

POEM-4 | Telephone Conversation

QUIZ-01

1. What is the central conflict in the poem "Telephone Conversation"?

- A. A disagreement about rent
- B. A misunderstanding about location
- C. A racial prejudice during a phone call
- D. A dispute over travel costs (C)

Explanation: The poem revolves around a racial inquiry made by the landlady when she learns the speaker is African.

2. How does the speaker first disclose his identity to the landlady?

- A. By showing his passport
- B. By writing a letter
- C. By warning her on the phone
- D. By meeting her in person (C)

Explanation: He tells her directly on the phone, "Madam, I hate a wasted journey—I am African."

3. Which object is not mentioned as part of the setting during the call?

- A. Red telephone booth
- B. Red pillar-box
- C. Black taxi
- D. Red double-tiered omnibus (C)

Explanation: The imagery includes a red booth, red pillar-box, and a red bus, but not a black taxi.

4. What question does the landlady repeatedly ask the speaker?

- A. Are you African or American?
- B. Do you have money for rent?
- C. Are you dark or very dark?
- D. What's your job? (C)

Explanation: She obsessively inquires about the darkness of his skin, emphasizing racial bias.

5. How does the speaker describe his skin tone to mock the landlady's question?

- A. Charcoal black
- B. Milk chocolate
- C. West African sepia
- D. Olive brown (C)

Explanation: He sarcastically describes himself as "West African sepia" to highlight the absurdity of her fixation.

6. What is meant by "spectroscopic flight of fancy" in the poem?

- A. A literal color test
- B. A fantasy about traveling
- C. Over-analysis of skin color
- D. A misunderstanding in science class (C)

Explanation: It refers to the landlady's ridiculous attempt to categorize skin color with precision.

7. What kind of tone does the speaker adopt in response to the landlady's racism?

- A. Angry and confrontational
- B. Sarcastic and humorous
- C. Sad and apologetic
- D. Confused and indifferent (B)

Explanation: The speaker uses wit and satire to expose and mock the landlady's racial prejudice.

8. What part of the speaker's body does he describe as "peroxide blonde"?

- A. Hair
- B. Hands and feet
- C. Eyes
- D. Teeth (B)

Explanation: He jokes that the palms of his hands and soles of his feet are "peroxide blonde."

9. What does the phrase "hide-and-speak" suggest?

- A. A children's game
- B. An avoidance of direct communication
- C. A method of debate
- D. A loud conversation (B)

Explanation: It plays on "hide-and-seek," implying the landlady hides her racism behind polite speech.

10. How does the poem end?

- A. The speaker hangs up angrily
- B. The landlady offers him the apartment
- C. The speaker invites her to see him in person
- D. The landlady apologizes (C)

Explanation: The speaker sarcastically suggests, "Wouldn't you rather see for yourself?" inviting her to judge in person.