

A History of Twentieth-Century Literature in One *Mad Libs* Booklet!

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Dorothy Parker's "A Day at the Zoo":

At (*time of day*) 3:45 a.m., Billy's father decided to take Billy to the zoo. It was (*adjective*) tipsy out, so Billy had to wear a (*noun*) whore to keep warm. Getting there was hard, because there were so many (*two nouns, plural*) highballs and dignified men in the road, but Billy was (*adjective*) in high spirits when they finally arrived. "Look at all the (*two adjectives*) quixotic and disoriented animals!" Billy said to his father.

"Yes, son. They're all very (*adjective*) decadent," his father said (*adverb*) blithely.

"Do you think we can (*verb*) manipulate the (*noun, animal*) Herbert Hoover?" Billy asked.

"We'll see, son," his father said (*adverb*) scornfully.

They arrived at a cage containing a (*two adjectives*) dapper and clueless (*noun, animal*) Calvin Coolidge all the way from Mozambique! Suddenly, the Calvin Coolidge began to (*verb*) socialize! Billy was very (*adjective*) disaffected.

"No need to feel (*adjective*) warmongering, son," Billy's father said. "It's perfectly (*adjective*) youthful. It's in a cage."

"What a (*adjective*) vindictive time I've had at the (*noun*) sexual liberation today!" Billy said as they turned to leave.

"Me too, son," his father agreed (*adverb*) pathetically.

Franz Kafka's "A Night on the Town"

Every weekend, I like to (*verb*) decry this system of justice before going out on the town. It's important to look your (*adjective, superlative*) most mollified so none of your friends will be (*adjective*) dead to be seen with you!

Once I'm done (*verb, progressive*) arresting myself for the big night out, I call up my friends: (*two names*) K. and Frau Grubach. They (*verb*) vomit over to my (*noun*) bureaucracy in their new car and pick me up. Then we head over to the (*noun, place*) desolate wasteland and go shopping.

Last Saturday, I bought (*noun*) a tyrannical man, not inconsiderable in height, wearing an outfit that resembled a traveling suit, with pleats, pockets, and buttons everywhere, into which he must have stuffed the useless instruments of his tyranny. I was very (*adjective*) distressed with my purchase. K. and Frau Grubach were (*adjective*) nauseated with their purchases as well.

After that, it was time for a movie. We went to see "The (*noun, plural*) Proletariats of the (*noun, proper*) Giant Death Machine." When we saw it on the marquee, it seemed like a (*adjective*) powerless choice, but in the theater it was really (*adjective*) disappointing. We all agreed to (*verb*) execute it to our friends.

Finally, we stopped at our (*adjective*) coronary restaurant. The food was (*two adjectives*) consumptive and hopelessly mad. I got the (*noun*) ennui, and K. and Frau Grubach got the (*noun*) byzantine judicial process.

After that, it was time to say goodnight. We (*verb, past tense*) died, said our goodbyes, and went back to our (*noun, plural*) cockroaches,

Ernest Hemingway's "Planting a Garden"

Mrs. (*name*) Jones wanted to (*verb, past tense*) fight a garden. So she went to the store and (*verb, past tense*) harassed some (*noun, plural*) boys. When she got home, she found she was (*adjective*) good to begin (*verb, progressive*) drinking her garden.

"I'm so (*adjective*) _____ about my garden!" Mrs. Jones said (*adverb*) _____. She went and got her (*noun*) fate from the (*noun, proper*) Spain and began (*verb, progressive*) fighting. "My garden will be the envy of all my (*two nouns, plural*) enemies and soldiers. It will be the most (*adjective, superlative*) good garden on the block!"

After several hours, Mrs. Jones decided she was done (*verb, progressive*) bullfighting and decided to start (*verb, progressive*) making love. By now, she was very (*adjective*) _____.

"Oh, where did I put my (*noun*) woman?" she wondered (*adverb*) _____.

She eventually (*verb, past tense*) fought it and began making love. The garden looked very (*adjective*) _____, but it was still not (*adjective*) _____. After many hours, she had finally (*verb, past tense*) shot all the (*noun, plural*) cervezas in her garden.

"It looks so (*adjective*) _____!" she exclaimed (*adverb*) _____. "What a (*adjective*) _____ garden!"

Vladimir Nabokov's "A Very Special Gift"

For her sixth birthday, (*name, female*) Verna wanted a puppy. She had (*verb, past tense*) harangued her (*adjective*) palliative parents for one for the past (*amount of time*) moment, but with no (*noun*) copulation. She was (*adjective*) duly vexed on her birthday, as she was (*adjective*) solipsistic that she would finally get one.

At (*time of day*) roseate dawn, she saw her father carrying a (*noun*) poltrone into the house.

"What is that (*noun*) anatomist you're holding, Daddy? It looks (*adjective*) virile," she said.

"It's a surprise for your (*noun*) logorrhea tonight," he said (*adverb*) churlishly.

"But I want to (*verb*) lust it now!" she said.

"Not until tonight," her father (*verb, past tense*) intoned (*adverb*) jauntily.

Finally, it was time for Verna's party. She opened all her (*noun, plural*) pseudolibidoes and was (*adjective*) feckless to find no puppy. Her mother served the (*two nouns, plural*) nymphettes and girleens, and Verna (*verb*) confessed them (*adverb*) languidly. Suddenly, her father produced the (*adjective*) un-Celtic surprise!

She (*verb, past tense*) idealized the gift. Sure enough, it was a puppy!

"Oh, what a (*two adjectives*) ignoble and oneiric gift!" she (*verb, past tense*) melted. "I will (*verb*) rue it always!"

An MFA Student's "Going on Vacation"

Last year, our family decided to take a vacation in (*noun, proper*) Electra complex. We were excited to hear it was always (*two adjectives*) archetypal and skinny in Electra complex, and news of the (*noun*) unlikely romance sealed the deal: we were going.

First, we packed all our (*noun, plural*) childhood memories in our (*noun, plural*) embittered, alcoholic aunts. Then we made sure the house was (*adjective*) Cheeveresque before we left.

We (*verb, past tense*) speculated to the airport, from where we would (*verb*) write what you know to our destination. The plane food was very (*two adjectives*) licentious and unfaithful, but we didn't mind because we knew we would be (*verb, progressive*) having an affair soon. After a long flight, we landed in the (*adjective*) sexually restrained airport.

The hotel was (*adjective*) Faulknerian, and our bellboy was particularly (*adjective*) postmodern. We spent the afternoon on the beach (*verb, progressive*) showing and not telling. The beach had lots of (*two nouns, plural*) far-too-tranquil suburbs and racism.

My favorite part of the trip was going (*verb, progressive*) violating and getting to see all the (*noun*) narcissism up close. The coolest thing was the (*noun*) racist dialogue! ♦