

Part One: *In the Beginning was the Word*

- heathen** *n.* a person who is not religious or whose religion is not Judaism, Islam, or especially Christianity
SENTENCE: “Mira, muchacha,” / she starts, “I will / feed and clothe no heathens.” / She tells me I owe it to / God and myself to devote.
- piety** *n.* the quality or state of being pious, such as in faithfulness to duty or religion
SENTENCE: She tells me if I don’t confirm here / she will send me to D.R., / where the priests and nuns know / how to elicit true piety.
- barrio** *n.* a Spanish-speaking neighborhood in a city or town in the U.S.
SENTENCE: Mami was born in La Capital / in a barrio of thirst buckets / who wrote odes to her legs / but the only man Mami wanted / was nailed to a cross.
- volition** *n.* the power of choosing or determining
SENTENCE: Father Sean tells us we’re going to deepen / our relationship with God. / “Of your own volition you will accept him into your lives.”

Part Two: *And the Word was Made Flesh*

- intuition** *n.* knowledge from an ability to understand or know something immediately based on your feelings rather than facts
SENTENCE: He has no twin intuition! / He doesn’t get sympathy pains. / He doesn’t ever randomly know / that I had a bad day or that I need help.
- solace** *n.* to give comfort to in grief or misfortune
SENTENCE: I should find solace in a forgiving religion.
- condone** *v.* to treat something bad or blameworthy as acceptable, forgivable, or harmless
SENTENCE: Maybe my silence. / Condone the ugly things people think.

Part Three: *The Voice of One Crying Out in the Wilderness*

- rectory** *n.* a residence of a pastor or a parish priest
SENTENCE: But listen, / you were mad lucky / Father Sean went straight / to the rectory after class.
- parasitic** *adj.* relating to, or being a parasite; living on another organism and feeding on it
SENTENCE: Looking back, maybe we had a parasitic relationship? / One of us taking and the other only trying to stay afloat.

cathartic

adj. involving the release of strong emotions through a particular activity or experience

SENTENCE: I thought it would be cathartic / to write something beautiful for yourself.

ovation

n. an occasion when a crowd of people expresses great enjoyment and/or approval of something with loud and long clapping

SENTENCE: With a brand-new notebook: I perform like I deserve to be there; /
With Aman's (and J. Cole's) inspiration: I don't see the standing ovation.

compulsory *adj.* mandatory, enforced
SENTENCE: You could tell he heard it. Boy, was he sore. He didn't say anything then, but the next night he made us have compulsory study hall in the academic building and he came up and made a speech. (Chapter 3)

halitosis *n.* the condition of having bad breath
SENTENCE: That guy had just about everything. Sinus trouble, pimples, lousy teeth, halitosis, crumbly fingernails. You had to feel a little sorry for the crazy sonuvabitch. (Chapter 5)

lavish *adj.* produced in great amounts
SENTENCE: I have this grandmother that's quite lavish with her dough. She doesn't have all her marbles any more--she's old as hell--and she keeps sending me money for my birthday about four times a year. (Chapter 7)

suave *adj.* smooth in texture, performance, or style
SENTENCE: "Well, I know it's quite late," I said, in this very mature voice and all. "I hope you'll forgive me, but I was very anxious to get in touch with you." I said it suave as hell. I really did. (Chapter 9)

rake *n.* a person who is not restrained by expectations or morality
SENTENCE: He had this big château and all on the Riviera, in Europe, and all he did in his spare time was beat women off with a club. He was a real rake and all, but he knocked women out. (Chapter 13)

bourgeois *adj.* middle class
SENTENCE: He was always saying snotty things about them, my suitcases, for instance. He kept saying they were too new and bourgeois. That was his favorite goddam word. He read it somewhere or heard it somewhere. Everything I had was bourgeois as hell. Even my fountain pen was bourgeois. He borrowed it off me all the time, but it was bourgeois anyway. (Chapter 15)

clique *n.* a narrow or exclusive group of people
SENTENCE: All you do is talk about girls and liquor and sex all day, and everybody sticks together in these dirty little goddam cliques. The guys that are on the basketball team stick together, the Catholics stick together, the goddam intellectuals stick together, the guys that play bridge stick together. Even the guys that belong to the goddam Book-of-the-Month Club stick together. (Chapter 17)

conceited *adj.* having or showing an excessively high opinion of oneself
SENTENCE: He was a very nice guy. But this Roberta Walsh's roommate didn't like him at all. She told Roberta he was too conceited--and the reason she thought he was conceited was because he happened to mention to her that he was captain

of the debating team. A little thing like that, and she thought he was conceited!
(Chapter 18)

sacrilegious *adj.* showing a lack of proper respect for a person, place, or object
SENTENCE: I said old Jesus probably would've puked if He could see it--all those fancy costumes and all. Sally said I was a sacrilegious atheist. (Chapter 18)

putrid *adj.* foul and rotten
SENTENCE: After the Christmas thing was over, the goddam picture started. It was so putrid I couldn't take my eyes off it. (Chapter 18)

pedagogical *adj.* of, relating to, or befitting a teacher or education
SENTENCE: "Holden. . . One short, faintly stuffy, pedagogical question. Don't you think there's a time and place for everything?" (Chapter 24)