The Ghost of Oscar Wilde speaks with fellow Irishmen—
their ghosts or their dreaming selves.
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* The Mysties *

Irish Matters

The portrait is of Lady Hazel Lavery as Cathleen ni Houlihan. Oil canvas (1923) by her husband, painter Sir John Lavery. (This image frequently appears on Irish bank notes.)
The Mysties

Who knows the Misteries of the Twelve?
The mystery-eyed, whom I shall call
The Mysties, in the moistening pall
Of Erin’s mist they delve, they delve.

The rich green turf of darksome dells,
The sway of strong druidic trees
Are the seeds of their Misteries.
The rainbow’s gold. The Book of Kells.

For centuries in the Land of Youth
They sojourned with Usheen, and when
His feet touched Irish earth again,
They withered, too, into the truth.

They heard of Patrick’s Purgatory,
The cave of Hell. They heard him say
‘Twas where their souls would burn one day,
But they did not believe his story.

Ash-plant in hand o’er fields they tread,
These Mysties of the Celtic Twilight.
(You cannot see them in a dry light.)
Tear-moistened are their eyes, and red.

From Tara Hill these Bards are calling,
And wheeling hawks give answering cries,
While down the dark and wintry skies,
Bright pieces of a star are falling.
A Correction. A Conversation with a Dubliner

In my cell at night there is some leisure-time for reading. One night a sort of delirium comes over me: as I look down at a collection of Pater’s essays in my hand, I see instead a volume entitled *Ulysses*, and looking inside I notice the date of publication: 1922! With unusual alacrity, even for me, I read the thing through. It appears to be some sort of novel, set in Dublin, and I find myself alternately fascinated and repelled. Fascinated by the flow of the characters’ thoughts, which go on unencumbered by quotation marks and sometimes without punctuation; repelled by the graphic descriptions of low bodily functions and a general air of lower-class squalour. But having read the book in its entirety, I cannot help but be impressed. That it was evidently written by a fellow Dubliner, and depicts places I remember fondly from my childhood, also inclines me favourably towards what in others ways represents a Realist aesthetics entirely antithetical to mine. The conviction takes hold of me—surely I am dreaming—that I am a ghost, that the time is the mid-1920’s, and that the author of the novel, James Joyce, a brash fellow with a defiant brogue, is conversing with me. He takes particular issue with certain opinions imputed to me regarding this *Ulysses* in a book by one Hester Travers Smith (née Dowden) of the Society for Psychical Research: *Psychic Messages from Oscar Wilde* (1923). Mr Joyce is himself dreaming, perhaps, and somehow our dreams have converged on what theosophists call the astral plane. Am I clairvoyantly looking into the future? Or am I, in fact, a ghost?

1.

Most Irish of all Irishmen,
   Devoutest bibulist! Ah, may
   I call you Jimmy for a day?
Most certainly you mayn’t. Good, then,

It’s settled: Jimmy you shall be!
   You make the English language as
   Drunk as you are in the cracked glass
Of sibylline crapulosity.

What, Oscar, ‘s in a name? The ‘Spear
   O’ God’? A shaky spear to shtick
   Saint George-the-Dragon with? Gay-lick
   ‘Deer-Lover’? (Ah, dear lover, dear!)

Niamh your dam, Oisin your sire,
   A faerie child, ungainly elf.
   What vain pretence, to play the self-
Infatuated golden lyre!

From TirnaNog you hailed, the ever-
   Green land where dwell the deathless young.
   The airy lightness of your tongue
   Came from a stone that made you clever,

A stone ye kissed, a stone ye licked,
   Plain as a doormat, but it casts
   A charmi-dizzy spell that lasts
   Until the whimsy-bubble’s pricked.
   A dig at my poem, ‘Charmides’
   and its somewhat gauche eroticism.
Green blarneyman of Doublin' Town,
So fool of posey, oh, so full
Of boysie! Eire-is-ponce-abel
Chicain pulled your cloudcastle down.

O two-toned green desire that dare
Not speak its name in England or
In Eire: ire on either shore
Is raised by a Uranian pair!

A slim-guilt youth turned Dorian grey.
Soiled letterature, creased, dog-eared words
Lost the light touch when you crossed swords
With Curseon: how could you unsay

Your pose-proems and the rent-boys' dirty
Testi-money? Your flippancy
Flip-fopped—and you claiming to be
A man of all of nine-and-flirty

Prone to Playtonic love affairs!
A pair o' doxies and a maid
Spoke you much ill, but you betrayed
Yourself with your grand, silly airs.

A simian Joker's card incensed you.
With no full deck you dared to play
The Marquer of Queens and Cains. But they
Who bore the witnesses against you,

The sly solicitors, informers,
Detectives (for a Littlechild
Shall lead them), they'd sleeved up the Wilde
Card and the aces. How enormous

The consequences of convictions
For convicts whom the laws convince
It is a game one never wins,
Publicly living private fictions,

Romans à clef with all the names
Spelt out in boldface in the margins!
Your wrists decked with the police sergeant's
Manacles, you suspect the game's

Most likely up when led away
From the Cadogan's hock-and-seltzer.
Justice! What thought for Beauty melts her
Heart? Two more 'hands' or trials you play

Edward Carson, a classmate of mine
at Trinity College, successfully defended
Queensberry during his
libel trial, in part by cross-examining
me with all the bitterness of an old
friend. To his credit, he refused to
join the prosecution when I became the
defendant in the two subsequent trials.

The name of the private detective hired
by Queensberry to track down witnesses.
Until the tainted jury votes
That you shall don what’s all the vogue
Where you go: arrows, scapegoat-rogue-
Wear. Ariel weeps. Caliban gloats.

I mourn what violent silence tombed
Your voice, glib jackadandyline.
O scar that was your mouth! That fine
Friendsy of languish, sexiled, doombed!

But tell me that you didn’t say
Those things that Hester Travers says
You said about my book, I prays,
That book about a Dublin day.

2.
Ah, Hester Travers Smith! I know
The woman. She writes silly lies
About me. What vulgarities
She claims I uttered, crude and low!

Travers... Another with that name,
A young woman, a curious sort,
Once dragged my parents into court.
She told those lies that brought such shame

Upon my father—who, it’s true,
Was a philanderer, but whose
‘Victims’ did naught they did not choose.
For libel did this Mary sue.

