

Name:

Up on the corner lived a drunk of legend, a true phenomenon, who could surely have qualified as the king of all the world's winos. He was neither poetic like the others nor ambitious like the singer
Line (to whom we'll presently come) but his drinking bouts were truly
(5) awe-inspiring and he was not without his sensitivity. In the throes of his passion he would shout to the whole wide world one concise command, "Shut up!" Which was disconcerting enough to all who heard (except, perhaps, the singer), but such were the labyrinthine acoustics of courtyards and areaways that he seemed to
(10) direct his command at me. The writer's block which this produced is indescribable. On one heroic occasion he yelled his obsessive command without one interruption longer than necessary to take another drink (and with no appreciable loss of volume, penetration or authority) for three long summer days and nights, and
(15) shortly afterwards he died. Just how many lines of agitated prose he cost me I'll never know, but in all that chaos of sound I sympathized with his obsession, for I, too, hungered and thirsted for quiet. Nor did he inspire me to a painful identification, and for that I was thankful. Identification, after all, involves feelings of
(20) guilt and responsibility, and, since I could hardly hear my own typewriter keys, I felt in no way accountable for his condition. We were simply fellow victims of the madding crowd. May he rest in peace.

No, these more involved feelings were aroused by a more intimate source of noise, one that got beneath the skin and worked into the very structure of one's consciousness—like the "fate" motif in Beethoven's Fifth or the knocking-at-the-gates scene in *Macbeth*. For at the top of our pyramid of noise there was a singer who lived directly above us; you might say we had a singer on our
(30) ceiling.

Now, I had learned from the jazz musicians I had known as a boy in Oklahoma City something of the discipline and devotion to his art required of the artist. Hence I knew something of what

the singer faced. These jazzmen, many of them now world-famous,
(35) lived for and with music intensely. Their driving motivation was neither money nor fame, but the will to achieve the most eloquent expression of idea-emotions through the technical mastery of their instruments (which, incidentally, some of them wore as a priest wears the cross) and the give and take, the subtle rhythmic
(40) mical shaping and blending of idea, tone, and imagination demanded of group improvisation. The delicate balance struck between strong individual personality and the group during those early jam sessions was a marvel of social organization. I had learned too that the end of all this discipline and technical
(45) mastery was the desire to express an affirmative way of life through its musical tradition and that this tradition insisted that each artist achieve his creativity within its frame. He must learn the best of the past, and add to his personal vision. Life could be harsh,

loud, and wrong if it wished, but they lived it fully, and when they
(50) expressed their attitude toward the world it was with a fluid style
that reduced the chaos of living to form.

The objectives of these jazzmen were not at all those of the
singer on our ceiling, but, though a purist committed to the mas-
tery of the *bel canto* style, German *lieder*, modern French art
(55) songs, and a few American slave songs sung as if *bel canto*, she
was intensely devoted to her art. From morning to night she
vocalized, regardless of the condition of her voice, the weather,
or my screaming nerves. There were times when her notes, sifting
(60) ricocheting off the building in the rear, whistled like tenpenny
nails, buzzed like a saw, wheezed like the asthma of Hercules,
trumpeted like an enraged African elephant—and the squeaky
pedal of her piano rested plumb center above my typing chair.
After a year of noncooperation from the neighbor on my left I
(65) became desperate enough to cool down the hot blast of his pho-
nograph by calling the cops, but the singer presented a serious
ethical problem: Could I, an aspiring artist, complain against the
hard work and devotion to craft of another aspiring artist?

17. The speaker in the passage can best be described as a person who
- (A) is committed to developing his skills as a writer
 - (B) is actually more interested in being a musician than in being a writer
 - (C) has talent as both a musician and a writer
 - (D) is motivated very differently from the jazz musicians that he describes
 - (E) aspires to greatness but knows that he will never achieve it
18. That the speaker “sympathized with” the drunk’s “obsession” (lines 16-17) is ironic chiefly because the drunk
- (A) agitated the speaker purposely and distracted him from his writing
 - (B) was not “poetic” (line 3) and had no basis for his obsession
 - (C) actually disturbed the speaker less than did the singer
 - (D) had little “sensitivity” (line 5) and was undeserving of sympathy
 - (E) was a major source of the noise from which the speaker wished to escape
19. It can be inferred that the speaker and the drunk were “fellow victims” (line 22) in that
- (A) both had lost control of their passions
 - (B) neither received support from friends or relatives
 - (C) each had in a different way proven to be a failure
 - (D) neither was any longer able to feel guilt or responsibility
 - (E) both were tormented by distracting disturbances

20. In context, the word “intimate” (lines 24-25) is best interpreted to mean
- (A) suggestive and lyrical
 - (B) tender and friendly
 - (C) inexorably penetrating
 - (D) sensual and charming
 - (E) strongly private
21. The speaker mentions Beethoven’s Fifth and *Macbeth* (lines 27-28) as examples of which of the following?
- (A) Masterly creations flawed by insidious motifs and violent scenes
 - (B) Works of art famous for their power to annoy audiences
 - (C) Splendid artistic achievements often performed unsatisfactorily
 - (D) Artistic compositions with compelling and unforgettable elements
 - (E) Classic masterpieces with which everyone should be familiar
22. The description of the “delicate balance” (line 41) achieved at jazz jam sessions contributes to the unity of the passage in which of the following ways?
- (A) As a contrast to the situation in the speaker’s neighborhood
 - (B) As a condemnation of the singer’s lack of talent
 - (C) As a parallel to the drunk’s attitude toward the world
 - (D) As an indication of the essential similarity between art and life
 - (E) As a satirical comment on the speaker’s own shortcomings
23. According to the speaker, the jazz musicians that he knew as a boy attempted to do all of the following EXCEPT
- (A) become technical masters of the instruments on which they performed
 - (B) blend forms such as the slave song and the spiritual into carefully structured performances
 - (C) achieve individuality and virtuosity within the confines of their musical tradition
 - (D) communicate their beliefs and attitudes in a positive manner through their performances
 - (E) combine their talents with those of others in extemporaneous group performances
24. The speaker’s attitude toward the jazz musicians is best described as one of
- (A) idolatrous devotion
 - (B) profound admiration
 - (C) feigned intimacy
 - (D) qualified enthusiasm
 - (E) reasoned objectivity

25. The speaker suggests that the jazz musicians to whom he refers accomplish which of the following by means of their art?
- (A) They hold a mirror to nature.
 - (B) They prove that music is superior to other art forms.
 - (C) They provide an ironic view of the world.
 - (D) They create order from the disorder of life.
 - (E) They create music concerned more with truth than beauty.
26. In the sentence beginning "There were times" (lines 58-63), the speaker employs all of the following EXCEPT
- (A) concrete diction
 - (B) parallel syntax
 - (C) simile
 - (D) understatement
 - (E) onomatopoeia
27. In the passage, the drunk, the jazz musicians, and the singer all share which of the following?
- (A) An inability to identify with others
 - (B) An intense application to a single activity
 - (C) A concern more with individuality than with tradition
 - (D) An ambivalent feeling about their roles in life
 - (E) A desire for popular approval
28. The style of the passage as a whole is most accurately characterized as
- (A) abstract and allusive
 - (B) disjointed and effusive
 - (C) informal and descriptive
 - (D) complex and pedantic
 - (E) symbolic and terse