

Words from Alfred Bester's *The Stars My Destination*

Avocabo List 47 Words

ANATHEMA, ASCETIC, ASUNDER, BULLION, CONGLOMERATE, CONSANGUINITY, COUNTENANCE, CRENELATE, EMACIATED, EQUANIMITY, FACSIMILE, GEODESICAL, INCHOATE, INOCULATE, IRRADIATE, JAUNTE, LOBOTOMY, LURID, MALINGER, MUNIFICENT, OB DURATE, PATOIS, PUISSANT, SAGACITY, SCINTILLATE, SERAGLIO, STIGMATA, SYCOPHANT, VAGRANT, VICTUAL

COGITO ERGO JAUNTEO

“EDUCATION: NONE. SKILLS: NONE. MERITS: NONE. RECOMMENDATIONS: NONE.” So reads Gully Foyle’s Merchant Marine card. But Gully has managed to survive for 170 days in the airless purgatory of deep space and to escape to Terra with a murderous grudge and a secret that could change the course of history.

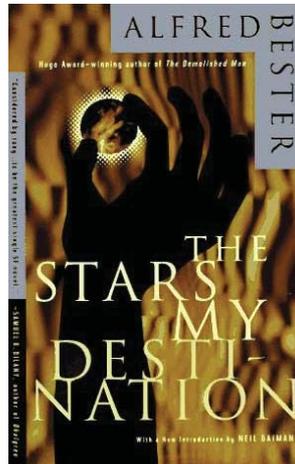
In this pulse-quickening novel, Alfred Bester imagines a future in which people “jaunte” a thousand miles with a single thought, where the rich barricade themselves in labyrinths and protect themselves with radioactive hit men – and where an inarticulate outcast is the most valuable and dangerous man alive. *The Stars My Destination* is a classic of technological prophecy and timeless narrative enchantment by an acknowledged master of science fiction.

- From the book's back-cover blurb.

Exercise 47-1: Fill-in The Blanks Fill in the blank with the list word that best matches the definition. (30marks)

1. _____: *n.* teleportation, the transportation of one-self through space by an effort of the mind alone
2. _____: *adj.* widely separated especially in space. *adv.* into parts or pieces.

3. _____: *adj.* very thin especially from disease or hunger or cold, waste away
4. _____: *adj.* horrible in fierceness or savagery; glaringly vivid and graphic, marked by sensationalism; shining with an unnatural red glow as of fire seen through smoke; ghastly pale



5. _____: *v.* enlighten, give spiritual insight to; cast rays of light upon; expose to radiation
6. _____: *adj.* lavish, overgenerous, too-generous, unsparing, unstinted, unstinting
7. _____: *v.* give off; sparkle, coruscate, reflect brightly; twinkle, emit or reflect light in a flickering manner
8. _____: *n.* judgement, discernment, the mental ability to understand and discriminate between relations
9. _____: *n.* visage, the appearance conveyed by a person's face; sanction, endorsement, indorsement, warrant, imprimatur, formal and explicit approval. *v.* permit, allow, let, consent to, give permission
10. _____: *adj.* cussed, stubbornly persistent in wrongdoing; flinty, showing unfeeling resistance to tender feelings
11. _____: *adj.* dominant, authoritative; formidable, strong
12. _____: *v.* shirk, avoid responsibilities and duties, e.g., by pretending to be ill
13. _____: *n.* vagabond, gypsy, floater, a wanderer who has no established residence or visible means of support. *adj.* aimless, drifting, floating, continually changing especially as from one abode or occupation to another
14. _____: *n.* surgical interruption of nerve tracts to and from the frontal lobe of the brain; often results in marked cognitive and personality changes
15. _____: *adj.* incipient, only partly in existence; imperfectly formed; a beginning, an immature start

16. _____: n. a mass of precious metal; gold or silver in bars or ingots

17. _____: n. cant, jargon, lingo, argot, vernacular, a characteristic language of a particular group (as among thieves); a regional dialect of a language, usually considered substandard

18. _____: n. blood kinship, cognation, related by blood

19. _____: n. a composite rock made up of particles of varying size

20. _____: n. a detested person; a formal ecclesiastical curse accompanied by excommunication

21. _____: n. composure, calm, calmness, steadiness of mind under stress

22. _____: n. abstainer; someone who practices self denial as a spiritual discipline. v. pertaining to or characteristic of an ascetic or the practice of rigorous self-discipline; practicing great self-denial.

23. _____: v. introduce an idea or attitude into the mind of; introduce a microorganism into, insert a bud for propagation, impregnate with the virus or germ of a disease in order to render immune

24. _____: v. supply with battlements; To indent; to notch

25. _____: n. suck-up, flatterer, crawler, lackey, ass-kisser, a person who tries to please someone in order to gain a personal advantage

26. _____: n. comestible, edible, eatable, pabulum, any substance that can be used as food, provisions. v. take in nourishment

27. _____: n. an exact copy or reproduction

28. _____: n. harem, serial, living quarters reserved for wives and concubines and female relatives in a Muslim household

29. _____: adj. of or relating to or determined by the branch of geology that studies the shape of the earth and

the determination of the exact position of geographical points

30. _____: n. marks resembling the wounds on the crucified body of Christ

Exercise 47-2: Fill in the Blanks *Complete each sentence with the most appropriate word from those in the wordlist above. (24 marks)*

1. By the first decade of the twenty-fifth century the principles of _____ were established and the first school was opened by Charles Fort _____ himself, then fifty-seven, immortalized, and ashamed to admit that had never dared to _____ again. But the primitive days were past; it was no longer necessary to threaten a man with death to make him teleport.