Now here’s another Travers, lying
About another Wilde.—Yis, two
Mistraversers transducing you
And yours, begob! So are ye trying

To say ye didn’t much despise
The navel I adamned th’Yinglish world
Withal, ye would not have it hurled
Gehenna-words?—To my surprise,

In fact, I was impressed. (My taste
Must seem to you so antiquated!)
This monument you signed and dated
Rises before us pre-defaced
With the graffiti of minute
Particulars of reality.
No Realist I, but when I see
Another genius, I salute.

Why did you shame our Ireland
With this low scandal? Our poor nation
Already has a…reputation.
Say why you stooped to kiss the hand

Of the English aristocracy.
And why for boys you shamed your art,
And pleasures fleeting as a f*rt.
I lived a life of poverty,

I gave me all-and-sundry to
A book that will stare down the ages,
Though prudery knits its brows and rages.
It is obscene in places, true,

But so is life, below the waist.
In print you were a toff, your prose
Wore a top hat and fancy clothes;
In life you were a satyr, chased

Poor renters, gave them cigarette cases
And dropped them like smoked cigarettes
When you grew bored. Starved household pets
Are treated better! Do their faces

Not haunt you, these poor children of
The working class you airily
Exploited? And your wife, does she
Speak to you ever of the love

That you betrayed? Your sons, yes, they
Whom you so casually forsook,
Whose happy childhoods you took,
I wonder what they have to say?
January 28, 1939
Death of Yeats

Yeats:
I took too little care of this!
Mosaic-stiff, hierarchical
Byzantium was my all in all,
Aristocratic dreams my bliss,

Disdain for lowly shepherds, scorn
For mere democracy, derision
Of any thought that was not Vision—
How ugly are the gates of horn

Through which a dream occult comes true!
The Nightmare clothes itself in steel.
The Focke’s gyre, the muddy wheel,
The barking columns marching through

The waste they make, and call it war!
Did I will this in dreams, do I
Bear some responsibility?
‘Love, and do battle’! There they are!

I can see past the temporal
Horizon far enough to say
The Malebranche are at play
In parachutes. (O second Fall!)

Rough beast born not in Bethlehem
But in the bloody bedlam made
Of Europe! The goose-step parade
Approaches Poland. Who will stem

The blood-dimmed tide? Don’t let your second
Sight trouble you too much. I think
This Malacoda’s doomed to sink,
When the final tally is reckoned,

Beneath the weight of his own evil.
Hell’s Valkyries will sniff their meal,
Stave in the door, though made of steel,
And back to his own natural level
Spirit him on their wingèd horses.
The Antichrist, a small man, would
Be Satan himself if he but could,
And will be, till the free world forces

Back this subaltern to his real
And stinking place where he has rank,
Poking with fork the pitchy tank,
Guffawing as the grafters squeal.
The Question Mark of Giacomo

Let us turn back the clock a little. It is 13 January, 1941. Joyce’s death mask floats before me. He has not yet left his body. Beneath the mask floats a curious pen-and-ink portrait of the author.

1. To the Mask

One night I’d like to see you do
Your spider-dance (those rubbery legs!)
Or lay a clutch of Orphic eggs
And pigeon-brood o’er the vast Brou-

Haha of too much world and, Lord!
So little time to have fun with
It all, playing the archi-smith
Of shapes and myth-scapes of the Word.

Ah, forging uncreated souls
Takes so much time that he could sulk an
Eon over the task, poor Vulcan!
Blackened by smoke, poking the coals.

An embryonic something possible
Gestates into a certain boy’s
Foetus, which grows into James Joyce,
Who tries and achieves the Colossible

And leaves behind a plaster mask’s
Daedal detail and rigour, real
Though dead to what it cannot feel,
Sleeping the questions that it asks.

2. To the Portrait

A friend said you looked like a question
Mark when you stood bent over in
The street, and so César Abin,
Under your scrupulous direction,

Presents you, concave as your face,
Stooped, the world at your feet, balanced
Over that ball, discountenanced
And fretful in such empty space.

Plurality of worlds. Your martyred hero Bruno.
Brouhaha: a fascinating French word, from
the cry of the false clergy in mediaeval plays,
perhaps ultimately from the Hebrew, ‘barukh habba’, ‘blessed be the one who comes’.

Paul Léon.

A Spanish artist commissioned by the Jolases
to draw Joyce for their journal, transitions
in honour of his fiftieth birthday.
Is it a seal-trick in reverse?
Is it your mind’s trick-seal balancing
The world? You sum up, at a glancing
Angle, the twirl of what occurs

Under your soles on such a massive
Scale. But your large brain’s microscopically
Focused on Dublin’s vivid, topically
Specific darkness. Being compassionate,

Dispassionately written in
To what you fret gigantically
Over, you weigh the puzzling tally
Of what has come or might begin

To come of it, in the great scream
Of things, and silence of the void
Geometries a paranoid
God ciphers with stars and a Dream.

But you see through no-coloured glasses,
Black spectacles for one half-blind
With pen as seeing eye, whose mind
Surpasses, somehow, all that passes.

Your derby hat is black in mourning
For your old father; it is cold,
You yourself prematurely old,
Cobwebbed, poor, in patched trousers. Turning

And turning keeps the world, suspended
Beneath the slouching Titan mass of a
Sentence suspended, of a Passover.
You are the world’s self-doubt, befriended.

But, egoist, your self-assertion
Of a long hesitation’s poise
Unsteadily standing, makes you joy’s
Grieved father and orphan. Your desertion

From the black capital of the only
Ireland in the world, is it
Not vigil for the Infinite
Word you made pun of? It is lonely.

‘No, doubt is the thing…Life is suspended
in doubt like the world in the void’. —Joyce

His daughter Lucia has sunk into madness.
3. What Ho, Bernardo!

You come not carefully upon
  Your hour, but ah, so punctually
Untimely! Watching tipsily
Not less than Everything—how gone,

Going, and going to be—: high sentry,
  What strength you show in wavering, posed
So dubiously thus, Blue-Nosed
Comedian of the twentieth century!

Make that ‘half-century’, for the shifty,
  Makeshift and shiftless fellow here
Depicted in such shabby gear,
This spendthrift tippler’s naught and fifty.

Doubtless you have just micturated
  In some shadowy alleyway.
For this relief much thanks, you say,
And take the watch. In your elated

Dejection you seem quite transcendent
  Of both despair and hope. To ask
The darkness, Who’s there? was your task,
Sainte-homme, world’s crooked papal pendant.

Of course you haven’t really died,
  You are still gloriously neurotic.
No, more, you are metempsychotic.
You are Mithras stepping outside

The cave of the known universe
  Of language into a transcendent
Space, and entirely independent,
In a hat black as any hearse.

