

## There Once Was a Man From Nantucket

IN TWO PREVIOUS PUZZLES, I've explored the connection between cryptic puzzles and poetry. Both earlier poems were sonnets, one Shakespearean and the other Petrarchan. I realize, however, that if I am ever to be taken seriously as a poet, and perhaps one day be named the Academy's poet laureate, I will have to confront that most sophisticated of poetic forms, the limerick.

The final word in each line of the five limericks below has been omitted. One additional omission was necessary to hide a different form of one of the last words. The answers to the 26 clues will give you the missing words. The poems, which all involve actuarial topics, provide a context for the words you need. They also provide information about the structure of the words. Limericks are rhymed aabba and have a prescribed pattern of metrical feet (33223). Between stressed syllables on each line, there will always be two unstressed ones. Before the first stressed syllable there may be either one or two unstressed ones. And after the last stressed syllable there may be zero, one, or two unstressed syllables.

With all that structural help, I decided to forgo normal (ahem) cryptic clues. I have omitted the straight definitions from the clues, leaving only the anagrams, homophones, and other wordplay. Clues of the double definition variety will of course be normal definitions of the words you need in the limericks, though their meanings in the poems will be different from the meanings clued.

It is challenging to think of limericks without getting inappropriate. In a rare burst of self-restraint, and upon the advice of my legal counsel, I have omitted three of my favorites: "There once was an F.C.A.S./Whose personal life was a mess"; "There once was a trainee in pricing/Whose praises Homerically I sing"; and, alas, the best poem I've ever written, "A back-office cruncher named Dudley/Wasn't someone you've ever call cuddly." Perhaps I will publish them posthumously or after I leave my job, whichever comes first.

The clues are in five groups. It is left to the solver to determine which group goes with which poem, as well as the correct order within each set of clues. The 26th clue, whose answer will be placed in line three of "There But for the Grace of God," has been placed at random into another group of clues.

There are no proper nouns and no unusual words, except for some insurance jargon. Everything is playable in Scrabble, except for the 16-letter word, Scrabble being played on a 15 × 15 board.

Thanks to Eric Klis and Bob Fink, for test-solving and editorial suggestions.

**Solutions may be emailed to [Thomas.Toce@ey.com](mailto:Thomas.Toce@ey.com). In order to make the solver list, your solutions must be received by Nov. 30, 2011.**

### The Limericks

#### *The Lifer*

A Lifer designing \_\_\_\_\_  
Encountered a few \_\_\_\_\_,  
"All my clients seem \_\_\_\_\_  
To outlive my \_\_\_\_\_,  
As if we had sold \_\_\_\_\_."

#### *There But for the Grace of God*

All Al needed was one more \_\_\_\_\_,  
So he said, "I'll wholeheartedly \_\_\_\_\_."  
Ah, but others \_\_\_\_\_,  
Only one out of \_\_\_\_\_  
Passed. When Al got his five he said, "\_\_\_\_\_."

#### *Perspicacious Gwen*

Gwen said, "Working in Government \_\_\_\_\_  
Has ever so many \_\_\_\_\_!  
We found one—that is, Dunne \_\_\_\_\_—  
Which was not \_\_\_\_\_!  
And to think I had \_\_\_\_\_!"

#### *A Tendentious Gal*

I once knew a gal in \_\_\_\_\_,  
Who possessed no real \_\_\_\_\_.  
She was fond of her \_\_\_\_\_.  
Oh, she loved them to \_\_\_\_\_!  
And would call correlation \_\_\_\_\_.

#### *A Curious Fellow*

A Fellow deep into \_\_\_\_\_,  
Had some issues around \_\_\_\_\_.  
His expense account \_\_\_\_\_  
When his kid's room and \_\_\_\_\_  
He put through—okay, that's just \_\_\_\_\_.

**Set #1**

- So dear, bananas? (6)
- Study pi? It rocked! (9)
- I mob Dirty Dotty (9)
- Sounding blasé (5)
- Sickly, I question the wild impulse it yields at the outset (11)

**Set #2**

- Boardinghouses (8)
- Freud dunned irresponsibly (11)
- Ion in dimness misconstrued (10)
- Rose, is penmanship haphazard? (16)
- Bombed like a standup comic with no energy (3)

**Set #3**

- Fresh coinsuring tie? (13)
- Each animal companion dismissing no Aristotelian principles (11)
- Vamoosed a little late (7)
- Insinuate when tipsy (9)
- Like Napoleon, before seeing Elba? (4)
- Random bleat (5)

**Set #4**

- Pixie painting one clay (formerly) table-spoon yellow (12)
- City containing gold, Sal (9)
- Connptions (4)
- Morality over earliest of trepidations (9)
- Second rate, it is (4)

**Set #5**

- Stop shouting (4)
- Formerly in the morning? (4)
- Rome must be destroyed (4)
- Marc looking in the mirror (4)
- Verbal warning from a golfer! (4)

**Previous Issue's Puzzle—  
Strange-looking Concoctions**

- |           |            |
|-----------|------------|
| 1. calves | 9. flints  |
| 2. exacts | 10. weaves |
| 3. Taoism | 11. tokens |
| 4. mosque | 12. oozing |
| 5. praxis | 13. reavow |
| 6. Triton | 14. divert |
| 7. acquit | 15. zinnia |
| 8. plunge | 16. nuance |



- |            |             |
|------------|-------------|
| 17. girder | 23. bother  |
| 18. fitter | 24. column  |
| 19. jested | 25. denied  |
| 20. broken | 26. arched  |
| 21. ironic | 27. yes-man |
| 22. jarred |             |

**Clues for nine-letter words  
on faces of large cube**

- Front (1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9) actuaries
- Left (19-10-1-22-13-4-25-16-7)  
decrement
- Right (3-12-21-6-15-24-9-18-27)  
mortality
- Back (21-20-19-24-23-22-27-26-25)  
insurance
- Top (19-20-21-10-11-12-1-2-3) triangles
- Bottom (7-8-9-16-17-18-25-26-27)  
annuities

**Solvers**

Dean Apps, Andrew Buckley, Lois Cappellano, Mick Diede, Greg Dreher, Mathew Eberhardt, Deb Edwards, Francis Regnaudcourt, Bob Fink, Mike Giamba, Pete Hepokoski, Brian Klimek, Eric Klis, Paul Kolell, Louis Lana,

Dave McGarry, Matthew Maguire, Jon Michelson, Lee Michelson, Jim Muza, David and Corinne Promislow, Tina Ringo, Debbie Rosenberg, Craig Schmid, Bill Scott, Dave Wallman, Josh Wallace

I regret that a typo found its way into the clues last time. The clue should have read, “Flits about the center of Allentown for starters,” which leads to FLI(N)TS, fairly straightforwardly, as far as these things go. The misprinted clue “Fits about . . . “ leads to nothing, really. Many of you caught the error. A few of you came up with an alternative. I was generous in awarding credit because a) there was a printing mistake and b) it’s just a puzzle. There may have been several more solvers—hundreds—who were that one answer away from a complete solution. To them especially, I offer my apologies for the error. □

T O M T O C E is a senior manager for actuarial services with Ernst & Young in New York and is a member of the Jeopardy Hall of Fame.