them.

As with many of Tom Stoppard’s works, the play has a love for cleverness and language. It treats language as a confounding system fraught with ambiguity.

6. The themes of the play

Existentialism – why are we here? Why should Rosencrantz and Guilkenstern do anything unless someone asks them to? They find themselves as pawns in a gigantic game of chess, yet make no effort whatsoever to escape.

Free will vs. determinism – is it their choice to perform actions, or are they fated to live the way they do? The implication the play gives is that it does not matter what choices Rosencrantz and Guilkenstern make, they are trapped within the logic of the play, and cannot escape, being fated to follow a destiny determined by the plot. Hamlet ends with the news of their deaths, so they have to die.

Search for value – what is important? What is not? Does anything matter? If we are all going to die, why do we continue to live?

Futility of language – Do words always mean what we say they mean? How do we know what words with multiple meanings mean? Why do words mean what they mean? How do we interpret what is being said to something sensible when it is not? How do words determine madness?

The impossibility of certainty.

These themes, and the presence of two central characters that almost appear to be two halves of a single character, are shared with Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* and the two plays are often compared. Many plot features are similar as well. The characters pass time by playing Questions, impersonating other characters, and interrupting each other or remaining silent for long periods of time. Other authors have also experimented with characters who (partially) understand that they are fictional – for example, in Frank Baker's classic *Miss Hargreaves: A Fantasy*, in Jostein Gaarder's *Sophie's World*, in Robert Shea and Robert Anton Wilson's *Illuminatus!* trilogy, in Luigi Pirandello's Six Characters in *Search of an Author*, and in Paul Wühr's *Das falsche Buch*. Jasper Fforde's *Thursday Next* series also makes heavy use of characters who understand that they are fictional.

Module 2

Seminar 5

Modern American Poetry (Langston Hughes, Theodore Roethke, Robert Lowell, Allen Ginsberg, Bob Dylan, Jim Morrison)

Plan

1. The open form vs. closed form poetry.
2. Langston Hughes as a representative of the African-American Renaissance. The analysis of *Harlem: A Dream Deferred*.
3. The mastery of rhythm and natural imagery in Theodore Roethke's poems. The meaning of *Waking*.
4. Robert Lowell's psychological lyricism. What is his *Water* about?
5. The poetry of Beat generation: Allen Ginsberg's biography and works. The main ideas of *The Supermarket in California*.
6. Rock-poetry as a cultural phenomenon.
7. Bob Dylan's life and lyrics. The analysis of *Like a Rolling Stone*.
8. The life and poetry of Jim Morrison. The main ideas of *People Are Strange*.

Literature and Resources

1. About American poetry:
 - 1) Американская поэзия в русских переводах [Электронный ресурс]. – Режим доступа: <http://www.uspoetry.ru/poets/2/poems/>.
 - 2) Дудченко М.М. Література Великобританії і США : навч. посіб. [для студ. вищ. навч. закл.] / Михайло Миколайович Дудченко. – 2-ге вид., доп. – Суми: ВТД “Університетська книга”, 2006. – 445 с. – С. 384–387, 395–398.
 - 3) An Online Journal and Multimedia Companion to *Anthology of Modern American Poetry* [edited by Cary Nelson]. – Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2000. – Online at : <http://www.english.uiuc.edu/maps/index.htm>.
2. About Langston Hughes:
 - 1) Langston Hughes. – Online at : en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Langston_Hughes.
 - 2) Langston Hughes. – Online at : www.poets.org/lhugh/.
3. About Theodore Roethke:
 - 1) Pinkus Susan. On Roethke's *The Waking*/ Susan Pinkus. – Online at : <http://www.mrbauld.com/roethwak.html>.
 - 2) Theodore Roethke. – Online at : en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theodore_Roethke.
4. About Robert Lowell:

Robert Lowell. – Online at : en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Lowell.
5. About Allen Ginsberg:

- 1) Allen Ginsberg. – Online at : en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allen_Ginsberg.
 - 2) Allen Ginsberg. – Online at : www.allenginsberg.org/.
 - 3) Allen Ginsberg. – Online at : <http://www.levity.com/corduroy/ginsberg/home.htm>.
6. About rock poetry, Bob Dylan and Jim Morrison:
- 1) Bob Dylan. – Online at : en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bob_Dylan.
 - 2) Bob Dylan. The Official Site of Bob Dylan. – Online at : www.bobdylan.com.
 - 3) Bowie Herb. Reason to Rock: Rock Music as Art Form / Herb Bowie. – 2008. – Online at : http://www.reasonatorock.com/tracks/like_a_rolling_stone.html.
 - 4) Burris Hamilton S. Biblical Allusion in Bob Dylan’s Lyrics. 1999–2005 / Skylar Hamilton Burris. – Online at : <http://www.literatureclassics.com/ancientpaths/dylan.html>.
 - 5) Goldstein Richard. The Poetry of Rock. – New York: Bantam, 1969. – 189 p.
 - 6) Jim Morrison. – Online at : en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jim_Morrison.
 - 7) Kolomiyets Ganna. T.S. Eliot in the Cultural Space of American Rock Culture of the 1960s // Головна течія – гетерогенність – канон в сучасній американській літературі: Матеріали III Міжнародної конференції з американської літератури, 3–5 жовтня 2005 р. – К., 2006. – С. 457–465.

Poems

Langston Hughes

Harlem: A Dream Deferred

What happened to a dream deferred?
 Does it dry up
 Like a Raisin in the sun?
 or fester like a sore –
 and than run?
 Does it stink like rotten meat?
 or crust and sugar over
 like a syrupy sweet?
 Maybe it just sags
 Like a heavy load
 or does it explode?

Theodore Roethke The Waking

I wake to sleep, and take my waking slow.
 I feel my fate in what I cannot fear.
 I learn by going where I have to go.

We think by feeling. What is there to know?
 I hear my being dance from ear to ear.
 I wake to sleep, and take my waking slow.

Of those so close beside me, which are you?
 God bless the Ground! I shall walk softly there,
 And learn by going where I have to go.

Light takes the Tree; but who can tell us how?
 The lowly worm climbs up a winding stair;
 I wake to sleep, and take my waking slow.

Great Nature has another thing to do
 To you and me; so take the lively air,
 And, lovely, learn by going where to go.
 This shaking keeps me steady. I should know.
 What falls away is always. And is near.

Пробуждение Пер. Ю. Мориц

Проснувшись в сон, я мыслил в этом сне:
 Моя судьба – там, где неведом страх,
 Учусь в пути, и цель понятна мне.

Мы чувством думаем. Но что понять извне?
 Моя душа – лишь звук в чужих ушах,
 Проснувшись в сон, я мыслил в этом сне.

Из тех, кто близок, как узнать – кто ты?
 Пусть Бог благословит мой тихий путь,
 Учусь в пути, и цель понятна мне.

Свет дерево укрыл. Как? Кто поймет вполне?
 По лестнице крутой ползет червяк,
 Проснувшись в сон, я мыслил в этом сне.

Великая Природа с высоты
 Еще приветит нас. В ее лесах
 Учись в пути, цель встретишь в тишине.
 Страх душу утвердит. Понять бы мне –
 Ушедшее ушло, но близко так...

I wake to sleep, and take my waking slow.
I learn by going where I have to go.

Проснувшись в сон, я мыслил в этом сне.
Учусь в пути, и цель понятна мне.

Robert Lowell
Water

It was a Maine lobster town –
each morning boatloads of hands
pushed off for granite
quarries on the islands,

and left dozens of bleak
white frame houses stuck
like oyster shells
on a hill of rock,

and below us, the sea lapped
the raw little match-stick
mazes of a weir,
where the fish for bait were trapped.

Remember? We sat on a slab of rock.
From this distance in time
it seems the color
of iris, rotting and turning purpler,

but it was only
the usual gray rock
turning the usual green
when drenched by the sea.

The sea drenched the rock
at our feet all day,
and kept tearing away
flake after flake.

One night you dreamed
you were a mermaid clinging to a wharf-pile,
and trying to pull
off the barnacles with your hands.

We wished our two souls
might return like gulls
to the rock. In the end,
the water was too cold for us.

Allen Ginsberg
The Supermarket in California

What thoughts I have of you tonight, Walt Whitman, for I walked
down the sidestreets under the trees with a headache self-conscious looking
at the full moon.

In my hungry fatigue, and shopping for images, I went into the neon
fruit supermarket, dreaming of your enumerations!
What peaches and what penumbras! Whole families shopping at

night! Aisles full of husbands! Wives in the avocados, babies in the tomatoes!
—and you, García Lorca, what were you doing down by the watermelons?

I saw you, Walt Whitman, childless, lonely old grubber, poking
among the meats in the refrigerator and eyeing the grocery boys.
I heard you asking questions of each: Who killed the pork chops?
What price bananas? Are you my Angel?
I wandered in and out of the brilliant stacks of cans following you,
and followed in my imagination by the store detective.
We strode down the open corridors together in our solitary fancy
tasting artichokes, possessing every frozen delicacy, and never passing the
cashier.

Where are we going, Walt Whitman? The doors close in a hour.
Which way does your beard point tonight?
(I touch your book and dream of our odyssey in the supermarket and
feel absurd.)
Will we walk all night through solitary streets? The trees add shade
to shade, lights out in the houses, we'll both be lonely.
Will we stroll dreaming of the lost America of love past blue automo-
biles in driveways, home to our silent cottage?
Ah, dear father, graybeard, lonely old courage-teacher, what America
did you have when Charon quit poling his ferry and you got out on a
smoking bank and stood watching the boat disappear on the black waters of
Lethe?

Bob Dylan
Like a Rolling Stone

Once upon a time you dressed so fine
You threw the bums a dime in your prime, didnt you?
Peopled call, say, beware doll, youre bound to fall
You thought they were all kiddin you
You used to laugh about
Everybody that was hangin out
Now you dont talk so loud
Now you dont seem so proud
About having to be scrounging for your next meal.

How does it feel
How does it feel
To be without a home
Like a complete unknown
Like a rolling stone?

Youve gone to the finest school all right, miss lonely
But you know you only used to get juiced in it
And nobody has ever taught you how to live on the street
And now you find out youre gonna have to get used to it
You said youd never compromise
With the mystery tramp, but now you realize
Hes not selling any alibis
As you stare into the vacuum of his eyes
And ask him do you want to make a deal?

How does it feel
How does it feel

To be on your own
With no direction home
Like a complete unknown
Like a rolling stone?

You never turned around to see the frowns on the jugglers and the clowns
When they all come down and did tricks for you
You never understood that it aint no good
You shouldnt let other people get your kicks for you
You used to ride on the chrome horse with your diplomat
Who carried on his shoulder a siamese cat
Aint it hard when you discover that
He really wasnt where its at
After he took from you everything he could steal.

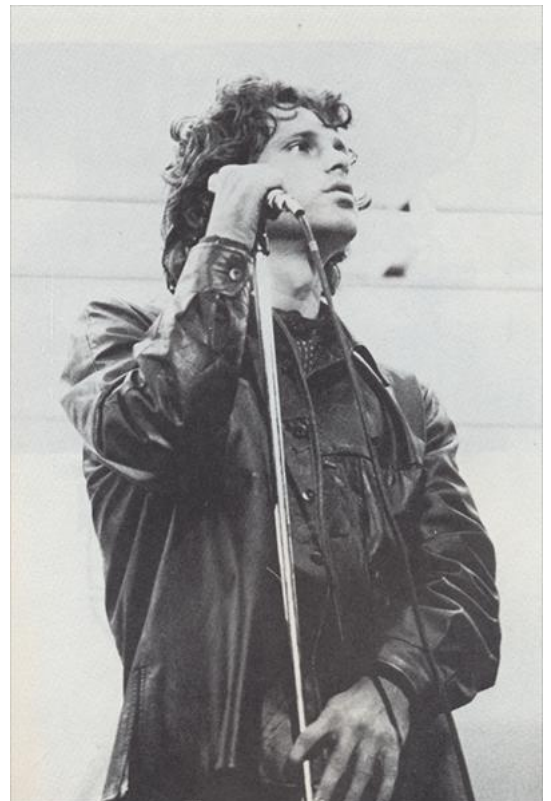
How does it feel
How does it feel
To be on your own
With no direction home
Like a complete unknown
Like a rolling stone?

Princess on the steeple and all the pretty people
Theyre drinkin, thinkin that they got it made
Exchanging all kinds of precious gifts and things
But youd better lift your diamond ring, youd better pawn it babe
You used to be so amused
At napoleon in rags and the language that he used
Go to him now, he calls you, you cant refuse
When you got nothing, you got nothing to lose
Youre invisible now, you got no secrets to conceal.

How does it feel
How does it feel
To be on your own
With no direction home
Like a complete unknown
Like a rolling stone?

Jim Morrison
People are Strange

People are strange when youre a stranger
Faces look ugly when youre alone
Women seem wicked when youre unwanted
Streets are uneven when youre down
When youre strange
Faces come out of the rain
When youre strange
No one remembers your name
When youre strange x3
People are strange when youre a stranger
Faces look ugly when youre alone
Women seem wicked when youre unwanted
Streets are uneven when youre down
When youre strange
Faces come out of the rain



When youre strange
No one remembers your name
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No one remembers your name
When youre strange x3

Helpful Information

1. The open form vs. closed form poetry.

Poetry in the 1950s was under the heavy influence of T. S. Eliot's often misinterpreted idea of poetry being an escape from self and the Modernist focus on objectivity. Similar to this, and perhaps an even more pervasive influence, was the ideas of the New Critics and their idea of a poem as a perfectible object; specifically the poetry of John Crowe Ransom and Robert Penn Warren was highly influential at this time. Their focus on the formal aspects of poetry and their celebration of the short, ironic lyric led to a rise in formalist poetry and a preference for the short lyric. When the Beat poets came to prominence in this time they were damned as sloppy libertines, and at best only a passing fad fueled by media attention.

This conflict was framed by two rival anthologies. Three champions of formalist poetry, Louis Simpson, Donald Hall, and Robert Pack, were putting together an anthology of young poets called *New Poets of England and America*. Allen Ginsberg, believing at the time the Beat poets would be accepted by the literary establishment, brought Simpson, his old Columbia classmate, a packet of poetry including Gary Snyder, Philip Whalen, Robert Duncan, Ed Dorn, Robert Creeley, Philip Lamantia, Denise Levertov, Michael McClure, and Charles Olson in hopes that they would be included in this new anthology (Ginsberg was a relentless promoter of the work of his friends and the work of those he admired). Simpson rejected all of them. The introduction for the anthology was written by formalist hero Robert Frost. The anthology included poetry by Robert Bly, Donald Justice, James Merrill, W. S. Merwin, Howard Nemerov, Adrienne Rich, Richard Wilbur, and James Wright. There is not a strict demarcation here between conservative and avant-garde poetry. The anthology also included poets associated with what is considered a movement parallel to the Beat Generation, The Angry Young Men, poets such as Kingsley Amis, Philip Larkin, and Thom Gunn. However, it did set a trend for who would become poets acceptable to academia and the literary establishment. For example, Robert Lowell and W. D. Snodgrass would be seminal in the creation of what later became known as Confessional poetry, which helped finally overturn the strict focus on objectivity (Lowell, according to some accounts, was inspired to write more personal poetry by Ginsberg and the Beats).

Donald Allen of Grove Press accepted many of the manuscripts Ginsberg gave him for his rival anthology *The New American Poets: 1945–1960*. Poets in that anthology included John Ashbery, Paul Blackburn, Ray Bremser, Gregory Corso, Robert Creeley, Ed Dorn, Kirby Doyle, Robert Duncan, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Allen Ginsberg, LeRoi Jones, Jack Kerouac, Kenneth Koch, Philip Lamantia, Denise Levertov, Michael McClure, Frank O'Hara, Charles Olson, Joel Oppenheimer, Peter Orlovsky, James Schuyler, Gary Snyder, Jack Spicer, Lew Welch, Philip Whalen, John Wieners, and Jonathan Williams. Don Allen framed the debate as "Open Form" (his anthology) vs. "Closed Form" (the other anthology). Though seeing it as a rivalry is overly simplistic (for example, many from *New Poets of England and America* were not strict formalists or have moved away from formalism), the development of poetry in the later half of the twentieth century is framed in these two anthologies.

These poets have had arguably equal impact on literature, and it can be said Beat literature has changed the establishment so that academia is more open to more radical forms of literature. For example, of the poets listed in this section, ten from *New Poets of England and America* and nine from *The New American Poetry* have been included in the *Norton Anthology of American Literature*. But Jack Kerouac, despite his impact on American culture and his status as an American icon, has never been included in *Norton*. Also, three poets from *New Poets of England and America* have served as Poets Laureate of the U.S.

2. Langston Hughes as a representative of the African-American Renaissance. Analysis of *Harlem: A Dream Deferred*.

Born in 1902 in Joplin, Missouri, **Langston Hughes** (1902–1967) grew up mainly in Lawrence, Kansas, but also lived in Illinois, Ohio, and Mexico. By the time Hughes enrolled at Columbia University in

New York, he had already launched his literary career with his poem *The Negro Speaks of Rivers* in the *Crisis*, edited by W. E. B. Du Bois. He had also committed himself both to writing and to writing mainly about the African Americans. Hughes's sense of dedication was instilled in him most of all by his maternal grandmother, Mary Langston, whose first husband had died at Harpers Ferry as a member of John Brown's band, and whose second husband (Hughes's grandfather) had also been a militant abolitionist. Another important family figure was John Mercer Langston, a brother of Hughes's grandfather who was one of the best-known black Americans of the nineteenth century. At the same time, Hughes struggled with a sense of desolation fostered by parental neglect. He himself recalled being driven early by his loneliness 'to books, and the wonderful world in books.'



Leaving Columbia in 1922, Hughes spent the next three years in a succession of menial jobs. But he also traveled abroad. He worked on a freighter down the west coast of Africa and lived for several months in Paris before returning to the United States late in 1924. By this time, he was well known in African American literary circles as a gifted young poet.

His major early influences were Walt Whitman, Carl Sandburg, as well as the black poets Paul Laurence Dunbar, a master of both dialect and standard verse, and Claude McKay, a radical socialist who also wrote accomplished lyric poetry. However, Sandburg, who Hughes later called "my guiding star," was decisive in leading him toward free verse and a radically democratic modernist aesthetic.

His devotion to black music led him to novel fusions of jazz and blues with traditional verse in his first two books, *The Weary Blues* (1926) and *Fine Clothes to the Jew* (1927). His emphasis on lower-class black life, especially in the latter, led to harsh attacks on him in the black press. With these books, however, he established himself as a major force of the Harlem Renaissance. In 1926, in the *Nation*, he provided the movement with a manifesto when he skillfully argued the need for both race pride and artistic independence in his most memorable essay, *The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain*.

By this time, Hughes had enrolled at the historically black Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, from which he would graduate in 1929. In 1927 he began one of the most important relationships of his life, with his patron Mrs. Charlotte Mason, or "Godmother," who generously supported him for two years. She supervised the writing of his first novel, *Not Without Laughter* (1930) – about a sensitive, black Midwestern boy and his struggling family. However, their relationship collapsed about the time the novel appeared, and Hughes sank into a period of intense personal unhappiness and disillusionment.

One result was his firm turn to the far left in politics. During a year (1932–1933) spent in the Soviet Union, he wrote his most radical verse. A year in Carmel, California, led to a collection of short stories, *The Ways of White Folks* (1934). This volume is marked by pessimism about race relations, as well as a sardonic realism.

After his play *Mulatto*, on the twinned themes of miscegenation and parental rejection, opened on Broadway in 1935, Hughes wrote other plays, including comedies such as *Little Ham* (1936) and a historical drama, *Emperor of Haiti* (1936). Most of these plays were only moderate successes. In 1937 he spent several months in Europe, including a long stay in besieged Madrid. In 1938 he returned home to found the Harlem Suitcase Theater, which staged his agitprop drama *Don't You Want to Be Free?* The play, employing several of his poems, vigorously blended black nationalism, the blues, and socialist exhortation. The same year, a socialist organization published a pamphlet of his radical verse, *A New Song*.

With World War II, Hughes moved more to the center politically. His first volume of autobiography, *The Big Sea* (1940), written in an episodic, lightly comic manner, made virtually no mention of his leftist sympathies. In his book of verse *Shakespeare in Harlem* (1942) he once again sang the blues. On the other hand, this collection, as well as another, his *Jim Crow's Last Stand* (1943), strongly attacked racial segregation.

After the war, two books of verse, *Fields of Wonder* (1947) and *One-Way Ticket* (1949), added little to his fame. However, in *Montage of a Dream Deferred* (1951) he broke new ground with verse accented by the discordant nature of the new bebop jazz that reflected a growing desperation in the black urban communities of the North. At the same time, Hughes's career was vexed by constant harassment by right-wing forces about his ties to the Left. In vain he protested that he had never been a Communist and had severed all such links. In 1953 he suffered a public humiliation at the hands of Senator Joseph McCarthy, who forced him to appear in Washington, D.C., and testify officially about his politics. Hughes denied that he had ever been a party member but conceded that some of his radical verse had been ill-advised.

Hughes's career hardly suffered from this episode. Within a short time McCarthy himself was discredited and Hughes was free to write at length about his years in the Soviet Union in *I Wonder as I Wander* (1956), his much-admired second volume of autobiography. He became prosperous, although he always had to work hard for his measure of prosperity and sometimes called himself, with good cause, a 'literary sharecropper.'

In the 1950s he constantly looked to the musical stage for success, as he sought to repeat his major coup of the 1940s, when Kurt Weill and Elmer Rice had chosen him as the lyricist for their *Street Scene* (1947). This production was hailed as a breakthrough in the development of American opera; for Hughes, the apparently endless cycle of poverty into which he had been locked came to an end. He bought a home in Harlem.

The Simple books inspired a musical show, *Simply Heavenly* (1957) that met with some success. However, Hughes's *Tambourines to Glory* (1963), a gospel musical play satirizing corruption in a black storefront church, failed badly, with some critics accusing him of creating caricatures of black life. Nevertheless, his love of gospel music led to other acclaimed stage efforts, usually mixing words, music, and dance in an atmosphere of improvisation. Notable here were the Christmas show *Black Nativity* (1961) and, inspired by the civil rights movement, *Jericho – Jim Crow* (1964).

For Hughes, writing for children was important. Starting with the successful *Popo and Fifina* (1932), a tale set in Haiti and written with Arna Bontemps, he eventually published a dozen children's books, on subjects such as jazz, Africa, and the West Indies. Proud of his versatility, he also wrote a commissioned history of the NAACP and the text of a much praised pictorial history of black America. His text in *The Sweet Flypaper of Life* (1955), where he explicated photographs of Harlem by Roy DeCarava, was judged masterful by reviewers, and confirmed Hughes's reputation for an unrivaled command of the nuances of black urban culture.

The 1960s saw Hughes as productive as ever. In 1962 his ambitious book-length poem *Ask Your Mama*, dense with allusions to black culture and music, appeared. However, the reviews were dismissive. Hughes's work was not as universally acclaimed as before in the black community. Although he was hailed in 1966 as a historic artistic figure at the First World Festival of Negro Arts in Dakar, Senegal, he also found himself increasingly rejected by young black militants at home as the civil rights movement lurched toward Black Power. His last book was the volume of verse, posthumously published, *The Panther and the Lash* (1967), mainly about civil rights. He died in May that year in New York City.

In many ways Hughes always remained loyal to the principles he had laid down for the younger black writers in 1926. His art was firmly rooted in race pride and race feeling even as he cherished his freedom as an artist. He was both nationalist and cosmopolitan. As a radical democrat, he believed that art should be accessible to as many people as possible. He could sometimes be bitter, but his art is generally suffused by a keen sense of the ideal and by a profound love of humanity, especially black Americans. He was perhaps the most original of African American poets and, in the breadth and variety of his work, assuredly the most representative of African American writers. [From *The Oxford Companion to African American Literature*. Copyright © 1997 by Oxford University Press].

Harlem: A Dream Deferred

The noted poet, Langston Hughes, focused primarily on race relations in America during the 1920s and 1930s. Sometimes his poetry is simplistic and degenerates into a nothing more than whining, but other times he waxes quite profound, and in all cases he is worth studying. A poem that students often encounter in their classes is "Harlem: A Dream Deferred," from his *Montage of a Dream Deferred*. The following discussion analyzes Hughes' "Harlem: A Dream Deferred" in terms of theme and literary devices; then it offers a commentary to help the student understand some of the subtle features of the poem:

Theme:

Having to postpone one's deepest desires can lead to destruction.

Literary devices:

The questions are all rhetorical questions, because they intend to answer themselves. Each question in the first stanza uses simile: "like a raisin in the sun," "like a sore," like rotten meat," "like a syrupy sweet." The second stanza which is not a question but a suggestion also uses simile "like a heavy load." The last stanza uses metaphor, "does it explode?"

The poem employs rhyme: sun-run, meat-sweet, load-explode.

The poem also uses imagery: "raisin in the sun," "fester like a sore – / And then run," "stink like rotten meat," etc.

Commentary:

The question, “What happens to a dream deferred?” appears to be answered with nothing but more questions. But if we analyze each question we get an idea of what the speaker really believes about dreams being postponed.

The “dream” is a goal in life, not just dreams experienced during sleep. The dream is important to the dreamer’s life. But what dream is it exactly? The poem does not choose the dream but leaves it up to the reader. Nevertheless, the speaker’s position is clear that any important dream or goal that must be delayed can have serious negative affects.

As we look at each question we find out what those affects are. With each question the speaker offers a possibility of each negative affect. The first one “Does it dry up like a raisin in the sun”: a raisin is already dry, and as a raisin, it is a good thing, useful and nutritious, but if a raisin is left in the sun to dry up, it becomes hard and impossible to eat; its value sucked out, it no longer serves its useful, nutritional purpose.

The dream or life goal of a human being is central to what makes the human a valuable member of society, but suppose that person with the dream is told he cannot fulfill his goal just yet; he must wait until society changes, until institutions and laws change to allow him to become the doctor, lawyer, professor, or poet that he finds his talent and desires direct him to be.

What if he has to take some other job that he lacks interest in until his environment allows him to attain his goal? What if he has no idea how long it will take? And what if he feels that perhaps in his lifetime that time will never come? What happens then? Surely, his talent will dry up, if he is not allowed to develop it.

If the dream does not dry up, maybe it will “fester like a sore – / And then run.” If you have a sore, you want it to dry up so it will heal, but if it festers and runs, that means it is infected and will take longer to heal. The dream that festers becomes infected with the disease of restlessness and dissatisfaction that may lead to criminal activity, striking back at those who are deferring the dream.

Perhaps a dream put off too long is like meat that had rotted. Dead animal flesh that some people use for food will turn rancid and give off horrible odors if not used within a certain period of time. If the dream is not realized in a timely fashion, it may seem to decay because it dies.

The dream may “crust and sugar over – / Like a syrupy sweet?” If you leave pancake syrup or honey unused for several months, and you go back to fetch the bottle, you might find that there is crusty accumulation on the top of the bottle and the contents are no longer usable. Lack of use had formed that crust, that hard material that is no longer useful because no longer pliable. The dream forced to sit idle hardens into an unusable substance of thoughts that have separated themselves from the goals and formed idle destructive thoughts that are crusted over with despair, doubt, anger, and hatred.

The second stanza is not a question but merely a “maybe” suggestion: maybe the dream-goal just sags like trying to carry something heavy. A heavy load makes one walk slowly, makes one clumsy as he tries to move under the load. The dream not realized may become heavy to bear, because it still weighs on one’s mind with musings like “what might have been,” “if only,” “I guess I’ll never know,” “the one that got away.” All these useless thoughts that dip back into the past weigh heavy on the mind that has had to defer a dream. This sagging under a heavy load might lead to depression and mental lethargy.

The last stanza returns to the question again, but this time instead of simile, the speaker employs metaphor of an explosion. What explodes? Bombs explode and cause great destruction. If all the other possibilities of a deferred dream are bad with some worse than others, then the last possibility is the worst. If the person whose dream is deferred loses all hope, he might “explode” with his despair. He might commit suicide, homicide – or both.

3. The mastery of rhythm and natural imagery in Theodore Roethke’s poems. The meaning of *Waking*.



Theodore Huebner Roethke (RET-key) (1908–1963) was a United States poet, who published several volumes of poetry characterized by its rhythm and natural imagery. He was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for poetry in 1954 for his book, *The Waking*.

Roethke was born in Saginaw, Michigan. His father, Otto Roethke, was a German immigrant, who owned a large local greenhouse. Much of Theodore’s childhood was spent in this greenhouse, as reflected by the use of natural imagery in his poetry. The poet’s adolescent years were jarred, however, by the death of his father from cancer in 1923, a loss that would powerfully shape Roethke’s psychic and creative lives.

He attended the University of Michigan and Harvard University and

became a professor of English. He taught at several universities, among them Lafayette College, Pennsylvania State University and Bennington College.

In 1940, he was expelled from his position at Lafayette and returned to Michigan. Just prior to his return, he had an affair with established poet and critic Louise Bogan, who later became one of his strongest early supporters. While teaching at Michigan State College (now Michigan State University) in Lansing, he began to suffer from depression, which he used as a creative impetus for his poetry. Lastly, he taught at the University of Washington, leading to an association with the poets of the American Northwest.

In 1953, Roethke married Beatrice O'Connell, a former student. Roethke did not inform O'Connell of his repeated episodes of depression, yet she remained dedicated to Roethke and his work. She ensured the posthumous publication of his final volume of poetry, *The Far Field*.

Theodore Roethke suffered a heart attack in a friend's swimming pool in 1963 and died on Bainbridge Island, Washington, aged 55. The pool was later filled in and is now a zen rock garden, which can be viewed by the public at the Bloedel Reserve, a 150-acre (60 hectare) former private estate. There is no sign to indicate that the rock garden was the site of Roethke's death.

Waking.