Behind you you have left the broken
  Eggshell; the serpent weaves among
The wreckage like the grief-tune sung
By Orpheus, in gone love’s token.

Yes, the poor clown-god seems quite lonely,
  Being the giant that he is,
Suspended in a vast abyss.
’Tis a grand curse, to be the Only.
Step out of this ecphrasis, clastic
God, in default of every icon,
And with no anvil here to strike on
Save the entirely Phantastic!

4. Rebirth, as Portrait, of the Mask:
   He Becomes his Inquirers

How madly you enjoyed your madness,
You whom I shall dub Sir Reality.
The evil of the eye, its malady,
The dimming of primeval gladness,

The fading of epiphany,
   Reversed in re-illumination,
   Reveal their own regeneration.
Cold mask, let us be ritually

Punctilious. I hold these strong
   Spirits before your nose, to wake
   The Finnegan in you, and make
   You live again. Breathe deep and long.

How pleasant, dear, to see your nose
   Turn blue! Before it shines that star
   You followed. What you were you are;
   It was but a light, pleasant doze.

5. Asleepius, you only make
   The sleeper sleepier. But I’m
   A sort of something—does it rhyme
   With ‘fake’?—ah, yes, I am a-wake.

*     *     *

Yes, let me like a soldier fall.
   Brave manly hearts confer my doom.
   And say, who stand before my tomb,
He like a soldier fell. O all

My shame and all my glory tell
   Who only asked of my proud race
   To die the last, nor in disgrace,
And say, He like a soldier fell.

His eyes open.

The death mask vanishes. Joyce
   in his astral body assumes his
   position, hunched over the world
   in the now-luminous portrait.

A garbled version of ‘Let Me Like a
Soldier Fall’. The rolled music sheet is
   shown protruding from Joyce’s trouser
   pocket in this made-to-order drawing.
   (Mithras, the Roman soldier’s god!)

In Mental Fight!
Awake for Giacomo

Jim, stood up in his coffin, opens his eyes to a ‘surprise’ wake and welcome party on his officially joining the Posthumous Club, calling for all the uninhibited festivity of a child’s birthday celebration. We are at Rossetti’s house, with many other guests at the night’s proceedings. Jim refuses to play the ‘stiff’, and somewhat rowdily participates.

1.
This is your wake, dear Jim, your shiva.
Shiva, god of the wild west wind,
Quicken a new birth of his mind
On the other side of the river.

May your wit be with you for ever.
Fear not the whiteness of the light.
It shines for you both day and night
On the other side of the river.

The mast is fall’n, the timbers shiver
And you shall come again no more.
Things are not as they were before
On the other side of the river.

* 
Here’s to me, boyos, ‘twas a good run
If a short one. I had some fun,
Blazed like the sun, but that is done.
Dead, dust-dry-dun is me old Blood Run.

2.
The Heraclitean stream will flow on
And flow on and so on and so on
This earth weeds grow on, stars will glow on
A man who can’t go on, who’ll go on.

This little ember that we blow on…
A sort of existential Koan,
This prayer to Nothing and to No One;
It goes, ‘I can’t go on, I’ll go on’.

Go on. No, thanks. I sed me peaze.
I mind me queues. Belacqua’s part
Is to sit on his *rse and f*r
And read D*nte. Whereat I ceaze.

A soused, thirtyish disciple of Joyce’s, Samuel Beckett, who is actually dreaming this entire episode—a pickled dream he will forget—with Irish impetuosity interjects himself into the proceedings with the following quatrains. Rather stuck on the one rhyme, I think. And as for his crude language: it is most offensive. But no one could dispute his cricketing skills.

A staring silence greets this outburst. I break it.
You do possess a morbid verve,
My dear. You find life meaningless,
And clown at the edge of the abyss.
To do this takes a certain nerve.

And to join the Resistance: plucky!
For the Gestapo like to play
With pain. This time I got away.
Next time I may not be so lucky.

“Lucky”… An interesting name for a character in a dark comedy, don’t you think?” I say to Sam, taking him aside.
Perhaps he will recall this part of the dream.


Swinburne:
This riddle is thorny as a thicket:
It begins with ‘ends in beginnings’
And it ends with ‘runs in big innings’.
Is it cricket, this sticky wicket?

In the Big Innings was the Word
Struck hard, and it made little puns
And we scored many riverruns
That day, unheard-of many scored.

The Word in its beginnings was spun
Round and around to make a whirled
Little ball that we call the world.
The Word in its beginnings was Pun.

In the beginning was the Word
Spun round and round until a world
Was worlded by the Word, was whirled
Into a Word-Thing, as it were’d.

And Word is’d, are’d and was’d and were’d
And will-be’d, all at the same time.
It was a jealous paradigm.
With neither rhyme nor reason, Word
Called itself World. It was acutely
Ambivalent: was it small or vast?—
It made the present tense, the past
Perfect, the future absolutely

Conditional. And things all day
Heard voices telling them to act
Or suffer. Some thought, ‘I’m a fact,
And that is all there is to say’.
Whilst others thought, ‘Perhaps there’s more
Than one way to be seen?’ And doubt
Filled them, for they could not make out
Quite what it was that they stood for.

And others, still, refused to stand
For anything at all. Things changed.
Vowel-shifty, moody and estranged
They grew, but the Word kenned and canned.

AGREE, it told the words, OBEY.
But verbs showed dubious aspects
Whilst nouns declined to be objects.
And grammar suffers to this day

From loss of glamour, its chaste mind
In the big U of ambiguity
Cupped, nouns corrupt in superfluity
Of contexts thoughtlessly declined.

In Buggy Innings the Beguine’s
The Last Word in Beginnings, buggering
Description is its hugger-muggering,
God Himself knows not what it means.

[Malthusian linguistics?
Swinburne, tossing fistfuls of multi-
coloured beggar’s velvet into the air.
Soused, le Duc arrogantly usurps my
prerogative as giver of stage-directions:

Ah, well, his left leg is
possibly a Greek poem.]
4. Oscar:
The Holy Ghost is but a dove, bird
Of one stripe; Holy Spirit can
Be goldfinch, crested grebe, toucan
And several species of the lovebird.

It is a Lovebird now, the Holy
Spirit, ἀγα̟όρνις, that’s fluttering
Above Jim’s head. A Joy past uttering
Desires to grace him, heart and solely,

In AGAPORNO Thanatology.
Jim in his writing spoke the world.
Like wings the pages are unfurled
And fly into eternity!

