

**R417 Aspects of the Novel 9.30 - 11am**  
**OLLI Fall Session 2012 - Reston**  
**Kay Menchel**

**Class 2 - Tuesday 9/25/12**

**Characters**

Miss Brooke had that kind of beauty which seems to be thrown into relief by poor dress. Her hand and wrists were so finely formed that she could wear sleeves not less bare of style than those in which the Blessed Virgin appeared to Italian painters; and her profile as well as her stature and bearing seemed to gain the more dignity from her plain garments, which by the side of provincial fashion gave her the impressiveness of a fine quotation from the Bible, - or from one of our elder poets, - in a paragraph of today's newspaper. She was usually spoken of as being remarkably clever, but with the addition that her sister Celia had more common-sense. Nevertheless, Celia wore scarcely more trimmings; and it was only to close observers that her dress differed from her sister's, and had a shade of coquetry in its arrangements; for Miss Brooke's plain dressing was due to mixed conditions, in which most of her sister shared.

**George Eliot *Middlemarch***

Charles was astonished at the whiteness of her nails. They were shiny and tapering, scrubbed cleaner than Dieppe ivory, and cut almond shape. Yet her hands were not beautiful, not pale enough perhaps, and somewhat hard at the knuckles; too long as well, with no soft curving contours. Her beauty was in her eyes - brown eyes, but made to look black by their dark lashes: eyes that came to meet yours openly, with a bold candour.

**Gustave Flaubert *Madame Bovary* Trans. Alan Russell**

Charles was surprised by the whiteness of her fingernails. They were glossy, delicate at the tips, more carefully cleaned than Dieppe ivories, and filed into almond shapes. Yet her hand was not beautiful, not pale enough, perhaps, and a little dry at the knuckles; it was also too long and without soft inflections in its contours. What was beautiful about her was her eyes: although they were brown, they seemed black because of the lashes, and her gaze fell upon you openly, with a bold candor.

**Gustave Flaubert *Madame Bovary* Trans. Lydia Davis**

The things they carried were largely determined by necessity. Among the necessities or near-necessities were P-38 can openers, pocket knives, heat tabs, wristwatches, dog tags, mosquito repellent, chewing gum, candy, cigarettes, salt tablets, packets of Kool-Aid, lighters, matches, sewing kits, Military Payment Certificates, C rations, and two or three canteens of water. Together, these items weighed between 15 and 20 pounds, depending upon a man's habits or rate of metabolism. Henry Dobbins, who was a big man, carried extra rations; he was especially fond of canned peaches in heavy syrup over pound cake. Dave Jensen, who practiced field hygiene, carried a toothbrush, dental floss, and several hotel-sized bars of soap he'd stolen on R&R in Sydney, Australia. Ted Lavender, who was scared, carried tranquilizers until he was shot in the head outside the village of Than Khe in mid-April. By necessity, and because it was SOP, they all carried steel helmets that weighed 5 pounds including the liner and camouflage cover. They carried the standard fatigue jackets and trousers. Very few carried underwear. On their feet they carried jungle boots - 2.1 pounds - and Dave Jensen carried three pairs of socks and a can of Dr. Scholl's

foot powder as a precaution against trench foot. Until he was shot, Ted Lavender carried 6 or 7 ounces of premium dope, which for him was a necessity. Mitchell Sanders, the RTO, carried condoms. Norman Bowker carried a diary. Rat Kiley carried comic books. Kiowa, a devout Baptist, carried an illustrated New Testament that had been presented to him by his father, who taught Sunday school in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. As a hedge against bad times, however, Kiowa also carried his grandmother's distrust of the white man, his grandfather's old hunting hatchet.

**Tim O'Brien *The Things They Carried***

**Dialogue**

"Oh, bother!" she panted, "I don't believe it!" and she began to talk about something else. But a few moments later, when he was pointing out to her the interesting design of an antique fireplace, she broke out irrelevantly: "You don't mean to say you're going back to Geneva?"