When a poem takes dead aim on the eternal we should not be surprised that it draws many interpretations. Neal Bowers sees the key to the cryptic opening lines of *The Waking*, and consequently to the entire poem, as a matter of grammar. If you read "I wake to sleep, and take my waking slow" as a prepositional phrase rather than an infinitive, Bowers writes, then sleep becomes a condition, not a process, and therefore a kind of revelation or understanding (51–53). The conclusion that sleep is an awakening is true enough, but it does not account for the mystical use of the paradox that informs the poem, where sleeping and waking, living and dying, dissolve into the vision of oneness with the universe. Jay Parini perceives *The Waking* as evidence of the poet's "steady movement toward self-transcendence on 'the long journey out of the self'" (173). Richard Allen Blessing describes *The Waking* as "a world in process about a world in process" (223). This is more metaphor than statement and perhaps the only way to approach the vision of Roethke's poem. Both Parini and Blessing sense the mystical nature of the poem. Neither, however, shows precisely how it comes about.

Roethke's *The Waking*, is a villanelle, an elaborate, fixed form of five tercets and a quatrain. The villanelle is built on only two rhymes, with the two key lines of the first stanza alternately repeated as the last line of each tercet and joined together in the closing quatrain. The two key lines of the poem are "I wake to sleep, and take my waking slow" and "I learn by going where I have to go." The repetition of these lines gradually unfolds the meaning of the poem. The lines weave in and out through this short poem like an incantation. We follow the movement of waking and going, waking and going, until we feel like a leaf caught in the current of the lines and the words. Where the actual lines are not repeated, the sound pattern takes over. Except for three halfrhymes, the vowel sounds of "wake" and "go" and "fear" carry us from verse to verse, echoing the central lines in every single line of the poem. The end-stopped lines enforce the rhyme, which slows the movement only to heighten the circular sound pattern of assonance and interlocking rhyme. This effect leads us from one verse to the next in a kind of endless movement that suggests the perpetual cycle from birth to death. It is hard to imagine another form that would express this cyclical movement more effectively than the villanelle.

The meaning of the key lines of the poem adds definition to the sense created by the poem's form. Waking to sleep, and learning by going where you have to go are both paradoxes. A paradox is a statement containing two diametrically opposite ideas, such as sleeping and waking, that ultimately join together in one meaning. The effect is circular, like traveling east as far as you can go to reach the west. Because the poem is built on a series of paradoxes, the meaning of the poem becomes as circular as its sound pattern. The effect of a circular form and a circular content adds to the mystical nature of the poem. The circle is the ultimate mystery of our lives. As the poem develops, however, the meaning of the paradoxes becomes clear.

The first verse establishes the central paradox: "I wake to sleep, and take my waking slow." The precise meaning, at this point, is not clear. The next line, "I feel my fate in what I cannot fear," is another paradox. Normally, we fear fate because it is unknown, because it cannot be felt or anticipated. By feeling fate rather than fearing it, you accept it rather than resist it. The last line of the tercet unifies the stanza's meaning. To learn by going means to move without a specific goal, simply accepting "where [you] have to go," which is your fate. Now the first line becomes clearer. Sleep becomes the state that the poet must reach to awake and discover this acceptance. The multilayered meanings of "wake" and "waking" can now be unraveled. Being awake is normally a more conscious state than being asleep. But in the poem, being awake is the unenlightened, pedantic state in which only logic guides us. Here is the paradox. To sleep is to acquire the vision that releases us from the involvement of our intellect and helps us drift into the acceptance of our

fate. To “take my waking slow” may have at least two meanings. First, it is the speaker’s reluctance to move back from the visionary experience (sleep) into the ordinary world of the intellect, that is, to wake up slowly in the ordinary sense. As the poem develops, the visionary sense of the phrase becomes more and more dominant. To wake up slowly is to become slowly more aware of the full sense of the visionary experience, as we drift from the myopic intellectual world to the visionary world of the spirit, where we become at one with the eternal force. This is the kind of complexity that runs through the poem.

The second stanza rejects the intellect as the road to enlightenment. To “think by feeling” is another paradox. The poem asks, “What is there to know?” The implied answer is that there is nothing “to know.” Life can only be felt. From here it is one short step into ecstasy: “I hear my being dance from ear to ear.” The fusion of the senses of sight and sound and the sensation of one’s being throbbing to the rhythm of life dissolves into the repetition of the first line of the poem. This time there is no ambiguity in the meaning of this line. Waking to sleep is to dissolve into the trance. We are a part of the visionary experience.

The vision continues into the next stanza. Of “those so close beside me,” he asks – friend or lover, alive or dead, it is difficult to say – “Which are you,” the waking or the sleeping? Again Roethke plays with the paradoxical meanings of waking and sleeping. To these meanings he now adds a further layer, the living or the dead. Are the dead, being an organic part of this living world, more alive than the living? In the next line, the word ground is capitalized. The ground is not simply an object but the life force, where the dead body dissolves, nourishes new life, and continues the cycle. In this sense, the repetition of the second of the key lines (“And learn by going where I have to go”) makes clear that death is the fate that he “cannot fear.”

From the ground and death we move through the cycle to the growing things, the light of life, the “Tree,” the lowly worm climbing “the winding stair.” The imagery here is mystical and visionary. We cannot explain what drives the cycle. We can, however, sense the mystery and feel a part of it.

In the next stanza, the last tercet, we come back from the vision to this world, “Great Nature,” with the understanding of our mortality. With our new enlightenment we can see how we must live this side of the grave. We must take “the lively air” and let fate, our partner, lead us in the dance of life.

The first line of the final stanza unifies the entire poem. Within the paradox of keeping steady by shaking, we find an explanation of the seemingly opposed forces of life and death. The “shaking” is both the fear of accepting mortality and the ecstasy of absolute openness to experience. The point where fear and ecstasy meet, where logic becomes vision, where death changes to life, is the point on which we must balance. Because we are alive, we must deal with the physical part of nature. Because we are human beings, we must transcend the physical and experience the vision of our interconnection with all living things. Within this vision we perceive that “[W]hat falls away is always. And is near.” What dies is perpetuated by the cycle of life, so that the worlds of the living and the dead are never fully separate. In this last stanza is the final meaning of “The Waking.”

We are still somehow removed from the effect of Roethke’s poem. We must return to the harmony of its form and content. Ultimately, we perceive the poem as we would a piece of music, not in its themes and philosophy, but in the blending of sound, tone, movement, and recurring motifs. When we join this to the metaphor, we sense something of the beauty and complexity of Roethke’s poem. It is as vibrant and fragile and mysterious as the circle of our lives – birth and decay, life and death – that inspired this poem. [By Susan Pinkus, West Vancouver, B.C.].

4. Robert Lowell’s psychological lyricism.

Robert Lowell (1917–1977), born **Robert Traill Spence Lowell, IV**, was an American poet whose works, confessional in nature, engaged with the questions of history and probed the dark recesses of the self. He is generally considered to be among the greatest American poets of the twentieth century.



Robert Lowell was born into the Boston Brahmin family that included Amy Lowell and James Russell Lowell. He attended Harvard College but transferred to Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio, to study under John Crowe Ransom. He was a Roman Catholic from 1940 to 1946, which influenced his first two books, *Land of Unlikeness* (1944) and the Pulitzer Prize winning *Lord Weary’s Castle* (1946). In 1950, Lowell was included in the influential anthology *Mid-Century American Poets* as one of the key literary figures of his generation.

Lowell was a conscientious objector during World War II and served several months at the federal prison in Danbury, Connecticut. He was married to novelist Jean Stafford from 1940 to 1948. In 1949 he married the writer Elizabeth Hardwick. In the 1960s, he became a media personality, befriending such celebrities as Jacqueline and Robert Kennedy, Mary McCarthy, Father Daniel Berrigan, and Eugene McCarthy.

Lowell was hospitalized approximately twenty times for a bipolar disorder that was later identified as “manic depression.” He was never entirely free of the symptoms that caused erratic behavior all through his life.

In 1970 he left Elizabeth Hardwick for the British author, Lady Caroline Blackwood. He spent many of his last years in England. Lowell died in 1977, suffering a heart attack in a cab in New York City, and is buried in Stark Cemetery, Dunbarton, New Hampshire.

Lowell’s collected poems were published in 2003 and his letters in 2005, leading to a renewed interest in his work.

Lowell reached wide acclaim for his 1946 book, *Lord Weary’s Castle*, which included ten poems slightly revised from his earlier *Land of Unlikeness*, and thirty new poems. Among the better known poems in the volume are *Mr Edwards and the Spider* and *The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket*. *Lord Weary’s Castle* was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1947.

The Mills of the Kavanaughs (1951) did not receive a similar acclaim, but Lowell was able to revive his reputation with the award-winning *Life Studies* (1959), a book that reflected stylistic changes that seemed more in line with the popular openness of Beat and Confessional poetry. It was a shift that for the rest of Lowell’s career would produce frequent flashes of brilliance and enable him to achieve respect among Counter Culture revisionists.

Lowell followed *Life Studies* with a volume of loose translations of poems by, among others, Rilke and Rimbaud, *Imitations*, for which he received the 1962 Bollingen Poetry Translation Prize.

For the Union Dead, 1964, was also widely praised, particularly for its title poem, which invokes Allen Tate’s *Ode to the Confederate Dead*. Following this book, however, many critics began to find Lowell’s poetry collections becoming more inconsistent.

During 1967 and 1968 he experimented with a verse journal, published as *Notebook*, 1967–68. These poems loosely based on the sonnet form were reworked into three volumes. *History* deals with public history from antiquity onwards, and with modern poets Lowell had known; *For Lizzie and Harriet* describes the breakdown of his second marriage; and *The Dolphin*, which won the 1974 Pulitzer Prize, includes poems about his marriage to Caroline Blackwood and their life in England.

5. The poetry of Beat generation: Allen Ginsberg’s biography and works.

The main ideas of *The Supermarket in California*.

Allen Ginsberg (1926–1997) was born in Newark, New Jersey, on June 3, 1926. The son of Louis and Naomi Ginsberg, two Jewish members of the New York literary counter-culture of the 1920s, Ginsberg was raised among several progressive political perspectives. A supporter of the Communist party, Ginsberg’s mother was a nudist whose mental health was a concern throughout the poet’s childhood. According to biographer Barry Miles, “Naomi’s illness gave Allen an enormous empathy and tolerance for madness, neurosis, and psychosis.”

As an adolescent, Ginsberg savored Walt Whitman, though in 1939, when Ginsberg left high school, he considered Edgar Allan Poe his favorite poet. Eager to follow a childhood hero who had received a scholarship to Columbia University, Ginsberg made a vow that if he got into the school he would devote his life to helping the working class, a cause he took seriously over the course of the next several years.

He was admitted to Columbia University, and as a student there in the 1940s, he began close friendships with **William S. Burroughs, Neal Cassady, and Jack Kerouac**, all of whom later became leading figures of **the Beat movement**. The group led Ginsberg to a “New Vision,” which he defined in his journal: “Since art is merely and ultimately self-expressive, we conclude that the fullest art, the most individual, uninfluenced, unrepressed, uninhibited expression of art is true expression and the true art.”

Around this time, Ginsberg also had what he referred to as his “Blake vision,” an auditory hallucination of William Blake reading his poems “Ah Sunflower,” “The Sick Rose,” and “Little Girl Lost.” Ginsberg noted the occurrence several times as a pivotal moment for him in his comprehension of the universe, affecting fundamental beliefs about his life and his work. While Ginsberg claimed that no drugs were involved, he later stated that he used various drugs in an attempt to recapture the feelings inspired by the vision.

In 1954, Ginsberg moved to San Francisco. His mentor, **William Carlos Williams**, introduced him to key figures in the San Francisco poetry scene, including Kenneth Rexroth. He also met Michael McClure, who handed off the duties of curating a reading for the newly-established “6” Gallery. With the help of Rexroth, the result was “The ‘6’ Gallery Reading” which took place on **October 7, 1955**. **The event has**



been hailed as the birth of the Beat Generation, in no small part because it was also the first public reading of Ginsberg's "Howl," a poem which garnered world-wide attention for him and the poets he associated with:

*I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by madness, starving
hysterical naked,
dragging themselves through the negro streets at dawn looking for an angry
fix,
angelheaded hipsters burning for the ancient heavenly connection to the
starry dynamo in the machinery of night...*

In response to Ginsberg's reading, McClure wrote: "Ginsberg read on to the end of the poem, which left us standing in wonder, or cheering and wondering, but knowing at the deepest level that a barrier had been broken, that a human voice and body had been hurled against the harsh wall of America..."

Shortly after *Howl and Other Poems* was published in 1956 by City Lights Bookstore, it was banned for obscenity. The work overcame censorship trials, however, and became one of the most widely read poems of the century, translated into more than twenty-two languages.

In the 1960s and 70s, Ginsberg studied under gurus and Zen masters. As the leading icon of the Beats, Ginsberg was involved in countless political activities, including protests against the Vietnam War, and he spoke openly about issues that concerned him, such as free speech and gay rights agendas.

Ginsberg went on to publish numerous collections of poetry, including *Kaddish and Other Poems* (1961), *Planet News* (1968), and *The Fall of America: Poems of These States* (1973), which won the National Book Award.

In 1993, Ginsberg received the Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres (the Order of Arts and Letters) from the French Minister of Culture. He also co-founded and directed the Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics at the Naropa Institute in Colorado. In his later years, Ginsberg became a Distinguished Professor at Brooklyn College.

On April 5, 1997, in New York City, he died from complications of hepatitis.

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6. Rock-poetry as a cultural phenomenon.

Rock is a form of popular music with a prominent vocal melody accompanied by guitar, drums, and often bass. Many styles of rock music also use keyboard instruments such as organ, piano, or synthesizers. Rock music usually has a strong back beat, and usually revolves around the electric guitar.

Rock music has its roots in 1950s-era rock and roll and rockabilly. In the late 1960s, rock music was blended with folk music to create folk rock, and with jazz, to create jazz-rock fusion. In the 1970s, rock incorporated influences from soul, funk, and Latin music. In the 1970s, rock developed a number of subgenres, such as soft rock, blues rock, heavy metal-style rock, progressive rock, art rock, techno-rock, synth-rock and punk rock. Rock subgenres from the 1980s included hard rock, indie-rock and alternative rock. In the 1990s, rock subgenres included grunge-style rock, Britpop, and indie rock.

So a term like "Rock" is impossibly vague; it denotes, if anything, something historical rather than aesthetic.

Rock poetry means the rock lyrics, which is usually characterized by certain rhythm and countercultural ideas. Like other kinds of poetry it deals with poetic devices:

Playing with the SOUNDS of words

Rhyme: word endings that sound alike including at least the final vowel sound.

Ex. Time, slime, mime.

Rhythm: a regular pattern of accented syllables.

Ex. i THOUGHT i SAW a PUSsyCAT.

Repetition: The recurrence of words and phrases for effect.

Ex. I was so so so glad.

Alliteration: repeated consonant sounds at the beginning of words.

Ex. Fast and furious.

Assonance: repeated vowel sounds.

Ex. He's a bruising loser.

Onomatopoeia: words that sound like their meanings.

Ex. Swoosh, Zip, Gurgle.

Playing with the MEANINGS of words

Simile: a comparison using “like” or “as.”

Ex. He’s as dumb as an ox.

Metaphor: a direct comparison.

Ex. He’s an zero.

Personification: Treating a non-human thing with human characteristics.

Ex. The days crept by slowly, sorrowfully.

Hyperbole: Exaggeration used for effect.

Ex. He weighs a ton.

Metonymy: Substituting one word or phrase for another that is closely related.

Ex. The White House stated today that...

Synecdoche: A part represents the whole.

Ex. The football player is hanging up his spikes.

Symbol: an object that represents something else.

Ex. A small cross by the dangerous curve on the road reminded all of Johnny’s death.

Contrast: closely arranging things with strikingly different characteristics

Ex. He was dark, sinister, and cruel; she was radiant, pleasant, and kind.

Paradox: a seeming contradiction.

Ex. The faster I go the behinder I get.

Irony: something said that is opposite its intended meaning.

Ex. Wow, thanks for expensive gift...let’s see: did it come with a Fun Meal or the Burger King equivalent?

Playing with the IMAGES of words

Imagery: the use of vivid language to generate ideas and/or evoke emotion via the five senses.

Examples:

- **Sight:** Smoked mysteriously puffed out from the clown’s ears.
- **Sound:** Tom placed his ear tightly against the wall; he could hear a faint but distinct thump thump thump.
- **Touch:** The burlap wall covering scraped against the little boy’s cheek.
- **Taste:** A salty tear ran across onto her lips.
- **Smell:** Cinnamon! That’s what wafted into his nostrils.

7. Bob Dylan’s life and lyrics. The analysis of *Like a Rolling Stone*.

The songwriter who seems to sound most like a poet is Bob Dylan.

Bob Dylan (born **Robert Allen Zimmerman**, May 24, 1941) is a Pulitzer, Grammy, Golden Globe and Academy Award-winning Jewish-American singer-songwriter, author, musician, and poet who has been a major figure in popular music for five decades. Much of Dylan’s most notable work dates from the 1960s, when he became an informal documentarian and reluctant figurehead of American unrest. Some of his songs, such as “Blowin’ in the Wind” and “The Times They Are a-Changin’”, became anthems of the anti-war and civil rights movements. After a lifetime of writing, recording, and performing, Dylan’s latest record – his 33rd studio album – *Together Through Life* was released on April 28, 2009. The album reached the number one spot on



both the *Billboard 200* chart of top selling albums.

Dylan’s early lyrics incorporated politics, social commentary, philosophy and literary influences, defying existing pop music conventions and appealing widely to the counterculture of the time. While expanding and personalizing musical styles, he has shown steadfast devotion to many traditions of American song, from folk and country/blues to rock and roll and rockabilly, to English, Scottish and Irish folk music, even jazz, swing, Broadway, and gospel.

Dylan performs with the guitar, keyboard and harmonica. Backed by a changing lineup of musicians, he has toured steadily since the late 1980s on what has been dubbed the “Never Ending Tour”. He has also performed alongside other major artists, such as Willie Nelson, Paul Simon, *The Grateful Dead*, Tom Petty, Bruce Springsteen, *The Rolling Stones*, Patti Smith, Jack White, Merle Haggard, Neil Young, Johnny Cash, George Harrison, Ringo Starr and Eric Clapton. Although his contributions as a performer and recording artist have been central to his career, his songwriting is generally held as his highest accomplishment.

Dylan was listed as one of TIME Magazine's 100 most influential people of the 20th century. In 2004, Bob Dylan was ranked #2 in Rolling Stone Magazine's *100 Greatest Artists of All Time*, second to *The Beatles*. He has also been nominated several times for the Nobel Prize in Literature.

Born in Duluth, Minnesota, Bob Dylan was raised there and in Hibbing, Minnesota, on the Mesabi Iron Range northwest of Lake Superior. His grandparents were Jewish immigrants from present-day Turkey and Russia. His parents, Abraham Zimmerman and Beatrice Stone (Beatty), were part of the area's small but close-knit Jewish community. Zimmerman lived in Duluth until age seven. When his father was stricken with polio, the family returned to nearby Hibbing, where Zimmerman spent the rest of his childhood.

Zimmerman spent much of his youth listening to the radio – first to the powerful blues and country stations broadcasting from Shreveport and, later, to early rock and roll. He formed several bands in high school.

Zimmerman enrolled at the University of Minnesota in September 1959 and moved to Minneapolis. His early focus on rock and roll gave way to an interest in American folk music, typically performed with an acoustic guitar.

Dylan quit college at the end of his freshman year. He stayed in Minneapolis, working the folk circuit there with temporary journeys in Denver, Colorado, Madison, Wisconsin, and Chicago, Illinois. In January 1961, he headed for New York City to perform and to visit his ailing musical idol Woody Guthrie in a New Jersey hospital. Guthrie had been a revelation to Dylan and was the biggest influence on his early performances. Dylan would later say of Guthrie's work, "You could listen to his songs and actually learn how to live." In the hospital room, Dylan also met Woody's old road-buddy Ramblin' Jack Elliott visiting Guthrie the day after returning from his trip to Europe. He and Elliott became friends, and much of Guthrie's repertoire was actually channeled through Elliott. Dylan paid tribute to Elliott in *Chronicles* (2005).

After initially playing mostly in small "basket" clubs for little pay, Dylan gained some public recognition after a positive review in *The New York Times* by critic Robert Shelton. Shelton's review and word-of-mouth around Greenwich Village led to legendary music business figure John Hammond's signing Dylan to Columbia Records that October. His performances, like those on his first Columbia album *Bob Dylan* (1962), consisted of familiar folk, blues and gospel material combined with some of his own songs. As Dylan continued to record for Columbia, he recorded more than a dozen songs for Broadside Magazine, a folk music magazine and record label, under the pseudonym Blind Boy Grunt. In August 1962, he went to the Supreme Court building in New York and changed his name to Robert Dylan.

By the time Dylan's next record, *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan*, was released in 1963, he had begun to make his name as both a singer and a songwriter.

His most famous song of the time, "Blowin' in the Wind", partially derived its melody from the traditional slave song "No More Auction Block", and coupled this to Dylan's lyrics questioning the social and political status quo. The song was widely recorded and became an international hit for Peter, Paul and Mary, setting a precedent for other artists. While Dylan's topical songs solidified his early reputation, *Freewheelin'* also included a mixture of love songs and jokey, surreal talking blues. Humor was a large part of Dylan's persona, and the range of material on the album impressed many listeners including *the Beatles*. George Harrison said, "We just played it, just wore it out. The content of the song lyrics and just the attitude – it was incredibly original and wonderful."

The single "**Like a Rolling Stone**" was a U.S. and UK hit; at over six minutes, it helped to expand the limits of songs played on hit radio. In 2004, *Rolling Stone* listed it at number one on its list of the 500 greatest songs of all time. Its signature sound – with a full, jangling band and an organ riff – characterized his 1965 album, *Highway 61 Revisited*. Titled after the road that led from Dylan's native Minnesota to the musical hotbed of New Orleans, the songs passed stylistically through the birthplace of blues, the Mississippi Delta, and referenced any number of blues songs. For example, Mississippi Fred McDowell's "61 Highway". The songs were in the same vein as the hit single, surreal litanies of the grotesque flavored by Mike Bloomfield's blues guitar, a rhythm section and Dylan's obvious enjoyment of the sessions. The closing song, "Desolation Row", is an apocalyptic vision with references to many figures of Western culture.

"**Like A Rolling Stone**" is not only one of the most popular rock songs of all time, it is also one of those whose appeal is the most mysterious. Whereas it is easy to see how other Dylan songs became anthems for a generation – songs like "Blowin' in the Wind," "The Times They Are A-Changing" and "Mr. Tambourine Man" – it is harder to see how this song attained such a broad and enthusiastic audience. A song like "Blowin' In The Wind" appealed to the masses by asking a series of pointed moral questions and then explicitly saying that the questions are unanswerable. But the climactic line of this song is itself an unanswerable question, and one with less obvious relevance: "How does it feel ... to be ... like a Rolling Stone?" What on earth was going on here, and why did people get so excited by it?

As we will see, the greatness of the song lies in the intricacy of its working, the way so many parts come together to make a cohesive, compelling and unique whole. The challenge in describing the recording is to look at it piece by piece and yet still be able to put it back together at the end and see it work. Let's take it a step at a time.

A good place to start is in the relationship of the words to the music. A criticism leveled at much of rock, and at Dylan in particular as he began making rock music rather than folk, was that the words were hard to hear. Certainly in much of rock music this was true, and intentional: foreground and background merged, the words and vocals became part of the mix, part of a "wall of sound" in some cases.

But in this recording, that usual criticism does not apply. It is not that the music is not full and loud: organ, piano, electric guitar and bass, drums, and tambourine are all working together, making for a complex musical tapestry. But all this music never overwhelms the vocals. As a matter of fact, they simply form a rich background, with Dylan's vocals clearly in the foreground, every word and nasal intonation clearly etched and standing out in sharp relief from the instruments. This will mean more to us as we come to understand more of the song, but for now let's just take this to mean that the words are important, and need to be understood.

So with that thought in mind, let's look at the lyrics and see what they have to say. (Note that I've broken the verses into short lines at times to make it easier to see the rhyming scheme – more on this later.)

*Once upon a time
You dressed so fine,
You threw the bums a dime,
In your prime,
 Didn't you?
 People'd call,
Say, "Beware doll,
You're bound to fall."
You thought they were all
 Kiddin' you.
 You used to laugh about
Everybody that was hangin' out.
Now you don't
 talk so loud.
Now you don't
 seem so proud
About having to be scrounging
for your next meal.
 How does it feel?
How does it feel,
To be without a home,
Like a complete unknown
Like a rolling stone?
 You've gone to the finest school
All right, Miss Lonely,
But you know you only
Used to get
 Juiced in it.
 And nobody has ever taught you
How to live on the street
And now you find out
You're gonna have to get
 Used to it.
 You said you'd never compromise
With the mystery tramp, but now you realize
He's not selling any alibis,
As you stare into the vacuum of his eyes
And ask him do you want to
 Make a deal?*

How does it feel?
How does it feel
To be on your own,
With no direction home,
Like a complete unknown
Like a rolling stone?
You never turned around
To see the frowns
On the jugglers and the clowns
When they all come down
And did tricks for you.
You never understood
That it ain't no good,
You shouldn't let
Other people get
Your kicks for you.
You used to ride on the chrome horse with your diplomat,
Who carried on his shoulder a Siamese cat.
Ain't it hard when you discover that
He really wasn't where it's at,
After he took from you everything
He could steal?
How does it feel?
How does it feel,
To be on your own,
With no direction home,
Like a complete unknown,
Like a rolling stone?
Princess on the steeple
And all the pretty people,
They're drinkin', thinkin'
That they
Got it made.
Exchanging all
Precious gifts,
But you'd better
Take your diamond ring, you'd better
Pawn it, babe.
You used to be so amused
At Napoleon in rags and the language that he used.
Go to him now, he calls you, you can't refuse.
When you ain't got nothing, you got nothing to lose.
You're invisible now, you got no secrets
To conceal.
How does it feel?
How does it feel,
To be on your own,
With no direction home,
Like a complete unknown,
Like a rolling stone?

At first glance, the song seems to be about class division. The woman addressed by the singer is clearly from the upper class, having gone to the finest schools, consorted with diplomats, and exchanged precious gifts with friends and family. At the other end of the spectrum, we have the “mystery tramp” and “Napoleon in rags.” The dramatic movement in the song, at this level, is simple: some event has caused the woman to fall from grace, to be cast out from the upper social circles, and to have joined the ranks of those who have no material possessions.

There is more going on here, though. The words are also about illusion and understanding, deception and truth. The song repeatedly describes ways in which the woman failed to see what was really going on around her. She never saw the frowns on the jugglers and the clowns, thought that people were joking when they said she was riding for a fall, failed to realize that the diplomat was using her, and so on.

It's worth noting how quickly and deftly Dylan introduces all of this. The first line encapsulates the class issue and tells us of the woman's fall: "Once upon a time, you dressed so fine, threw the bums a dime, in your prime, didn't you?" The second line then tells us how blind the woman was to what was going on around her: "People used to call, say 'Beware, doll, you're bound to fall,' you thought they were all kidding you."

It is instructional to compare this song to a couple of similar ones written about the same time: "Positively Fourth Street" and "Ballad of a Thin Man". The former is about someone who claims to be a friend of the singer's, and concludes with the most biting put-down in all of rock: "Yes I wish, that for just one time, you could stand inside my shoes. Then you'd know what a drag it is to see you!" Similarly, the latter talks about someone who is clueless, each chorus ending with the line, "Because something is happening here, but you don't know what it is, do you, Mr. Jones?"

In all three of these songs, Dylan the singer is directly addressing an individual who has been unaware, unenlightened. What makes "Like A Rolling Stone" different from the other two, and more interesting, is that it is more than just a character sketch, more than just a scathing commentary; in this song, there is dramatic movement: the woman who has been unaware has experienced a fall, and from that experience, has an opportunity to change, to learn, to grow. And, brilliantly, each verse describes one more experience from which the subject might learn, takes the subject to the brink of enlightenment, asks the key questions whose answers would provide resolution, then... stops, begins again, and repeats the process.

Now let's turn next to the structure of the song. Let's start with just the first four mini-lines, as shown above.

*Once upon a time
You dressed so fine,
You threw the bums a dime,
In your prime,*

The short line length, the fairy-tale opening, the simple words and images, the straightforward aaaa repeating rhyme – all these elements work together to create the feeling of a children's song, of a child's world. "Little miss Muffet / Sat on a Tuffet / Eating her curds and whey" uses similar devices to similar effect, for example. In conjunction with the themes we have discussed, these devices suggest that the woman in our story started her adventure with a certain childish, simplistic approach to life, apparently thinking that everything around her was placed there solely for her own amusement.

But then Dylan does something really interesting. The first extended line, or verse, or whatever we call it – the first sentence, certainly – is not yet finished. The singer pauses, and then tosses off the following question.

Didn't you?

What is this? A fifth line that doesn't rhyme with any of the first four, yet is clearly part of this first sentence. Do you see what Dylan is doing? He is using the very structure of the song to let us know, to let the woman know, that there is more going on, more to the song, and more to life, than this simple children's world. The words are about illusion and reality, deception and truth. But the lines, verses and rhymes are also playing with these same ideas, first making us think that this is a simple children's song, then showing us a larger world of which this childish beginning is no more than a piece.

The next extended line uses the same structure.

*People'd call,
Say, "Beware doll,
You're bound to fall."
You thought they were all
Kiddin' you.*

But note that, by pairing these two similar verses, and ending that hanging fifth line with the same rhyme in both (the same word, in this case), he is at the same time building a larger structure, a richer pattern. So now we can see that the longer rhyming scheme is aaaab ccccb. Thematically, the effect is in concert with the words: the gradual revelation of a larger, more complex world than the one we started with.

Let's see what comes next.

*You used to laugh about
Everybody that was hangin' out.*

*Now you don't
talk so loud.
Now you don't
seem so proud
About having to be scrounging
for your next meal.*

This is a different melody now, and a different verse structure. The rhyming pattern is now ddeefg. Again, though, Dylan employs the same device, ending the line/verse/sentence with an unmatched rhyme, leaving us hanging, waiting for closure, wondering how the pattern completes itself.

