
First Lines Quiz pt.3

Posted by Etienne - 18-04-2008 21:28

1. Ships at a distance have every man's wish on board. For some they come in with the tide. For others they sail forever on the horizon, never out of sight, never landing until the Watcher turns his eyes away in resignation, his dreams mocked to death by Time. That is the life of men.

2. -----, the artist, stood, rented glass in hand, and watched as a rowing eight emerged from the brown brick wall of one building, slid across a band of grey-green water, and then eased into the grey concrete. Some people lose their sense of proportion, thought -----, but what would it be like to lose your sense of perspective?

Will Self - Great Apes (Not Me)

3. It can hardly be a coincidence that no language on Earth has ever produced the expression "as pretty as an airport."

Douglas Adams - The Long Dark Tea-Time Of The Soul

4. "What are you wearing?" he asked.

She said, "I'm wearing a white shirt with little stars, green and black stars, on it, and black pants, and socks the color of the green stars, and a pair of black sneakers I got for nine dollars.

5. They put the behemoths in the hold along with the rhinos, the hippos and the elephants.

Julian Barnes - The History of the World in 10 1/2 Chapters (Purves)

6. Spring had come to New York, the eight-fifteen train from Great Neck had come to the Pennsylvania terminus, and G. Ellery Cobbold, that stout economic royalist, had come to his downtown office, all set to prise another wad of currency out of the common people.

PG Wodehouse - Spring Fever (ursus/Andy C)

7. -----'s jaw was long and bony, his chin a jutting V under the more flexible V of his mouth. his nostrils curved back to make another smaller V. His yellow-grey eyes were horizontal.

Dashiell Hammett - The Maltese Falcon (Gyuri)

8. The village of Holcomb stands on the high wheat plains of Western Kansas, a lonesome area that other Kansans call 'out there'.

Truman Capote - In Cold Blood (ursus)

Re:First Lines Quiz pt.3

Posted by Gyuri - 18-04-2008 21:39

I think 7 is The Maltese Falcon.

Re:First Lines Quiz pt.3

Posted by Not me - 18-04-2008 22:11

Number 2 is The Great Apes by Will Self, one of the great lost novellas of our time. (If anyone else can persevere beyond the excruciating "posh idiots having sex on drugs" passage, they'll also sigh about the cost-cutting that means no one edits fiction anymore.)

Not being funny, but most of those aren't first lines Etienne. They're first bits, with more than one line.

Re:First Lines Quiz pt.3

Posted by Etienne - 18-04-2008 22:17

I wrote them without checking whether the original threads were first lines or first lines'. Most of them aren't famous enough to be identified with jus one line.

Great Apes is right. Would agree with the comment too, but perhaps it should go on the "pabulum, declivity, moue" thread.

Re:First Lines Quiz pt.3

Posted by Purves Grundy - 18-04-2008 23:19

I think:

3 - Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency. It's definitely by Douglas Adams, whatever it is.

5 - Reminds me of A History of the World in 10 1/2 Chapters by Julian Barnes.

Re:First Lines Quiz pt.3

Posted by Purves Grundy - 18-04-2008 23:22

If anyone else can persevere beyond the excruciating "posh idiots having sex on drugs" passage, they'll also sigh about the cost-cutting that means no one edits fiction anymore

See also Trainspotting. Danny Boyle did a great job with the screenplay, but it's a job that should already have been done some years earlier.

By the way, talking of Will Self, wasn't it nice to see The Fats from How The Dead Live turn up as Doctor Who monsters recently?

Re:First Lines Quiz pt.3

Posted by ursus arctos - 18-04-2008 23:38

8. In Cold Blood, Truman Capote.

6. is PG Wodehouse, but I don't remember which book.

Re:First Lines Quiz pt.3

Posted by Etienne - 19-04-2008 09:11

3 and 6 are correct authors, but Purves chose the wrong book.

Re:First Lines Quiz pt.3

Posted by Wyatt Earp - 19-04-2008 11:06

3 is perhaps The Long Dark Tea-Time Of The Soul?

Re:First Lines Quiz pt.3

Posted by Andy C - 21-04-2008 16:01

G Ellery Cobbold is in Spring Fever.

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Re:First Lines Quiz pt.3

Posted by Etienne - 21-04-2008 17:14

Both correct, 1 and 4 left.

No 1 came out in 1937, No. 4 in 1992.

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Re:First Lines Quiz pt.3

Posted by mafu - 22-04-2008 21:33

4 is vox by nicholson baker. clinton's present to lewinsky, or vice versa

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Re:First Lines Quiz pt.3

Posted by Purves Grundy - 23-04-2008 08:36

If it's 1937 then I'll take a punt on it being by Graham Greene. Brighton Rock, perhaps?

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Re:First Lines Quiz pt.3

Posted by ursus arctos - 23-04-2008 08:50

Clinton gave Lewinsky Whitman's Leaves of Grass; she may have given him Vox (though the gift I remember was a necktie).

Being completely without a clue, I've looked 1 up and seriously doubt that anyone will get it. It isn't Greene, and I'm not even sure that more than a handful of posters would recognise the author's name, let alone recall the quote.

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Re:First Lines Quiz pt.3

Posted by Andy C - 23-04-2008 09:25

It isn't Brighton Rock. That leaps straight in with the bit about Kolly Kibber.

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Re:First Lines Quiz pt.3

Posted by Wyatt Earp - 23-04-2008 12:15

Though not by that name. It's "Hale knew, before he had been in Brighton three hours, that they meant to murder him." My English teacher Mrs Airey's favourite first line ever, that is.

I also gave up and googled number 1. I'd never even heard of the author, I must confess.

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Re:First Lines Quiz pt.3

Posted by Etienne - 27-04-2008 11:46

Ah, sorry about that people.

Mafu is correct on number 4. Good book, but an incredibly cheesy gift.

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