2. Plagues and pandemics raged as jaunting _____ carried diseases and vermin into defenceless countries.

3. The wreck was filled with a floating _____ of frozen that hung within the destroyed vessel like an instantaneous photograph of an explosion.

4. As Foyle passed the door he had a quick view of himself reflected in the polished chrome of the leaf... Gully Foyle, a giant black creature, bearded, crusted with dried blood and filth, _____, with sick, patient eyes...

5. Then he saw the famous red and blue emblem on her side, the trademark of the mighty industrial clan of Prest-eign; Presteign of Terra, powerful, _____, beneficent.

6. You are the first to arrive alive in fifty years. You are a(n) _____ man. Very. Arrival of the fittest is the doctrine of Holy Darwin. Most scientific.

7. There was a hollow explosion as Hi-Thrust flamed out of stern of the ship. The launch shuddered, yawed, heated. A squeal of metal began. Then the launch grated forward. Metal, stone, and glass split apart _____ and the ship burst out of the asteroid into space.

8. Wet? He's been in the rain somewhere. But I've seen the morning weather reports. No rain east of St. Louis. Then he must have jaunted further than that. But he's not supposed to be able. He's supposed to have lost all memory and ability to jaunte. He's _____.

9. Presteign entered the _____ keep at 99 Wall Street that was Castle Presteign. It was staffed and guarded by his famous Jaunte-Watch, all in clan livery.
10. [Y'ang Yeovil] opened with a flanking movement. "Are we related anywhere within fifteen degrees of _____?" he asked Bunny in the Mandarin dialect. "I am of the house of the learned Meng-Tse whom the barbarians call Mencius."
11. "Damn it," Y'ang Yeovil stormed. "Can't you recognize a crisis, Sheffield? We're on a tightrope. What the devil are you doing backing Presteign in this shabby deal? You're the leader of the Liberal party... Terra's archpatriot. You're Presteign's political archenemy. Sell him out, you fool, before he sells us all out."
"Captain Yeovil," Presteign broke in with icy venom. "These expressions cannot be _____."
12. "Now listen to this. We've got a lawyer waiting in New York. He's got a criminal persecution for piracy pending against you; piracy in space, murder, and looting. We're going to throw the book at you. Presteign will get a conviction in twenty-four hours. If you've got a criminal record of any kind, that means a(n) _____. They'll open up the top of your skull and burn out half your brain to stop you from ever jaunting again."
13. "You don't know what jaunting's done to women, Gully. It's locked us up, sent us back to the _____... A place where women are kept on ice. After a thousand years of civilization we're still property. Jaunting's such a danger to our virtue, our value, our mint condition, that we're locked up like gold plate in a safe. There's nothing for us to do... nothing respectable. No jobs. No careers. There's no getting out, Gully unless you bust out and smash all the rules."
14. "I had to be independent, Gully. I had to live on my own life, and that's the only way society would let me. So I ran away from home and turned crook." And Jiz went on to describe the _____ details of her revolt: the Temper Racket, the Cataract Racket, the Honeymoon and Obituary Robs, the Badger Jaunte, and the Glim-Drop.
15. They came to a(n) _____ cellar. Baker's zoo had broken out of their cells in the chaos and were raiding the cellar like bees glutting themselves with honey in an attacked hive.
16. The record clerk at the Country Record Office was unaware of Foyle's identity and was _____ and uncompromising.
17. Inside the vase valet and plush reception hall, Presteign examined Fourmyle curiously. Foyle endured the keen iron-gray gaze with _____ meanwhile nodding and smiling to the enthusiastic admirers he had acquired from Canberra to New York.
18. In the center of the barracks he found his key man, the obvious barracks bully, a monster of a man, naked, hairless, fondling two bawds and being fed whiskey by _____.
19. Kempsey began to caper in weary exultation. The bruised and bloated face split into a _____ of laughter. He laughed and capered and Foyle led him out of the washroom. But in the barracks he screamed and wept again...
20. "What's a matter, him?" Foyle inquired of the hairless man in the gutter _____.
21. Again desperate, on the ghastly verge of extinction, he abandoned all disciplines and habits of living; or, perhaps, they were stripped from him. He reverted from a conditional product of environment and experience to a(n) _____ creature craving escape and survival and exercising every power it possessed.
22. He went hurling along the _____ space lines of the curving universe at the speed of thought, far exceeding that of light.
23. "The Outer Satellites don't have PyrE, Yeovil. Sheffield revealed that. Would you use it on them anyway? Will you turn my name into common _____... like Lyncg and Boycott?"
24. Vega in Lyra, an AO star twenty-six light years from earth, buring bluer than Rigel, planetless, but encircled by swarms of blazing comets whose gaseous tails _____ across the blue-black firmament...