Now, finally, we hit the chorus.
*How does it feel?
How does it feel,
To be without a home,
Like a complete unknown
Like a rolling stone?*

Do you see what happened there? “How does it feel” is repeated. The first occurrence rhymes with the last line of the preceding verse, “For your next meal,” and also rhymes with the second “How does it feel”. So we end up with a 5-line chorus, with the last three lines rhyming, finally leaving us with no unfinished business, no unrhymed lines. The whole, intricate pattern, one line dovetailing with the next, has now been revealed. And it is nothing like what we started with, nothing like a simple children’s song. Look at the whole rhyming scheme: aaaab ccccb ddeefg gghhh.

And so, of course, having just created one of the most interesting, powerful and unusual verse/chorus structures in all of rock, Dylan proceeds to get maximum value for it: he repeats it three more times, with different words, all reinforcing and building on the same story, the same themes, his only variation being minor deviations from the strict aaaa rhyming scheme of the first two lines.

[The analysis of “Like A Rolling Stone” is taken from the web book by Herb Bowie “Reason to Rock: Rock Music as Art Form”].

8. The life and poetry of Jim Morrison. The main ideas of *People Are Strange*.



James Douglas Morrison (1943–1971) was an American singer, songwriter, writer, and poet. He was best known as the lead singer and lyricist of the popular American rock band *The Doors*, and is considered to be one of the most charismatic frontmen in the history of rock music. He was also an author of several poetry books, a documentary, short film, and three early music videos (“The Unknown Soldier”, “Moonlight Drive”, and “People are Strange”). Morrison’s death at the age of 27 in Paris stunned his fans; the circumstances of his death and secret burial have been the subject of endless

rumours and play a significant part in the mystique that continues to surround him.

Of Scottish and Irish ancestry, Morrison was the son of Admiral George Stephen Morrison and Clara Clarke Morrison, who met in Hawaii in 1941 where Steve Morrison, then an ensign, was stationed.

Morrison was born in Melbourne, Florida, some two years after his parents met. Six months later, Clara Morrison moved to Clearwater, Florida along with her infant son to live with her in-laws (Paul and Caroline Morrison) while her husband returned to the Pacific front for the duration of World War II.

According to Morrison, one of the most important events of his life occurred when he was a child in 1949, during a family road trip in New Mexico, when he and his parents and grandmother came across the scene of an accident in the desert. As he recites in the spoken-word bridge of his song “Peace Frog” and “The Ghost Song”:

*“Indians scattered on dawn’s highway bleeding
Ghosts crowd the young child’s fragile egg-shell mind.”*

Morrison said that he realized the Indians were bleeding to death, and that he was afraid. He came to believe that the souls of the newly-dead Indians were running around, “freaked out,” and that one had leaped into him.

Morrison graduated from George Washington High School (now George Washington Middle School) in Alexandria, Virginia in June 1961. His father was transferred to Southern California that August. Morrison was sent to live with his paternal grandparents in Clearwater, Florida, where he attended classes at St. Petersburg Junior College.

He later transferred to Florida State University (1962–1963), which afforded a favorable tuition but was still too far away for a reasonable commute. Morrison thus moved close to the Florida State University (FSU) campus where, for a time, he was a roommate of George Greer, who later became a judge known for his involvement in the Terri Schiavo case, and appeared in a school recruitment film.

In January 1964, urged on by an FSU professor, Morrison headed for Los Angeles, California where he completed his undergraduate degree in UCLA's film school, the Theater Arts department of the College of Fine Arts in 1965. Jim made two films while attending UCLA. The first one entitled "First Love" is finally released to the public, unedited at the end of the documentary about the film called "Obscura."

The Doors (Jim Morrison, Ray Manzarek, Robby Krieger and John Densmore).

The Doors' sound was a significant innovation, dominated by Morrison's wispy, sonorous baritone, against the interplay of Manzarek's keyboards, Krieger's classically influenced flamenco guitar style and Densmore's crisp, fluid drumming. *The Doors* were unique in that there was no bass guitar in the lineup. Manzarek provided bass lines on his newly-released Fender keyboard bass, a small bass-scale version of the famous Fender Rhodes electric piano. Although the group did augment their studio recordings with bass players (including Lonnie Mack), *The Doors* appeared as a four-piece in concert, apart from occasions when they were joined by special guests such as John Sebastian.

Lyricaly, *The Doors* broke new ground in rock music, with Morrison's complex, surrealist, allusive lyrics exploring themes of sex, mysticism, drugs, murder, madness and death. Although Morrison is known as the lyricist for the group, Krieger also made significant lyrical contributions, writing or co-writing some of the group's biggest hits, including "Light My Fire", "Love Me Two Times" and "Touch Me."

By the release of their second album, *Strange Days*, *The Doors* had become one of the most popular rock bands in the United States. Their blend of blues and rock tinged with psychedelia had never before been heard.

Even though Morrison was a well-known singer and lyricist, he encountered difficulty when searching for a publisher for his poetry. He self-published two slim volumes in 1969, *The Lords / Notes on Vision* and *The New Creatures*. Both works were dedicated to "Pamela Susan" (Courson). These were the only writings to be published during Morrison's lifetime.

The Lords consists primarily of brief descriptions of places, people, events and Morrison's thoughts on cinema. They often read as short, prose paragraphs strung together by what seems to be little more than the pages upon which they appear. McClure describes the work as Morrison's deconstruction of his UCLA thesis on film. *The New Creatures* verses are more poetic in structure, feel and appearance. These two books were later combined into a single volume titled *The Lords and The New Creatures*.

Much later, two posthumous volumes of poetry were published, both of them selected and arranged by Morrison's friend, photographer Frank Lisciandro, and Courson's parents, who owned the rights to his poetry. *The Lost Writings of Jim Morrison* Volume 1 is titled *Wilderness*, and, upon its release in 1988, became an instant New York Times best seller. Volume 2, *The American Night*, released in 1990, was also a success.

Morrison recorded his own poetry in a professional sound studio on two separate occasions. The first was in March 1969 in Los Angeles and the second was on December 8, 1970, his 27th birthday. The latter recording session was attended by personal friends of Morrison and included a variety of sketch pieces. Some of the tapes from the 1969 session were later used as part of the *Doors' An American Prayer* album, released in 1978. The album reached number 54 on the music charts. The poetry recorded from the December 1970 session remains unreleased to this day and is in the possession of the Courson family.

Morrison was encouraged in his desire to believe in the value of his poetry by his close friend, and Beat poet, Michael McClure. McClure would later write the *Afterword* for Danny Sugerman's biography of Morrison in which he laments his friend's death and his forgotten status as a poet. Danny Sugarman passed away in January 2005 of lung cancer. McClure and Morrison reportedly collaborated on a number of unmade film projects, including a film version of McClure's infamous play *The Beard* in which Morrison would have played the role of Billy The Kid.

Morrison moved to Paris in March 1971 with the intention of taking a break from performing and concentrating on his writing.

He died on July 3, 1971, at age 27. Morrison is buried in the famous Père Lachaise cemetery in eastern Paris.

Biographers have consistently pointed to a number of writers and philosophers who influenced Morrison's thinking and, perhaps, behavior. Richard Fariña's 1966 novel *Been Down So Long It Looks Like Up to Me* is thought to have inspired the title of the blues song featured on the *L.A. Woman* album. While still in his teens, Morrison discovered the works of philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche (after Morrison's death, John

Densmore opined that the nihilism of “Nietzsche killed Jim”). He was also drawn to the dark poets of the 18th and 19th century, notably the British poet William Blake, and the French poets Charles Baudelaire and Arthur Rimbaud. Beat Generation writers, such as Jack Kerouac, also had a strong influence on Morrison’s outlook and manner of expression; Morrison was eager to experience the life described in Kerouac’s *On the Road*. He was similarly drawn to the works of the French writer Céline. Céline’s book, *Voyage au Bout de la Nuit (Journey to the End of the Night)* and Blake’s *Auguries of Innocence* both echo through one of Morrison’s early songs, “End of the Night.” Eventually Morrison got to meet and befriend Michael McClure, a well known beat poet. McClure had enjoyed Morrison’s lyrics but was even more impressed by his poetry and encouraged him to further develop his craft.

Other works relating to religion, mysticism, ancient myth and symbolism were of lasting interest, particularly Joseph Campbell’s *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. James Frazer’s *The Golden Bough* also became a source of inspiration and is reflected in the title and lyrics of the song “Not to Touch the Earth.”

He apparently borrowed some wording from the King James *New Testament*. Matthew 7:13-14: “Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and... strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life,” which speaks of death and the afterlife, one of his common themes. Their first hit single “Break On Through” includes the lines: “Gate is straight, deep and wide – break on through to the other side.” Though most of “Light My Fire” was written by Krieger, the second verse was written by Morrison and includes the line “...no time to wallow in the mire,” a wording that could have been borrowed either from 2 Peter 2:22, which reads: “The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire,” or from Socrates’ deathbed statement, as recorded in Plato’s “Phaedo”: “...They said that whoever arrives in the underworld uninitiated and unsanctified will wallow in the mire....”

Morrison was particularly attracted to the myths and religions of Native American cultures. While he was still in school, his family moved to New Mexico where he got to see some of the places and artifacts important to the Southwest Indigenous cultures. These interests appear to be the source of many references to creatures and places, such as lizards, snakes, deserts and “ancient lakes” that appear in his songs and poetry. His interpretation of the practices of a Native American “shaman” were worked into some of Morrison’s stage routine, notably in his interpretation of the Ghost Dance, and a song on his later poetry album, *The Ghost Song*. The song *Wild Child* was also inspired by Native American rhythm and ritual, but often interpreted to be about one of Morrison’s literary influences, Arthur Rimbaud.

Morrison remains one of the most popular and influential singers/writers in rock history, as *The Doors*’ catalog has become a staple of classic rock radio stations. To this day, he is widely regarded as the prototypical rock star: surly, sexy, scandalous and mysterious. The leather pants he was fond of wearing both onstage and off have since become stereotyped as rock star apparel.

Morrison’s poetry

- *The Lords and The New Creatures* (1969). 1985 edition.
- *An American Prayer* (1970) privately printed by Western Lithographers, and an unauthorized version *American Prayer* in 1983 by now-defunct Zeppelin Publishing Company. (caution: the authenticity of the unauthorized edition has been disputed).
- *Wilderness: The Lost Writings Of Jim Morrison* (1988). 1990 edition.
- *The American Night: The Writings of Jim Morrison* (1990). 1991 edition.

Seminar 6

James Baldwin’s *Sonny’s Blues*

Plan

1. James Baldwin’s biography and major works.
2. The plot overview.
3. The socio-historical setting of *Sonny’s Blues* and characterization of brothers within that context.
4. The characterization (pay attention to the language of the characters).
5. The imagery.
6. The themes.

Literature and Resources

1. Fleischmann Ann, Jones Andy. Lecture on *Sonny's Blues* / Anne Fleischmann and Andy Jones. – Online at : cai.ucdavis.edu/uccp/sblecture.html.
2. James Baldwin. – Online at : [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Baldwin_\(writer\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Baldwin_(writer)).
3. James Baldwin – Online at : www.kirjasto.sci.fi/jbaldwin.htm.

Text.

James Baldwin. *Sonny's Blues*.

I read about it in the paper, in the subway, on my way to work. I read it, and I couldn't believe it, and I read it again. Then perhaps I just stared at it, at the newsprint spelling out his name, spelling out the story. I stared at it in the swinging lights of the subway car, and in the faces and bodies of the people, and in my own face, trapped in the darkness which roared outside.

It was not to be believed and I kept telling myself that, as I walked from the subway station to the high school. And at the same time I couldn't doubt it. I was scared, scared for Sonny. He became real to me again. A great block of ice got settled in my belly and kept melting there slowly all day long, while I taught my classes algebra. It was a special kind of ice. It kept melting, sending trickles of ice water all up and down my veins, but it never got less. Sometimes it hardened and seemed to expand until I felt my guts were going to come spilling out or that I was going to choke or scream. This would always be at a moment when I was remembering some specific thing Sonny had once said or done.

When he was about as old as the boys in my classes his face had been bright and open, there was a lot of copper in it; and he'd had wonderfully direct brown eyes, and great gentleness and privacy. I wondered what he looked like now. He had been picked up, the evening before, in a raid on an apartment down-town, for peddling and using heroin. I couldn't believe it: but what I mean by that is that I couldn't find any room for it anywhere inside me. I had kept it outside me for a long time. I hadn't wanted to know. I had had suspicions, but I didn't name them, I kept putting them away. I told myself that Sonny was wild, but he wasn't crazy. And he'd always been a good boy, he hadn't ever turned hard or evil or disrespectful, the way kids can, so quick, so quick, especially in Harlem. I didn't want to believe that I'd ever see my brother going down, coming to nothing, all that light in his face gone out, in the condition I'd already seen so many others. Yet it had happened and here I was, talking about algebra to a lot of boys who might, every one of them for all I knew, be popping off needles every time they went to the head. Maybe it did more for them than algebra could.

I was sure that the first time Sonny had ever had horse; he couldn't have been much older than these boys were now. These boys, now, were living as we'd been living then, they were growing up with a rush and their heads bumped abruptly against the low ceiling of their actual possibilities. They were filled with rage. All they really knew were two darknesses, the darkness of their lives, which was now closing in on them, and the darkness of the movies, which had blinded them to that other darkness, and in which they now, vindictively, dreamed, at once more together than they were at any other time, and more alone.

When the last bell rang, the last class ended, I let out my breath. It seemed I'd been holding it for all that time. My clothes were wet – I may have looked as though I'd been sitting in a steam bath, all dressed up, all afternoon. I sat alone in the classroom a long time. I listened to the boys outside, downstairs, shouting and cursing and laughing. Their laughter struck me for perhaps the first time. It was not the joyous laughter which – God knows why – one associates with children. It was mocking and insular, its intent was to denigrate. It was disenchanting, and in this, also, lay the authority of their curses. Perhaps I was listening to them because I was thinking about my brother and in them I heard my brother. And myself.

One boy was whistling a tune, at once very complicated and very simple, it seemed to be pouring out of him as though he were a bird, and it sounded very cool and moving through all that harsh, bright air, only just holding its own through all those other sounds.

I stood up and walked over to the window and looked down into the court-yard. It was the beginning of the spring and the sap was rising in the boys. A teacher passed through them every now and again, quickly, as though he or she couldn't wait to get out of that courtyard, to get those boys out of their sight and off their minds. I started collecting my stuff. I thought I'd better get home and talk to Isabel.

The courtyard was almost deserted by the time I got downstairs. I saw this boy standing in the shadow of a doorway, looking just like Sonny. I almost called his name. Then I saw that it wasn't Sonny, but somebody we used to know, a boy from around our block. He'd been Sonny's friend. He'd never been mine, having been too young for me, and, anyway, I'd never liked him. And now, even though he was a grown-up

man, he still hung around that block, still spent hours on the street corners, was always high and raggy. I used to run into him from time to time and he'd often work around to asking me for a quarter or fifty cents. He always had some real good excuse, too, and I always gave it to him. I don't know why.

But now, abruptly, I hated him. I couldn't stand the way he looked at me, partly like a dog, partly like a cunning child. I wanted to ask him what the hell he was doing in the school courtyard.

He sort of shuffled over to me, and he said, "I see you got the papers. So you already know about it."

"You mean about Sonny? Yes, I already know about it. How come they didn't get you?"

He grinned. It made him repulsive and it also brought to mind what he'd looked like as a kid.

"I wasn't there. I stay away from them people."

"Good for you." I offered him a cigarette and I watched him through the smoke. "You come all the way down here just to tell me about Sonny?"

"That's right." He was sort of shaking his head and his eyes looked strange, as though they were about to cross. The bright sun deadened his damp dark brown skin and it made his eyes look yellow and showed up the dirt in his kinked hair. He smelled funky. I moved a little away from him and I said, "Well, thanks. But I already know about it and I got to get home."

"I'll walk you a little ways," he said. We started walking. There were a couple of lads still loitering in the courtyard and one of them said goodnight to me and looked strangely at the boy beside me.

"What're you going to do?" he asked me. "I mean, about Sonny?"

"Look. I haven't seen Sonny for over a year, I'm not sure I'm going to do anything. Anyway, what the hell can I do?"

"That's right," he said quickly, "ain't nothing you can do. Can't much help old Sonny no more, I guess."

It was what I was thinking and so it seemed to me he had no right to say it.

"I'm surprised at Sonny, though," he went on – he had a funny way of talking, he looked straight ahead as though he were talking to himself – "I thought Sonny was a smart boy, I thought he was too smart to get hung."

"I guess he thought so too," I said sharply, "and that's how he got hung. And how about you? You're pretty goddamn smart, I bet."

Then he looked directly at me, just for a minute. "I ain't smart," he said. "If I was smart, I'd have reached for a pistol a long time ago."

"Look. Don't tell me your sad story, if it was up to me, I'd give you one." Then I felt guilty, probably, for never having supposed that the poor bastard had a story of his own, much less a sad one, and I asked, quickly, "What's going to happen to him now?"

He didn't answer this. He was off by himself some place.

"Funny thing," he said, and from his tone we might have been discussing the quickest way to get to Brooklyn, "when I saw the papers this morning, the first thing I asked myself was if I had anything to do with it. I felt sort of responsible."

I began to listen more carefully. The subway station was on the corner, just before us, and I stopped. He stopped, too. We were in front of a bar and he ducked slightly, peering in, but whoever he was looking for didn't seem to be there. The juke box was blasting away with something black and bouncy and I half watched the barmaid as she danced her way from the juke box to her place behind the bar. And I watched her face as she laughingly responded to something someone said to her, still keeping time to the music. When she smiled one saw the little girl, one sensed the doomed, still-struggling woman beneath the battered face of the semi-whore.

"I never give Sonny nothing," the boy said finally, "but a long time ago I come to school high and Sonny asked me how it felt." He paused, I couldn't bear to watch him, I watched the barmaid, and I listened to the music which seemed to be causing the pavement to shake. "I told him it felt great." The music stopped, the barmaid paused and watched the juke box until the music began again. "It did."

All this was carrying me some place I didn't want to go. I certainly didn't want to know how it felt. It filled everything, the people, the houses, the music, the dark, quicksilver barmaid, with menace; and this menace was their reality.

"What's going to happen to him now?" I asked again.

"They'll send him away some place and they'll try to cure him." He shook his head. "Maybe he'll even think he's kicked the habit. Then they'll let him loose" – he gestured, throwing his cigarette into the gutter. "That's all."

"What do you mean, that's all?"

But I knew what he meant.

"I mean, that's all." He turned his head and looked at me, pulling down the corners of his mouth. "Don't you know what I mean?" he asked, softly.

"How the hell would I know what you mean?" I almost whispered it, I don't know why.

"That's right," he said to the air, "how would he know what I mean?" He turned toward me again, patient and calm, and yet I somehow felt him shaking, shaking as though he were going to fall apart. I felt that ice in my guts again, the dread I'd felt all afternoon; and again I watched the barmaid, moving about the bar, washing glasses, and singing. "Listen. They'll let him out and then it'll just start all over again. That's what I mean."

"You mean-they'll let him out. And then he'll just start working his way back in again. You mean he'll never kick the habit. Is that what you mean?"

"That's right," he said, cheerfully. "You see what I mean."

"Tell me," I said at last, "why does he want to die? He must want to die, he's killing himself, why does he want to die?"

He looked at me in surprise. He licked his lips. "He don't want to die. He wants to live. Don't nobody want to die, ever."

Then I wanted to ask him – too many things. He could not have answered, or if he had, I could not have borne the answers. I started walking. "Well, I guess it's none of my business."

"It's going to be rough on old Sonny," he said. We reached the subway station. "This is your station?" he asked. I nodded. I took one step down. "Damn!" he said, suddenly. I looked up at him. He grinned again. "Damn it if I didn't leave all my money home. You ain't got a dollar on you, have you? Just for a couple of days, is all."

All at once something inside gave and threatened to come pouring out of me. I didn't hate him any more. I felt that in another moment I'd start crying like a child.

"Sure," I said. "Don't sweat." I looked in my wallet and didn't have a dollar, I only had a five.

"Here," I said. "That hold you?"

He didn't look at it – he didn't want to look at it. A terrible, closed look came over his face, as though he were keeping the number on the bill a secret from him and me. "Thanks," he said, and now he was dying to see me go. "Don't worry about Sonny. Maybe I'll write him or something."

"Sure," I said. "You do that. So long."

"Be seeing you," he said. I went on down the steps.

And I didn't write Sonny or send him anything for a long time. When I finally did, it was just after my little girl died, and he wrote me back a letter which made me feel like a bastard.

Here's what he said:

Dear brother,

You don't know how much I needed to hear from you. I wanted to write you many a time but I dug how much I must have hurt you and so I didn't write. But now I feel like a man who's been trying to climb up out of some deep, real deep and funky hole and just saw the sun up there, outside. I got to get outside.

I can't tell you much about how I got here. I mean I don't know how to tell you. I guess I was afraid of something or I was trying to escape from something and you know I have never been very strong in the head (smile). I'm glad Mama and Daddy are dead and can't see what's happened to their son and I swear if I'd known what I was doing I would never have hurt you so, you and a lot of other fine people who were nice to me and who believed in me.

I don't want you to think it had anything to do with me being a musician. It's more than that. Or maybe less than that. I can't get anything straight in my head down here and I try not to think about what's going to happen to me when I get outside again.

Sometime I think I'm going to flip and never get outside and sometime I think I'll come straight back. I tell you one thing, though, I'd rather blow my brains out than go through this again. But that's what they all say, so they tell me. If I tell you when I'm coming to New York and if you could meet me, I sure would appreciate it. Give my love to Isabel and the kids and I was sure sorry to hear about little Gracie. I wish I could be like Mama and say the Lord's will be done, but I don't know it seems to me that trouble is the one thing that never does get stopped and I don't know what good it does to blame it on the Lord. But maybe it does some good if you believe it.

Your brother,

Sonny

Then I kept in constant touch with him and I sent him whatever I could and I went to meet him when he came back to New York. When I saw him many things I thought I had forgotten came flooding back to me. This was because I had begun, finally, to wonder about Sonny, about the life that Sonny lived inside. This life, whatever it was, had made him older and thinner and it had deepened the distant stillness in which he had always moved. He looked very unlike my baby brother. Yet, when he smiled, when we shook hands, the baby brother I'd never known looked out from the depths of his private life, like an animal waiting to be coaxed into the light.

"How you been keeping?" he asked me.

"All right. And you?"

"Just fine." He was smiling all over his face. "It's good to see you again."

"It's good to see you."

The seven years' difference in our ages lay between us like a chasm: I wondered if these years would ever operate between us as a bridge. I was remembering, and it made it hard to catch my breath, that I had been there when he was born; and I had heard the first words he had ever spoken. When he started to walk, he walked from our mother straight to me. I caught him just before he fell when he took the first steps he ever took in this world.

"How's Isabel?"

"Just fine. She's dying to see you."

"And the boys?"

"They're fine, too. They're anxious to see their uncle."

"Oh, come on. You know they don't remember me."

"Are you kidding? Of course they remember you."

He grinned again. We got into a taxi. We had a lot to say to each other, far too much to know how to begin.

As the taxi began to move, I asked, "You still want to go to India?"

He laughed. "You still remember that. Hell, no. This place is Indian enough for me."

"It used to belong to them," I said.

And he laughed again. "They damn sure knew what they were doing when they got rid of it." Years ago, when he was around fourteen, he'd been all hipped on the idea of going to India. He read books about people sitting on rocks, naked, in all kinds of weather, but mostly bad, naturally, and walking barefoot through hot coals and arriving at wisdom. I used to say that it sounded to me as though they were getting away from wisdom as fast as they could. I think he sort of looked down on me for that.

"Do you mind," he asked, "if we have the driver drive alongside the park? On the west side – I haven't seen the city in so long."

"Of course not," I said. I was afraid that I might sound as though I were humoring him, but I hoped he wouldn't take it that way.

So we drove along, between the green of the park and the stony, lifeless elegance of hotels and apartment buildings, toward the vivid, killing streets of our childhood. These streets hadn't changed, though housing projects jutted up out of them now like rocks in the middle of a boiling sea. Most of the houses in which we had grown up had vanished, as had the stores from which we had stolen, the basements in which we had first tried sex, the rooftops from which we had hurled tin cans and bricks. But houses exactly like the houses of our past yet dominated the landscape, boys exactly like the boys we once had been found themselves smothering in these houses, came down into the streets for light and air and found themselves encircled by disaster. Some escaped the trap, most didn't. Those who got out always left something of themselves behind, as some animals amputate a leg and leave it in the trap. It might be said, perhaps, that I had escaped, after all, I was a school teacher; or that Sonny had, he hadn't lived in Harlem for years. Yet, as the cab moved uptown through streets which seemed, with a rush, to darken with dark people, and as I covertly studied Sonny's face, it came to me that what we both were seeking through our separate cab windows was that part of ourselves which had been left behind. It's always at the hour of trouble and confrontation that the missing member aches.

We hit 110th Street and started rolling up Lenox Avenue. And I'd known this avenue all my life, but it seemed to me again, as it had seemed on the day I'd first heard about Sonny's trouble, filled with a hidden menace which was its very breath of life.

"We almost there," said Sonny.

"Almost." We were both too nervous to say anything more.

We live in a housing project. It hasn't been up long. A few days after it was up it seemed uninhabitably new, now, of course, it's already rundown. It looks like a parody of the good, clean, faceless

life – God knows the people who live in it do their best to make it a parody. The beat-looking grass lying around isn't enough to make their lives green, the hedges will never hold out the streets, and they know it. The big windows fool no one, they aren't big enough to make space out of no space. They don't bother with the windows, they watch the TV screen instead. The playground is most popular with the children who don't play at jacks, or skip rope, or roller skate, or swing, and they can be found in it after dark. We moved in partly because it's not too far from where I teach, and partly for the kids; but it's really just like the houses in which Sonny and I grew up. The same things happen, they'll have the same things to remember. The moment Sonny and I started into the house I had the feeling that I was simply bringing him back into the danger he had almost died trying to escape.

Sonny has never been talkative. So I don't know why I was sure he'd be dying to talk to me when supper was over the first night. Everything went fine, the oldest boy remembered him, and the youngest boy liked him, and Sonny had remembered to bring something for each of them; and Isabel, who is really much nicer than I am, more open and giving, had gone to a lot of trouble about dinner and was genuinely glad to see him. And she's always been able to tease Sonny in a way that I haven't. It was nice to see her face so vivid again and to hear her laugh and watch her make Sonny laugh. She wasn't, or, anyway, she didn't seem to be, at all uneasy or embarrassed. She chatted as though there were no subject which had to be avoided and she got Sonny past his first, faint stiffness. And thank God she was there, for I was filled with that icy dread again. Everything I did seemed awkward to me, and everything I said sounded freighted with hidden meaning. I was trying to remember everything I'd heard about dope addiction and I couldn't help watching Sonny for signs. I wasn't doing it out of malice. I was trying to find out something about my brother. I was dying to hear him tell me he was safe.

"Safe!" my father grunted, whenever Mama suggested trying to move to a neighborhood which might be safer for children. "Safe, hell! Ain't no place safe for kids, nor nobody."

He always went on like this, but he wasn't, ever, really as bad as he sounded, not even on weekends, when he got drunk. As a matter of fact, he was always on the lookout for "something a little better," but he died before he found it. He died suddenly, during a drunken weekend in the middle of the war, when Sonny was fifteen. He and Sonny hadn't ever got on too well. And this was partly because Sonny was the apple of his father's eye. It was because he loved Sonny so much and was frightened for him, that he was always fighting with him. It doesn't do any good to fight with Sonny. Sonny just moves back, inside himself, where he can't be reached. But the principal reason that they never hit it off is that they were so much alike. Daddy was big and rough and loud-talking, just the opposite of Sonny, but they both had-that same privacy.

Mama tried to tell me something about this, just after Daddy died. I was home on leave from the army.

This was the last time I ever saw my mother alive. Just the same, this picture gets all mixed up in my mind with pictures I had other when she was younger. The way I always see her is the way she used to be on a Sunday afternoon, say, when the old folks were talking after the big Sunday dinner. I always see her wearing pale blue. She'd be sitting on the sofa. And my father would be sitting in the easy chair, not far from her. And the living room would be full of church folks and relatives. There they sit, in chairs all around the living room, and the night is creeping up outside, but nobody knows it yet. You can see the darkness growing against the windowpanes and you hear the street noises every now and again, or maybe the jangling beat of a tambourine from one of the churches close by, but it's real quiet in the room. For a moment nobody's talking, but every face looks darkening, like the sky outside. And my mother rocks a little from the waist, and my father's eyes are closed. Everyone is looking at something a child can't see. For a minute they've forgotten the children. Maybe a kid is lying on the rug, half asleep. Maybe somebody's got a kid in his lap and is absent-mindedly stroking the lad's head. Maybe there's a kid, quiet and big-eyed, curled up in a big chair in the corner. The silence, the darkness coming, and the darkness in the faces frighten the child obscurely. He hopes that the hand which strokes his forehead will never stop-will never die. He hopes that there will never come a time when the old folks won't be sitting around the living room, talking about where they've come from, and what they've seen, and what's happened to them and their kinfolk.

But something deep and watchful in the child knows that this is bound to end, is already ending. In a moment someone will get up and turn on the light. Then the old folks will remember the children and they won't talk any more that day. And when light fills the room, the child is filled with darkness. He knows that every time this happens he's moved just a little closer to that darkness outside. The darkness outside is what the old folks have been talking about. It's what they've come from. It's what they endure. The child knows that they won't talk any more because if he knows too much about what's happened to them, he'll know too much too soon, about what's going to happen to him.

The last time I talked to my mother, I remember I was restless. I wanted to get out and see Isabel. We weren't married then and we had a lot to straighten out between us.

There Mama sat, in black, by the window. She was humming an old church song. Lord, you brought me from a long ways off. Sonny was out somewhere. Mama kept watching the streets.

"I don't know," she said, "if I'll ever see you again, after you go off from here. But I hope you'll remember the things I tried to teach you."

"Don't talk like that," I said, and smiled. "You'll be here a long time yet."

