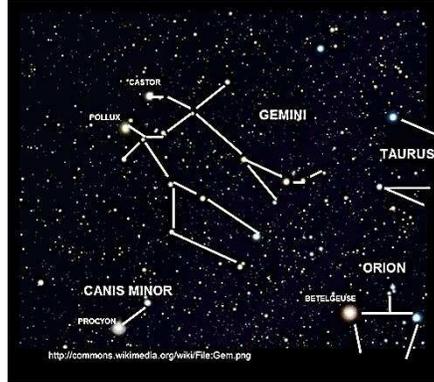


** Jim and I **



Strange Gemini

Oscar Wilde and James Joyce

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(A  next to an image indicates the image is linked to a music clip.)

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.)
Mist-moistened are their eyes, and red.

From Tara Hill the 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 C.3.3., or is it Purgatory? there is some leisure-time for reading, and in addition to the Classics, there is, of course, no end of new books. I make it a point to keep up with the literary exploits of my younger compatriots, and the works of one brash young Dubliner in particular, with an unapologetic brogue and a very dry throat but a fine tenor voice, have been of interest to me in this regard. Yes, I can read the books of the future! There I entered into the dream of a Mr James Joyce, and he did me the honour, at times somewhat churlishly tendered, of conversing with me about a matter that concerns us both: the opinion that has been imputed to me regarding his celebrated opus, Ulysses, in a book by one Hester Travers Smith (née Dowden) of the Society for Psychical Research, Psychic Messages from Oscar Wilde (1923). In this book she purports to record my sentiments and opinions on a variety of subjects. In my conversation with the Joyce I am especially at pains to clear up the misrepresentations contained in the Travers travesty.



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, Oisín 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 Dublin' 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, for 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*

*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.*



*Queensberry's attorney, Edward
Carson, who, when I was plaintiff,
cross-examined me in the first trial
with all the bitterness of an old friend.
To his credit, he refused to take part
in the prosecution of my two trials.*



*The name of the private detective hired
by Queensberry to track down witnesses.*

*I mourn what violent silence tumbled
Your voice, glib jackadandyline.
O scar that was your mouth! That fine
Friendship of languish, sexiled, doomed!*

*And tell me that you didn't say
Those things that Hester Travers says
You said about my book, I pray,
That book about a Dublin day.*



Hester Travers Smith
née Dowden

2.
Ah, Hester Travers Smith! I know
The woman. She writes silly lies
About me. What vulgarities
She claims I said, how 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 adammed 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 give 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?*



The Question Mark of Giacomo

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 Mithra 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.



*Portrait of the Artist as a Prematurely
Old Man. The portrait was commissioned
to commemorate your fiftieth birthday.
(Aquarius: an air-sign, yet a water-bearer.
The net result: a splendid Celtic mist!)*
*Picture the watch, of Swiss make, with a
Horus-eye staring out from the linchpin-hole.*

A Spinozan stoic.



*Mary Colum said of the Work in
Progress: 'I think it is outside literature'.*

An 'egghead', Americans might call you.

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.
(Mithra, 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.*

(Oscar)
(Browning, Shelley-shallying.)

(Chorus)

*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.*

(Charles Dodgson)

(Chorus)

*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.*

(DG Rossetti)

(Chorus)

*

*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.*

(Jim)

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.*

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.

*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'.*

A staring silence greets this outburst. I break it.

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

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.

3. *In Principio Erat Verbum, Etc.*

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'.*



*"Lucky"... An interesting name for a
character in a dark comedy, don't you
think?' I say to Sam, taking hiim aside.
Perhaps he will recall this part of the dream.*

Dancing about excitedly.

Jim (a cricket enthousiast).

Charles.

Aubrey Beardsley.

Lord Byron?

Charles.

*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.*

Swinburne.



*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.*

Charles.

*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.*

Malthusian linguistics?