5. Jim as Cardinal Newman:
I speak on the Holy Ghost’s behalf.
He is no showman costume-changing:
He is Himself, though widely ranging,
And never, never does He laugh.

He trumps the allusions of the Holy
Spirit.—Then worship we the Dove,
The Only-Bird, the Bird of Love,
Not to be parroted, but solely

Authoritative, overflying
All witticism and all psittacism,
Who will not tolerate one bit a schism
Of any kind, and no denying

The truth through pettifogging bluff,
But the Confession of the Sinner!—
[O:] What, can’t the Beggar share the Dinner?
One Last Supper is not enough.

The Spirit spends His time conversing
Idly in any tongue, in chaffing
A bit, even, to set you laughing.
As mockingbird, he’s known to sing

A midnight medley of the day’s
Quota of magna opera,
Warbling an insomnia
Of references and turns of phrase.
6. Jim’s Sermon on the Pentecost

Let us repeat what Paul, in all
His heteroglossy raiment, spoke.
The giddying Dove beaked him. Out broke
A frenzy polyglottical

To oinopopontificate
Sur le péché, with agenbit
Of coscienza infinite
Für unsere Moralität.

Dove-Word is Word intensified
To hyper-sacred frequencies.
What to us sounds like gibberish is
Raw God in all His naked hide.

Then we’re all ears. Tell us what Paul
Said, that you’d have us all repeat?
GANDWANANANDA DROOPLE DREEP.
Now this is not obscure at all:

GANDWANANANDA, clearly, is
The pure primordial origin.
We DROOPLE-DREPT: we fell in sin.
Regained must be that distant bliss.

Repeat, my children, after me:
Gandwanananda droople dreep.
Gandwanananda droople dreep.
GANDWANAN is the verb, ‘to be’.

ANDA means, ‘In a state of bliss’.
O do not droople, never dreep!
And let the Dove hear not a peep
That is not Praise whose Praise is His!

Oscar:
Though I don’t droople, now and then,
I must confess, I’ve dreeped, or drept.
And many a time for this I’ve wept
And then I’ve gone and drept again.

Oh! te absolvo, fili. Dreep
No more, henceforth, nor droop, my son.
And now, God bless us everyone.
The Wake is nodding off to sleep.
Ulysses Revisited

1.
I have read through Ulysses once
   Again: I am even more impressed.
You and Marcel are much the best
Of Flaubert’s wayward modern sons.

Begob, my dream is a nightmare
   From which I am trying to awake.
   You’ll put me back to sleep! I take
It you’re abashed by such a rare

Compliment? But you write resplendent
   Prose! A cracked looking glass you place
   Before the Bard’s own gibbering face.
A prank so cheekily transcendent,

Getting the English language drunk!
   Linguistic Saturnalia
   Striking blows for Hibernia!
Yet, from behind it all, a monk

Peers out, ascetic young aesthete.
   ‘A god, paring his fingernails’.
   (That comes from me.) The prim Muse pales
At the soiled wonders of the street,

But down that street your novel guides
   Her, sights that would have sickened Zola
   You show her, as you give the soul a
Tour of its animal insides.

2.
That June day glared, and challenged you
   To render it, down to the most squalid
   Details, as a Carlylean solid.
But is not Bloom, the Wandering Jew

Reading at stool his Titbits tale,
   A sort of icon to remind us
   How soon such things will be behind us,
Mixed with the dung and gilded stale?
And yet 'tis a canonic Scene,
Recorded for eternity.
It resists ideality
In vain, the smear of what is mean.

It is swept up into the vast
Sun-saturated canvas of
A day in Dublin’s life, whose tough
Presence is flooded by the past

As by a Liffey of the soul
That carries all that is inside us
Of prayers and curses, that detritus,
To the ocean of the cleansing Whole;

The Akashic record of that single
Sixteenth of June, 1904,
Silver-and-dross of Dublin ore,
Where the inner and the outer mingle

In one half-chance, complex vibration
Somehow imprinted on the ether
Of vital oddnesses together
Forming the song of their occasion

Intricately attuned to which,
With vastly listening ear, one sings
The motley anthem of these things
Whose very poverty is rich

With scents his intuition noses.
Lives of the living and the dead
He lives and dies, for he has read
The scripts of our metempsychoses.

(A schizophrenic, Carl Jung thinks,
But diving conscious into water
Wherein Lucia, your poor daughter,
In helpless madness merely sinks.)

3.
Realism, pushed far enough—
Too far, that is—yields to the pull
Of the Phantasmagorical.
Among strange diamonds in the rough

When you and Nora first 'stepped out'.

'You' becomes 'one' becomes 'he' becomes 'we'.
A polyphonic ear hears collective Rabelaisian speech.

He should have said, 'scherzophrenic'.
We enter what is truly real:
The mind, half-dreaming what it sees
In haphazard epiphanies,
The taste and touch and smell and feel

Of existence as a lived process,
Moment-by-moment. This atomic
Viewpoint is mapped, in ways both comic
And grand (as in ‘met him pikehoses’),

Onto the overarching myth
Of the Odyssey. The past, the Great
Tradition, shadows forth a fate,
An archetypal monolith

To which this day’s experience
Adds its impromptu gargoyles. Mind
Passes through Overmind. Refined
And gross, intricate and immense,

Eccentric, yet of massive poise,
This solid dream, this sight-seeing vision
You render with such mad precision
Gives madness reason to rejoice.

You consecrate life’s daily mess
As artist’s bread, down to the least
Particulars and bubbling yeast
Of language-making-consciousness.

Ulysses is a smear of gold
We find God-like details enough in
To fill cathedrals. (One must roughen
The texture or the truth won’t hold,

The truth, I mean, of mental realms.)
Your ear, ah, supernatural!
Catches murmurs innumerable
Of bees in immemorial elms,

When that’s the note you wish to sound.
In ‘The Oxen of the Sun’ your style
Runs from the Latin to Carlyle.
Indeed, what echo is not found
Of literary ancestors,
   Most from an alien, conquering race?
For you, pastiche is at once grace
   And vengeance on those who by force
Stole from us our good Gaelic tongue,
   But in whose language we must speak
And write, or else, resigned to weak
Provincial status, dwell among

The marginal, behind green doors
   Weave cottage marginalia,
Languishing in Hibernia,
   All our subversive metaphors

Hidden, like Blake, but in the dense
   Brogue of an ancient wizard speech
We would, like good Saint Francis, preach
To ears that catch nor style nor sense.