She smiled, too, but she said nothing. She was quiet for a long time. And I said, "Mama, don't you worry about nothing. I'll be writing all the time, and you be getting the checks..."

"I want to talk to you about your brother," she said, suddenly. "If anything happens to me he ain't going to have nobody to look out for him."

"Mama," I said, "ain't nothing going to happen to you or Sonny. Sonny's all right. He's a good boy and he's got good sense."

"It ain't a question of his being a good boy," Mama said, "nor of his having good sense. It ain't only the bad ones, nor yet the dumb ones that gets sucked under." She stopped, looking at me. "Your Daddy once had a brother," she said, and she smiled in a way that made me feel she was in pain. "You didn't never know that, did you?"

"No," I said, "I never knew that," and I watched her face.

"Oh, yes," she said, "your Daddy had a brother." She looked out of the window again. "I know you never saw your Daddy cry. But I did – many a time, through all these years."

I asked her, "What happened to his brother? How come nobody's ever talked about him?"

This was the first time I ever saw my mother look old.

"His brother got killed," she said, "when he was just a little younger than you are now. I knew him. He was a fine boy. He was maybe a little full of the devil, but he didn't mean nobody no harm."

Then she stopped and the room was silent, exactly as it had sometimes been on those Sunday afternoons. Mama kept looking out into the streets.

"He used to have a job in the mill," she said, "and, like all young folks, he just liked to perform on Saturday nights. Saturday nights, him and your father would drift around to different places, go to dances and things like that, or just sit around with people they knew, and your father's brother would sing, he had a fine voice, and play along with himself on his guitar. Well, this particular Saturday night, him and your father was coming home from some place, and they were both a little drunk and there was a moon that night, it was bright like day. Your father's brother was feeling kind of good, and he was whistling to himself, and he had his guitar slung over his shoulder. They was coming down a hill and beneath them was a road that turned off from the highway. Well, your father's brother, being always kind of frisky, decided to run down this hill, and he did, with that guitar banging and clanging behind him, and he ran across the road, and he was making water behind a tree. And your father was sort of amused at him and he was still coming down the hill, kind of slow. Then he heard a car motor and that same minute his brother stepped from behind the tree, into the road, in the moonlight. And he started to cross the road. And your father started to run down the hill, he says he don't know why. This car was full of white men. They was all drunk, and when they seen your father's brother they let out a great whoop and holler and they aimed the car straight at him. They was having fun, they just wanted to scare him, the way they do sometimes, you know. But they was drunk. And I guess the boy, being drunk, too, and scared, kind of lost his head. By the time he jumped it was too late. Your father says he heard his brother scream when the car rolled over him, and he heard the wood of that guitar when it give, and he heard them strings go flying, and he heard them white men shouting, and the car kept on a-going and it ain't stopped till this day. And, time your father got down the hill, his brother weren't nothing but blood and pulp."

Tears were gleaming on my mother's face. There wasn't anything I could say.

"He never mentioned it," she said, "because I never let him mention it before you children. Your Daddy was like a crazy man that night and for many a night thereafter. He says he never in his life seen anything as dark as that road after the lights of that car had gone away. Weren't nothing, weren't nobody on that road, just your Daddy and his brother and that busted guitar. Oh, yes. Your Daddy never did really get right again. Till the day he died he weren't sure but that every white man he saw was the man that killed his brother."

She stopped and took out her handkerchief and dried her eyes and looked at me.

"I ain't telling you all this," she said, "to make you scared or bitter or to make you hate nobody. I'm telling you this because you got a brother. And the world ain't changed."

I guess I didn't want to believe this. I guess she saw this in my face. She turned away from me, toward the window again, searching those streets.

"But I praise my Redeemer," she said at last, "that He called your Daddy home before me. I ain't saying it to throw no flowers at myself, but, I declare, it keeps me from feeling too cast down to know I helped your father get safely through this world. Your father always acted like he was the roughest, strongest man on earth. And everybody took him to be like that. But if he hadn't had me there – to see his tears!"

She was crying again. Still, I couldn't move. I said, "Lord, Lord, Mama, I didn't know it was like that."

"Oh, honey," she said, "there's a lot that you don't know. But you are going to find out." She stood up from the window and came over to me. "You got to hold on to your brother," she said, "and don't let him fall, no matter what it looks like is happening to him and no matter how evil you gets with him. You going to be evil with him many a time. But don't you forget what I told you, you hear?"

"I won't forget," I said. "Don't you worry, I won't forget. I won't let nothing happen to Sonny."

My mother smiled as though she was amused at something she saw in my face. Then, "You may not be able to stop nothing from happening. But you got to let him know you's there."

Two days later I was married, and then I was gone. And I had a lot of things on my mind and I pretty well forgot my promise to Mama until I got shipped home on a special furlough for her funeral.

And, after the funeral, with just Sonny and me alone in the empty kitchen, I tried to find out something about him.

"What do you want to do?" I asked him.

"I'm going to be a musician," he said.

For he had graduated, in the time I had been away, from dancing to the juke box to finding out who was playing what, and what they were doing with it, and he had bought himself a set of drums.

"You mean, you want to be a drummer?" I somehow had the feeling that being a drummer might be all right for other people but not for my brother Sonny.

"I don't think," he said, looking at me very gravely, "that I'll ever be a good drummer. But I think I can play a piano."

I frowned. I'd never played the role of the oldest brother quite so seriously before, had scarcely ever, in fact, asked Sonny a damn thing. I sensed myself in the presence of something I didn't really know how to handle, didn't understand. So I made my frown a little deeper as I asked: "What kind of musician do you want to be?"

He grinned. "How many kinds do you think there are?"

"Be serious," I said.

He laughed, throwing his head back, and then looked at me. "I am serious."

"Well, then, for Christ's sake, stop kidding around and answer a serious question. I mean, do you want to be a concert pianist, you want to play classical music and all that, or – or what?"

Long before I finished he was laughing again. "For Christ's sake. Sonny!"

He sobered, but with difficulty. "I'm sorry. But you sound so-scared!" and he was off again.

"Well, you may think it's funny now, baby, but it's not going to be so funny when you have to make your living at it, let me tell you that." I was furious because I knew he was laughing at me and I didn't know why.

"No," he said, very sober now, and afraid, perhaps, that he'd hurt me, "I don't want to be a classical pianist. That isn't what interests me. I mean" – he paused, looking hard at me, as though his eyes would help me to understand, and then gestured helplessly, as though perhaps his hand would help – "I mean, I'll have a lot of studying to do, and I'll have to study everything, but, I mean, I want to play with – jazz musicians." He stopped. "I want to play jazz," he said.

Well, the word had never before sounded as heavy, as real, as it sounded that afternoon in Sonny's mouth. I just looked at him and I was probably frowning a real frown by this time. I simply couldn't see why on earth he'd want to spend his time hanging around nightclubs, clowning around on bandstands, while people pushed each other around a dance floor. It seemed – beneath him, somehow. I had never thought about it before, had never been forced to, but I suppose I had always put jazz musicians in a class with what Daddy called "goodtime people."

"Are you serious?"

"Hell, yes, I'm serious."

He looked more helpless than ever, and annoyed, and deeply hurt.

I suggested, helpfully: "You mean – like Louis Armstrong?"

His face closed as though I'd struck him. "No. I'm not talking about none of that old-time, down home crap."

"Well, look, Sonny, I'm sorry, don't get mad. I just don't altogether get it, that's all. Name somebody – you know, a jazz musician you admire."

"Bird."

"Who?"

"Bird! Charlie Parker! Don't they teach you nothing in the goddamn army?"

I lit a cigarette. I was surprised and then a little amused to discover that I was trembling.

"I've been out of touch," I said. "You'll have to be patient with me. Now. Who's this Parker character?"

"He's just one of the greatest jazz musicians alive," said Sonny, sullenly, his hands in his pockets, his back to me. "Maybe the greatest," he added, bitterly, "that's probably why you never heard of him."

"All right," I said, "I'm ignorant. I'm sorry. I'll go out and buy all the cat's records right away, all right?"

"It don't," said Sonny, with dignity, "make any difference to me. I don't care what you listen to. Don't do me no favors."

I was beginning to realize that I'd never seen him so upset before. With another part of my mind I was thinking that this would probably turn out to be one of those things kids go through and that I shouldn't make it seem important by pushing it too hard. Still, I didn't think it would do any harm to ask: "Doesn't all this take a lot of time? Can you make a living at it?"

He turned back to me and half leaned, half sat, on the kitchen table. "Everything takes time," he said, "and – well, yes, sure, I can make a living at it. But what I don't seem to be able to make you understand is that it's the only thing I want to do."

"Well, Sonny," I said gently, "you know people can't always do exactly what they want to do –"

"No, I don't know that," said Sonny, surprising me. "I think people ought to do what they want to do, what else are they alive for?"

"You getting to be a big boy," I said desperately, "it's time you started thinking about your future."

"I'm thinking about my future," said Sonny, grimly. "I think about it all the time."

I gave up. I decided, if he didn't change his mind, that we could always talk about it later. "In the meantime," I said, "you got to finish school." We had already decided that he'd have to move in with Isabel and her folks. I knew this wasn't the ideal arrangement because Isabel's folks are inclined to be dicty and they hadn't especially wanted Isabel to marry me. But I didn't know what else to do. "And we have to get you fixed up at Isabel's."

There was a long silence. He moved from the kitchen table to the window. "That's a terrible idea. You know it yourself."

"Do you have a better idea?"

He just walked up and down the kitchen for a minute. He was as tall as I was. He had started to shave. I suddenly had the feeling that I didn't know him at all.

He stopped at the kitchen table and picked up my cigarettes. Looking at me with a land of mocking, amused defiance, he put one between his lips. "You mind?"

"You smoking already?"

He lit the cigarette and nodded, watching me through the smoke. "I just wanted to see if I'd have the courage to smoke in front of you." He grinned and blew a great cloud of smoke to the ceiling. "It was easy." He looked at my face. "Come on, now. I bet you was smoking at my age, tell the truth."

I didn't say anything but the truth was on my face, and he laughed. But now there was something very strained in his laugh. "Sure. And I bet that ain't all you was doing."

He was frightening me a little. "Cut the crap," I said. "We already decided that you was going to go and live at Isabel's. Now what's got into you all of a sudden?"

"You decided it," he pointed out. "I didn't decide nothing." He stopped in front of me, leaning against the stove, arms loosely folded. "Look, brother. I don't want to stay in Harlem no more, I really don't." He was very earnest. He looked at me, then over toward the kitchen window. There was something in his eyes I'd never seen before, some thoughtfulness, some worry all his own. He rubbed the muscle of one arm. "It's time I was getting out of here."

"Where do you want to go, Sonny?"

"I want to join the army. Or the navy, I don't care. If I say I'm old enough, they'll believe me."

Then I got mad. It was because I was so scared. "You must be crazy. You goddamn fool, what the hell do you want to go and join the army for?"

"I just told you. To get out of Harlem."

"Sonny, you haven't even finished school. And if you really want to be a musician, how do you expect to study if you're in the army?"

He looked at me, trapped, and in anguish. "There's ways. I might be able to work out some kind of deal. Anyway, I'll have the G.I. Bill when I come out."

"If you come out." We stared at each other. "Sonny, please. Be reasonable. I know the setup is far from perfect. But we got to do the best we can."

"I ain't learning nothing in school," he said. "Even when I go." He turned away from me and opened the window and threw his cigarette out into the narrow alley. I watched his back. "At least, I ain't learning nothing you'd want me to learn." He slammed the window so hard I thought the glass would fly out, and turned back to me. "And I'm sick of the stink of these garbage cans!"

"Sonny," I said, "I know how you feel. But if you don't finish school now, you're going to be sorry later that you didn't." I grabbed him by the shoulders. "And you only got another year. It ain't so bad. And I'll come back and I swear I'll help you do whatever you want to do. Just try to put up with it till I come back. Will you please do that? For me?"

He didn't answer and he wouldn't look at me.

"Sonny. You hear me?"

He pulled away. "I hear you. But you never hear anything I say."

I didn't know what to say to that. He looked out of the window and then back at me. "OK," he said, and sighed. "I'll try."

Then I said, trying to cheer him up a little, "They got a piano at Isabel's. You can practice on it."

And as a matter of fact, it did cheer him up for a minute. "That's right," he said to himself. "I forgot that." His face relaxed a little. But the worry, the thoughtfulness, played on it still, the way shadows play on a face which is staring into the fire.

But I thought I'd never hear the end of that piano. At first, Isabel would write me, saying how nice it was that Sonny was so serious about his music and how, as soon as he came in from school, or wherever he had been when he was supposed to be at school, he went straight to that piano and stayed there until suppertime. And, after supper, he went back to that piano and stayed there until everybody went to bed. He was at the piano all day Saturday and all day Sunday. Then he bought a record player and started playing records. He'd play one record over and over again, all day long sometimes, and he'd improvise along with it on the piano. Or he'd play one section of the record, one chord, one change, one progression, then he'd do it on the piano. Then back to the record. Then back to the piano.

Well, I really don't know how they stood it. Isabel finally confessed that it wasn't like living with a person at all, it was like living with sound. And the sound didn't make any sense to her, didn't make any sense to any of them – naturally. They began, in a way, to be afflicted by this presence that was living in their home. It was as though Sonny were some sort of god, or monster. He moved in an atmosphere which wasn't like theirs at all. They fed him and he ate, he washed himself, he walked in and out of their door; he certainly wasn't nasty or unpleasant or rude. Sonny isn't any of those things; but it was as though he were all wrapped up in some cloud, some fire, some vision all his own; and there wasn't any way to reach him.

At the same time, he wasn't really a man yet, he was still a child, and they had to watch out for him in all kinds of ways. They certainly couldn't throw him out. Neither did they dare to make a great scene about that piano because even they dimly sensed, as I sensed, from so many thousands of miles away that Sonny was at that piano playing for his life.

But he hadn't been going to school. One day a letter came from the school board and Isabel's mother got it – there had, apparently, been other letters but Sonny had torn them up.

This day, when Sonny came in, Isabel's mother showed him the letter and asked where he'd been spending his time. And she finally got it out of him that he'd been down in Greenwich Village, with musicians and other characters, in a white girls apartment. And this scared her and she started to scream at him and what came up, once she began-though she denies it to this day – was what sacrifices they were making to give Sonny a decent home and how little he appreciated it.

Sonny didn't play the piano that day. By evening, Isabel's mother had calmed down but then there was the old man to deal with, and Isabel herself. Isabel says she did her best to be calm but she broke down and started crying. She says she just watched Sonny's face. She could tell, by watching him, what was happening with him. And what was happening was that they penetrated his cloud, they had reached him. Even if their fingers had been times more gentle than human fingers ever are, he could hardly help feeling that they had stripped him naked and were spitting on that nakedness. For he also had to see that his presence, that music, which was life or death to him, had been torture for them and that they had endured it,

not at all for his sake but only for mine. And Sonny couldn't take that. He can take it a little better today than he could then but he's still not very good at it and, frankly, I don't know anybody who is.

The silence of the next few days must have been louder than the sound of all the music ever played since time began. One morning, before she went to work, Isabel was in his room for something and she suddenly realized that all of his records were gone. And she knew for certain that he was gone. And he was. He went as far as the navy would carry him. He finally sent me a postcard from some place in Greece and that was the first I knew that Sonny was still alive. I didn't see him any more until we were both back in New York and the war had long been over.

He was a man by then, of course, but I wasn't willing to see it. He came by the house from time to time, but we fought almost every time we met. I didn't like the way he carried himself, loose and dreamlike all the time, and I didn't like his friends, and his music seemed to be merely an excuse for the life he led. It sounded just that weird and disordered.

Then we had a fight, a pretty awful fight, and I didn't see him for months. By and by I looked him up, where he was living, in a furnished room in the Village, and I tried to make it up. But there were lots of other people in the room and Sonny just lay on his bed, and he wouldn't come downstairs with me, and he treated these other people as though they were his family and I weren't. So I got mad and then he got mad, and then I told him that he might just as well be dead as live the way he was living. Then he stood up and he told me not to worry about him any more in life, that he was dead as far as I was concerned. Then he pushed me to the door and the other people looked on as though nothing were happening, and he slammed the door behind me. I stood in the hallway, staring at the door. I heard somebody laugh in the room and then the tears came to my eyes. I started down the steps, whistling to keep from crying, I kept whistling to myself. You going to need me, baby, one of these cold, rainy days.

I read about Sonny's trouble in the spring. Little Grace died in the fall. She was a beautiful little girl. But she only lived a little over two years. She died of polio and she suffered. She had a slight fever for a couple of days, but it didn't seem like anything and we just kept her in bed. And we would certainly have called the doctor, but the fever dropped, she seemed to be all right. So we thought it had just been a cold. Then, one day, she was up, playing, Isabel was in the kitchen fixing lunch for the two boys when they'd come in from school, and she heard Grace fall down in the living room. When you have a lot of children you don't always start running when one of them falls, unless they start screaming or something. And, this time, Gracie was quiet. Yet, Isabel says that when she heard that thump and then that silence, something happened to her to make her afraid. And she ran to the living room and there was little Grace on the floor, all twisted up, and the reason she hadn't screamed was that she couldn't get her breath. And when she did scream, it was the worst sound, Isabel says, that she'd ever heard in all her life, and she still hears it sometimes in her dreams.

Isabel will sometimes wake me up with a low, moaning, strangling sound and I have to be quick to awaken her and hold her to me and where Isabel is weeping against me seems a mortal wound.

I think I may have written Sonny the very day that little Grace was buried. I was sitting in the living room in the dark, by myself, and I suddenly thought of Sonny. My trouble made his real.

One Saturday afternoon, when Sonny had been living with us, or anyway, been in our house, for nearly two weeks, I found myself wandering aimlessly about the living room, drinking from a can of beer, and trying to work up courage to search Sonny's room. He was out, he was usually out whenever I was home, and Isabel had taken the children to see their grandparents. Suddenly I was standing still in front of the living room window, watching Seventh Avenue. The idea of searching Sonny's room made me still. I scarcely dared to admit to myself what I'd be searching for. I didn't know what I'd do if I found it. Or if I didn't.

On the sidewalk across from me, near the entrance to a barbecue joint, some people were holding an old-fashioned revival meeting. The barbecue cook, wearing a dirty white apron, his conked hair reddish and metallic in the pale sun, and a cigarette between his lips, stood in the doorway, watching them. Kids and older people paused in their errands and stood there, along with some older men and a couple of very tough-looking women who watched everything that happened on the avenue, as though they owned it, or were maybe owned by it. Well, they were watching this, too. The revival was being carried on by three sisters in black, and a brother. All they had were their voices and their Bibles and a tambourine. The brother was testifying and while he testified two of the sisters stood together, seeming to say, amen, and the third sister walked around with the tambourine outstretched and a couple of people dropped coins into it. Then the brother's testimony ended and the sister who had been taking up the collection dumped the coins into her palm and transferred them to the pocket of her long black robe. Then she raised both hands, striking the

tambourine against the air, and then against one hand, and she started to sing. And the two other sisters and the brother joined in.

It was strange, suddenly, to watch, though I had been seeing these meetings all my life. So, of course, had everybody else down there. Yet, they paused and watched and listened and I stood still at the window. "Tis the old ship of Zion," they sang, and the sister with the tambourine kept a steady, jangling beat, "it has rescued many a thousand!" Not a soul under the sound of their voices was hearing this song for the first time, not one of them had been rescued. Nor had they seen much in the way of rescue work being done around them. Neither did they especially believe in the holiness of the three sisters and the brother, they knew too much about them, knew where they lived, and how. The woman with the tambourine, whose voice dominated the air, whose face was bright with joy, was divided by very little from the woman who stood watching her, a cigarette between her heavy, chapped lips, her hair a cuckoo's nest, her face scarred and swollen from many beatings, and her black eyes glittering like coal. Perhaps they both knew this, which was why, when, as rarely, they addressed each other, they addressed each other as Sister. As the singing filled the air the watching, listening faces underwent a change, the eyes focusing on something within; the music seemed to soothe a poison out of them; and time seemed, nearly, to fall away from the sullen, belligerent, battered faces, as though they were fleeing back to their first condition, while dreaming of their last. The barbecue cook half shook his head and smiled, and dropped his cigarette and disappeared into his joint. A man fumbled in his pockets for change and stood holding it in his hand impatiently, as though he had just remembered a pressing appointment further up the avenue. He looked furious. Then I saw Sonny, standing on the edge of the crowd. He was carrying a wide, flat notebook with a green cover, and it made him look, from where I was standing, almost like a schoolboy. The coppery sun brought out the copper in his skin, he was very faintly smiling, standing very still. Then the singing stopped, the tambourine turned into a collection plate again. The furious man dropped in his coins and vanished, so did a couple of the women, and Sonny dropped some change in the plate, looking directly at the woman with a little smile. He started across the avenue, toward the house. He has a slow, loping walk, something like the way Harlem hipsters walk, only he's imposed on this his own half-beat. I had never really noticed it before.

I stayed at the window, both relieved and apprehensive. As Sonny disappeared from my sight, they began singing again. And they were still singing when his key turned in the lock.

"Hey," he said.

"Hey, yourself. You want some beer?"

"No. Well, maybe." But he came up to the window and stood beside me, looking out. "What a warm voice," he said.

They were singing. If I could only hear my mother pray again!

"Yes," I said, "and she can sure beat that tambourine."

"But what a terrible song," he said, and laughed. He dropped his notebook on the sofa and disappeared into the kitchen. "Where's Isabel and the kids?"

"I think they want to see their grandparents. You hungry?"

"No." He came back into the living room with his can of beer. "You want to come some place with me tonight?"

I sensed, I don't know how, that I couldn't possibly say no. "Sure. Where?"

He sat down on the sofa and picked up his notebook and started leafing through it. "I'm going to sit in with some fellows in a joint in the Village."

"You mean, you're going to play, tonight?"

"That's right." He took a swallow of his beer and moved back to the window. He gave me a sidelong look. "If you can stand it."

"I'll try," I said.

He smiled to himself and we both watched as the meeting across the way broke up. The three sisters and the brother, heads bowed, were singing God be with you till we meet again.

The faces around them were very quiet. Then the song ended. The small crowd dispersed. We watched the three women and the lone man walk slowly up the avenue.

"When she was singing before," said Sonny, abruptly, "her voice reminded me for a minute of what heroin feels like sometimes – when it's in your veins. It makes you feel sort of warm and cool at the same time. And distant. And – and sure." He sipped his beer, very deliberately not looking at me. I watched his face. "It makes you feel – in control. Sometimes you've got to have that feeling."

"Do you?" I sat down slowly in the easy chair.

"Sometimes." He went to the sofa and picked up his notebook again. "Some people do."

"In order," I asked, "to play?" And my voice was very ugly, full of contempt and anger.

“Well” – he looked at me with great, troubled eyes, as though, in fact, he hoped his eyes would tell me things he could never otherwise say – “they think so. And if they think so – !”

“And what do you think?” I asked.

He sat on the sofa and put his can of beer on the floor. “I don’t know,” he said, and I couldn’t be sure if he were answering my question or pursuing his thoughts. His face didn’t tell me.

“It’s not so much to play. It’s to stand it, to be able to make it at all. On any level.” He frowned and smiled: “In order to keep from shaking to pieces.”

“But these friends of yours,” I said, “they seem to shake themselves to pieces pretty goddamn fast.”

“Maybe.” He played with the notebook. And something told me that I should curb my tongue, that Sonny was doing his best to talk, that I should listen. “But of course you only know the ones that’ve gone to pieces. Some don’t – or at least they haven’t yet and that’s just about all any of us can say.” He paused. “And then there are some who just live, really, in hell, and they know it and they see what’s happening and they go right on. I don’t know.” He sighed, dropped the notebook, folded his arms. “Some guys, you can tell from the way they play, they on something all the time. And you can see that, well, it makes something real for them. But of course,” he picked up his beer from the floor and sipped it and put the can down again, “they want to, too, you’ve got to see that. Even some of them that say they don’t some, not all.”

“And what about you?” I asked – I couldn’t help it. “What about you? Do you want to?”

He stood up and walked to the window and I remained silent for a long time. Then he sighed.

“Me,” he said. Then: “While I was downstairs before, on my way here, listening to that woman sing, it struck me all of a sudden how much suffering she must have had to go through-to sing like that. It’s repulsive to think you have to suffer that much.”

I said: “But there’s no way not to suffer – is there. Sonny?”

“I believe not,” he said and smiled, “but that’s never stopped anyone from trying.” He looked at me. “Has it?” I realized, with this mocking look, that there stood between us, forever, beyond the power of time or forgiveness, the fact that I had held silence – so long! – when he had needed human speech to help him. He turned back to the window. “No, there’s no way not to suffer. But you try all kinds of ways to keep from drowning in it, to keep on top of it, and to make it seem – well, like you. Like you did something, all right, and now you’re suffering for it. You know?” I said nothing. “Well you know,” he said, impatiently, “why do people suffer? Maybe it’s better to do something to give it a reason, any reason.”

“But we just agreed,” I said, “that there’s no way not to suffer. Isn’t it better, then, just to take it?”

“But nobody just takes it,” Sonny cried, “that’s what I’m telling you! Everybody tries not to. You’re just hung up on the way some people try – it’s not your way!”

The hair on my face began to itch, my face felt wet. “That’s not true,” I said, “that’s not true. I don’t give a damn what other people do, I don’t even care how they suffer. I just care how you suffer.” And he looked at me. “Please believe me,” I said, “I don’t want to see you – die trying not to suffer.”

“I won’t,” he said flatly, “die trying not to suffer. At least, not any faster than anybody else.”

“But there’s no need,” I said, trying to laugh, “is there? in killing yourself.”

I wanted to say more, but I couldn’t. I wanted to talk about will power and how life could be well, beautiful. I wanted to say that it was all within; but was it? or, rather, wasn’t that exactly the trouble? And I wanted to promise that I would never fail him again. But it would all have sounded-empty words and lies.

So I made the promise to myself and prayed that I would keep it.

“It’s terrible sometimes, inside,” he said, “that’s what’s the trouble. You walk these streets, black and funky and cold, and there’s not really a living ass to talk to, and there’s nothing shaking, and there’s no way of getting it out – that storm inside. You can’t talk it and you can’t make love with it, and when you finally try to get with it and play it, you realize nobody’s listening. So you’ve got to listen. You got to find a way to listen.”

And then he walked away from the window and sat on the sofa again, as though all the wind had suddenly been knocked out of him. “Sometimes you’ll do anything to play, even cut your mother’s throat.” He laughed and looked at me. “Or your brother’s.” Then he sobered. “Or your own.” Then: “Don’t worry. I’m all right now and I think I’ll be all right. But I can’t forget where I’ve been. I don’t mean just the physical place I’ve been, I mean where I’ve been. And what I’ve been.”

“What have you been, Sonny?” I asked.

He smiled – but sat sideways on the sofa, his elbow resting on the back, his fingers playing with his mouth and chin, not looking at me. “I’ve been something I didn’t recognize, didn’t know I could be. Didn’t know anybody could be.” He stopped, looking inward, looking helplessly young, looking old. “I’m not talking about it now because I feel guilty or anything like that – maybe it would be better if I did, I don’t know. Anyway, I can’t really talk about it. Not to you, not to anybody,” and now he turned and faced me.

“Sometimes, you know, and it was actually when I was most out of the world, I felt that I was in it, that I was with it, really, and I could play or I didn’t really have to play, it just came out of me, it was there. And I don’t know how I played, thinking about it now, but I know I did awful things, those times, sometimes, to people. Or it wasn’t that I did anything to them – it was that they weren’t real.” He picked up the beer can; it was empty; he rolled it between his palms: “And other times – well, I needed a fix, I needed to find a place to lean, I needed to clear a space to listen – and I couldn’t find it, and I – went crazy, I did terrible things to me, I was terrible for me.” He began pressing the beer can between his hands, I watched the metal begin to give. It glittered, as he played with it like a knife, and I was afraid he would cut himself, but I said nothing. “Oh well. I can never tell you. I was all by myself at the bottom of something, stinking and sweating and crying and shaking, and I smelled it, you know? my stink, and I thought I’d die if I couldn’t get away from it and yet, all the same, I knew that everything I was doing was just locking me in with it. And I didn’t know,” he paused, still flattening the beer can, “I didn’t know, I still don’t know, something kept telling me that maybe it was good to smell your own stink, but I didn’t think that that was what I’d been trying to do – and – who can stand it?” and he abruptly dropped the ruined beer can, looking at me with a small, still smile, and then rose, walking to the window as though it were the lodestone rock. I watched his face, he watched the avenue. “I couldn’t tell you when Mama died – but the reason I wanted to leave Harlem so bad was to get away from drugs. And then, when I ran away, that’s what I was running from – really. When I came back, nothing had changed I hadn’t changed I was just – older.” And he stopped, drumming with his fingers on the windowpane. The sun had vanished, soon darkness would fall. I watched his face. “It can come again,” he said, almost as though speaking to himself. Then he turned to me. “It can come again,” he repeated. “I just want you to know that.”

“All right,” I said, at last. “So it can come again. All right.”

He smiled, but the smile was sorrowful. “I had to try to tell you,” he said.

“Yes,” I said. “I understand that.”

“You’re my brother,” he said, looking straight at me, and not smiling at all.

“Yes,” I repeated, “yes. I understand that.”

He turned back to the window, looking out. “All that hatred down there,” he said, “all that hatred and misery and love. It’s a wonder it doesn’t blow the avenue apart.”

We went to the only nightclub on a short, dark street, downtown. We squeezed through the narrow, chattering, jampacked bar to the entrance of the big room, where the bandstand was. And we stood there for a moment for the lights were very dim in this room and we couldn’t see. Then, “Hello, boy” said the voice and an enormous black man, much older than Sonny or myself, erupted out of all that atmospheric lighting and put an arm around Sonny’s shoulder. “I been sitting right here,” he said, “waiting for you.”

He had a big voice, too, and heads in the darkness turned toward us.

Sonny grinned and pulled a little away, and said, “Creole, this is my brother. I told you about him.”