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

*Swinburne, tossing fistfuls of multi-
coloured beggar's velvet into the air.*

*Soused, le Duc arrogantly usurps my
prerogative as giver of stage-directions:*

[Here the great good William Gilbert Grace, champion cricketer of all time, as old as Methuselah, enters batting giant atoms out of the galaxy and into the deeps of yonder-space, they bounce off the uttermost wall of the spheroid Unicorniverse, each atom splitting into trillions of subatomic particles in turn shattering into sub-subatomic particulules, of which three for Muster Mark, please, and a huge, giant, large, rather big, above-average-in-size-for-a-cricket Cricket hops out of a thicket and takes a turn at the wicket, but no, it is the Good Luck Cricket of Pu-Yi, last Emperor of China, he keeps it in an intricately wrought ivory cage not much larger than a locket, but no, in fact it is simply an ordinary small boy's lucky cricket escaped from its miniature Schrödinger box, and all are suitably impressed by its decision to exist, and Grace himself in his great bearded Falstaffian little-boy gusto grown to Titan size applauds, we all applaud the Good Luck Cricket at the bat, Cricket runs back and forth so fast he becomes a solid line or vibrating string that hums whilst Oy says Grace and Grace sings me and, by the God of Grace and Greece and Gross of God, that's surely enough of this reines Quark-Reden um das Wort!]



*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, ἀγάπορνις, that's fluttering
Above Jim's head. A Joy past uttering
Desires to grace him, heart and solely,



In AGAPORNOTHANATOGRAPHY.
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.

*The nice distinction between the
relative incarnational versatilities of
the Holy Ghost and the Holy Spirit is
the subject of spirited debate. A point first
raised by the puritanical lunatic Father
Feropont in The Brothers Karamazov.*

*Mark Twain intrudes for no particular
reason: 'Sir, I have inspected this high-
dollar portmanteau-word from every angle,
and I conclude that it should not be sold
at some run-of-the-mill antique shop in
Portobello Road. I suggest you bring in
Sotheby's'.—This is done. (I will hardly
miss it. The thing was bulky and pre-
sumptuously hypermetric.) Because it is
heavy, a crew of six is required to haul it away.*

6. *Jim's Sermon on the Pentecost*

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

*To oinopontificate
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.*



*The dove never ceases to move on toward
what is before, going on from where it now
is, to penetrate that further to which it has
not yet come.
—Gregory of Nyssa*



Ulysses Revisited

Speaking with Jim.

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 death was 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 outsides.

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?



'Narrative is linear, Action is solid'.

—Carlyle

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,

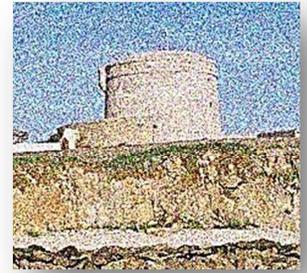
Eccentric, yet of massive poise,
This solid dream, this sight-seeing vision
You render with such mad precision
Gives madness reason to rejoice.

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
Boylan. Gogarty-Mulligan.

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 grateful to me,
For all of yer profundust 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 made of you whatever sense*

*Kneaded, to bake my WIP, a ball
Of doughy smear-sinification,
Accusative of accusation.
I made you anyone at all.*

Work in Progress.

(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.



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.)



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.

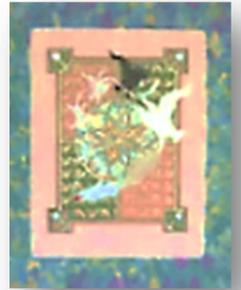
He gambles with a beggar, loses
His property, his wife, his proper
Semblance, in all things comes a cropper
Until among the herbs he noses,

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?

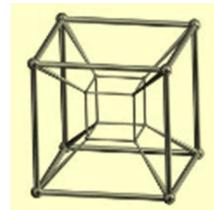
But wife and goods and all are stowed
With care in an alternative
Dimension, where we shall them leave
For now, for on the wingèd road

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 teller hates 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!*

*'The Woman with Three Cows':
a poem by Mangan.—[Mr V]*

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.*



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,
Mendelssohn's
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 befall me.



Music at this point,

'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 Usheen
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



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*

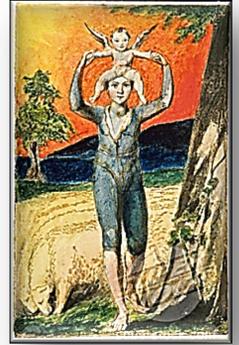
*We both loved Beauty, Wilde, past right or wrong.
We knew the truth of masks, that without strife
Of contraries, as Blake knew, life is not life.
I'm no believer. Intellect is as strong*

*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.*

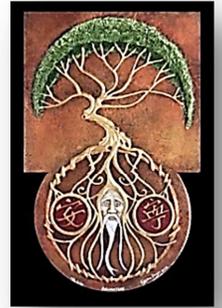
4. When I Was an Irish Rat

Joyce McMocking.