Exercise 47-3: Synonyms and Antonyms From three choices, write an “S” beside the word that is closest in meaning to the listed word; where applicable, write an “A” beside the word that is opposite in meaning. (35 marks)

1. Asunder
___ split ___ intact ___ alongside
2. Ascetic
___ indulgent ___ altruistic ___ abstemious
3. Countenance
___ tolerate ___ prohibit ___ contradict
4. Emaciated
___ corpulent ___ bony ___ desiccate
5. Equanimity
___ calm ___ callous ___ overwrought
6. Inchoate
___ developed ___ proficient ___ primitive
7. Irradiated
___ insight ___ ignorant ___ unreceptive
8. Jaunte
___ cytokinesis ___ telekinesis ___ transposition
9. Lurid
___ bland ___ explicit ___ lacklustre
10. Malinger
___ persist ___ exert ___ skulk
11. Munificent
___ beneficent ___ parsimonious ___ scrounging
12. Obdurate
___ compliant ___ unfeasible ___ obstinate
13. Patois
___ beliefs ___ attitude ___ slang
14. Puissant
___ puny ___ powerful ___ paltry
15. Sagacity
___ wisdom ___ futility ___ inanity

16. Scintillated
___ shimmering ___ lethargic ___ stultified
17. Sycophant
___ furtive ___ toady ___ surreptitious
18. Vagrant
___ reputable ___ fraught ___ drifter
19. Victual
___ dispossessed ___ palatable ___ invigorating

Exercise 47-4: Etymologies Provide the list word described. (10 marks)

- _____ 1. Which list word comes from the Latin words *facere* meaning “to make” and *similis* meaning “alike” or “similar”?
- _____ 2. Which list word comes from the Latin word *emaciare* meaning “make lean, waste away,” deriving from *macies* meaning “leanness”?
- _____ 3. Which list word comes from the Greek word *askete*, meaning “monk”?
- _____ 4. Which list word comes from the Latin words *com-* meaning “together” and *sanguineus* meaning “of blood”?
- _____ 5. Which list word comes from the Latin word *victus* meaning “livelihood, food, sustenance”?
- _____ 6. Which list word comes from the Turkish word *saray* meaning “palace or “court”?
- _____ 7. Which list word comes from the Greek words *ge* meaning “earth” or “land” and *daiein* meaning “divide”?
- _____ 8. Which list word comes from the Latin words *ob* meaning “against” and *durare* meaning “harden” or “render hard”?
- _____ 9. Which list word comes from the Old French word *wacrer* meaning “to walk or wander”?
- _____ 10. Which list word comes from the Latin words *com-* meaning “together” and *glomerare* meaning “to gather into a ball”?

Exercise 47-5: Parts of Speech Fill in the blank with the correct word that fits the part of speech given. If there is no word for that part of speech, draw an 'X'. (15 marks)

- _____ 1. Verb form of anathema
- _____ 2. Two noun forms of ascetic
- _____ 3. Adjective form of consanguinity
- _____ 4. Adverb form of emaciated
- _____ 5. Noun form of geodesical
- _____ 6. Another noun form of lobotomy
- _____ 7. Noun form of munificent
- _____ 8. Noun form of obdurate
- _____ 9. Adjective form of sagacity
- _____ 10. Three adjective forms of stigmata
- _____ 11. Two plural noun form of vagrant

Exercise 47-6: Jumbled Words Unscramble the letters and/or phrases to create a list word. (15 marks)

- 1. Hate A Man: _____
- 2. Dear Sun: _____
- 3. Reenact Gloom: _____
- 4. Untying Casino: _____
- 5. Eel Central: _____
- 6. Came A Tide: _____
- 7. Chant Posy: _____
- 8. Male Ring: _____

- 9. Unfit Mince: _____
- 10. A Doubter: _____
- 11. Irate Raid: _____
- 12. Into Each: _____
- 13. Clone Unit: _____
- 14. Soiled Cage: _____
- 15. Ace If Slim: _____

Exercise 47-7: Bonus Questions!

1. (a) What is the English translation of the Latin phrase *Cognito Ergo Sum* ?

(b) Based on the translation of *Cognito Ergo Sum*, what does *Cognito Ergo Jaunteo* mean?

2. What is the English translation of the latin words *Ipsa facto*? _____

3. "Remorseless, lecherous, treacherous, kindless villain" is a literary allusion used in Bester's novel

(a) Who wrote it? _____

(b) In what literary work? _____

Exercise 47-8: Creative Writing

If you could jaunte, where and when would you go? Write a description of the jaunte experience and the scene that follows...

SCI-FI FYI!

Alfred Bester is a *Babylon 5* character played by Walter Koenig. He is a senior Psi Cop and a recurring antagonist in the series. J. Michael Straczynski named the character after the science fiction writer Alfred Bester, since telepathy is a recurring theme in his work (most notably *The Demolished Man*).

Unit by Mary Buse, May 2010