

Salman Rushdie



In this LWS we are going to learn a bit more about the novels by Salman Rushdie.

1. In LWS 1 of this series we heard how Salman Rushdie had chosen a song by The Rolling Stones in the Desert Island Discs podcast. Just to warm you up a bit, here are simple activities based on the Sympathy For The Devil song.

A. _____ Join the beginnings and endings of the lines

Pleased to	of my game
Hope you	guess my name
But what's	meet you
Is the nature	puzzling you

B. Drag, drop, listen and check _____

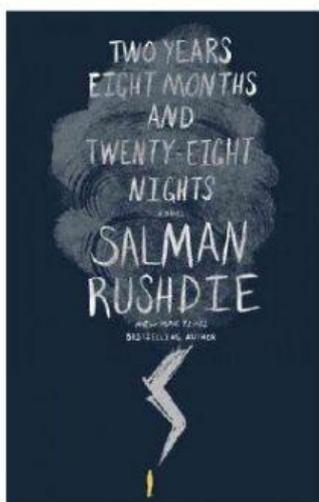
Anastasia

St. Petersburg

Tsar

Stuck around _____
When I saw it was a time for a change
Killed the _____ and his ministers
_____ screamed in vain

2. This activity is based on a 2015 interview. Read the chunks, then listen to the snippets and mark every chunk with the number of the correspondent audio.



___ everybody is upset all the time

___ seems to transpose

___ dark, mischievous, supernatural beings

___ about crazy stuff

___ upsets the laws

___ move around pretty freely

___ to eat the Staten Island Ferry

___ and varied and diverse

___ people screaming at other people

___ walks on air

___ a naturalistic novel

___ a randy bunch

___ turn away from that unpleasant noise

___ a conflict between reason and unreason

___ in lubricious detail

___ that's boring and two-dimensional

___ shoots lightning

___ it's quite dull

___ has a frontispiece

___ to screw things up

___ brings forth monsters

___ a graphic novelist's characters

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

3. Listen again to the snippets in the previous activity and fill the gaps in the sentences.

A. Which seems to transpose the Arabian Nights of long ago into a _____ - _____ New York City, which gets _____ by a thunderstorm.

B. The jinn have come back after an 800-year _____, and create a world in which a down-to-earth man, a _____ in fact, walks on air, a spurned _____ shoots lightning from her _____ and a graphic novelist's characters turn to _____.

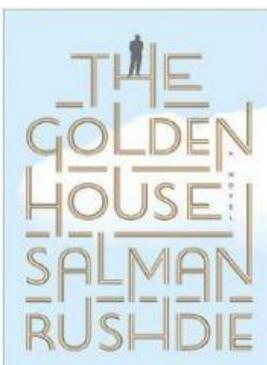
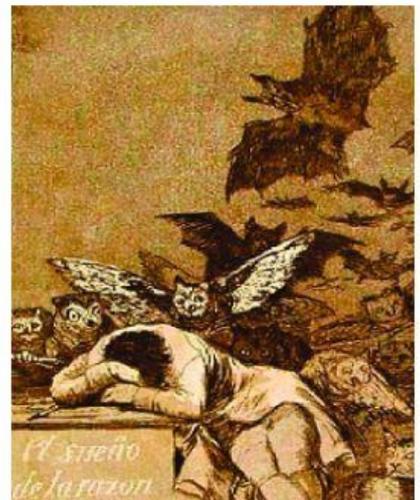
C. But at the _____ of it is a _____ to create a kind of _____ arising out of what we see happening all around us in the world.

D. It's been good. I think, it's got to the _____ where you have to stop _____ me.

E. I think we have to just turn that sound _____ and turn _____ from that unpleasant noise and just get _____ doing what we do.

F. I just decided that they needed one characteristic which is very _____ and kind of funny, and so I made them have sex all the time. Just all the time, _____, forever.

G. I didn't want it to be a simple good/bad _____.



3. Listen to the Introduction to an interview with Salman Rushdie and write down the titles and the places where each novel is set _____

4. Listen to the clip _____

A. unjumble the words of the interviewer

For people who's spent their whole lives in the United States,
/our youthfulness/ I'm not/ affects us /that/ as a country/ we feel how/ sure/.