*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 the cottage by the lake.*



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!

3.

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

Scene: Oh, any astral estaminet
suitably seedy will do. Hélas!



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.



Finnegans Wake

riverrun, Anna Livia's reverie
Of night, forged epic check, a Shem-Shaun sham bent
To straddle the chaosmos, vast enjambment
That sweeps us all away along with the

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-which way what
So ever. A veritable smut
Of possibilities, I'd say.

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

Enough about the cosmos, dear!
I'd sooner talk about cosmetics.
For *tó kalón* 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.

4.
Mein irisch' Kind, wo weilest du?
Woo-woo, moo-moo, mein Kind so irisch,
So Io, that it makes me tear-ish,
O meine irisch', irisch' Kuh!

This Wagner Typ puzzo di sesse.—
He stinks of sex? Who doesn't, after...?
Although he *does* excite my...laughter,
His Siegfried. One could write an essay

On his stupidity and find,
In the end, nothing to say. (Though on his
Teutonically blond Adonis
Looks one could heap praise.) And his 'mind'?

He is no village idiot,
He's a whole village full of them.
A 'hardy', we'd say. *So would Shem.*
From schlimm to wurst he goes, this Brat.



Nora Joyce, née Barnacle.

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!

Sits down at the piano and plays snatches
of Tristan und Isolde . Isolde incarnates
before us. She is transformed from a
beautiful young queen into a mythological cow.

He speaks Italo-Anglo-German.



5.

*Mavrone! Sure, Ireland was born knowing
What hunger is! There's those that do
Not know it; but they will. How true!
Me, I never got used to going*

*Without food, studying medicine
In Paris as ah! young man. Hunger
Is La Bohème when we are younger
And a youth cannot be too thin;*

*At forty it is simply real.
Ugliness, suffering, obscene.
The grumbling void, the pangs how keen!
Quick now, let's order us a meal!*

*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,*

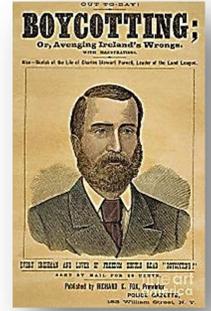
*In part, that prompted me to go
Abroad and speak a foreign tongue.
How could I live my life among
A race of people who could do*

*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!*



*Boiled potatoes are ordered:
They bring us but the one!*



*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!*

[Sings and plays at the piano a medley of Verdi and Donizetti. Una furtiva lagrima wells in the eye of this listener. He plays the opening theme of Beethoven's last piano sonata, last movement: 'The donkey cart that goes to Heaven,' as Thomas Mann characterised it.]

*The donkey draws the cart to Heaven,
F*rtng 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 difficùlty
(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.*

6. 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!*

Gladstone.

*Each of us pokes disconsolately
at his half of the potato.*

*How full of grace and invention
is Mozart after the muscle-bound
Beethoven.—James Joyce*

*Garçons are sweeping the floor, putting
chairs upside-down on tables. We are
the only patrons left in the establishment.
Exotic flowers bloom from the sawdust.*



Musical Program

Page 9, *The Question Mark of Giacomo*

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

Page 16, *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 trotters 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 trotters 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 trotters 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

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Page 22, *Ulysses Revisited*

Harry B. Norris, *Those Lovely Seaside Girls*. Kevin McDermott, tenor, Ralph Richey, piano.

Page 26, *The Story-Teller at Fault*

Will (Hurlfoot) Maher (lyricist), *The Night Before Larry Was Stretched* (ca. 1816).
Instrumental version by the Chieftains.

The lyricist was an Irishman, but the first line is from an anonymous early-18th-century English tune, "The Bowman Prigg's Farewell." The melody is taken from another anonymous English ballad, "To the Hundreds of Drury Lane I Write," also dating from the early 18th century. Maher's version is an example of a genre, the Irish Execution Ballad, typically using "Newgate cant." Joyce incorporated the lyrics to a Newgate cant song into the "Proteus" chapter of *Ulysses*, with the concluding line, "In the darkmans [night's] clip and kiss." (See Wikipedia article on "The Night Before Larry Was Stretched.")