"It is a melancholy fact that I have to report myself there tomorrow."

She met it with a vivacity that could only flatter him. "Well, Mr. Winterbourne, I think you're horrid!"

"Oh don't say such dreadful things!" he quite sincerely pleaded – "just at the last."

"The last?" the girl cried; "I call it the very first! I've half a mind to leave you here and go straight back to the hotel alone.:

**Henry James *Daisy Miller***

"Nothing's wrong," she repeated to Les Goodwin on the telephone.

"I know something's wrong."

"Nothing."

"O.K.," he said finally. "All right. I'm coming out alone on Monday, meet my plane at four."

"I can't."

"I want to *talk* to you, Maria. I want to see you."

"Monday night," she said. "Listen. You make me happy."

**Joan Didion *Play It As It Lays***

"What's *different* about it? Nothin's *different* about it," Horwitz said. Everything he said, he sounded sore about something. "It's tougher for the *fish*, the winter and all, than it is for the ducks, for Chrissake. Use your head, for Chrissake."

I didn't say anything for about a minute. Then I said, "All right. What do they do, the fish and all, when that whole little lake's a solid block of ice, people skating on it and all?"

Old Horowitz turned around again. "What the hellaya mean what they do?" he yelled at me. "They stay right where they are, for Chrissake."

**J.D. Salinger *The Catcher In The Rye***

Stick said he wasn't going if they had to pick up anything. Rainy said no, there wasn't any product in the deal; all they had to do was drop a bag. Stick said. "And the guy's giving you five grand?"

"It makes him feel important," Rainy said, it's how its done. Listen this's the big time, man, I'm taking you uptown."

**Elmore Leonard *Stick***

The sheriff shook his head. He got down and walked over to where the dead man lay slumped. He walked over the ground, the rifle yoked across his shoulders. He squatted and studied the grass.

We got another execution here Sheriff?

No, I believe this one's died of natural causes.

Natural causes?

Natural to the line of work he's in.

He aint got a gun.

No.

Wendell leaned and spat. Somebody's been here before us.

I'd say so.

### **Cormac McCarthy *No Country For Old Men***

#### **Point of View**

Vulich went back into the other room and sat at the table. We followed and he motioned us to sit down round him. We silently obeyed. He had acquired some mysterious power over us. I looked him hard in the eyes, but he met my searching gaze with a look of steady calm and a smile flickered on his pale lips. Yet, for all his composure, I fancied I saw the mark of death on his pale face. I've noticed it myself, and I've heard a lot of old soldiers say the same, that a strange mark of inevitable doom can often be seen on the face of a man a few hours before he dies. Anyone with an eye for it is rarely mistaken.

### **Mikhail Lermontov *A Hero Of Our Time***

You are not the kind of guy who would be at a place like this at this time of the morning. But here you are, and you cannot say that the terrain is entirely unfamiliar, although the details are fuzzy. You are at a nightclub talking to a girl with a shaved head. The club is either the Heartbreak or the Lizard Lounge. All might come clear if you could slip into the bathroom and do a little more Bolivian Marching Powder. Then again, it might not. A small voice inside you insists that this epidemic lack of clarity is a result of too much of that already.

### **Jay McInerney *Bright Lights, Big City***

Be it known then, that Sir Walter, like a good father, (having met with one or two private disappointments in very reasonable applications) prided himself on staying single for his dear daughters' sake. For one daughter, his eldest, he would really have given up any thing, which he had not been very much tempted to do. Elizabeth had succeeded, at sixteen, to all that was possible, of her mother's rights and consequence; and being very handsome, and very like himself, her influence had always been great, and they had gone on together most happily. His two other children were of very inferior value. Mary had acquired a little artificial importance, by becoming Mrs. Charles Musgrove; but Anne, with an elegance of mind and sweetness of character, which must have placed her high with any people of real understanding, was nobody with either father or sister: her word had no weight; her convenience was always to give way; - she was only Anne.

### **Jane Austen *Persuasion***