Creole shook my hand. “I’m glad to meet you, son,” he said and it was clear that he was glad to meet me there, for Sonny’s sake. And he smiled, “You got a real musician in your family,” and he took his arm from Sonny’s shoulder and slapped him, lightly, affectionately, with the back of his hand.

“Well. Now I’ve heard it all,” said a voice behind us. This was another musician, and a friend of Sonny’s, a coal-black, cheerful-looking man built close to the ground. He immediately began confiding to me, at the top of his lungs, the most terrible things about Sonny, his teeth gleaming like a lighthouse and his laugh coming up out of him like the beginning of an earthquake. And it turned out that everyone at the bar knew Sonny, or almost everyone some were musicians, working there, or nearby, or not working, some were simply hangers-on, and some were there to hear Sonny play. I was introduced to all of them and they were all very polite to me. Yet, it was clear that, for them I was only Sonny’s brother. Here, I was in Sonny’s world. Or, rather: his kingdom. Here, it was not even a question that his veins bore royal blood.

They were going to play soon and Creole installed me, by myself, at a table in a dark corner. Then I watched them, Creole, and the little black man and Sonny, and the others, while they horsed around, standing just below the bandstand. The light from the bandstand spilled just a little short of them and watching them laughing and gesturing and moving about, I had the feeling that they, nevertheless, were being most careful not to step into that circle of light too suddenly; that if they moved into the light too suddenly, without thinking, they would perish in flame. Then, while I watched, one of them, the small black man, moved into the light and crossed the bandstand and started fooling around with his drums. Then – being funny and being, also, extremely ceremonious – Creole took Sonny by the arm and led him to the piano. A woman’s voice called Sonny’s name and a few hands started clapping. And Sonny, also being funny and being ceremonious, and so touched, I think, that he could have cried, but neither hiding it nor showing it, riding it like a man, grinned, and put both hands to his heart and bowed from the waist.

Creole then went to the bass fiddle and a lean, very bright-skinned brown man jumped up on the bandstand and picked up his horn. So there they were, and the atmosphere on the bandstand and in the room began to change and tighten. Someone stepped up to the microphone and announced them. Then there were all kinds of murmurs. Some people at the bar shushed others. The waitress ran around, frantically getting in the last orders, guys and chicks got closer to each other, and the lights on the bandstand, on the quartet, turned to a kind of indigo. Then they all looked different there. Creole looked about him for the last time, as though he were making certain that all his chickens were in the coop, and then he jumped and struck the fiddle. And there they were.

All I know about music is that not many people ever really hear it. And even then, on the rare occasions when something opens within, and the music enters, what we mainly hear, or hear corroborated, are personal, private, vanishing evocations. But the man who creates the music is hearing something else, is dealing with the roar rising from the void and imposing order on it as it hits the air. What is evoked in him, then, is of another order, more terrible because it has no words, and triumphant, too, for that same reason. And his triumph, when he triumphs, is ours. I just watched Sonny's face. His face was troubled, he was working hard, but he wasn't with it. And I had the feeling that, in a way, everyone on the bandstand was waiting for him, both waiting for him and pushing him along. But as I began to watch Creole, I realized that it was Creole who held them all back. He had them on a short rein. Up there, keeping the beat with his whole body, wailing on the fiddle, with his eyes half closed, he was listening to everything, but he was listening to Sonny. He was having a dialogue with Sonny. He wanted Sonny to leave the shoreline and strike out for the deep water. He was Sonny's witness that deep water and drowning were not the same thing—he had been there, and he knew. And he wanted Sonny to know. He was waiting for Sonny to do the things on the keys which would let Creole know that Sonny was in the water.

And, while Creole listened, Sonny moved, deep within, exactly like someone in torment. I had never before thought of how awful the relationship must be between the musician and his instrument. He has to fill it, this instrument, with the breath of life, his own. He has to make it do what he wants it to do. And a piano is just a piano. It's made out of so much wood and wires and little hammers and big ones, and ivory. While there's only so much you can do with it, the only way to find this out is to try; to try and make it do everything.

And Sonny hadn't been near a piano for over a year. And he wasn't on much better terms with his life, not the life that stretched before him now. He and the piano stammered, started one way, got scared, stopped; started another way, panicked, marked time, started again; then seemed to have found a direction, panicked again, got stuck. And the face I saw on Sonny I'd never seen before. Everything had been burned out of it, and, at the same time, things usually hidden were being burned in, by the fire and fury of the battle which was occurring in him up there.

Yet, watching Creole's face as they neared the end of the first set, I had the feeling that something had happened, something I hadn't heard. Then they finished, there was scattered applause, and then, without an instant's warning, Creole started into something else, it was almost sardonic, it was Am I Blue? And, as though he commanded, Sonny began to play.

Something began to happen. And Creole let out the reins. The dry, low, black man said something awful on the drums, Creole answered, and the drums talked back. Then the horn insisted, sweet and high, slightly detached perhaps, and Creole listened, commenting now and then, dry, and driving, beautiful and calm and old. Then they all came together again, and Sonny was part of the family again. I could tell this from his face. He seemed to have found, right there beneath his fingers, a damn brand-new piano. It seemed that he couldn't get over it. Then, for a while, just being happy with Sonny, they seemed to be agreeing with him that brand-new pianos certainly were a gas.

Then Creole stepped forward to remind them that what they were playing was the blues. He hit something in all of them, he hit something in me, myself, and the music tightened and deepened, apprehension began to beat the air. Creole began to tell us what the blues were all about. They were not about anything very new. He and his boys up there were keeping it new, at the risk of ruin, destruction, madness, and death, in order to find new ways to make us listen. For, while the tale of how we suffer, and how we are delighted, and how we may triumph is never new, it always must be heard. There isn't any other tale to tell, it's the only light we've got in all this darkness.

And this tale, according to that face, that body, those strong hands on those strings, has another aspect in every country, and a new depth in every generation. Listen, Creole seemed to be saying, listen. Now these are Sonny's blues. He made the little black man on the drums know it, and the bright, brown man on the horn. Creole wasn't trying any longer to get Sonny in the water. He was wishing him Godspeed. Then he stepped back, very slowly, filling the air with the immense suggestion that Sonny speak for himself.

Then they all gathered around Sonny and Sonny played. Every now and again one of them seemed to say, amen. Sonny's fingers filled the air with life, his life. But that life contained so many others. And Sonny went all the way back, he really began with the spare, flat statement of the opening phrase of the song. Then he began to make it his. It was very beautiful because it wasn't hurried and it was no longer a lament. I seemed to hear with what burning he had made it his, and what burning we had yet to make it ours, how we could cease lamenting. Freedom lurked around us and I understood, at last, that he could help us to be free if we would listen, that he would never be free until we did. Yet, there was no battle in his face now, I heard what he had gone through, and would continue to go through until he came to rest in earth. He had made it his: that long line, of which we knew only Mama and Daddy. And he was giving it back, as everything must be given back, so that, passing through death, it can live forever. I saw my mother's face again, and felt, for the first time, how the stones of the road she had walked on must have bruised her feet. I saw the moonlit road where my father's brother died. And it brought something else back to me, and carried me past it, I saw my little girl again and felt Isabel's tears again, and I felt my own tears begin to rise. And I was yet aware that this was only a moment, that the world waited outside, as hungry as a tiger, and that trouble stretched above us, longer than the sky.

Then it was over. Creole and Sonny let out their breath, both soaking wet, and grinning. There was a lot of applause and some of it was real. In the dark, the girl came by and I asked her to take drinks to the bandstand. There was a long pause, while they talked up there in the indigo light and after awhile I saw the girl put a Scotch and milk on top of the piano for Sonny. He didn't seem to notice it, but just before they started playing again, he sipped from it and looked toward me, and nodded. Then he put it back on top of the piano.

For me, then, as they began to play again, it glowed and shook above my brother's head like the very cup of trembling.

1957

Helpful Information

1. James Baldwin's biography and major works.



James Arthur Baldwin (August 2, 1924–November 30, 1987) was a novelist, short story writer, playwright, poet, and essayist, best known for his novel *Go Tell It on the Mountain*. Most of Baldwin's work deals with racial and sexual issues in the mid-20th century United States. His novels are notable for the personal way in which they explore questions of identity as well as for the way in which they mine complex social and psychological pressures related to being black and homosexual, well before the social, cultural or political equality of these groups could be assumed.

Baldwin was born in 1924, the first of his mother's nine children. He never met his biological father and may never have even known the man's identity. Instead, he considered his stepfather, David Baldwin, as his only father figure. David, a factory worker and a store-front preacher, was allegedly very cruel at home, which the young Baldwin hated. While his father opposed his literary aspirations, Baldwin found support from a teacher as well from the mayor of New York City, Fiorello H. LaGuardia. At age 14, Baldwin became a preacher at the small Fireside Pentecostal Church in Harlem. After he graduated from DeWitt Clinton high school in the Bronx, he moved to Greenwich Village. In the early 1940s, he transferred his faith from religion to literature. His most important source of support, however, came from his idol Richard Wright, whom he called "the greatest black writer in the world for me". Wright and Baldwin became friends for a short time and Wright helped him to secure the Eugene F. Saxon Memorial Award. Indeed, Baldwin titled a collection of essays *Notes of a Native Son*, in clear reference to Wright's enraged and despairing novel *Native Son*. However, Baldwin's 1949 essay *Everybody's Protest Novel* ended the two authors' friendship because Baldwin asserted that Wright's novel *Native Son*, like Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, lacked credible characters and psychological complexity. However, during an interview with Julius Lester Baldwin explained that his adoration for Wright remained: "I knew Richard and I loved him. I was not attacking him; I was trying to clarify something for myself."

Another major influence on Baldwin's life was the African-American painter Beauford Delaney. In *The Price of the Ticket*, 1985, Baldwin describes Delaney as "the first living proof, for me, that a black man could be an artist. In a warmer time, a less blasphemous place, he would have been recognised as my teacher and I as his pupil. He became, for me, an example of courage and integrity, humility and passion. An absolute integrity: I saw him shaken many times and I lived to see him broken but I never saw him bow."

Baldwin, like many American authors of the time, left to live in Europe for an extended period of time beginning in 1948. His first destination was Paris where Ernest Hemingway, Gertrude Stein, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Richard Wright, and many others had lived during their writing careers. When Baldwin returned to America, he became actively involved in the Civil Rights Movement. He marched with Martin Luther King, Jr. to Washington, D.C.

In 1962 Baldwin received a George Polk Award for his reporting in *The New Yorker*.

During the early 1980s, Baldwin was on the faculty of the Five Colleges in Western Massachusetts. While there, he mentored Mount Holyoke College future playwright Suzan-Lori Parks, who won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 2002.

Baldwin died of cancer in 1987 at the age of 63.

Baldwin's 1954 play *The Amen Corner* was the basis for a short-lived 1968 Broadway musical of the same name.

In 2005 the USPS created a First-Class Postage Stamp dedicated to him which featured him on the front, and on the back of the peeling paper had a short biography.

One of Baldwin's richest short stories, *Sonny's Blues*, appears in many anthologies of short fiction used in introductory college literature classes.

Baldwin's long list of literary accomplishments includes essays, plays, and novels, most of which were set in the United States or concerned the struggles of people from the United States. In addition to *Go Tell It On The Mountain* (1953) and *Giovanni's Room* (1956), Baldwin's novels include *Another Country* (1962), *Tell Me How Long The Train's Been Gone* (1968), *If Beale Street Could Talk* (1974), and *Just Above My Head* (1979). Among his books of essays are *The Fire Next Time* (1962), *Notes of a Native Son* (1955), *Evidence of Things Not Seen* (1985), and *The Price of the Ticket* (1985). His plays include *The Amen Corner* (1955) and *Blues for Mister Charlie* (1964). Baldwin also collaborated on a book of photographs called *Nothing Personal* (1964) with his high-school colleague and long time friend Richard Avedon. During the last decade of his life, Baldwin taught and lectured frequently at various American universities, including University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Bowling Green State, and University of California, Berkeley.

2. The plot overview.

"Sonny's Blues" is narrated in the first-person by an unnamed character, Sonny's brother. An algebra teacher in a high school in Harlem, this narrator is a stable family man with a wife and two sons. He is seven years older than Sonny and has tried, at various times during their lives, to parent him and to protect him. The story opens as the narrator, who has been estranged from Sonny for over a year, is on the subway, reading about a drug raid in which Sonny has been arrested and jailed. As guilt and sorrow wash over him, the narrator is approached by one of Sonny's childhood friends, an addict who blames himself for Sonny's addiction and subsequent arrest. The narrator and the friend discuss what has happened to Sonny, and we see the narrator begin, with anger, to try to understand how and why Sonny has become an addict.

The narrator doesn't contact Sonny while he is in prison/rehab until his own daughter, Gracie, dies of polio. When the narrator does finally contact Sonny, Sonny responds immediately, asking for forgiveness, trying to explain how and why he developed his heroin addiction, and expressing his uncertainty over what will happen to him when he is released from prison. When Sonny is released from prison, the narrator brings him back to live with his family in Harlem and begins trying to repair their relationship.

At this point in the story, the narrator flashes back to several scenes that occurred during their young adulthood. In one scene, their mother asks the narrator to take care of Sonny and to watch out for him when she dies. She tells him that his own father had had a brother who was very much like Sonny, but who was killed by drunken whites on a rural road in the South.

In a second flashback, the narrator tells us that following his mother's funeral, the narrator arranges for the teenaged Sonny to live with his fiancée Isabel's family while he is at war. In a third flashback, Sonny clashes with Isabel's middle-class family, who don't understand his passion for music, his desire to "hang out" downtown with other musicians (both white and black) or his rejection of Isabel's family's values and lifestyle. He runs away and joins the Navy, goes to Greece and returns to live a Bohemian lifestyle in New York's Greenwich Village. Presumably, he struggles there as a musician and a heroin addict, maintaining a fragile and intermittent relationship with his brother until he is picked up the final time on drug charges. Following these flashback scenes, we see the brothers trying to repair their relationship, threatened still by Sonny's addiction, which is under control but hovering in the wings, and by the narrator's continuing mistrust and misunderstanding of Sonny's commitment to his music. As the narrator slowly comes closer to understanding Sonny, Sonny invites him to a nightclub in Greenwich Village, where he is able to witness Sonny in his element, playing the music that helps him remain whole and stay sane. Here, at the end of the

story, the narrator finally begins to understand Sonny's struggle and how music helps him, and his audience, endure and perhaps triumph over it.

3. The socio-historical setting of *Sonny's Blues* and characterization of brothers within that context.

a. Growing up in Harlem:

"Sonny's Blues" takes place during the mid-20th century, probably during the early 1950s. The action of the story occurs prior to the gains made by the Civil Rights Movement, during the dark days of segregation and supposedly "separate but equal" accommodations in public institutions. The narrator and Sonny have grown up in predominately black and poor neighborhood of Harlem, the sons of a working-class, embittered father whose pride and optimism have been worn down by his own brother's violent death at the hands of rural Southern whites and the ensuing years of struggling to support a family in an overtly racist Northern urban community. The father has given up trying to move his family out of Harlem: "'Safe!' my father grunted, whenever Mama suggested trying to move to a neighborhood which might be safer for children. 'Safe, hell! Ain't no place safe for kids, nor nobody'". As the brothers reach adulthood and the narrator begins his own family, their material circumstances haven't changed much; though the narrator is not impoverished himself and enjoys the comfortable trappings of middle class life, he and his family remain in impoverished surroundings, probably due to the de facto segregation of the safer, suburban and largely white communities they might have been able to afford.

The narrator is teaching algebra to boys very much like he and Sonny had been, full of potential but threatened by the drugs and violence of the urban ghetto, their futures limited by segregation and discrimination. The narrator describes the boys he teaches, to whom he likens Sonny and himself as boys, in the following way:

"They were growing up with a rush and their heads bumped abruptly against the low ceiling of their actual possibilities. They were filled with rage. All they really knew were two darknesses, the darkness of their lives, which was now closing in on them, and the darkness of the movies, which had blinded them to that other darkness, and in which they now, vindictively, dreamed, at once more together than they were at any other time, and more alone".

Although he doesn't approve, the narrator begins to understand how such a child can go wrong, or can become addicted to drugs. He suspects some of his own students to "be popping off needles every time they went to the head," and surmises that "maybe it did more for them than algebra could". The narrator is aware, then, that in spite of his own success at attaining the valued middle class lifestyle, most of his students wouldn't be so lucky.

b. Military service:

The brothers' military service plays an important role in the socio-historical context of the story. The narrator refers to being "home on leave from the army" during the war; he remarks that his father "died suddenly, during a drunken weekend in the middle of the war, when Sonny was fifteen" and he informs the reader that both he and Sonny served in the military. It is important to notice and understand these references to the military service of the brothers.

Beginning after their liberation from slavery, black men had tried to prove their patriotism and to improve their standard of living by serving in the U.S. military. Hoping that service to their country would prove them worthy of the same respect and opportunities accorded to whites, black men readily enlisted in the military.

The characters in "Sonny's Blues" reflect this tendency: as a teenager, Sonny yearns to enlist in the army or navy because it would take him away from the "killing streets" of Harlem and give him the opportunity to get a college education on the GI Bill. That enlistment in the Army during a war might seem safer or more sane than remaining at home is part of the cruel irony of this family's urban experience. The narrator, too, has struggled in spite of his military service to his country to attain success and safety at home. He dutifully fought the war, returned to become an algebra teacher and a productive member of the middle class, and yet because of segregation and discrimination, his family must live in a new but already rundown housing project, "a parody of a good, clean, faceless life".

c. Jazz music, class divisions and racial politics:

In his article entitled "Baldwin, Bebop, and Sonny's Blues" (in *Understanding Others: Cultural and Cross-Cultural Studies and the Teaching of Literature*, eds. Joseph Trimmer and Tilly Warnock Urbana, IL: NCTE, 1992, 165-176.), Pancho Savery concludes that the story most likely takes place during the Korean War rather than during World War II. Savery argues that the story's



discussion of the 1950s jazz music scene illustrates a division in the black community represented by the brothers themselves. To understand Savery's argument, we first must understand some of the personality and philosophical differences between Sonny and his brother. The division within the black community can best be described as between those of middle class, like the narrator, who downplay the barriers to their success, who want to believe that they can improve their standard of living in the US, who feel confident that through hard work, determination and self-denial, they can make their world safe for their children, and who would readily assimilate into white society if given the chance.

The other group, Sonny's group, is more radical and less accepting of the status quo. They suspect that as blacks their struggles will always be fierce, and that, unless drastic social change were to occur, they will always be shut out from the privileges most whites enjoy.

This opposition can be seen mainly in several conversations between the brothers. First, when the younger narrator confronts the teenaged Sonny about his plans for the future, Sonny avers that he would like to become a musician. Seeing this career goal as an impractical and therefore dangerous choice, the narrator says, "Well, Sonny, you know people can't always do exactly what they want to do –." This quotation sums up the narrator's personality: he is cautious, responsible, willing to deny himself the things he might want so that he can maintain his foothold as a middle class family man. He's also afraid for Sonny, afraid that Sonny will fail or, because he doesn't understand them, that Sonny's goals are not lofty enough. Sonny responds with "No, I don't know that. I think people ought to do what they want to do, what else are they alive for?," indicating his unwillingness to subordinate his dreams and goals to someone else's standard of success.

In another conversation, which takes place during the present day time frame of the story as the brothers watch an emotionally arresting street singer, Sonny says "it struck me all of a sudden how much suffering she must have had to go through – to sing like that. It's repulsive to think you have to suffer that much". Sonny here shows the sensitivity and perception of the artist that he is; clearly, he feels other people's pain acutely and in thinking about it deeply, is transformed such that he gains an insight into an art form and how it is produced. The brother responds in a practical, almost dismissive way by saying, "But there's no way not to suffer – is there, Sonny?" The narrator has essentially missed Sonny's point (Sonny seems to have realized long ago that there's no way not to suffer).

Sonny's response – "I believe not, but that's never stopped anyone from trying, has it?" – shows what he understands about art, music and even drug use that his brother has not yet understood. Their conversation here mirrors the early conversation the narrator has with Sonny's friend by the subway. The anguished narrator is only beginning to comprehend Sonny's drug use, his bohemian lifestyle and the risks he takes to express his true self. He says to Sonny's friend "Tell me, why does he want to die? He must want to die, he's killing himself, why does he want to die?" The friend, surprised by the narrator's lack of understanding, responds with "He don't want to die. He wants to live. Don't nobody want to die, ever". What Sonny and his friend understand, which the narrator misses throughout most of the story, is that living by another man's definition of success or, worse, being hemmed in by a discrimination that deprives one of true freedom, is like being dead. Music, art, and even drugs are avenues out of that social death, even as they are, in their own ways, dangerous or subversive.

Looking at yet another conversation between the brothers, critic Pancho Savery (in his essay "Baldwin, Bebop and Sonny's Blues") notices **the way in which Baldwin uses jazz music as an analogy for the way the brothers don't really understand each other and for the distinction between those who would give up a great deal of independence and personal satisfaction to stay safe and those who would risk everything to express themselves and to claim their rights.** As the narrator and Sonny discuss Sonny's career plans, the narrator asks Sonny if he wants to be a jazz musician "like Louis Armstrong." Sonny's reaction is almost violent: "No, I'm not talking about none of that old-time down home crap." It turns out that Sonny admires a newer, edgier kind of jazz music, one not yet accepted by mainstream culture, a fresh sound exemplified by the music of **Charlie Parker. This new jazz, also called Bebop,** had revolutionized music by 1952 (Savery 167), but traditionalists like Sonny's brother, who don't place a high value on art, music or African American culture, might not have heard of Charlie Parker. Bebop fans in the early 50s were looking for a replacement for, in Sonny's words, "that old-time down home crap" that Louis Armstrong had pioneered and that white artists like Benny Goodman had subsequently popularized among mainstream white audiences.

4. The characterization.

Like with so many other stories, in "Sonny's Blues," the dramatic action mainly concerns the characters' changes or lack of them. The character changes in "Sonny's Blues" are particularly interesting, and subtle, in part because the plot features a character's battle with heroin addiction, and the narrator's efforts to come to grips with this character's addiction and recovery.

We might begin thinking about characterization in this story by asking ourselves what we think Baldwin wanted his story to be about, or more specifically, what Baldwin wanted to say about drugs and addiction in his story.

Is “Sonny’s Blues” a story:

- * That moralizes against drug use?
- * That tries to explain why people become addicted to drugs?
- * About a man’s struggle to kick a drug habit?
- * About an artist’s struggle to kick a drug habit?
- * About the effects of drug use on a family?
- * About the ways in which drug use and self-expression can sometimes serve the same purposes.

Of all of the bulleted items above, only the first is wholly unlikely. Not that Baldwin or his characters in “Sonny’s Blues” approve of drug use or advocate it, but the story is far more than simply a cautionary tale warning readers against drugs or exhorting them to “just say no.” In fact, through the characterizations of the brothers, we see that Baldwin wants to illustrate the answers to the other bulleted items. That is, “Sonny’s Blues” helps us to understand the various ways people experience pain and suffering. As a musician and artist, Sonny tries to make known, to speak through his music, the pain he sees around him. Extremely sensitive to that pain himself, Sonny becomes an addict to try to dull his perception of it.

The narrator, on the other hand, denies his own pain and hardship, and that of those around him. But when he is finally forced to see it, he begins to understand Sonny as both an artist and as a recovering addict.

a. Sonny, the artist:

As readers, we realize that our knowledge of Sonny comes only through the narrator, who has acted largely as Sonny’s guardian, a father figure, rather than a brother-peer. The narrator describes Sonny as “wild,” but not “crazy.” He says Sonny had “always been a good boy, he hadn’t ever turned hard or evil or disrespectful, the way kids can, so quick, so quick, especially in Harlem.” He compares Sonny to his students: dreamy, disenchanted, and obedient, but struggling against the hopelessness their impoverished lives promise.

Sonny’s one hope is that he can become a musician. Discouraged from that goal by his practical minded brother, Sonny agrees to finish high school living with Isabel’s family, only because the family has a piano. But he cannot change who he is to satisfy their expectations. At some level, the narrator writes, all of the adults understood that “Sonny was at that piano playing for his life.”

When Isabel’s mother discovers Sonny is truant, and “that he’d been down in Greenwich Village, with musicians and other characters in a white girl’s apartment”, she is frightened for him. The ensuing confrontation, in which Sonny realizes that they have not appreciated or understood, but only endured, his efforts to create something from his music, so saddens and angers him that he flees and enlists in the Navy.

This pivotal flashback scene tells us a lot about Sonny and his family. Sonny is desperately trying to express himself, first to his brother when he reveals his aspirations, and then, through his music. Neither the narrator nor Isabel’s family really hear him or understand him: “It was as though Sonny were some sort of god, or monster. He moved in an atmosphere which wasn’t like theirs at all. They fed him and he ate, he washed himself, he walked in and out of their door; he certainly wasn’t nasty or unpleasant or rude, Sonny isn’t any of those things; but it was as though he were all wrapped up in some cloud, some fire, some vision all his own; and there wasn’t any way to reach him.” Perhaps some of you might think that this description suggests that Sonny was already using drugs at this point; people who are under the influence of mind-altering substance are often described in such terms. But we have no hard evidence that suggests that Sonny was already using drugs. In fact, later in the story, Sonny tells his brother that he left Harlem as a teenager to escape the lure of the drugs; thus we can reasonably assume that music was Sonny’s only drug at this time, his only way of expressing his hopes and dulling his pain. Rather than seeing Sonny’s difference here as evidence of a drug altered mind, we should see Baldwin as simply depicting a sensitive, artistic mind and how it expresses what it perceives. Sonny has a radically different world view than that of the narrator and Isabel’s family, who are frightened of the disorder, uncertainty, and suffering his artistic nature represents. Sonny wants to confront his pain and those of others like him, while the narrator wants to deny it.

Because he is arrested for drug use, goes to prison, kicks his drug habit, and returns to society to live with his brother, we may think of Sonny as the character who changes the most in the story. In fact, it would be easy to assume, after a cursory reading of the story, that Sonny, the addict, is the character who must change. But Sonny’s attempts to change are not really the focus of the story. Readers never glimpse Sonny “high,” or actively struggling with his addiction; we meet him only after he’s served prison time and come home clean. We also never find out whether he continues to maintain control over his addiction. Therefore,

we might conclude that to Baldwin, the questions of how Sonny became addicted and how or whether he reformed are secondary. More important to Baldwin is how the narrator changes as he begins to listen to and understand Sonny.

b. The narrator:

The narrator of “Sonny’s Blues” is an upstanding man. He’s a dutiful son to his parents, and a caring husband and father. He has worked hard to attain the trappings of middle-class success. Up until Sonny’s arrest, he has tried not to think about things that bother him. It’s logical that the narrator would exhibit this particular trait, as his parents have set a good example for him by not telling him and Sonny about their uncle’s murder by a group of drunken white men. Certainly the boys had felt the effects of their father’s great sorrow – the father appears to have been an alcoholic himself, as “he died suddenly, during a drunken weekend” – but the root of this sorrow had never been spoken in their family.

Because of this generational silence, Sonny grows up virtually alone. Though the narrator and his parents are physically there for most of Sonny’s childhood, they never really hear him or listen to him. After Sonny returns from military service, the narrator begins to harbor unspoken suspicions about Sonny’s lifestyle and the brothers fight whenever they see each other. As we saw in the scene where the narrator discourages Sonny from becoming a musician, he refuses to accept Sonny for who he is: “I didn’t like the way he carried himself, loose and dreamlike all the time, and I didn’t like his friends, and his music seemed to be merely an excuse for the life he led. It sounded just that weird and disordered.” We might understand this reaction if the narrator were disapproving the drug use. But notice how the brother never explicitly articulates his fear that Sonny is a drug addict. In fact, we know from the opening paragraphs that the brother has always pushed that realization aside, never allowing himself to believe it. Only when he reads about Sonny “being picked up for peddling and using heroin” does the narrator accept the facts: “I couldn’t believe it: but what I mean by that is that I couldn’t find any room for it anywhere inside me. I had kept it outside me for a long time. I hadn’t wanted to know. I had had suspicions, but I didn’t name them, I kept putting them away.” Thus, we get a picture here of the narrator as shutting Sonny out, not because just he’s a drug addict, but because he can’t face pain and uncertainty of the way Sonny lives.

The narrator does as many of us might do, were we to walk in his shoes. Afraid of the dangers or misfortune that might befall him, he tries to keep safe. But in trying always to stay safe, the narrator is always afraid. The story opens with the narrator feeling an icy dread as he reads about Sonny in the paper. Images of darkness surround him in the subway; he feels “trapped in the darkness that roared outside.” In the first flashback to his childhood, he remembers family gatherings on Sunday afternoons not with warmth and nostalgia, but with a recollection of silence and a darkness that settles over everything. He says,

“The darkness outside is what the old folks have been talking about. It’s what they’ve come from. It’s what they endure. The child knows that they won’t talk any more because if he knows too much about what’s happened to them, he’ll know too much too soon, about what’s going to happen to him.”

The narrator as a child and now as an adult has tried to ignore or deny those feelings of dread and despair because he is afraid of them. But Sonny has tried through his blues music to face them. Sonny doesn’t understand his brother’s fearful reaction, just as the narrator doesn’t understand Sonny’s drug use as a way of coping with his terror. Sonny accuses the narrator of “sound[ing] so – scared” at the thought of Sonny becoming a musician.

The narrator begins to end his silence toward Sonny and to try to understand Sonny’s pain when his own daughter dies. “My trouble,” he says, “made his real.” We see here the narrator beginning to appreciate not only Sonny’s experience, but also the meaning and purpose of blues music, the music he had scoffed at and dismissed when Sonny first mentioned to him his interest in it. A blues musician sings of his sorrow and trouble; listeners are transformed, and their pain is at least momentarily assuaged when they hear another’s blues.