_____ .

Bringing an outside prospective,

/the way / what the/how would/ that shapes/ United States is/ you describe/?

_____ ?

B. Fill the gaps in the lines from the writer's answer

- a) America clearly has some very _____ , and even _____ aspects _____ its history.
- b) People from an old country, an Indian family, a wealthy Indian family — in a way, trying to _____ the _____ of their own history — comes to a country in which the subject of _____ of the _____ is completely central.
- c) It seemed _____ for people from an old country trying to get rid _____ the shadow of the past, to come to somewhere where it's _____ to be new.

Is it possible to escape your past?

5. Listen to the clip _____ and join the parts of the chunks

a family arrives

lot of luggage

concealing some

of those stories

the secret is going

three adult sons

New York is full

bit of innocence

that is the tragedy

in Manhattan

clearly has a

to blow up in their face

has had quite

very dark secret

along with his

of the novel

he is guilty of a little

underestimate the opposition

can go beyond the

harming him

interested in

reach of the gangsters

sometimes you

a shady past

The following excerpts are from Salman Rushdie's novel, The Golden House which set against the backdrop of current American culture and politics.

6. Read the excerpt from The Golden House and ask questions to the "answers" in bold

Here is Vasilisa, the Russian girl. She is striking. One might say she is astonishing. She has long dark hair. Her body is also long, and exceptional; she runs marathons, and is a fine gymnast, specializing in the ribbon element of rhythmic gymnastics.

She says that in her youth she came close to the Russian Olympics team. She is



twenty-eight years old. Her youth was when she was fifteen. **Vasilisa Arsenyeva** is her full name. Her region of origin is **Siberia** and she claims descent from the great

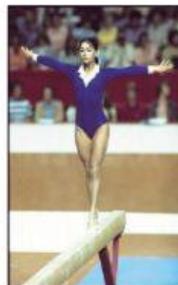


explorer **Vladimir Arsen-yev** himself, who wrote many books

about the region, including the one that became a **Kurosawa**

film, Dersu Uzala, but this line of descent is not confirmed because Vasilisa, as we will see, is a brilliant liar, accomplished in the arts of deceit. She says she was raised **in the heart of the forest**, the immense taiga forest that covers much of Siberia, and her family was of the tribe Nanai, whose menfolk worked as hunters, trappers and guides. She was born in the year of the Moscow Summer Olympics and her heroine, as she grew up, was **the great gymnast Nelli Kim**, half Korean, half Tatar. **Sixty-five** countries, including the United States, boycotted those Moscow games but in the depths of the forest she was far away from politics, though she did hear **about the fall of the Berlin Wall** when she was nine years old. She was happy because she had begun to look at a few magazines and wanted to go to America and be adored and send U.S. dollars back to her family at home.

Caption the pictures



7. Read the excerpt. Drag and drop the verbs

making ate acquired looking wants admired gobbled
escape flown owns meet remained desire

This is what she has done. She has _____ the coop. Here she is in America, in New York City and also, now and often, in Florida, and she is much _____, and _____ money doing the work the beautiful do. Many men _____ her but she is not _____ for a mere man. She _____ a protector. A Tsar.



Here is Vasilisa. She _____ a magic doll. When, as a child, an earlier Vasilisa was sent by her wicked stepmother to the house of Baba Yaga, the witch who _____ children, who lived in the heart of the heart of the forest, it was the magic doll who helped her _____ so that she could begin her search for her Tsar. So the story goes. But there are those who tell it differently, saying that Baba Yaga did eat Vasilisa, _____ her up the way she gobbled up everyone, and when she did, the ugly old witch _____ all the young girl's beauty – that she became, outwardly, the spitting image of Vasilisa the Fair, though she _____ sharp-toothed Baba Yaga on the inside.

This is Vasilisa in Miami. She is blond now. She is about to _____ her Tsar.

Would you like to read any book by Salman Rushdie? Why/Why not?

How would you describe the author based on the materials of this series?

And here, just one more bead to the string, another cameo of the writer in a very popular romcom.