With syntax to inordinate
   Degrees you play, of which the meaning
Often resembles more a keening
   Than a (to logic or dictate

Of fact with reference which one
   Can easily grasp) significance.
Nothing in style escapes your glance,
   With life it rings in unison.

4.
Imagination can possess
   The streaky bacon of a life;
Through the texture, as with a knife,
   Cut to the grain of consciousness.

Mid-day traffic. Businessmen feeding.
   The potted meat. The scrotum-tightening
Sea, the wind-driven breakers whitening.
Bloom in his silks, or Stephen reading:

We know them by their style of thinking.
   How the sun dapples with its light
The schoolmaster, the anti-Semite.
   The rumor of sedition, winking.

‘I am hid’, writes Blake writes in an
annotation. To be ‘apocryphal’ in both
Graeco-Roman and Hebraic traditions
means to be ‘hidden’ or ‘hid’.—[Mr V]
The Cyclopean Citizen
Hurling his tin. Gerty, who raises
Lewdly her skirt, the lame girl. Blazes

You get inside our heads... What is
Home without Plumtree’s Potted Meat?
We know the answer: Incomplete.
And with it? An abode of bliss.

(Your Stuart Gilbert certainly
Wrote you a fine advertisement,
A book of which, do you repent?
I do, I do, most bitterly.)

It ends—to anticipate—with Yes.
As well him as another, call
Him lover or husband, Yes to all
This, melon-buttocked Molly says.

5.
Yer deepraised voice is greatful to me,
For all of yer profoundust snobbing.
It pains me, thinking of you sobbing
There, in your prisonce, gland and gloomy.

But I owe you no reverence,
O Moon-Queen of a Beardsley drawing.
I find you less than overawing.
I make of you whatever sense

I knead, to bake my WIP, a ball

Of doughy smear-sinification,
Accusative of accusation.
I make you anyone at all.

(Ah, here comes everybody! I’m
Aware of it: quite Shandean.
The plot, though, as far as I can
Make out, is: Once. A pun. A time.)

To appropriate is exquisite,
To be appropriated, more
Exquisite still. Come, dear: have your
Way with me. I don’t mind a bit.

‘Work in Progress’.
The finished work:
Finnegans Wake.
—[Mr V]
Far from a solemn archetype,
   I am a posture, a position,
   A trend, a manner, a transition—
   A Tyger, in short, of any stripe

One of your stripe may postulate.
   Primal infinitive of a sign
   That signifies its own decline
   Into declension and cognate…

Yes, mighty conscience-forging smithy,
   Go forth, our Hero Daedalus!
   (Though in your WIP, dear, some of us
    Might wish you a wee bit more pithy.)

All you wild geese of Irish letters:
   With Joyce on point you fly to where
    I foundered. Pierce the cold blue air
   In glory, free of English fetters!
The Story-Teller at Fault

As told by Mr James Joyce.

1.
Aengus, ‘tis the great traveller
   You are! No tellin’ what landscapes
   You’ve passed through in your antic scrapes,
   You always seemin’ here and there

And nowhere. It’ll be a cold
   Day in Hell when the likes of me
   Can get away with what you see
   Your way through, begob, but you’re bold!

2.
The story-teller’s out of tales—
   That’s where the mischief takes its start:
   The inspiration’s left his art,
   And that’s a fault for which one fails.

He gambles with a beggar, loses
   His property, his wife, his proper
   Semblance, in all things comes a cropper
   Until among the herbs he noses,

Hare-brained in a hare’s body, he is,
   His own hounds set upon him by
   His own wife. Then by wizardry
   The goods are gone; who knows where she is?

But wife and goods and all are stowed
   With care in an alternative
   Dimension, where we shall them leave
   For now, for on the wingèd road

Go story-teller and beggar-man,
   The teller invisible, but seeing all:
   ‘Tis in O’Donnell’s Keep (it being all
   Around them dark, where Red sits wan)

They are, beggar and unseen fellow.
   But he is Aengus of the Bluff,
   Of tricks the god has store enough,
   And Red has store of coins of yellow

Hump, croupe, a kind
   of printing press.

(The architecture of ‘literary space’?)
To pay him to provoke his laughter. It’s
But a wee thread we’re speaking of
The beggar spins to heaven above,
But up he sends a hare, and after it’s

A hound he sends, and then a lad,
O’Donnell’s lad, to stop the hound
As tries to eat the hare. To ground
He pulls the eaten hare, the bad

Dog and O’Donnell’s boy, asleep.
He chops his head off for neglect.
But sure he can him resurrect,
Such spells are in a wizard’s keep,

But that will cost the king more gold,
Which paid, the lad is in his health
Restored, the beggar has his wealth,
And, well, there’s more that could be told.

3.
How they continued till ‘twas in
The King of Leinster’s court they were,
And many times they hang him there,
The beggar, but he out of thin

Air re-appears alive and hale:
*Is it me-self you’re looking for?*
He asks the guard, and to restore
The king’s dead sons he does not fail,

And to the teller he reveals
Himself as Aengus, he that’s of
The imaginary land of Bluff;
And wife and goods, like one who heals

A wound in space and time that death
Has made, the god brings back to life.
*Bless you, but you can keep the wife!*
As in the abstraction of a breath

The god had hid them in the space
Of telling, whence he now retrieves all,
And cheers the teller and relieves all
From the suspense with which he plays.
And so the teller’s family’s
  Restored to him, with his position:
  For the king craves the repetition
Of that one story, for it is

All the other stories, isn’t it?
  This poor Job-out-of-work who lost
  It all, receives more than his cost,
The treasure of the Aengus wit!

He did him a good turn or two
  And so the god of trick and frolic
  Cures the king, sleepless, melancholic,
And so the teller’s dreams come true.

4. The Sequel

The teller thus his lot secures
  As good in life, though not as great.
  But could one come, at length, to hate
Re-telling the tale that ensures

The goodness, the insipid good
  That is one’s luck in life, and lot
In the great lottery one has not
Yet won, but thinks that one still could,

If given half a chance, an angle?
  And so the man resents the god
  Who saddles him with but one odd
Matryoshka doll, and lets it dangle

From his hand or sit on his shoulder
  And be his hump, his Hugo-esque
Trope of Romantic-Turned-Grotesque.
Never was butt of laughter older

Than what this god makes of him and
  His hump, his ‘legendary story’.
  A million of the things, bagorr! he
Has, does this Aengus, ain’t he grand?