The narrator begins to realize the importance of breaking his silence toward Sonny and sharing his own feelings and receiving Sonny’s.

c. The story’s final scenes and how they develop the narrator’s changes:

In the pivotal penultimate scene of “Sonny’s Blues,” the narrator agrees to go with Sonny to the jazz club and the brothers finally talk about Sonny’s addiction. This scene is pivotal because it demonstrates the extent of the narrator’s changes, particularly when compared with the flashback of the narrator’s last conversation with his mother. In the flashback scene, the narrator is cautioned by his mother: “You got to hold onto your brother...and don’t let him fall, no matter what it looks like is happening to him and no matter how evil you gets with him. You going to be evil with him many a time. But don’t you forget what I told you, you hear?”. In this scene, the narrator perfunctorily promises: “I won’t let nothing happen to Sonny.” His mother smiles as if amused at his naiveté. She knows he can’t prevent Sonny’s struggles, but

she wants the narrator to be there for Sonny, to help him get through life by listening to him. In almost the next sentence, the narrator admits that once he left for the war, he “pretty well forgot [his] promise to Mama.” What we understand, though, when we see how the narrator interacts with Sonny, is not so much that he’s forgotten his promise, but that he’s never really understood that promise or what his mother was asking him to do. As a man who denies or tries to ignore what frightens him, what makes him uncomfortable, and what he doesn’t understand, he has believed that “taking care” of Sonny means trying to get Sonny to live the way he does. When this strategy doesn’t work, he essentially breaks his promise to his mother and gives up on Sonny, letting years pass between their meetings.

In the penultimate scene, the narrator shows how far he’s come since Sonny has come back into his life. As we’ve discussed previously, here the brothers discuss the nature of suffering and how different people try to overcome it – through song, or art, through drug use, and through denial. Here the narrator begins to see that his way – denial – is not effective. The narrator thinks to himself that he wants to reassure Sonny that with “will power” he can conquer his addiction, that “life could be – well, beautiful,” and that he “would never fail him again”. But the narrator finally realizes here that these promises, because they deny and ignore Sonny’s true nature and needs, would have been “empty words and lies,” like his first forgotten promise to his mother. Instead of making these promises publicly, then, the narrator “made the promise to [him]self and prayed that [he] would keep it.”

He begins right away to keep his promise as Sonny describes his loneliness and alienation.

“It’s terrible sometimes, inside,” he said, “that’s what’s the trouble. You walk these streets, black and funky and cold, and there’s not really a living ass to talk to, and there’s nothing shaking, and there’s no way of getting it out – that storm inside. You can’t talk it and you can’t make love with it, and when you finally try to get with it and play it, you realize nobody’s listening. So you’ve got to listen. You got to find a way to listen.”

Sonny’s use of the pronoun “you” in the speech above is generic; that is, he is referring to himself and to addicts and artists in general. But he is also exhorting the narrator himself to listen, and the narrator does. He draws Sonny out for the first time, asking him “What have you been, Sonny?”

Sonny’s response describes the worst moments of his drug addiction, the way in which heroin seemed to promise a way “to listen” to himself and to what he, as an artist, wanted to say about his world. But as his addiction tightened its grip on him, Sonny realized that its promises (like those of the narrator) were really just false promises that drove him to depths he hadn’t imagined. He ends his speech by warning his brother (and himself) that his dependence on heroin “can come again.” In the narrator’s response, we see how far the narrator has come: “‘All right,’ I said, at last. ‘So it can come again, All right’” Here, the narrator finally accepts that Sonny’s addiction needs to be faced before it can be dealt with, that Sonny will continue to struggle with it and with his artistic goals and temperament. To truly help Sonny, the narrator must accept this bitter battle and fight it with Sonny. As the scene ends, Sonny has turned, as if toward a lodestone (a magnetized stone used by sailors to find their way on the sea), to the window that looks out onto the Harlem street. The lodestone image suggests that Sonny is and will be continually drawn to street life, to explaining the sorrows of the people. The scene ends with Sonny expressing his main concern, the wonder that motivates his music: “‘All that hatred down there,’ he said, ‘all that hatred and misery and love. It’s a wonder it doesn’t blow the avenue apart’.

The narrator’s realization that he must accept Sonny as he is sets the stage for the narrator’s first trip to the nightclub where Sonny has played. Here he meets Sonny’s musician friends, who appreciate Sonny in a way the narrator never has, as a “real musician”. The tables are turned on the narrator and he begins to understand the value of jazz and blues music. Rather than trying to make Sonny fit into his world, he is now “in Sonny’s world. Or, rather: his kingdom. Here it was not even a question that his veins bore royal blood”.

In the ensuing scene the narrator begins to understand the language of jazz music, the way in which it helps artists express their torment and their fear. As he describes the musical scene, the narrator uses another analogy of the sea, with its threatening deep water.

[The band leader Creole] was having a dialogue with Sonny. He wanted Sonny to leave the shoreline and strike out for the deep water. He was Sonny’s witness that deep water and drowning were not the same thing – he had been there, and he knew. And he wanted Sonny to know. He was waiting for Sonny to do the things on the keys which would let Creole know that Sonny was in the water.

Thus, as Creole tries to get Sonny to put everything into his music, to really express a true emotion, to abjure his fear, the narrator himself finally sees the benefit of such risk-taking. He learns

“...what the blues were all about. They were not about anything very new. He and his boys up there were keeping it new, at the risk of ruin, destruction, madness, and death, in order to find new ways to make us listen. For, while the tale of how we suffer, and how we are delighted, and how we may triumph is never

new, it always must be heard. There isn't any other tale to tell, it's the only light we've got in all this darkness."

Thus, music has a communal function; it tells the stories of a community of people, it evokes feelings in performers and in listeners, helping them to heal from the misfortunes of their lives or to at least find solace in the company of others who are similarly afflicted. The narrator sees that "Sonny's fingers filled the air with life, his life. But that life contained so many others". The music makes the narrator remember the tragedies that befell his parents, the death of his own daughter and the sorrow of his wife, and he is moved to tears as he feels the power of the music to evoke his own pain. Somehow, this experience is transformative, helping the narrator to see into himself at the same time as he connects with Sonny and the other nightclub patrons.

We might wonder about the final image of the story in which waitress puts a "Scotch and milk on top of the piano for Sonny".

We might wonder whether a recovering heroin addict should be drinking an alcoholic beverage.

And what, we might wonder, is the "cup of trembling"? This biblical allusion is to Isaiah 51: 17-22, which reads as follows:

17. *Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the LORD the cup of his fury; thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, and wrung them out.*

18. *There is none to guide her among all the sons whom she hath brought forth; neither is there any that taketh her by the hand of all the sons that she hath brought up.*

19. *These two things are come unto thee; who shall be sorry for thee? desolation, and destruction, and the famine, and the sword: by whom shall I comfort thee?*

20. *Thy sons have fainted, they lie at the head of all the streets, as a wild bull in a net: they are full of the fury of the LORD, the rebuke of thy God.*

21. *Therefore hear now this, thou afflicted, and drunken, but not with wine:*

22. *Thus saith thy Lord the LORD, and thy God that pleadeth the cause of his people, Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no more drink it again:*

23. *But I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee; which have said to thy soul, Bow down, that we may go over: and thou hast laid thy body as the ground, and as the street, to them that went over.*

In these passages, God tells the Israelites that He knows they have suffered His fury that they have been afraid of his wrath and of their enemies ("drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling"). God promises here that they will no longer drink from the cup of trembling or feel His wrath and that the cup of trembling will instead be put into the hands of their enemies. As an allusion at the end of the story, this passage implies hope that those, like Sonny and his brother, who have been afflicted with fear and suffering, will no longer be tormented.

As you can see, the passage's images of drunkenness and of the street resonate with the plot and setting of *Sonny's Blues*. In the Biblical passage, God speaks to those "afflicted, and drunken, but not with wine" (verse 21) and promises to assuage their pain by taking away the cup of trembling. Sonny's drink is likened to a "cup of trembling" which he sips from as he plays. This seems an ambiguous image. Baldwin may be saying that the artist/musician can never escape the "cup of trembling," that his music depends on feeling, understanding and expressing the fear and sorrow of his people. Or, Baldwin may be saying that Sonny, in taking from the cup of trembling himself, allows his listeners to abstain; that is, his suffering translated into music inoculates his audience from feeling the same depths of suffering. We might see a connection here to the last verse of the Biblical passage: The artist is he who "hast laid [his] body as the ground, and as the street, to them that went over."

Taking the analogy further, we can see that, as the artist, Sonny performs a sort of sacrifice; he internalizes and then expresses all of the anguish and joy of his listeners, as though he were laying his body down for them to walk over from a stormy emotional state to a place of peace and contentment. Don't miss the religious, Christ-like implications of this depiction of the artist's sacrifice.

Another very persuasive interpretation of the final image of the drink appears in the article "Words and Music: Narrative Ambiguity in 'Sonny's Blues.'" Here, Keith Byerman comments on this final ambiguous image. He writes that the Scotch and milk drink is "an emblem of simultaneous destruction and nurture to the system; it cannot be reduced to one or the other. Sonny's acceptance of it indicates that he will continue on the edge between the poison of his addiction and the nourishment of his music" (371).

5. The imagery.

Following a story's prevailing imagery can help us to understand an author's focus or concerns. A story can have a pattern of recurring imagery as well as sentences which describe in figurative or imagistic

language certain concepts, ideas or scenes such that the reader can gain a full understanding of the author's intent. This section of the lecture looks at one recurring pattern of images and then asks you to consider how other images Baldwin uses help him create meaning.

Darkness and light, a recurring pattern of images:

In *Sonny's Blues*, Baldwin relies on the opposition between images of darkness and light. We first see this imagery in the opening scene, where the narrator is contemplating Sonny's fate in the dark subway. The "swinging lights of the subway car" allow him to read about Sonny's arrest, while the "darkness roared outside". This image sets up a major plot development in the story, which is the narrator's growth as he realizes his duty to Sonny. The coming of a realization or the dawning of knowledge and understanding is often described as a "light going on." Depression and fear are often described as "darkness" or "night." The narrator has to find a way to absorb and live with this new understanding of Sonny as an addict and as a blues musician. Similarly, in the final scene of the story, the narrator notices Sonny and the other jazz musicians standing behind the light of the bandstand. "I had the feeling that they... were being most careful not to step into that circle of light too suddenly: if they moved into the light too suddenly and without thinking, they would perish in flame." Perhaps this description suggests that the musicians like Sonny must be careful with how they approach the truths of their lives; full awareness of their suffering can be painful and dangerous.

We might also consider images of darkness and light in terms of race and the historical context of the story. The narrator refers to his own students and the "darkness of their lives" this imagery in the opening scene, where the narrator is contemplating Sonny's fate in the dark subway. The "swinging lights of the subway car" allow him to read about Sonny's arrest, while the "darkness roared outside". This image sets up a major plot development in the story, which is the narrator's growth as he realizes his duty to Sonny. The coming of a realization or the dawning of knowledge and understanding is often described as a "light going on." Depression and fear are often described as "darkness" or "night." The narrator has to find a way to absorb and live with this new understanding of Sonny as an addict and as a blues musician. Similarly, in the final scene of the story, the narrator notices Sonny and the other jazz musicians standing behind the light of the bandstand. "I had the feeling that they... were being most careful not to step into that circle of light too suddenly: if they moved into the light too suddenly and without thinking, they would perish in flame." Perhaps this description suggests that the musicians like Sonny must be careful with how they approach the truths of their lives; full awareness of their suffering can be painful and dangerous.

6. The themes.

A story's themes are best and most specifically expressed as complete sentences. Thus, rather than saying "one theme of *Sonny's Blues* is suffering" or even "coping with suffering" we should be more precise and say: "One theme of *Sonny's Blues* is that tragedy and suffering can be transformed into a communal art form such as blues music." We might even go further to claim that blues music can be viewed as a catalyst for change, as the narrator begins to understand not only the music but also himself and his relationship with Sonny. Similarly, we might explore the theme of brotherhood in *Sonny's Blues*, and suggest that the story implies that we are "our brother's keepers," and that a brotherly support amounts to more than control or coercion. It requires listening and true understanding.

Notice how the themes elaborated above are similar to thesis statements. That is, they make an assertion about the story, one that is not immediately obvious and one that requires development and explanation with evidence from the text.

[The materials of Anne Fleischmann and Andy Jones' lecture on *Sonny's Blues* have been used above].

Seminar 7

Richard Bach's *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*

Plan

1. The biography and works of Richard Bach.
2. The seventies: the social context of his works.
3. The plot of *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*.
4. The main themes and symbols.

Questions:

1. With what writer of the 20th century does Bach have much in common?
2. Why did the author use the human names for the seagulls?

3. What Christian symbols can be found in the book? How does the author revalue them?
4. What elements of the Greek and Taoist philosophies can you see here?
5. What recent American cartoon resembles the plot of Jonathan Livingston Seagull?
6. Explain how you understand the statements:

a) *The gulls who scorn perfection for the sake of travel go nowhere, slowly. Those who put aside travel for the sake of perfection go anywhere, instantly.*

b) *If our friendship depends on things like space and time, then when we finally overcome space and time, we've destroyed our own brotherhood! But overcome space, and all we have left is Here. Overcome time, and all we have left is Now. And in the middle of Here and Now, don't you think that we might see each other once or twice?*

c) *You don't love hatred and evil, of course. You have to practice and see the real gull, the good in every one of them, and to help them see it in themselves. That's what I mean by love.*

Literature and Resources

1. Bach Richard. Jonathan Livingston Seagull / Richard Bach. – Online at : www.lib.ru/RBACH/seagullengl.txt.
2. Bach Richard. Jonathan Livingston Seagull / Richard Bach [Audio book]. – TOB “Сідоком”, 2004.
3. Richard Bach – Online at : en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Bach.
4. Richard Bach: A Fan Site. – Online at : http://www.inner-growth.info/main_bach.htm.
5. Jonathan Livingston Seagull. – Online at : en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jonathan_Livingston_Seagull.
6. Bach Richard. Jonathan Livingston Seagull / Richard Bach [Audio book]. – TOB “Сідоком”, 2004.

Text

Richard Bach. Jonathan Livingston Seagull.

To the real Jonathan Seagull,
who lives within us all.

Part One

It was morning, and the new sun sparkled gold across the ripples of a gentle sea. A mile from shore a fishing boat chummed the water, and the word for Breakfast Flock flashed through the air, till a crowd of a thousand seagulls came to dodge and fight for bits of food. It was another busy day beginning.

But way off alone, out by himself beyond boat and shore, Jonathan Livingston Seagull was practicing. A hundred feet in the sky he lowered his webbed feet, lifted his beak, and strained to hold a painful hard twisting curve through his wings. The curve meant that he would fly slowly, and now he slowed until the wind was a whisper in his face, until the ocean stood still beneath him. He narrowed his eyes in fierce concentration, held his breath, forced one... single... more... inch... of... curve... Then his feathers ruffled, he stalled and fell.

Seagulls, as you know, never falter, never stall. To stall in the air is for them disgrace and it is dishonor.

But Jonathan Livingston Seagull, unashamed, stretching his wings again in that trembling hard curve – slowing, slowing, and stalling once more – was no ordinary bird.

Most gulls don't bother to learn more than the simplest facts of flight – how to get from shore to food and back again. For most gulls, it is not flying that matters, but eating. For this gull, though, it was not eating that mattered, but flight. More than anything else. Jonathan Livingston Seagull loved to fly.

This kind of thinking, he found, is not the way to make one's self popular with other birds. Even his parents were dismayed as Jonathan spent whole days alone, making hundreds of low-level glides, experimenting.

He didn't know why, for instance, but when he flew at altitudes less than half his wingspan above the water, he could stay in the air longer, with less effort. His glides ended not with the usual feet-down splash into the sea, but with a long flat wake as he touched the surface with his feet tightly streamlined against his body. When he began sliding in to feet-up landings on the beach, then pacing the length of his slide in the sand, his parents were very much dismayed indeed.

“Why, Jon, why?” his mother asked. “Why is it so hard to be like the rest of the flock, Jon? Why can't you leave low flying to the pelicans, the albatross? Why don't you eat? Son, you're bone and feathers!”

“I don’t mind being bone and feathers mom. I just want to know what I can do in the air and what I can’t, that’s all. I just want to know.”

“See here Jonathan” said his father not unkindly. “Winter isn’t far away. Boats will be few and the surface fish will be swimming deep. If you must study, then study food, and how to get it. This flying business is all very well, but you can’t eat a glide, you know. Don’t you forget that the reason you fly is to eat.”

Jonathan nodded obediently. For the next few days he tried to behave like the other gulls; he really tried, screeching and fighting with the flock around the piers and fishing boats, diving on scraps of fish and bread. But he couldn’t make it work.

It’s all so pointless, he thought, deliberately dropping a hard-won anchovy to a hungry old gull chasing him. I could be spending all this time learning to fly. There’s so much to learn!

It wasn’t long before Jonathan Gull was off by himself again, far out at sea, hungry, happy, learning. The subject was speed, and in a week’s practice he learned more about speed than the fastest gull alive.

From a thousand feet, flapping his wings as hard as he could, he pushed over into a blazing steep dive toward the waves, and learned why seagulls don’t make blazing steep power-dives. In just six seconds he was moving seventy miles per hour, the speed at which one’s wing goes unstable on the upstroke.

Time after time it happened. Careful as he was, working at the very peak of his ability, he lost control at high speed.

Climb to a thousand feet. Full power straight ahead first, then push over, flapping, to a vertical dive. Then, every time, his left wing stalled on an upstroke, he’d roll violently left, stall his right wing recovering, and flick like fire into a wild tumbling spin to the right.

He couldn’t be careful enough on that upstroke. Ten times he tried, and all ten times, as he passed through seventy miles per hour, he burst into a churning mass of feathers, out of control, crashing down into the water.

The key, he thought at last, dripping wet, must be to hold the wings still at high speeds – to flap up to fifty and then hold the wings still.

From two thousand feet he tried again, rolling into his dive, beak straight down, wings full out and stable from the moment he passed fifty miles per hour. It took tremendous strength, but it worked. In ten seconds he had blurred through ninety miles per hour. Jonathan had set a world speed record for seagulls!

But victory was short-lived. The instant he began his pullout, the instant he changed the angle of his wings, he snapped into that same terrible uncontrolled disaster, and at ninety miles per hour it hit him like dynamite. Jonathan Seagull exploded in midair and smashed down into a brickhard sea.

When he came to, it was well after dark, and he floated in moonlight on the surface of the ocean. His wings were ragged bars of lead, but the weight of failure was even heavier on his back. He wished, feebly, that the weight could be just enough to drug him gently down to the bottom, and end it all.

As he sank low in the water, a strange hollow voice sounded within him. There’s no way around it. I am a seagull. I am limited by my nature. If I were meant to learn so much about flying, I’d have charts for brains. If I were meant to fly at speed, I’d have a falcon’s short wings, and live on mice instead of fish. My father was right. I must forget this foolishness. I must fly home to the Flock and be content as I am, as a poor limited seagull.

The voice faded, and Jonathan agreed. The place for a seagull at night is on shore, and from this moment forth, he vowed, he would be a normal gull. It would make everyone happier.

He pushed wearily away from the dark water and flew toward the land, grateful for what he had learned about work-saving low-altitude flying.

But no, he thought. I am done with the way I was, I am done with everything I learned. I am a seagull like every other seagull, and I will fly like one. So he climbed painfully to a hundred feet and flapped his wings harder, pressing for shore.

He felt better for his decision to be just another one of the Flock. There would be no ties now to the force that had driven him to learn, there would be no more challenge and no more failure. And it was pretty, just to stop thinking, and fly through the dark, toward the lights above the beach.

Dark! The hollow voice cracked in alarm. Seagulls never fly in the dark!

Jonathan was not alert to listen. It’s pretty, he thought. The moon and the lights twinkling on the water, throwing out little beacon-trails through the night, and all so peaceful and still...

Get down! Seagulls never fly in the dark! If you were meant to fly in the dark, you’d have the eyes of an owl! You’d have charts for brains! You’d have a falcon’s short wings!

There in the night, a hundred feet in the air, Jonathan Livingston Seagull – blinked. His pain, his resolutions, vanished.

Short wings. A falcon's short wings!

That's the answer! What a fool I've been! All I need is a tiny little wing, all I need is to fold most of my wings and fly on just the tips alone! Short wings!

He climbed two thousand feet above the black sea, and without a moment for thought of failure and death, he brought his forewings tightly in to his body, left only the narrow swept daggers of his wingtips extended into the wind, and fell into a vertical dive.

The wind was a monster roar at his head. Seventy miles per hour, ninety, a hundred and twenty and faster still. The wing-strain now at a hundred and forty miles per hour wasn't nearly as hard as it had been before at seventy, and with the faintest twist of his wingtips he eased out of the dive and shot above the waves, a gray cannonball under the moon.

He closed his eyes to slits against the wind and rejoiced. A hundred forty miles per hour! And under control! If I dive from five thousand feet instead of two thousand, I wonder how fast...

His vows of a moment before were forgotten, swept away in that great swift wind. Yet he felt guiltless, breaking the promises he had made himself. Such promises are only for the gulls that accept the ordinary. One who has touched excellence in his learning has no need of that kind of promise.

By sunup, Jonathan Gull was practicing again. From five thousand feet the fishing boats were specks in the flat blue water, Breakfast Flock was a faint cloud of dust motes, circling.

He was alive, trembling ever so slightly with delight, proud that his fear was under control. Then without ceremony he hugged in his forewings, extended his short, angled wingtips, and plunged directly toward the sea.

By the time he passed four thousand feet he had reached terminal velocity, the wind was a solid beating wall of sound against which he could move no faster. He was flying now straight down, at two hundred fourteen miles per hour. He swallowed, knowing that if his wings unfolded at that speed he'd be blown into a million tiny shreds of seagull. But the speed was power, and the speed was joy, and the speed was pure beauty.

He began his pullout at a thousand feet, wingtips thudding and blurring in that gigantic wind, the boat and the crowd of gulls tilting and growing meteor-fast, directly in his path.

He couldn't stop; he didn't know yet even how to turn at that speed.

Collision would be instant death.

And so he shut his eyes.

It happened that morning, then, just after sunrise, that Jonathan Livingston Seagull fired directly through the center of Breakfast Flock, ticking off two hundred twelve miles per hour, eyes closed, in a great roaring shriek of wind and feathers. The Gull of Fortune smiled upon him this once, and no one was killed.

By the time he had pulled his beak straight up into the sky he was still scorching along at a hundred and sixty miles per hour. When he had slowed to twenty and stretched his wings again at last, the boat was a crumb on the sea, four thousand feet below.

His thought was triumph. Terminal velocity! A seagull at two hundred fourteen miles per hour! It was a breakthrough, the greatest single moment in the history of the Flock, and in that moment a new age opened for Jonathan Gull. Flying out to his lonely practice area, folding his wings for a dive from eight thousand feet, he set himself at once to discover how to turn.

A single wingtip feather, he found, moved a fraction of an inch, gives a smooth sweeping curve at tremendous speed. Before he learned this, however, he found that moving more than one feather at that speed will spin you like a raffle ball... and Jonathan had flown the first aerobatics of any seagull on earth.

He spared no time that day for talk with other gulls, but flew on past sunset. He discovered the loop, the slow roll, the point roll, the inverted spin, the gull bunt, the pinwheel.

When Jonathan Seagull joined the Flock on the beach, it was full night. He was dizzy and terribly tired. Yet in delight he flew a loop to landing, with a snap roll just before touchdown. When they hear of it, he thought, of the Breakthrough, they'll be wild with joy. How much more there is now to living! Instead of our drab slogging forth and back to the fishing boats, there's a reason to life! We can lift ourselves out of ignorance, we can find ourselves as creatures of excellence and intelligence and skill. We can be free! We can learn to fly!

The years ahead hummed and glowed with promise.

The gulls were flocked into the Council Gathering when he landed, and apparently had been so flocked for some time. They were, in fact, waiting.

“Jonathan Livingston Seagull! Stand to Center!” The Elder’s words sounded in a voice of highest ceremony. Stand to Center meant only great shame or great honor. Stand to Center for Honor was the way the gulls’ foremost leaders were marked. Of course, he thought, the Breakfast Flock this morning; they saw the Breakthrough! But I want no honors. I have no wish to be leader. I want only to share what I’ve found, to show those horizons out ahead for us all. He stepped forward.

“Jonathan Livingston Seagull,” said the Elder, “Stand to Center for Shame in the sight of your fellow gulls!”

It felt like being hit with a board. His knees went weak, his feathers sagged, there was roaring in his ears. Centered for shame?

Impossible! The Breakthrough! They can’t understand! They’re wrong, they’re wrong!

“... for his reckless irresponsibility” the solemn voice intoned, “violating the dignity and tradition of the Gull Family...”

To be centered for shame meant that he would be cast out of gull society, banished to a solitary life on the Far Cliffs.

“... one day Jonathan Livingston Seagull, you shall learn that irresponsibility does not pay. Life is the unknown and the unknowable, except that we are put into this world to eat, to stay alive as long as we possibly can.”

A seagull never speaks back to the Council Flock, but it was Jonathan’s voice raised. “Irresponsibility? My brothers!” he cried. “Who is more responsible than a gull who finds and follows a meaning, a higher purpose for life? For a thousand years we have scabbled after fish heads, but now we have a reason to live – to learn, to discover, to be free! Give me one chance, let me show you what I’ve found...”

The Flock might as well have been stone.

“The Brotherhood is broken,” the gulls intoned together, and with one accord they solemnly closed their ears and turned their backs upon him.

Jonathan Seagull spent the rest of his days alone, but he flew way out beyond the Far Cliffs. His one sorrow was not solitude, it was that other gulls refused to believe the glory of flight that awaited them; they refused to open their eyes and see. He learned more each day. He learned that a streamlined high-speed dive could bring him to find the rare and tasty fish that schooled ten feet below the surface of the ocean: he no longer needed fishing boats and stale bread for survival. He learned to sleep in the air, setting a course at night across the offshore wind, covering a hundred miles from sunset to sunrise. With the same inner control, he flew through heavy sea-fogs and climbed above them into dazzling clear skies... in the very times when every other gull stood on the ground, knowing nothing but mist and rain. He learned to ride the high winds far inland, to dine there on delicate insects.

What he had once hoped for the Flock, he now gained for himself alone; he learned to fly, and was not sorry for the price that he had paid. Jonathan Seagull discovered that boredom and fear and anger are the reasons that a gull’s life is so short, and with these gone from his thought, he lived a long fine life indeed.

They came in the evening, then, and found Jonathan gliding peaceful and alone through his beloved sky. The two gulls that appeared at his wings were pure as starlight, and the glow from them was gentle and friendly in the high night air. But most lovely of all was the skill with which they flew, their wingtips moving a precise and constant inch from his own. Without a word, Jonathan put them to his test, a test that no gull had ever passed. He twisted his wings, slowed to a single mile per hour above stall. The two radiant birds slowed with him, smoothly, locked in position. They knew about slow flying.

He folded his wings, rolled and dropped in a dive to a hundred ninety miles per hour. They dropped with him, streaking down in flawless formation.

At last he turned that speed straight up into a long vertical slow-roll. They rolled with him, smiling.

He recovered to level flight and was quiet for a time before he spoke. “Very well,” he said, “who are you?”

“We’re from your Flock, Jonathan. We are your brothers.” The words were strong and calm. “We’ve come to take you higher, to take you home.”

“Home I have none. Flock I have none. I am Outcast. And we fly now at the peak of the Great Mountain Wind. Beyond a few hundred feet, I can lift this old body no higher.”

“But you can Jonathan. For you have learned. One school is finished, and the time has come for another to begin.”

As it had shined across him all his life, so understanding lighted that moment for Jonathan Seagull. They were right. He could fly higher, and it was time to go home.

He gave one last look across the sky, across that magnificent silver land where he had learned so much.

“I’m ready” he said at last.

And Jonathan Livingston Seagull rose with the two starbright gulls to disappear into a perfect dark sky.

Part Two

So this is heaven, he thought, and he had to smile at himself. It was hardly respectful to analyze heaven in the very moment that one flies up to enter it.

As he came from Earth now, above the clouds and in close formation with the two brilliant gulls, he saw that his own body was growing as bright as theirs. True, the same young Jonathan Seagull was there that had always lived behind his golden eyes, but the outer form had changed.

It felt like a seagull body, but already it flew far better than his old one had ever flown. Why, with half the effort, he thought, I’ll get twice the speed, twice the performance of my best days on Earth!

His feathers glowed brilliant white now, and his wings were smooth and perfect as sheets of polished silver. He began, delightedly, to learn about them, to press power into these new wings.

At two hundred fifty miles per hour he felt that he was nearing his level-flight maximum speed. At two hundred seventy-three he thought that he was flying as fast as he could fly, and he was ever so faintly disappointed. There was a limit to how much the new body could do, and though it was much faster than his old level-flight record, it was still a limit that would take great effort to crack. In heaven, he thought, there should be no limits.

The clouds broke apart, his escorts called, “Happy landings, Jonathan,” and vanished into thin air.

He was flying over a sea, toward a jagged shoreline. A very few seagulls were working the updrafts on the cliffs. Away off to the north, at the horizon itself, flew a few others. New sights, new thoughts, new questions. Why so few gulls? Heaven should be flocked with gulls! And why am I so tired, all at once? Gulls in heaven are never supposed to be tired, or to sleep.

Where had he heard that? The memory of his life on Earth was falling away. Earth had been a place where he had learned much, of course, but the details were blurred - something about fighting for food, and being Outcast.

The dozen gulls by the shoreline came to meet him, none saying a word. He felt only that he was welcome and that this was home. It had been a big day for him, a day whose sunrise he no longer remembered.

He turned to land on the beach, beating his wings to stop an inch in the air, then dropping lightly to the sand. The other gulls landed too, but not one of them so much as flapped a feather. They swung into the wind, bright wings outstretched, then somehow they changed the curve of their feathers until they had stopped in the same instant their feet touched the ground. It was beautiful control, but now Jonathan was just too tired to try it. Standing there on the beach, still without a word spoken, he was asleep.

In the days that followed, Jonathan saw that there was as much to learn about flight in this place as there had been in the life behind him. But with a difference. Here were gulls who thought as he thought, For each of them, the most important thing in living was to reach out and touch perfection in that which they most loved to do, and that was to fly. They were magnificent birds, all of them, and they spent hour after hour every day practicing flight, testing advanced aeronautics.

