“Black Snake” literal reading Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Per\_\_\_

1. What literally happens in these lines?

2. What is literally described in these lines? Who is “he”? What simile is used?

3. What literally happens in these lines? Who is “him”?

4. What is literally described in these lines? Who is “he”? What two similes are used?

5. What is the speaker literally doing? Who is “him”? What does she think about as she does it?

6. All of the “its” at the beginning of these lines refer to something in the previous sentence: “Yet under / reason burns a brighter fire, which the bones / have always preferred.” Does “it” refer to “reason”, “brighter fire”, or “bones”?

7. Each of these sentences expands on what this “it” is or does.

A. What does sentence A say “it” is?

B. What does sentence B say “it” says, and to whom does “it” say that thing? What does the word “oblivion” mean?

C. What does sentence C say that “it” is?

D. What does sentence D say that “it” does?

E. Based on your answers to all these questions, how would you define “it”?

8. I’ve divided the poem into a top and bottom part with a jagged line. Which part involves more literal action and which part involves more reflection on the literal action?

9. What is a one or two word subject of the poem?

10. What is a one or two sentence explanation of what the poem says about this subject? (This is the meaning of the work as a whole).

“Picnic, Lightning” literal reading Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Per\_\_\_\_

1. What things are possible in these lines? Do these things literally, physically happen in this poem?

2. Where do safes mostly drop from rooftops and flatten pedestrians?

3. What three things are possible in these lines (one of these things is referred to as “it”)? Do these things literally, physically happen in this poem?

4. What is the “message” in this line? What does being “delivered from within” mean? (This question may be easier to answer after answering # 5).

5. What two things that may possibly happen are described in these lines. What two things are they? What two literary devices are used to describe these things? Do these things literally, physically happen in this poem?

6. What does “This” refer to?

7. What is the speaker doing?

8. Which set of lines is literally, physically happening in the poem, A or B?

9. When is “Then”? In other words, what is “Then” referring to?

10. What three “marvels” does the speaker describe in these lines?

11. Why are those things “marvels” and the blue of the wheelbarrow “wilder” the clouds “brighter” now, at this point in time—in other words “Then”?

12. What is the speaker literally, physically doing here? What does the “rasp of the steel edge against a round stone” allude to?

13. What is literally being described here? How does it relate to the allusion from question 12?

14. I’ve divided the poem into a top and bottom part with a jagged line. Which part involves more literal action

and which part involves more reflection?

15. How does the epigraph relate to the poem?

16. What is a one or two word subject of the poem?

17. What is a one or two sentence explanation of what the poem says about this subject? (This is the meaning of the work as a whole).