And yet ‘tis but the one he gave
  Me, this Lord Aengus: beggarly
Indeed’s his generosity!
Is that how a god should behave?
So I’m the pony of one trick,
Mavrone! Not half as rich as Craysus,
And but a beast of burden. Jaysus!
This Aengus god half-makes me sick.

4. His Wife Scolds Him

A greedy troll guarding his vault!
So it’s not autographs you’re signing
These days, and on fine lobster dining?
Ingratitude’s a serious fault!

The Story-Teller:
Why don’t I have it printed, then?
There’s pots of gold in that, no less!
I’ll use old Cropper’s printing press.—
So the auteur takes up his pen

And is a famous literary man
Who has amours and duels in print
And makes himself another mint,
This little literary dairyman.

5. Epilogue: Haines (from Ulysses)

This fine Hibernian trickster is
Quite the old hand. Impressive, very!
True Celtic-twilight völkisch-fairy,
Eh what? I’m here for stuff like this.

Aengus chops off his head.
The Apocrypheosis of James Clarence Mangan as Related by One James Augusta Aloysius Joyce

The Judgment Hour must first be nigh,
Ere you can fade, ere you can die,
My Dark Rosaleen!—JC Mangan

1.
Fell Time, that greedy landlord Time,
   He takes starved children for his rent,
   And spinsters by their labour bent,
   And many a bone in many a rhyme

There is to pick with him! Among one’s
   Pet peeves, he greys my hair, he ploughs
   To earth the Woman with Three Cows
   And along come the tramplin’ young ones!

2.
Poor Mangan, he with the umbrella
   Carried about in driest weather,
   A singular fellow altogether,
   A needy sot, but he could tell a

   Story or two in golden phrases
   To make your red hair stand on end,
   ‘Twas few who cared to be his friend,
   A difficult man: I sing his praises.

   Behold him in your mind’s eye now,
   In his blue cloak and his blond wig,
   Green spectacles and a great big
   Witch hat that makes it work somehow,

   That whole mad-genius business.
   Among the world’s distinguished forgers
   He stands supreme, his work is gorgeous!
   Translated out of languages

   He did not know, attributed
   To non-existent poets, such as
   ‘Selber’ (his very self!) with touches
   Of greatness now appreciated,
But praise of little use to him
That’s dead these many more than twenty
Not very golden years. No plenty
He ever knew, his life was grim

And he obscure, and stone-cold dead
Like you at six-and-forty years:
Such was his lot. I’ve shed my tears
For him! An Gortya Mor, the dread

Famine, made him turn patriot
And put a fire into his verses
That on the English showered curses
For leaving the Irish poor to rot.

This man, an idol once of mine,
    Was taken by the cholera
    In all his weird regalia
In the year eighteen-forty-nine.

On his memorial let us hang an
Old ivy wreath, on Ivy Day,
And for his spirit let us pray,
The spirit of James Clarence Mangan!

3. Oscar:

Among the poets constellated
    In Heaven, though it may seem full,
There’s room for the Apocryphal
Who never were, but were translated!

‘Twenty Golden Years Ago’, a poem written by ‘Selber’—German for ‘self’, i.e., written by himself, James Mangan. How perverse of the man! Forgery is, of course, plagiarism in reverse. Right or wrong, immoral or imaginative, lawful play or a matter for the law… All these grave questions will be cleared up only with the coming of the Apocryphalypse.
The Good Green Land  
Yeats, Joyce and the Myst

1. The Song of the Faeries

Come home, Wilde Oscar, come home to the good green land of Eire!  
Than your father Usheen you have wandered further and longer by far.  
Great were your triumphs, and greater your trials! How sorrowful-weary  
And haggard your face is, and your grey eyes, how haunted they are!  
The unappeasable host, can you hear them, the legions of Faery?  
And the lone pipe, and the wheels of Cuchulain’s battle-car?

Now really, that’s a bit de trop.  
I’m not a Celtic Twilight man.  
My mind is cosmopolitan—  
Though I heard the sidhe-cry, long ago.

2. God is Crazy Jane

We both loved Beauty, Wilde, past right or wrong.  
We knew the truth of masks, that without strife  
Of contraries, as Blake knew, life is not life.  
I’m no believer. Intellect is as strong

As its capacity for doubt. It can  
And must remain a little sceptical  
Even confronted by the Illimitable  
In all its vast intimidating span—

To which a vast uncertainty responds  
In kind: that, too, is infinite, because  
The mind is so, being riddled by the loss  
Incurred with every gain. How cast in bronze

Or fix for-ever in mosaic azure  
And gold the hesitant and questioning  
Gesture of so mercurial a thing,  
Of all things the immeasurable measure?

My weakness and my strength, was my self-doubt:  
It made me waver where the hazel-tree  
Stood still, stand still when the horses of the sea  
Bid me turn wave and join their tumultuous rout.
When Niamh, let us call her, spirit of Youth,
Invited me to live beyond all age
In the green land of the Young, I turned the page
And read how one must wither into the Truth.

My verses were restless with a Celtic lilt,
For the heart that was in them was molten and fluid.
I gave to my dreams the names Rose and Druid
And saw the Druid vanish, and the Rose wilt.

God is a wanderer, too. Down in his least
Details he dwells, a beggar’s mask he wears,
And then a king’s. He climbs his winding stairs.
The Sexless Angel marries the Rough Beast.

The Intellect can never fully parse
That riddling grammar, speech of Crazy Jane.
Say God is wise, but Wisdom’s half-insane.
Our eyes see by the raging of the stars.

God is the Rose and the invisible Worm.
Riddle to riddle the truth-seekers range,
Seeking an island in the sea of change.
The island wanders, and the sea holds firm.

‘In dreams begin responsibilities’,
You wrote. Yet you were irresponsible,
In your heart’s core, and half-in-love with Hell.
That’s why I trust you. You stayed crazy-wise.

4. When I Was an Irish Rat

I’ve not been so be-rhymed since old Pythagoras’
Time, when—it has been falsely claimed—I was
An Irishrat. It wakes the rhythmic saws
Of Slumber’s all it does, this Myst mandragorous.

To meet Cathleen, a man must walk away.
To write of Mother Ireland, move to France.
If that sounds too much like the old Romance,
Make sure to die in Switzerland someday.