For a long time Jonathan forgot about the world that he had come from, that place where the Flock lived with its eyes tightly shut to the joy of flight, using its wings as means to the end of finding and fighting for food. But now and then, just for a moment, he remembered.

He remembered it one morning when he was out with his instructor, while they rested on the beach after a session of folded-wing snap rolls.

“Where is everybody, Sullivan?” he asked silently, quite at home now with the easy telepathy that these gulls used instead of screeches and gracks. “Why aren’t there more of us here? Why, where I came from there were...”

“... thousands and thousands of gulls. I know.” Sullivan shook his head. “The only answer I can see, Jonathan, is that you are pretty well a one-in-a-million bird. Most of us came along ever so slowly. We went from one world into another that was almost exactly like it, forgetting right away where we had come from, not caring where we were headed, living for the moment. Do you have any idea how many lives we must have gone through before we even got the first idea that there is more to life than eating, or fighting, or power in the Flock? A thousand lives, Jon, ten thousand! And then another hundred lives until we began to learn that there is such a thing as perfection, and another hundred again to get the idea that our purpose for living is to find that perfection and show it forth. The same rule holds for us now, of course: we choose our

next world through what we learn in this one. Learn nothing, and the next world is the same as this one, all the same limitations and lead weights to overcome.”

He stretched his wings and turned to face the wind. “But you, Jon,” he said, “learned so much at one time that you didn’t have to go through a thousand lives to reach this one.”

In a moment they were airborne again, practicing. The formation point-rolls were difficult, for through the inverted half Jonathan had to think upside down, reversing the curve of his wing, and reversing it exactly in harmony with his instructor’s.

“Let’s try it again.” Sullivan said over and over: “Let’s try it again.” Then, finally, “Good.” And they began practicing outside loops.

One evening the gulls that were not night-flying stood together on the sand, thinking. Jonathan took all his courage in hand and walked to the Elder Gull, who, it was said, was soon to be moving beyond this world. “Chiang...” he said a little nervously.

The old seagull looked at him kindly. “Yes, my son?” Instead of being enfeebled by age, the Elder had been empowered by it; he could outfly any gull in the Flock, and he had learned skills that the others were only gradually coming to know.

“Chiang, this world isn’t heaven at all, is it?” The Elder smiled in the moonlight. “You are learning again, Jonathan Seagull,” he said.

“Well, what happens from here? Where are we going? Is there no such place as heaven?”

“No, Jonathan, there is no such place. Heaven is not a place, and it is not a time. Heaven is being perfect.” He was silent for a moment. “You are a very fast flier, aren’t you?”

“I... I enjoy speed,” Jonathan said, taken aback but proud that the Elder had noticed.

“You will begin to touch heaven, Jonathan, in the moment that you touch perfect speed. And that isn’t flying a thousand miles an hour, or a million, or flying at the speed of light. Because any number is a limit, and perfection doesn’t have limits. Perfect speed, my son, is being there.”

Without warning, Chiang vanished and appeared at the water’s edge fifty feet away, all in the flicker of an instant. Then he vanished again and stood, in the same millisecond, at Jonathan’s shoulder. “It’s kind of fun,” he said.

Jonathan was dazzled. He forgot to ask about heaven. “How do you do that? What does it feel like? How far can you go?”

“You can go to any place and to any time that you wish to go,” the Elder said. “I’ve gone everywhere and everywhen I can think of.” He looked across the sea. “It’s strange. The gulls who scorn perfection for the sake of travel go nowhere, slowly. Those who put aside travel for the sake of perfection go anywhere, instantly. Remember, Jonathan, heaven isn’t a place or a time, because place and time are so very meaningless. Heaven is...”

“Can you teach me to fly like that?” Jonathan Seagull trembled to conquer another unknown.

“Of course if you wish to learn.”

“I wish. When can we start?”

“We could start now if you’d like.”

“I want to learn to fly like that,” Jonathan said and a strange light glowed in his eyes. “Tell me what to do,”

Chiang spoke slowly and watched the younger gull ever so carefully. “To fly as fast as thought, to anywhere that is,” he said, “you must begin by knowing that you have already arrived...”

The trick, according to Chiang, was for Jonathan to stop seeing himself as trapped inside a limited body that had a forty-two inch wingspan and performance that could be plotted on a chart. The trick was to know that his true nature lived, as perfect as an unwritten number, everywhere at once across space and time.

Jonathan kept at it, fiercely, day after day, from before sunrise till past midnight. And for all his effort he moved not a feather width from his spot.

“Forget about faith!” Chiang said it time and again. “You didn’t need faith to fly, you needed to understand flying. This is just the same. Now try again...”

Then one day Jonathan, standing on the shore, closing his eyes, concentrating, all in a flash knew what Chiang had been telling him. “Why, that’s true! I am a perfect, unlimited gull!” He felt a great shock of joy.

“Good!” said Chiang and there was victory in his voice.

Jonathan opened his eyes. He stood alone with the Elder on a totally different seashore – trees down to the water's edge, twin yellow suns turning overhead.

“At last you've got the idea,” Chiang said, “but your control needs a little work...”

Jonathan was stunned. “Where are we?”

Utterly unimpressed with the strange surroundings, the Elder brushed the question aside. “We're on some planet, obviously, with a green sky and a double star for a sun.”

Jonathan made a scree of delight, the first sound he had made since he had left Earth. “IT WORKS!”

“Well, of course, it works, Jon.” said Chiang. “It always works, when you know what you're doing. Now about your control...”

By the time they returned, it was dark. The other gulls looked at Jonathan with awe in their golden eyes, for they had seen him disappear from where he had been rooted for so long.

He stood their congratulations for less than a minute. “I'm the newcomer here! I'm just beginning! It is I who must learn from you!”

“I wonder about that, Jon,” said Sullivan standing near. “You have less fear of learning than any gull I've seen in ten thousand years.” The Flock fell silent, and Jonathan fidgeted in embarrassment.

“We can start working with time if you wish,” Chiang said, “till you can fly the past and the future. And then you will be ready to begin the most difficult, the most powerful, the most fun of all. You will be ready to begin to fly up and know the meaning of kindness and of love.”

A month went by, or something that felt about like a month, and Jonathan learned at a tremendous rate. He always had learned quickly from ordinary experience, and now, the special student of the Elder Himself, he took in new ideas like a streamlined feathered computer.

But then the day came that Chiang vanished. He had been talking quietly with them all, exhorting them never to stop their learning and their practicing and their striving to understand more of the perfect invisible principle of all life. Then, as he spoke, his feathers went brighter and brighter and at last turned so brilliant that no gull could look upon him.

“Jonathan,” he said, and these were the last words that he spoke, “keep working on love.”

When they could see again, Chiang was gone.

As the days went past, Jonathan found himself thinking time and again of the Earth from which he had come. If he had known there just a tenth, just a hundredth, of what he knew here, how much more life would have meant! He stood on the sand and fell to wondering if there was a gull back there who might be struggling to break out of his limits, to see the meaning of flight beyond a way of travel to get a breadcrumb from a rowboat. Perhaps there might even have been one made Outcast for speaking his truth in the face of the Flock. And the more Jonathan practiced his kindness lessons, and the more he worked to know the nature of love, the more he wanted to go back to Earth. For in spite of his lonely past, Jonathan Seagull was born to be an instructor, and his own way of demonstrating love was to give something of the truth that he had seen to a gull who asked only a chance to see truth for himself.

Sullivan, adept now at thought-speed flight and helping the others to learn, was doubtful.

“Jon, you were Outcast once. Why do you think that any of the gulls in your old time would listen to you now? You know the proverb, and it's true: The gull sees farthest who flies highest. Those gulls where you came from are standing on the ground, squawking and fighting among themselves. They're a thousand miles from heaven – and you say you want to show them heaven from where they stand! Jon, they can't see their own wingtips! Stay here. Help the new gulls here, the ones who are high enough to see what you have to tell them.” He was quiet for a moment, and then he said, “What if Chiang had gone back to his old worlds? Where would you have been today?”

The last point was the telling one, and Sullivan was right. The gull sees farthest who flies highest.

Jonathan stayed and worked with the new birds coming in, who were all very bright and quick with their lessons. But the old feeling came back, and he couldn't help but think that there might be one or two gulls back on Earth who would be able to learn, too. How much more would he have known by now if Chiang had come to him on the day that he was Outcast!

“Sully, I must go back” he said at last. “Your students are doing well. They can help you bring the newcomers along.”

Sullivan sighed, but he did not argue. “I think I'll miss you, Jonathan,” was all he said.

“Sully, for shame!” Jonathan said in reproach, “and don't be foolish! What are we trying to practice every day? If our friendship depends on things like space and time, then when we finally overcome space and time, we've destroyed our own brotherhood! But overcome space, and all we have left is Here. Overcome time, and all we have left is Now. And in the middle of Here and Now, don't you think that we might see each other once or twice?”

Sullivan Seagull laughed in spite of himself. "You crazy bird," he said kindly. "If anybody can show someone on the ground how to see a thousand miles, it will be Jonathan Livingston Seagull." He looked at the sand. "Good-bye, Jon, my friend."

"Good bye, Sully. We'll meet again." And with that, Jonathan held in thought an image of the great gull flocks on the shore of another time, and he knew with practiced ease that he was not bone and feather but a perfect idea of freedom and flight, limited by nothing at all.

Fletcher Lynd Seagull was still quite young, but already he knew that no bird had ever been so harshly treated by any Flock, or with so much injustice.

"I don't care what they say," he thought fiercely, and his vision blurred as he flew out toward the Far Cliffs. "There's so much more to flying than just flapping around from place to place! A... a... mosquito does that! One little barrel roll around the Elder Gull, just for fun, and I'm Outcast! Are they blind? Can't they see? Can't they think of the glory that it'll be when we really learn to fly?"

"I don't care what they think. I'll show them what flying is! I'll be pure Outlaw, if that's the way they want it. And I'll make them so sorry..."

The voice came inside his own head, and though it was very gentle, it startled him so much that he faltered and stumbled in the air.

"Don't be harsh on them, Fletcher Seagull. In casting you out, the other gulls have only hurt themselves, and one day they will know this, and one day they will see what you see. Forgive them, and help them to understand."

An inch from his right wingtip flew the most brilliant white gull in all the world, gliding effortlessly along, not moving a feather, at what was very nearly Fletcher's top speed.

There was a moment of chaos in the young bird. "What's going on? Am I mad? Am I dead? What is this?"

Low and calm, the voice went on within his thought, demanding an answer. "Fletcher Lynd Seagull, do you want to fly?"

"YES, I WANT TO FLY!"

"Fletcher Lynd Seagull, do you want to fly so much that you will forgive the Flock, and learn, and go back to them one day and work to help them know?"

There was no lying to this magnificent skillful being, no matter how proud or how hurt a bird was Fletcher Seagull.

"I do" he said softly.

"Then, Fletch," that bright creature said to him, and the voice was very kind, "let's begin with Level Flight..."

Part Three

Jonathan circled slowly over the Far Cliffs, watching. This rough young Fletcher Gull was very nearly a perfect flight-student. He was strong and light and quick in the air, but far and away more important, he had a blazing drive to learn to fly.

Here he came this minute, a blurred gray shape roaring out of a dive, flashing one hundred fifty miles per hour past his instructor. He pulled abruptly into another try at a sixteen point vertical slow roll, calling the points out loud.

"...eight... nine... ten... see-Jonathan-I'm-running-out-ofairspeed... eleven... I-want-good-sharp-stops-like yours... twelve... but-blast-it-I-just-can't-make... - thirteen... theselast-three-points... without... fourtee ...aaakk!"

Fletcher's whipstall at the top was all the worse for his rage and fury at failing. He fell backward, tumbled, slammed savagely into an inverted spin, and recovered at last, panting, a hundred feet below his instructor's level.

"You're wasting your time with me, Jonathan! I'm too dumb! I'm too stupid! I try and try, but I'll never get it!"

Jonathan Seagull looked down at him and nodded. "You'll never get it for sure as long as you make that pull-up so hard. Fletcher, you lost forty miles an hour in the entry! You have to be smooth! Firm but smooth, remember?"

He dropped down to the level of the younger gull. "Let's try it together now, in formation. And pay attention to that pull-up. It's a smooth, easy entry."

By the end of three months Jonathan had six other students, Outcasts all, yet curious about this strange new idea of flight for the joy of flying.

Still, it was easier for them to practice high performance than it was to understand the reason behind it.

"Each of us is in truth an idea of the Great Gull, an unlimited idea of freedom," Jonathan would say in the evenings on the beach, "and precision flying is a step toward expressing our real nature. Everything that limits us we have to put aside. That's why all this high-speed practice, and low speed, and aerobatics..."

...and his students would be asleep, exhausted from the day's flying. They liked the practice, because it was fast and exciting and it fed a hunger for learning that grew with every lesson. But not one of them, not even Fletcher Lynd Gull, had come to believe that the flight of ideas could possibly be as real as the flight of wind and feather.

"Your whole body, from wingtip to wingtip," Jonathan would say, other times, "is nothing more than your thought itself, in a form you can see. Break the chains of your thought, and you break the chains of your body, too..." But no matter how he said it, it sounded like pleasant fiction, and they needed more to sleep.

It was only a month later that Jonathan said the time had come to return to the Flock.

"We're not ready!" said Henry Calvin Gull. "We're not welcome! We're Outcast! We can't force ourselves to go where we're not welcome, can we?"

"We're free to go where we wish and to be what we are," Jonathan answered, and he lifted from the sand and turned east, toward the home grounds of the Flock.

There was brief anguish among his students, for it is the Law of the Flock that an Outcast never returns, and the Law had not been broken once in ten thousand years. The Law said stay; Jonathan said go; and by now he was a mile across the water. If they waited much longer, he would reach a hostile Flock alone.

"Well, we don't have to obey the law if we're not a part of the Flock, do we?" Fletcher said, rather self-consciously. "Besides, if there's a fight we'll be a lot more help there than here."

And so they flew in from the west that morning, eight of them in a double-diamond formation, wingtips almost overlapping. They came across the Flock's Council Beach at a hundred thirty-five miles per hour, Jonathan in the lead. Fletcher smoothly at his right wing, Henry Calvin struggling gamely at his left. Then the whole formation rolled slowly to the right, as one bird... level... to... inverted... to... level, the wind whipping over them all.

The squawks and grackles of everyday life in the Flock were cut off as though the formation were a giant knife, and eight thousand gull-eyes watched, without a single blink. One by one, each of the eight birds pulled sharply upward into a full loop and flew all the way around to a dead-slow stand-up landing on the sand. Then as though this sort of thing happened every day, Jonathan Seagull began his critique of the flight.

"To begin with," he said with a wry smile, "you were all a bit late on the join-up..."

It went like lightning through the Flock. Those birds are Outcast! And they have returned! And that... that can't happen! Fletcher's predictions of battle melted in the Flock's confusion.

"Well sure, O.K. they're Outcast," said some of the younger gulls, "but hey, man, where did they learn to fly like that?"

It took almost an hour for the Word of the Elder to pass through the Flock: Ignore them. The gull who speaks to an Outcast is himself Outcast. The gull who looks upon an Outcast breaks the Law of the Flock, Gray-feathered backs were turned upon Jonathan from that moment onward, but he didn't appear to notice. He held his practice sessions directly over the Council Beach and for the first time began pressing his students to the limit of their ability.

"Martin Gull!" he shouted across the sky. "You say you know low-speed flying. You know nothing till you prove it! FLY!"

So quiet little Martin William Seagull, startled to be caught under his instructor's fire, surprised himself and became a wizard of low speeds. In the lightest breeze he could curve his feathers to lift himself without a single flap of wing from sand to cloud and down again.

Likewise Charles-Roland Gull flew the Great Mountain Wind to twenty-four thousand feet, came down blue from the cold thin air, amazed and happy, determined to go still higher tomorrow.

Fletcher Seagull, who loved aerobatics like no one else, conquered his sixteen point vertical slow roll and the next day topped it off with a triple cartwheel, his feathers flashing white sunlight to a beach from which more than one furtive eye watched.

Every hour Jonathan was there at the side of each of his students, demonstrating, suggesting, pressuring, guiding. He flew with them through night and cloud and storm, for the sport of it, while the Flock huddled miserably on the ground.

When the flying was done, the students relaxed in the sand, and in time they listened more closely to Jonathan. He had some crazy ideas that they couldn't understand, but then he had some good ones that they could.

Gradually, in the night, another circle formed around the circle of students a circle of curious gulls listening in the darkness for hours on end, not wishing to see or be seen of one another, fading away before daybreak.

It was a month after the Return that the first gull of the Flock crossed the line and asked to learn how to fly. In his asking, Terrence Lowell Gull became a condemned bird, labeled Outcast; and the eighth of Jonathan's students.

The next night from the Flock came Kirk Maynard Gull, wobbling across the sand, dragging his left wing, to collapse at Jonathan's feet. "Help me," he said very quietly, speaking in the way that the dying speak. "I want to fly more than anything else in the world..."

"Come along then," said Jonathan. "Climb with me away from the ground, and we'll begin."

"You don't understand My wing. I can't move my wing."

"Maynard Gull, you have the freedom to be yourself, your true self, here and now, and nothing can stand in your way. It is the Law of the Great Gull, the Law that Is."

"Are you saying I can fly?"

"I say you are free."

As simply and as quickly as that, Kirk Maynard Gull spread his wings, effortlessly, and lifted into the dark night air. The Flock was roused from sleep by his cry, as loud as he could scream it, from five hundred feet up: "I can fly! Listen! I CAN FLY!"

By sunrise there were nearly a thousand birds standing outside the circle of students, looking curiously at Maynard. They didn't care whether they were seen or not, and they listened, trying to understand Jonathan Seagull.

He spoke of very simple things – that it is right for a gull to fly, that freedom is the very nature of his being, that whatever stands against that freedom must be set aside, be it ritual or superstition or limitation in any form.

"Set aside," came a voice from the multitude, "even if it be the Law of the Flock?"

"The only true law is that which leads to freedom," Jonathan said. "There is no other."

"How do you expect us to fly as you fly?" came another voice. "You are special and gifted and divine, above other birds."

"Look at Fletcher! Lowell! Charles-Roland! Judy Lee! Are they also special and gifted and divine? No more than you are, no more than I am. The only difference, the very only one, is that they have begun to understand what they really are and have begun to practice it."

His students, save Fletcher, shifted uneasily. They hadn't realized that this was what they were doing.

The crowd grew larger every day, coming to question, to idolize, to scorn.

"They are saying in the Flock that if you are not the Son of the Great Gull Himself," Fletcher told Jonathan one morning after Advanced Speed Practice, "then you are a thousand years ahead of your time."

Jonathan sighed. The price of being misunderstood, he thought. They call you devil or they call you god. "What do you think, Fletch? Are we ahead of our time?"

A long silence. "Well, this kind of flying has always been here to be learned by anybody who wanted to discover it; that's got nothing to do with time. We're ahead of the fashion, maybe, Ahead of the way that most gulls fly."

"That's something," Jonathan said rolling to glide inverted for a while. "That's not half as bad as being ahead of our time."

It happened just a week later. Fletcher was demonstrating the elements of high-speed flying to a class of new students. He had just pulled out of his dive from seven thousand feet, a long gray streak firing a few inches above the beach, when a young bird on its first flight glided directly into his path, calling for its mother. With a tenth of a second to avoid the youngster, Fletcher Lynd Seagull snapped hard to the left, at something over two hundred miles per hour, into a cliff of solid granite.

It was, for him, as though the rock were a giant hard door into another world. A burst of fear and shock and black as he hit, and then he was adrift in a strange strange sky, forgetting, remembering, forgetting; afraid and sad and sorry, terribly sorry.

The voice came to him as it had in the first day that he had met Jonathan Livingston Seagull,

“The trick Fletcher is that we are trying to overcome our limitations in order, patiently, We don’t tackle flying through rock until a little later in the program.”

“Jonathan!”

“Also known as the Son of the Great Gull” his instructor said dryly,

“What are you doing here? The cliff! Haven’t I didn’t I., die?”

“Oh, Fletch, come on. Think. If you are talking to me now, then obviously you didn’t die, did you? What you did manage to do was to change your level of consciousness rather abruptly. It’s your choice now. You can stay here and learn on this level – which is quite a bit higher than the one you left, by the way – or you can go back and keep working with the Flock. The Elders were hoping for some kind of disaster, but they’re startled that you obliged them so well.”

“I want to go back to the Flock, of course. I’ve barely begun with the new group!”

“Very well, Fletcher. Remember what we were saying about one’s body being nothing more than thought itself....?”

Fletcher shook his head and stretched his wings and opened his eyes at the base of the cliff, in the center of the whole Flock assembled. There was a great clamor of squawks and screees from the crowd when first he moved.

“He lives! He that was dead lives!”

“Touched him with a wingtip! Brought him to life! The Son of the Great Gull!”

“No! He denies it! He’s a devil! DEVIL! Come to break the Flock!”

There were four thousand gulls in the crowd, frightened at what had happened, and the cry DEVIL! went through them like the wind of an ocean storm. Eyes glazed, beaks sharp, they closed in to destroy.

“Would you feel better if we left, Fletcher?” asked Jonathan.

“I certainly wouldn’t object too much if we did...”

Instantly they stood together a half-mile away, and the flashing beaks of the mob closed on empty air.

“Why is it,” Jonathan puzzled, “that the hardest thing in the world is to convince a bird that he is free, and that he can prove it for himself if he’d just spend a little time practicing? Why should that be so hard?”

Fletcher still blinked from the change of scene. “What did you just do? How did we get here?”

“You did say you wanted to be out of the mob, didn’t you?”

“Yes! But how did you...”

“Like everything else, Fletcher. Practice.” By morning the Flock had forgotten its insanity, but Fletcher had not. “Jonathan, remember what you said a long time ago, about loving the Flock enough to return to it and help it learn?”

“Sure.”

“I don’t understand how you manage to love a mob of birds that has just tried to kill you.”

“Oh, Fletch, you don’t love that! You don’t love hatred and evil, of course. You have to practice and see the real gull, the good in every one of them, and to help them see it in themselves. That’s what I mean by love. It’s fun, when you get the knack of it.

“I remember a fierce young bird for instance, Fletcher Lynd Seagull, his name. Just been made Outcast, ready to fight the Flock to the death, getting a start on building his own bitter hell out on the Far Cliffs. And here he is today building his own heaven instead, and leading the whole Flock in that direction.”

Fletcher turned to his instructor, and there was a moment of fright in his eye. “Me leading? What do you mean, me leading? You’re the instructor here. You couldn’t leave!”

“Couldn’t I? Don’t you think that there might be other flocks, other Fletchers, that need an instructor more than this one, that’s on its way toward the light?”

“Me? Jon, I’m just a plain seagull and you’re...”

“...the only Son of the Great Gull, I suppose?” Jonathan sighed and looked out to sea. “You don’t need me any longer. You need to keep finding yourself, a little more each day, that real, unlimited Fletcher Seagull. He’s your instructor. You need to understand him and to practice him.”

A moment later Jonathan’s body wavered in the air, shimmering, and began to go transparent. “Don’t let them spread silly rumors about me, or make me a god. O.K., Fletch? I’m a seagull. I like to fly, maybe...”

“JONATHAN!”

“Poor Fletch. Don’t believe what your eyes are telling you. All they show is limitation. Look with your understanding, find out what you already know, and you’ll see the way to fly.”

The shimmering stopped. Jonathan Seagull had vanished into empty air.

After a time, Fletcher Gull dragged himself into the sky and faced a brand-new group of students, eager for their first lesson.

“To begin with” he said heavily, “you’ve got to understand that a seagull is an unlimited idea of freedom, an image of the Great Gull, and your whole body, from wingtip to wingtip, is nothing more than your thought itself.”

The young gulls looked at him quizzically. Hey, man, they thought, this doesn’t sound like a rule for a loop.

Fletcher sighed and started over. “Hm. Ah... very well,” he said, and eyed them critically. “Let’s begin with Level Flight.” And saying that, he understood all at once that his friend had quite honestly been no more divine than Fletcher himself.

No limits, Jonathan? he thought. Well, then, the time’s not distant when I’m going to appear out of thin air on your beach, and show you a thing or two about flying!

And though he tried to look properly severe for his students, Fletcher Seagull suddenly saw them all as they really were, just for a moment, and he more than liked, he loved what he saw. No limits, Jonathan? he thought, and he smiled. His race to learn had begun.

1973

The New York Times, July 3, 1974

Des Moines, Iowa, July 2 – John H. Livingston, the man who inspired the best-selling novel “Jonathan Livingston Seagull,” died Sunday at the Pompano Beach (Fla.) Airport soon after completing his last plane ride.

Richard Bach, a former Iowa Air Guard pilot, has said his best-selling book about a free-wheeling seagull was inspired by Mr. Livingston.

Johnny Livingston, as he was known, moved many years ago from Iowa to Florida. He was one of the country’s top pilots during the barnstorming days of the nineteen-twenties and thirties.

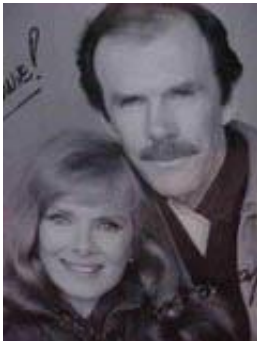
From 1928 through 1933, Mr. Livingston won 79 first places, 43 seconds and 15 thirds in 139 races throughout the country, many of them at Cleveland. He won first place and \$13,910 in 1928 in a cross-country race from New York to Los Angeles.

Helpful Information

1. The biography and works of Richard Bach.

Richard David Bach (b. June 23, 1936, Oak Park, Illinois) is an American writer. He claims to be a direct descendant of Johann Sebastian Bach. Richard Bach is widely known as the author of the 1972 best-selling novel, *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*, and the movie based on the book. He is noted for his love of flying and for his books related to air flight and flying in a metaphorical context. He has pursued flying as a hobby since the age of 17.

Richard Bach attended Long Beach State College in 1955. He has authored numerous works of fiction and nonfiction, including *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* (1970), *Illusions* (1977), *One* (1989), and *Out of My Mind* (1999). Most of his books have been semi-autobiographical, using actual or fictionalized events from his life to illustrate his philosophy.



Richard Bach served in the Air Force Reserve as a pilot, and afterwards worked a variety of jobs. He later became a barnstormer. Most of his books involve flight in some way, from the early stories which are straightforwardly about flying aircraft to his later works in which he used flight as a philosophical metaphor. One of his greatest books that many pilots love is *A Gift of Wings*.

In 1972, *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*, a story about a seagull who flew for the sake of flying rather than merely to catch food, was published by Macmillan Publishers after the manuscript was turned down by many other publishers. The book, which included unique photos of seagulls in flight, became a number one best-seller on both the fiction and non-fiction lists. The book contained fewer than 10,000 words, yet it broke all hardcover sales records since *Gone with the Wind*. It sold more than 1,000,000 copies in 1972 alone. The surprise success of the book was widely reported in the media in the early 1970s.

In 1973, the book was turned into a movie produced by Paramount Pictures Corporation. The movie included a soundtrack by Neil Diamond.

A second book, *Illusions: The Adventures of a Reluctant Messiah*, published in 1977, tells the story of the author's encounter with a modern-day messiah who has decided to quit.

Bach had six children with his first wife, Bette. They divorced in 1970.

Bach married actress Leslie Parrish in 1977, during the making of the Jonathan Livingston Seagull movie. She was a major element in two of his subsequent books – *The Bridge Across Forever* and *One* – which primarily focused on their relationship and Bach's concept of soulmates. They divorced in 1999.

Bach was married to his third wife, Sabryna Nelson-Alexopoulos in April 1999.

Bach espouses a consistent philosophy in his books: our true nature is not bound by space or time, we are not truly born nor truly die, and we enter this world of Seems and Appearances for fun, learning, to share experiences with those we care for, to explore – and most of all to learn how to love and love again.

2. The seventies: the social context of his works.

Following the social cataclysm of the 1960s and the Vietnam War, Americans turned inward – initiating a decade of “self-help” and healing that some critics have called the “Me decade.” Richard Bach's popular inspirational literature, such as *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*, is characteristic of this cultural moment and the associated rise of “New Age” spirituality. A loss of faith in the ability of technocrats to solve the world's problems was accompanied by an increase in non-traditional forms of faith.

The **New Age** (also known as the **New Age Movement**, **New Age spirituality**, and **Cosmic Humanism**) is a decentralized Western social and spiritual movement that seeks “Universal Truth” and the attainment of the highest individual human potential. It combines aspects of cosmology, astrology, esotericism, alternative medicine, music, collectivism, sustainability, and nature. New Age spirituality is characterized by an individual approach to spiritual practices and philosophies, while rejecting religious doctrine and dogma.

The main aspects of New Age philosophy and cosmology

Theism

There is a general and abstract idea of God, which can be understood in many ways; seen as a superseding of the need to anthropomorphize deity. Not to be confused with pantheism.

Spiritual beings

Gods, angels, Ascended Masters, elementals, ghosts, faeries, Spirit guides and extraterrestrials can spiritually guide a person, if they open themselves to their guidance.

Afterlife

Consciousness persists after death as life in different forms; the afterlife exists for further learning through the form of a spirit, reincarnation and/or near-death experiences. There may be a belief in hell, but typically not in the traditional Christian sense or Islamic sense of eternal damnation. Universalist views of the afterlife are common.

Age of Aquarius

The current time period is claimed by some astrologers to be the dawning of the Age of Aquarius correlated to various changes in the world and some claim that the early 1960s was the actual beginning of the Age of Aquarius, though this claim is highly contentious. Common claims about the developments associated with the Age of Aquarius include, but are not limited to, human rights, democracy, innovative technology, electricity, computers, and aviation. Esoteric claims are that the Age of Aquarius will see a rise in consciousness.

Astrology

Horoscopes and the Zodiac are used in understanding, interpreting, and organizing information about personality, human affairs, and other terrestrial matters.

Teleology

Life has a purpose; this includes a belief in synchronicity – that coincidences have spiritual meaning and lessons to teach those whom are open to them. Everything is universally connected through God and participates in the same energy. There is a cosmic goal and a belief that all entities are (knowingly or unknowingly) cooperating towards this goal.

Interpersonal relationships

There are opportunities to learn about one's self and relationships are destined to be repeated until they are healthy.

Intuition

An important aspect of perception – offset by a somewhat strict rationalism – noted especially in the works of psychologist Carl Jung.

Optimism

Positive thinking supported by affirmations will achieve success in anything; this is based on the concept that Thought Creates. Therefore, as one begins focusing attention and consciousness on the positive, on the “half-filled” glass of water, reality starts shifting and materializing the positive intentions and aspects of life. A certain critical mass of people with a highly spiritual consciousness will bring about a sudden change in the whole population. Humans have a responsibility to take part in positive creative activity and to work to heal ourselves, each other and the planet.

Human Potential Movement

The human mind has much greater potential than that ascribed to it and is even capable of overriding physical reality.

Spiritual healing

Humans have potential healing powers, such as therapeutic touch, which can be developed to heal others through touch or at a distance.

Religion and science

Eclecticism

New Age writers argue people should follow their own individual path to spirituality instead of dogma.

Anti-patriarchy

Feminine forms of spirituality, including feminine images of the divine, such as the female Aeon Sophia in Gnosticism, are deprecated by patriarchal religions.

Stonehenge and other ancient sites are revered by many who practice New Age spirituality.

Ancient civilizations

Atlantis, Lemuria, Mu, and other lost lands existed. Relics such as the crystal skulls and monuments such as Stonehenge and the Great Pyramid of Giza were left behind.

Psychic perception

Certain geographic locations emanate psychic energy (sometimes through ley lines) and were considered sacred in pagan religions throughout the world.

Eastern world practices

Meditation, Yoga, Tantra, Chinese medicine, Ayurveda, martial arts, Tai chi chuan, and other Eastern practices can assist in realizing one’s potential.

Diet

Food influences both the mind and body; it is generally preferable to practice vegetarianism by eating fresh organic food, which is locally grown and in season. Fasting can help achieve higher levels of consciousness.

Mathematics

An appeal to the language of nature and mathematics, as evidenced by numerology, Kabbalah, Sacred geometry, and gnosticism to discern the nature of God.

Science

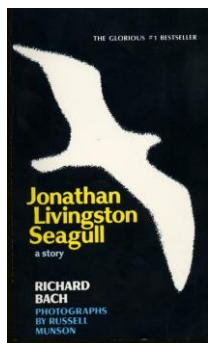
Quantum mechanics, parapsychology, and the Gaia hypothesis have been used in quantum mysticism to validate spiritual principles. The Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle, quantum entanglement, wave function collapse, or the many-worlds interpretation have been interpreted to mean that all objects in the Universe are one (monism), that possibility and existence are endless, and that the physical world is only what one believes it to be.

In medicine, such practices as therapeutic touch, homeopathy, chiropractic, and naturopathy involve hypotheses and treatments that have not been accepted by the conventional, science-based medical community through the normal course of empirical testing.

3. The plot of *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*.

The novel tells the story of Jonathan Livingston Seagull, a seagull who is bored with the daily squabbles over food and seized by a passion for flight. He pushes himself, learning everything he can about flying, until finally his unwillingness to conform results in his expulsion from his flock. An outcast, he continues to learn, becoming increasingly pleased with his abilities as he leads an idyllic life.

One day, Jonathan is met by two seagulls who take him to a “higher plane of existence”, where he meets other gulls who love to fly. He discovers that his sheer tenacity and desire to learn make him “a gull in a million”. Jonathan befriends the wisest gull in this new place, named Chiang, who takes him beyond his previous learning, teaching him how to move instantaneously to anywhere else in the universe. The secret, Chiang says, is to “begin by knowing that you have already arrived”.



Not satisfied with his new life, Jonathan returns to Earth to find others like him, to bring them his learning and to spread his love for flight. His mission is successful, gathering around him others who have been outlawed for not conforming. Ultimately, one of his students, Fletcher Lynd Seagull, becomes a teacher in his own right and Jonathan leaves to continue his learning.

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4. The main themes and symbols.

Several early commentators, focusing mainly on the first part of the book, see it as part of the American self-help and positive thinking culture, epitomized by Norman Vincent Peale and by the New Thought movement. Some have described it as having Christian-anarchist characteristics. It has also been compared to the children’s tale *The Little Engine That Could*. But while *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* may take the form of a traditional animal fable, and can be enjoyed by young children at that level, its attraction has extended beyond this group.

In the second part, Jonathan transcends into another society where all the gulls enjoy flying. He is only capable of this after practicing hard alone for a long time (described in the first part). In this other society, real respect emerges as a contrast of the coercive force that was keeping the former “Breakfast Flock” together. The learning process, linking the highly experienced teacher and the diligent student, is raised into almost sacred level, suggesting that this may be the true relation between human and God. The author surely thinks that human and God, regardless of the all immense difference, are sharing something of great importance that can bind them together: “you’ve got to understand that a seagull is an unlimited idea of freedom, an image of the Great Gull.” He realizes that you have to be true to yourself: the source of happiness comes from persevering to achieve your own dreams.

The introduction to the third part of the book are the last words of Jonathan’s teacher: “keep working on love.” In this part Jonathan understands that the spirit cannot be really free without the ability to forgive, and the way to progress leads through becoming a teacher – not just through working hard as a student. Jonathan returns to the Breakfast Flock to share his newly discovered ideals and the recent tremendous experience, ready for the difficult fight against the current rules of that society. The ability to forgive seems to be a mandatory “passing condition”. “Do you want to fly so much that you will forgive the Flock, and learn, and go back to them one day and work to help them know?” Jonathan asks his first student before getting into any further talks. The idea that the stronger can reach more by leaving the weaker friends behind seems totally rejected. According to some, this contradicts interpretations aligned with the New Age ideology which were later supported by Bach.

Hence, love, deserved respect, and forgiveness seem to be equally important to the freedom from the pressure to obey the rules just because they are commonly accepted. The general idea of this book may be not very far from Christian anarchism ideology.

Seminar 8

Ursula Le Guin’s *She Unnames Them*

Plan

1. The appearance of soft science fiction.
2. Ursula Le Guin’s biography and works.
3. The main themes of her books.
4. Changing the fantasy canon: Earthsea series.

5. The feminist aspects of *She Unnames Them*
(try to connect the idea of naming in Earthsea series with the idea of unnameing in this story).

Literature and Resources

1. Erlich R.D. Coyote's Song: The Teaching Stories of Ursula K. Le Guin [A Science Fiction Research Association Digital Book] / Richard Erlich.. – 2000. – 728 p. –
Online at : <http://www.sfra.org/Coyote/CoyoteHome.htm>.
2. Le Guin U.K. Buffalo Gals And Other Animal Presences / Ursula K. Le Guin. – Santa Barbara: Capra P, 1987. – 196 p.
3. Le Guin's World. – Online at : hem.passagen.se/peson42/lgw/.
4. The Official Web Site of Ursula K. Le Guin. – Online at: www.ursulakleguin.com/.
5. Ursula Le Guin. – Online at : http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ursula_K._Le_Guin.
6. Ursula Le Guin. – Online at : www.fantasticfiction.co.uk/1/ursula-k-le-guin/.
7. Ursula Le Guin. – Online at : feministsf.org/femsf/authors/leguin/.

Text

Ursula Le Guin. *She Unnames Them*

MOST OF THEM ACCEPTED NAMELESSNESS with the perfect indifference with which they had so long accepted and ignored their names. Whales and dolphins, seals and sea otters consented with particular grace and alacrity, sliding into anonymity as into their element. A faction of yaks, however, protested. They said that “yak” sounded right, and that almost everyone who knew they existed called them that. Unlike the ubiquitous creatures such as rats or fleas who had been called by hundreds or thousands of different names since Babel, the yaks could truly say, they said, that they had a name. They discussed the matter all summer. The councils of the elderly females finally agreed that though the name might be useful to others, it was so redundant from the yak point of view that they never spoke it themselves, and hence might as well dispense with it. After they presented the argument in this light to their bulls, a full consensus was delayed only by the onset of severe early blizzards. Soon after the beginning of the thaw their agreement was reached and the designation “yak” was returned to the donor.

Among the domestic animals, few horses had cared what anybody called them since the failure of Dean Swift's attempt to name them from their own vocabulary. Cattle, sheep, swine, asses, mules, and goats, along with chickens, geese, and turkeys, all agreed enthusiastically to give their names back to the people to whom – as they put it – they belonged.

A couple of problems did come up with pets. The cats of course steadfastly denied ever having had any name other than those self-given, unspoken, effanineffably personal names which, as the poet named Eliot said, they spend long hours daily contemplating – though none of the contemplators has ever admitted that what they contemplate is in fact their name, and some onlookers have wondered if the object of that meditative gaze might not in fact be the Perfect, or Platonic, Mouse. In any case it is a moot point now. It was with the dogs, and with some parrots, lovebirds, ravens, and mynahs that the trouble arose. These verbally talented individuals insisted that their names were important to them, and flatly refused to part with them. But as soon as they understood that the issue was precisely one of individual choice, and that anybody who wanted to be called Rover, or Froufrou, or Polly, or even Birdie in the personal sense, was perfectly free to do so, not one of them had the least objection to parting with the lower case (or, as regards German creatures, uppercase) generic appellations poodle, parrot, dog, or bird, and all the Linnaean qualifiers that had trailed along behind them for two hundred years like tin cans tied to a tail.

The insects parted with their names in vast clouds and swarms of ephemeral syllables buzzing and stinging and humming and flitting and crawling and tunneling away.

As for the fish of the sea, their names dispersed from them in silence throughout the oceans like faint, dark blurs of cuttlefish ink, and drifted off on the currents without a trace.

None were left now to unname, and yet how close I felt to them when I saw one of them swim or fly or trot or crawl across my way or over my skin, or stalk me in the night, or go along beside me for a while in the day. They seemed far closer than when their names had stood between myself and them like a clear barrier: so close that my fear of them and their fear of me became one same fear. And the attraction that many of us felt, the desire to smell one another's smells, feel or rub or caress one another's scales or skin or

feathers or fur, taste one another's blood or flesh, keep one another warm, – that attraction was now all one with the fear, and the hunter could not be told from the hunted, nor the eater from the food.

This was more or less the effect I had been after. It was somewhat more powerful than I had anticipated, but I could not now, in all conscience, make an exception for myself. I resolutely put anxiety away, went to Adam, and said, "You and your father lent me this – gave it to me, actually. It's been really useful, but it doesn't exactly seem to fit very well lately. But thanks very much! It's really been very useful."

It is hard to give back a gift without sounding peevish or ungrateful, and I did not want to leave him with that impression of me. He was not paying much attention, as it happened, and said only, "Put it down over there, OK?" and went on with what he was doing.

One of my reasons for doing what I did was that talk was getting us nowhere; but all the same I felt a little let down. I had been prepared to defend my decision. And I thought that perhaps when he did notice he might be upset and want to talk. I put some things away and fiddled around a little, but he continued to do what he was doing and to take no notice of anything else. At last I said, "Well, goodbye, dear. I hope the garden key turns up."

He was fitting parts together, and said without looking around, "OK, fine, dear. When's dinner?"

"I'm not sure," I said. "I'm going now. With the –" I hesitated, and finally said, "With them, you know," and went on. In fact I had only just then realized how hard it would have been to explain myself. I could not chatter away as I used to do, taking it all for granted. My words now must be as slow, as new, as single, as tentative as the steps I took going down the path away from the house, between the dark-branched, tall dancers motionless against the winter shining.

1985

Helpful information

1. The appearance of soft science fiction.

Hard science fiction is a category of science fiction characterized by an emphasis on scientific or technical detail, or on scientific accuracy, or on both. The term was first used in print in 1957 by P. Schuyler Miller, book reviewer for *Astounding Science Fiction*. The complementary term, **soft science fiction** (a back formation that first appeared in the late 1970s) contrasts the "hardness" of the sciences used in the story: the "hard" sciences are quantitative or material-based disciplines (physics, chemistry, astronomy) versus the "soft" social sciences (sociology, anthropology, psychology). In some usages, though, "soft SF" suggests bad or fake science.

However, the 1960s actually hailed a new era for science fiction, a decade where the realization of many technological visions brought science fiction some measure of respect, as well as a greater concentration regarding literary "style" (Aldiss). This style was marked by excess of and an exploration of choice, and in 1961 Heinlein's *Stranger in a Strange Land* exemplified both. The British invasion of American science fiction shores via *New Worlds* was not to come until the midpoint of the decade, and new American writers were exploring the literary lands science fiction encompassed. Perhaps the most notable were **Samuel Delany** and **Roger Zelazny**, storytellers writing with the underpinnings of myth and semiology in their work.

"**The New Wave**" was about to break in the science fiction community, but not without some opposition from **hard science fiction** writers responding to a backlash against scientific optimism. Lester del Rey commented, "The philosophy behind New Wave Writing was a general distrust of both science and mankind. Science and technology were usually treated as evils which could only make conditions worse in the long run. And mankind was essentially contemptible, or at least of no importance. There was an underlying theme of failure throughout. Against the universe, the significance of mankind was no greater than that of bedbugs – if as great."

2. Ursula Le Guin's biography and works.

Ursula Le Guin (born October 21, 1929) is an American author. She has written novels, poetry, children's books and essays, and is best known for her science fiction, fantasy novels and short stories.

First published in the 1960s, she is now regarded as one of the best modern science fiction and fantasy authors, noted for her exemplary style and for her exploration of Taoist, anarchist, feminist, psychological and sociological themes. She has received several Hugo and Nebula awards, and was awarded the Gandalf Grand Master award in 1979 and the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America Grand Master Award in 2003.

Le Guin was born and raised in Berkeley, California, the daughter of



the anthropologist Alfred L. Kroeber and the writer Theodora Kroeber. She became interested in literature when she was very young. At the age of eleven she submitted her first story to the magazine *Astounding Science Fiction* (it was rejected).

She received her B.A. (Phi Beta Kappa) from Radcliffe College in 1951, and M.A. from Columbia University in 1952. She later studied in France, where she met her husband, historian Charles Le Guin. They were married in 1953.

Her earliest writings (little was published at the time, but some was published in adapted form much later in *Orsinian Tales* and *Malafrena*), were non-fantastic stories of imaginary countries. Searching for a publishable way to express her interests, she returned to her early interest in science fiction and began to be published regularly in the early 1960s. She became famous after the publication of her 1969 novel *The Left Hand of Darkness*, which won the Hugo and Nebula awards.

Le Guin has lived in Portland, Oregon since 1958. She has three children and four grandchildren.

Major SF works

Novels of the Hainish Cycle: *Rocannon's World*, 1966; *Planet of Exile*, 1966; *City of Illusions*, 1967; *The Left Hand of Darkness*, 1969 (winner of the Hugo Award and Nebula Award); *The Dispossessed: An Ambiguous Utopia*, 1974 (winner of the Hugo Award and Nebula Award); *The Word for World is Forest*, 1976 (winner of the Hugo Award); *Four Ways to Forgiveness*, 1995 (Four Stories of the Ekumen); *The Telling*, 2000 (winner of Endeavour Award); **Miscellaneous novels:** *The Lathe of Heaven*, 1971 (made into TV movies, 1980 and 2002); *Always Coming Home*, 1985, a memoir-as-novel mixed with an anthropological collection of folk tales, recipes, rituals, poems, glossary, etc.; **short story collections:** *The Wind's Twelve Quarters*, 1975; *The Compass Rose*, 1982; *Buffalo Gals, and Other Animal Presences*, 1987; *A Fisherman of the Inland Sea*, 1994; *The Birthday of the World*, 2002.

Major fantasy works

The Earthsea novels: *A Wizard of Earthsea*, 1968, *The Tombs of Atuan*, 1971, *The Farthest Shore*, 1972 (Winner of the National Book Award), *Tehanu: The Last Book of Earthsea*, 1990 (Winner of the Nebula Award), *The Other Wind*, 2001; The Earthsea short stories: *Tales from Earthsea*, short story collection, 2001.

Le Guin is a prolific author and has published many works that are not listed here.

Despite her many awards and her considerable popularity, Le Guin is also notable as one of the few major science fiction writers of her generation whose major SF and Fantasy works have not as yet been widely adapted for film or television.

One of Le Guin's best-known novels, *The Left Hand of Darkness*, is being developed by Zoetrope production as a feature film to be released in 2008.

3. The main themes of her books.

As it was mentioned above they are **Taoist, anarchist, feminist, psychological and sociological themes**.

Much of Le Guin's science fiction places a **strong emphasis on the social sciences**, including sociology and anthropology, thus placing it in the subcategory known as **soft science fiction**. Her writing often makes use of unusual alien cultures to convey a message about our own culture; one example is **the exploration of sexual identity** through the hermaphroditic race in *The Left Hand of Darkness*, which forms an important plank in the canon of **feminist science fiction**.

A number of Le Guin's science fiction works, including her award-winning novels *The Dispossessed* and *The Left Hand of Darkness*, are set in a future, post-Imperial galactic civilization loosely connected by a co-operative body known as **the Ekumen**. The Ekumen is very specifically not in any sense a governing body, but rather a conduit for the exchange of information, goods, and mutual cultural understanding. Novels such as *The Left Hand of Darkness*, *The Word for World is Forest*, and *The Telling* deal with the consequences of the arrival of Ekumen envoys (known as "mobiles") on remote planets and the culture shock that ensues.

Le Guin is known for her ability to create believable worlds populated by strongly sympathetic characters (regardless of whether they are technically "human"). Le Guin's worlds are made believable by the attention she pays to the ordinary actions and transactions of everyday life. For example, in *Tehanu* it is central to the story that the main characters are concerned with the everyday business of looking after animals, tending gardens and doing domestic chores. **Her works often explore political and cultural themes from a very "un-Earthly" perspective.** Le Guin has also written fiction set much closer to home; many of her short stories are set in our world in the present or the near future.

A notable feature of her conception that sets her work apart from much of mainstream "hard" science fiction is that neither the old Empire nor the Ekumen possesses traditional faster-than-light travel (the

Ekumen are developing “churten” technology, a form of instantaneous travel), although the politically progressive Ekumen thrives where the old Empire has failed mainly because it possesses a means of instantaneous interstellar communication, through a device called the ansible, the invention and consequences of which form the main plot of *The Dispossessed*.

In this loose background scenario, the human species originated on the planet Hain in the distant past, near the galactic center. A Galactic Empire had expanded far across the galaxy over many millennia but, because it lacked faster-than-light (FTL) travel or communication, the Empire was finally stretched beyond its limits by the vast distances involved and it collapsed catastrophically. Thousands of years passed, during which time the populations of many outlying planets became so isolated from the central galactic civilization that they lost all knowledge of their origins, reverting to more archaic forms of civilization and technology.

4. Changing the fantasy canon: Earthsea series.

The world of Earthsea is one of sea and islands: a vast archipelago of hundreds of islands surrounded by uncharted ocean. It is uncertain whether or not there are other landmasses, though reference is made to lands “beyond the west” where the dragons have their realm.

One of the most distinctive aspects of the Earthsea universe is Le Guin’s magic system. Magic is a central part of life, and magic appears in all parts of Archipelago civilization, from weather workers on ships, fixers who repair boats and buildings, entertainers and court sorcerers, and most important of all, the staff-carrying Wizards who are trained on Roke. In general, magic is usually the result of inborn talent, and with the exception of witches, mostly restricted to men.

Le Guin imagined the magicians of Earthsea as purveyors of an unknown science, and a strong theme of the stories is the connection of power and responsibility. There is often a Taoist message: “good” wizardry tries to be in harmony with the world and to right wrongs, while “bad” wizardry, such as necromancy, is unbalanced and must be resolved or lead to catastrophe.

Magic on Earthsea is verbal: all objects have a **true name**, in an old language related to the Dragon-tongue which is known simply as the Old Speech. By using this language, it is possible to have power over an object or living thing. To protect themselves from this, most characters have two names: one for everyday use and one, the true name, known only to close friends and family. For example, Sparrowhawk (use name) is known as Ged (true name) only to those closest to him.

One vital aspect of magic is that it is impossible to lie in the old language, so that magic works by forcing the universe to conform to the words spoken by the mage. For example, to say “I am an eagle” in the old language means that the speaker becomes an eagle, so that the statement is no longer false. The consequences of this are dealt with in the most recent Earthsea novel, *The Other Wind*. “The artist as magician. The Trickster. Prospero.” So says Le Guin in her article on the writing of the Earthsea stories, entitled “Dreams Must Explain Themselves.” Her wizards are poets as well as shamans.

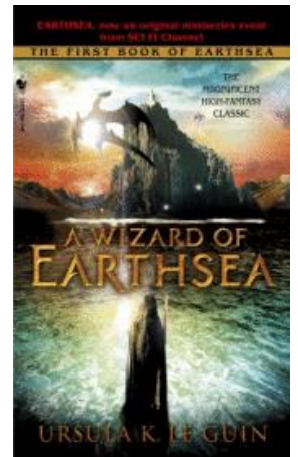
The main differences between Le Guin’s fantasy (especially after *Tehanu*) and the traditional fantasy:

- the Taoism vs. Western religions,
- the feminist ideas vs. the patriarchal ones;
- a concept of everyday heroism vs. traditional heroism.

“Ursula K. Le Guin has absorbed Tolkien, comprehended him, and gone on in her own direction... The stories of Earthsea depend on Tolkienian technique, Pacific geography, Oriental philosophy, and tribal institutions, but there is no question of their Americanness. Underneath its borrowings and adaptations, the Earthsea trilogy is, as we might expect, another instance of the American archetypal story: the high, lonely wilderness quest... Nor is it surprising that Le Guin includes in her fantasy world no angels or demons, only men, in various guises, and nature. We are still in our literature a land without antecedents or intermediaries” [Attebery B. *The Fantasy Tradition in American Literature: From Irving to Le Guin*. – Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1980. – P. 183].

5. The feminist aspects of *She Unnames Them*.

“She Unnames Them” is a *mâshâl* (*mâshâl* – a Hebrew word for a linguistic construct like a parable, satire or prophecy, but in the ancient sense of language in which words act in the world; so *mâshâlim* that epitomize past situations educate their hearers in significant ways and satires and prophecies may will future outcomes) in the sense of a light-toned, highly serious comic satire. “She Unnames Them” ends *Buffalo Gals*, and, again, it is, in this context – and helping greatly to establish the context – an (anti)Prophecy, a



mâshâl of unmaking: a figurative unbuilding of walls. In this beautiful funny little story, Le Guin is as sincere as the authors of the “J-Code” in their story of the making: the myth of the Creation of Eden. Initially, in the J-Code version of Creation, you have a pretty sterile world, because Yahweh had not yet created farmers and gardeners nor watered the earth. So the Eternal gathers up dust (‘adamah) and animates it with “the breath of life,” making ‘adam, “man ... a living being” – i.e., dust plus breath (ruach, anima, spiritus). The body/soul business is a later importation, and, I strongly agree with Le Guin, a very bad idea. Then,

The Lord God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden, to till it and tend it. And the Lord God formed out of the earth all the wild beasts and all the birds of the sky, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that would be its name. And the man gave names to all the cattle and to the birds of the sky and to all the wild beasts; but for Adam no fitting helper was found. So the Lord God cast a deep sleep upon the man; and, while he slept, He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that spot. And the Lord God fashioned the rib that He had taken from the man into a woman; and He brought her to the man. Then the man said,

“This one at last
Is bone of my bones
And flesh of my flesh.
This one shall be called Woman,
for from man was she taken.”

Hence a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, so that they become one flesh. (Gen. 2.18-24; Tenakh).

In the more sophisticated P-code (or E-code) version of creation, God makes men and women together (and perhaps hermaphroditic) and just comes right out and gives us rule, dominion, mastery (Gen. 1.26-28). The more primitive Eden story is more subtle and yokes together consciousness, dominion, and an ambiguous marriage, soon to become fully patriarchal (Gen. 3.16).

“It is not good for man to be alone,” and in the J-code version of the creation story, there’s just Adam, in the beginning, and the garden. So the Eternal makes the beasts and birds, and in the first act of human consciousness Adam names them. Which gives him dominion over the beasts: “Because the name is the thing... and the true name is the true thing. To speak the name is to control the thing” [Le Guin U.K. *The Rule of Names // The Wind’s Twelve Quarters*. – NY: Harper and Row, 1975. – 303 p. – P. 76]. The naming, however, does not give him a proper companion and “fitting helper,” so the Eternal does the rib trick and gives the man a woman. The woman is an afterthought and created to be a helper, but is still accepted by a rather poetic and punning Adam as “bone of my bones / And flesh of my flesh.” And, in an image of innocence, “The two of them were naked, the man and his wife, yet they felt no shame” (Gen. 2.24).

The Hebrew for “naked,” though, ‘arummim, leads to ‘arum, “shrewd” in the next verse, where we learn that “...the serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild beasts that the Lord God had made” (3.1). And the rest of the story is the Fall and the establishment first of explicit patriarchal rule of Adam over Eve then expulsion from the Garden, then the birth of Cain and Abel-and then murder and, by Genesis 11, the Tower of Babel, civilization, and civilization’s hubristic discontents.

The first act of complicity, then, with the monotheistic Father/Creator God was Man’s unilaterally naming the beasts. Woman undoes the job, in Le Guin’s version, and does it democratically, indeed, with good anarchistic participation: “Most of them accepted namelessness with the perfect indifference with which they had so long accepted and ignored their names. Whales and dolphins, seals and sea otters consented with particular grace and alacrity, sliding into anonymity as into their element” – water, the favorite element of the Daoists, perhaps, in its yielding strength, and large bodies of water, representing Being, the Dao that can be named (if we weren’t giving up naming). There is a problem with yaks for a bit: “Unlike the ubiquitous creatures such as rats or fleas that have been called by hundreds or thousands of different names since Babel, the yaks could truly say, they said, that they had a name.” But it’s a name “The council of elderly females finally agreed that... might be useful to others” but was totally “redundant” from “the yak point of view”: they didn’t need a name for themselves and had never used it [Le Guin U.K. *Buffalo Gals And Other Animal Presences*. – Santa Barbara: Capra P., 1987. Collection. – 196 p. – P. 194].

Pets were a problem, especially among the “verbally talented individuals” like “some parrots, lovebirds, ravens, and mynahs” who “insisted that their names were important to them.” The solution here was getting them to understand “that the issue was precisely one of individual choice, and that anybody who wanted to be called Rover, or Froufrou... or even Birdie in the personal sense, was perfectly free to do so.”

What she unnames is not the personal name any animal likes to name itself but “the lower case (or, as regards German creatures, uppercase) generic appellations poodle, parrot, dog, or bird and all the Linnaean qualifiers that had trailed along behind them for two hundred years like tin cans tied to a tail.” The insects and fish give up their names easily, especially the fish, whose names “dispersed from them in silence throughout the oceans... without a trace” [P. 195]. All this work of unNaming done, she feels closer to the beasts, far closer than when their names had stood between myself and them like a clear barrier: so close that my fear of them and their fear of me became one same fear{sic}. And the attraction that many of us felt, the desire to smell one another’s smells, feel or rub or caress one another’s scales or skin or feathers or fur, taste one another’s blood or flesh, keep one another warm, – {sic} that attraction was all one with the fear, and the hunter could not be told from the hunted, nor the eater from the food [P. 195–96].

In fairness, she, the Woman, will not make an exception for herself, so she goes to Adam and says, “You and your father lent me this – gave it to me, actually. It’s been really useful, but it doesn’t exactly seem to fit very well lately. But thanks very much! It’s really been very useful.” She is embarrassed (it is awkward to return gifts), but, fortunately perhaps, Adam “was not paying much attention,” and responds to what I’ll call The Great Divorce with only “Put it down over there, OK?” and went on with what he was doing.” One of the reasons she, the Woman, leaves is “talk was getting us nowhere,” but she had been prepared to talk things over. She “fiddled around a little, but he continued to do what he was doing” – doing being what one with dominion does – “and take no notice of anything else. At last I said, ‘Well, goodbye, dear. I hope that garden key turns up.’” And Adam, oblivious, asks “When’s dinner?”

“I’m not sure,” I said. “I’m going now. With the –” I hesitated, and finally said, “With them, you know,” and went on. In fact I had only just then realized how hard it would have been to explain myself. I could not chatter away as I used to do, taking it all for granted. My words now must be as slow, as new, as single, as tentative as the steps I took going down the path away from the house, between the dark-branched, tall dancers motionless against the winter shining [P. 196].

Eve has given up her name, her share of dominion, and Adam and the household of ‘adam, returning to the woods or forest or line of trees she cannot dismissively name “forest,” or whatever. She has given up the taxons and binomial nomenclature of Carolus Linnaeus (1707–78), and, more deeply the universals and categories of Western thought going back to at least Immanuel Kant (1724–1804). Most deeply, she has redone the Western myth underlying all such naming in the Judeo-Christian-Rationalist West. Now she must face the world face to face – a truly radical Nominalist – without abstractions, and Le Guin values such immediate, unmediated contact with the world, however much to the rational (masculinist?) mind, this relationship with what is may seem like unconsciousness.

Eve’s act, seen this way, is also a *mâshâl* for women’s giving up the ease of writing that comes with working within a tradition they have grown up with: “The beauty of your own tradition,” Le Guin has written, “is that it carries you. It flies, and you ride it... It frames your thinking and put words in your mouth. If you refuse to ride, ...you lose that wonderful fluency.” If women are to create their own tradition, they must drop men’s categories, which means, for at least a while, “...you have to stumble along... like a foreigner in your own country, amazed and troubled by things you see, not sure of the way, not able to speak with authority.” I think the lesson is that, like this re-visioned Eve, women must make the attempt in order to “to speak your own wisdom” [Le Guin U.K. *Earthsea Revised*. – Cambridge, MA: Children’s Literature New England, 1993. – 26 p. – P. 12].

[From Erlich R.D. *Coyote’s Song: The Teaching Stories of Ursula K. Le Guin*].

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НАВЧАЛЬНЕ ВИДАННЯ

Н.І. Криницька

Сучасна література країн, мова яких вивчається

Частина 2

Навчальний посібник для підготовки до семінарських занять студентів-філологів, що вивчають англійську мову як фах

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