We all must suffer our metempsychotic break-
Downs, be the worm, the tree, the bee and the clover.
In my next life I’ll be no more a rover,
But spend my days in a cottage by the lake.
Oscar of the Cove
A Fantasy

PRISONER WILDE ESCAPES FROM READING
NATIONWIDE MANHUNT UNDERWAY
SENSATIONAL DETAILS OF PLAY-WRIGHT’S DARING BREAK-OUT. WHERE IS HE HEADING?

That’s up to you to guess. A thimble
Can be honed down into a saw.
Armour has chinks; doors and the law
Have cracks. Is this fact, or a symbol?
*

I joined the champions of the Cause,
If you must know: we agitated
For freedom from the ones we hated,
The English, and their tyrannous laws!

’Twas call to arms, and calls quite close
At times: bombs smuggled, weapons cached,
And police station windows smashed
Right under Dublin Castle’s nose.

You don’t believe a word of this,
Do you? Something so noble must
Be true! Then you’ll believe me just
A little if I speak of his,

I mean, The Oscar’s, thrilling deeds,
His famed great-coat, his sea-side lair,
His wayside tavern love affair?
And how he rides in shadow, and leads

His doughty friends from episode
To escapade in the Good Fight?
Bane of the English in the night,
We harass them on the high road.

Great Oscar of the Cove, they call me,
And Fighting Wilde, and Druid Bard.
Great are my exploits, Dears, and hard
The luck and troubles that befell me.

Music at this point, Mendelssohn’s
‘Fingal’s Cave’ Overture, perhaps.
We blow supply trains off the rails
Then to our hideaway withdraw,
   Where, warmed by fire and usquebaugh,
We tell each other the Old Tales.

I learn the harp, and sing in Erse
The deeds of Fingal and Oisin
   When Erin’s fields were grand and green,
Before we fell beneath the Curse.

I’m captured by the Authorities
   And sentenced to be hanged—but not
   Before a speech not soon forgot
By those who heard such words as these:

   Better to die than live in slavery!
   Before a crowd of thirty thousand
   I shout these fiery words, to rouse and
Inspire my fellows to new bravery.

Like a great Actor’s is my stance,
   And some weep tears who came to jeer.
I gladly lay my life down here
In Emmet’s name, and Ireland’s!

The perfect cue for my comrades
To burst in on the scene and snatch
   Me from the noose: too fast to catch
We ride to freedom. Well done, lads!

I am what we Irish call a seanachie.

Let no man write my epitaph; for as
no man who knows my motives
dare now vindicate them, let not
prejudice or ignorance, asperse
them. Let them and me rest in
obscurity and peace, and my tomb
remain uninscribed, and my
memory in oblivion, until other
times and other men can do justice
to my character. When my country
takes her place among the nations of
the earth, then and not till then, let my
epitaph be written.
*Hanged on a Comma*

*Roger Casement*

August 3, 1916.

Poor Roger Casement came to me that night
Sent from the gallows to the Great Beyond.
*Hanged on a comma,* said he, with a light
Disdain for Law so dexterously conned.

While I denounced the Rubber Barons of
Brazil, slave-drivers of the Indians,
I found the time to search for young men’s love.
Uranian rebels stand beneath two bans!

Don’t think the diaries they circulated
Were forgeries, though the Crown’s aim was malicious.
I was the man I was by nature fated
To be, like you, whom virtuously vicious
England also laid low. And as for libel,
Think what is said about us in the Bible!

---

In the months leading up to the Easter Rising of 1916, Casement had secretly persuaded the Germans to help arm the rebels. At his trial for treason, the prosecution had trouble arguing its case as his crimes had been carried out in Germany and the Treason Act of 1351 seemed to apply only to activities carried out on English (or, arguably, British) soil. A close reading of the Act allowed for a broader interpretation: the court decided that a comma should be read in the text, crucially widening the sense so that ‘in the realm [,] or elsewhere’ referred to where acts were done and not just to where the ‘King’s enemies’ might be.

—Mr V
Jim and I Drink Too Much

1. Now in Ulysses, what is that
   Elaborate machinery
   Of ancient Greek mythology?
   A whim. Ah hah! Pulled from a hat.

   From somewhere! Such a sturdy bubble!
   Well, keep your poor lay readers dizzy!
   The scholars, too, must be kept busy.
   And off the streets. And out of trouble.

   Your face is sunk into its centre.
   It is, I think, the crescent moon.
   Why don’t you sing me a folk tune?
   Does Beauty, Wilde, dwell in a renter?

   Does it pay rent? Beauty is free
   To those who can afford to win her.
   Nora, she found you a beginner…
   She never read your books, did she?

   The worthy Sir blunts not his needle.
   One of us must be Tweedledum,
   The other, Tweedledee. Or some
   Quarky half-other, Tweedledaedal?

2. In Zurich I made bold to found
   The English Players; we made our
   Debut upon the stage with your
   Earnest, you know. And through the sound

   Of the audience clapping you could hear me
   Shouting, ‘Hurrah for Ireland!’
   I yelled. ‘Poor Wilde was Irish, and
   So am I!’ Ah, you cheered, and cheer me!

   But the Wake, Jim…How many moons!
   I only wanted to amuse them.
   But some resent the way you use them
   As sounding-boards for loony tunes

   So he told young Nabokov.

   A global gloire de cénacle.

   Another round, please, barman.
   White wine for Jim, usquebaugh for me, in boggy Erin’s honour.

Proust and Joyce

Longtemps and Stately: two first words
Gestating in themselves the last.
Circle swells into sphere. Two vast Finales seed their opening chords.

Together, what do the words say?
Yes to Time. Time and its ‘it was’.
To music and to long applause
Let all things passing pass away!
Selected from your idiolect
With indiscriminate abandon.
What principle should a clown stand on?
The game’s in how the bits connect

If you connect them, which you may
In any warlock—what way what
So ever. A veritable smut
Barnacle.
Of possibilities, I’d say.

If you look past my stray obscenities
You’ll find a comic theologian
Behind the cosmic philologian.
Not Heraclitus, sir: Parmenides.

Enough about the cosmos, dear!
I’d sooner talk about cosmetics.
For τὸ καλὸν in Greek aesthetics
Is shapely, human-scaled and clear.

That is the view of an apprentice,
As I was in my Portrait. You
Will not achieve a real break-through
If you’re entirely compos mentis.

To work of fate, to quirk of art,
To quart of white wine and a quark
And the blind man who in the dark
Sees (what he sees there breaks his heart).

It breaks his heart and makes him laugh
And sets him deep where things begin
And Finneg an again within
His dream rears up like a giraffe.

On this sham rock I build my church,
For ‘tis not rock, ‘tis but a clover
That wears the blessing of my lover,
Sea-seeking in her endless search,

My Anna Livia Plurabelle.
She is a silver winding sheet,
A dew, imparting ah, such sweet
Sorrow! Let liquid Liffey swell
Beyond her banks and drench the air
With dream-times of a plural world!
See how the clover gleams, empearled
With Annamnesia’s Livia-wear?

Quoi? Pleur-t-il dans son coeur comme il
Pleut sur la mer? La Livia! Vive
En romans-fleuves, bel être! Live
The river of the wound you heal!

3.
Jim, dare we speak of Parnell, great
And tragic Parnell? How they turned
Against him, whose deeds should have earned
Him reverence? It was his fate,

In part, that prompted me to go
Abroad and speak a foreign tongue.
How could I live my life among
A race of people who could do

Such things to such a princely fellow?
Who’d fought so superhumanly
To give them back their dignity!
All for a harmless peccadillo…

Didn’t Gladstone call him the most
Remarkable man he’d ever met?
How soon our countrymen forget!
One moment he’s the nation’s toast,

The next: pariah. Ireland never
Produced a greater man, I claim,
And to our country’s lasting shame,
This hero, brave as he was clever,

The people jeered, while the priests gave
Smug sermons on his fall from grace.
A crowd threw quicklime in his face.
They drove him to an early grave!

As for old Glad-Eye, what a dance

He danced! He backed a Home Rule bill
He knew the House of Lords would kill,
And him there, standing with clean hands!

[For musical relief, sings and plays at the piano a Verdi medley. Plays opening theme of Beethoven’s last piano sonata, last movement: ‘The

How full of grace and invention is Mozart after the muscle-bound Beethoven.—James Joyce
donkey cart that goes to Heaven,’ as Thomas Mann characterised it.
The donkey draws the cart to Heaven,  
F*ring freely in his *rse-scent.  
Let hands be clasped, let knees be bent:  
Rise, incest smoke: the Heavens are Seven!

A cultish Celt, of Celtish cult  
Was A.E.I.O.U. McNulty,  
Known for his mysty difficulty  
(Pronounced with stress on the penùlt).

Our native accent’s out of joint.  
Saying’s the Irish way of seeing—  
Paycock, the Irish way of being  
A peacock. Aye, the pint’s the point.

4. Coda: Jim Looks into the Camera and the Near-Future

They’ll gather in the local pub, lick  
The foamy head from the beer mug  
And drink a toast. But me? I shrug.  
So Ireland is a REPUBLIC.

And still divided from itself  
North to South, violently Other,  
South to North. Barman, O me brother!  
A gallon o’ white wine from the shelf!
Musical Program

Page 1, Title Page

Dion Boucicoult (attr., probably dates from late 18th century), Wearing of the Green. Sung by John McCormack.

Page 14, The Question Mark of Giacomo

Wallace, Let Me Like a Soldier Fall. From the opera Maritana. Walter Widdop, tenor. Lawrence Collingwood, conductor.

Page 19, Awake for Giacomo

Finnegan’s Wake (trad. Irish pub song). The Chieftains.

Tim Finnegan lived in Walkin Street, a gentle Irishman mighty odd
He had a brogue both rich and sweet, an' to rise in the world he carried a hod
You see he'd a sort of a tipplers way but the love for the liquor poor Tim was born
To help him on his way each day, he'd a drop of the craythur every morn

Whack fol the dah now dance to yer partner around the flure yer trottres shake
Wasn't it the truth I told you? Lots of fun at Finnegan's Wake

One morning Tim got rather full, his head felt heavy which made him shake
Fell from a ladder and he broke his skull, and they carried him home his corpse to wake
Rolled him up in a nice clean sheet, and laid him out upon the bed
A bottle of whiskey at his feet and a barrel of porter at his head

Whack fol the dah now dance to yer partner around the flure yer trottres shake
Wasn't it the truth I told you? Lots of fun at Finnegan's Wake

His friends assembled at the wake, and Mrs Finnegan called for lunch
First she brought in tay and cake, then pipes, tobacco and whiskey punch
Biddy O'Brien began to cry, "Such a nice clean corpse, did you ever see,
Tim avourneen, why did you die?", "Will ye hould your gob?" said Paddy McGee

Whack fol the dah now dance to yer partner around the flure yer trottres shake
Wasn't it the truth I told you? Lots of fun at Finnegan's Wake
Then Maggie O'Connor took up the job, "Biddy" says she "you're wrong, I'm sure"
Biddy gave her a belt in the gob and left her sprawling on the floor
Then the war did soon engage, t'was woman to woman and man to man
Shillelagh law was all the rage and a row and a ruction soon began
Whack fol the dah now dance to yer partner around the flure yer trotters shake
Wasn’t it the truth I told you? Lots of fun at Finnegan’s Wake

Mickey Maloney ducked his head when a bucket of whiskey flew at him
It missed, and falling on the bed, the liquor scattered over Tim
Bedad he revives, see how he rises, Timothy rising from the bed
Saying "Whittle your whiskey around like blazes, t'underin' Jaysus, do ye think I'm dead?"

Whack fol the dah now dance to yer partner around the flure yer trotters shake
Wasn’t it the truth I told you? Lots of fun at Finnegan's Wake

Whack fol the dah now dance to yer partner around the flure yer trotters shake
Wasn’t it the truth I told you? Lots of fun at Finnegan's Wake

Page 25, Ulysses Revisited


Page 29, The Story-Teller at Fault

The Night Before Larry Was Stretched. Instrumental version by the Chieftains.

Page 34, Oscar of the Cove


Page 40, Jim and I Drink Too Much


La donna è mobile
Qual piuma al vento,
Muta d'accento e di pensiero.
Sempre un amabile,
Leggiadro viso,
In pianto o in riso, è menzognero.
È sempre misero
Chi a lei s'affida,
Chi le confida mal cauto il cuore!
Pur mai non sentesi
Felice appieno
Chi su quel seno non liba amore!

Woman is flighty
Like a feather in the wind,
She changes her voice and her mind.
Always sweet,
Pretty face,
In tears or in laughter, she is always lying.
Always miserable
Is he who trusts her,
He who confides in her his unwary heart!
Yet one never feels
Fully happy
Who on that bosom does not drink love!

Page 41, Jim and I Drink Too Much

Joyce, Bid Adieu to Girlish Days. (This is the only known composition by Joyce.) Kevin McDermott, tenor, Ralph Richey, piano.