The night before Larry was stretched,
The boys they all paid him a visit
A bit in their sacks too they fetched
They sweated their duds¹ till they riz it
For Larry was always the lad,
When a friend was condemn'd to the squeezer,²
He'd sweat all the togs³ that he had
Just to help the poor boy to a sneezer⁴
– And moisten his gob 'fore he died.

The boys they came crowding in fast;
They drew their stools close round about him,
Six glims⁵ round his trap-case⁶ were placed
For he couldn't be well waked without 'em,
When ax'd if he was fit to die,
Without having duly repented?
Says Larry, 'That's all in my eye,

And all by the clergy invented,
– To make a fat bit for themselves.

“I'm sorry dear Larry', says I,
'For to see you here in such trouble,
And your life's cheerful noggin run dry,
And yourself going off like its bubble!
'Hauld your tongue in that matter,' says he;
'For the neckcloth I don't care a button,
And by this time tomorrow you'll see
Your Larry will be dead as mutton:
– And all 'cos his courage was good’

"And then I'll be cut up like a pie,
And me nob⁷ from me body be parted."
"You're in the wrong box, then", says I,
"For blast me if they're so hard-hearted.
A chalk on the back of your neck
Is all that Jack Ketch⁸ dares to give you;
So mind not such trifles a feck,
Sure why should the likes of them grieve you?
– And now boys, come tip us the deck.⁹"

Then the cards being called for, they play'd,
Till Larry found one of them cheated;
A dart¹⁰ at his napper¹¹ he made
The lad being easily heated,
'So ye chates me bekase I'm in grief!
O! is that, by the Hokey, the rason?
Soon I'll give you to know you d—d thief!
That you're cracking your jokes out of sason,
– And scuttle your nob with my fist’.

Then the clergy came in with his book
He spoke him so smooth and so civil;
Larry tipp'd him a Kilmainham¹² look,¹³
And pitch'd his big wig to the divil.
Then raising a little his head,
To get a sweet drop of the bottle,
And pitiful sighing he said,
'O! the hemp will be soon round my throttle,¹⁴
– And choke my poor windpipe to death!’

So mournful these last words he spoke,
We all vented our tears in a shower;
For my part, I thought my heart broke
To see him cut down like a flower!

On his travels we watch'd him next day,
O, the throttler¹⁵ I thought I could kill him!
But Larry not one word did say,
Nor chang'd till he came to King William;¹⁶
– Then, musha, his colour turned white.

When he came to the nubbing-cheat,
He was tack'd up so neat and so pretty;
The rambler¹⁷ jugg'd off from his feet,
And he died with his face to the city.
He kick'd too, but that was all pride,
For soon you might see 'twas all over;
And as soon as the noose was untied,
Then at darkey¹⁸ waked him in clover,
– And sent him to take a ground-sweat.¹⁹

1. They pawned their clothes
2. The Hangman or Gallows
3. pawn all the clothes
4. a drink
5. candles
6. coffin
7. head
8. "Jack Ketch" was the generic name for the hangman, as "Chips" was for a ship's carpenter and so on; the original Jack Ketch was "the common executioner 1663(?)-1686. He became notorious on account of his barbarity at the executions of William Lord Russell and others."
9. deck of cards
10. blow
11. head
12. An area in Dublin's Liberties
13. A "Kilmainham look" may be something like a Ringsend tango or a Ringsend uppercut (a kick in the groin) – or perhaps not. Kilmainham was the county jail in former times, and later was the scene of the execution of the leaders of the 1916 Rising. Larry may have been confined in Kilmainham or in the Green Street prison, the "new" Newgate which replaced the old Newgate in the 1770s. Kilmainham is remembered in another prison ballad called "The Kilmainham Minit", i.e., "minuet", the dance of the hanged man.
14. neck
15. hangman
16. This was an equestrian statue of King William of Orange, erected in 1701 at College Green in Dublin. Always controversial, it was repeatedly daubed, defaced and blown up; in 1929 it was blown up for the last time, and later broken up for smelting. Presumably the bold Larry was important enough to be hanged in the large public space of College Green rather than at the prison itself.
17. cart
18. night time
19. buried him

Page 29

Mendelssohn, *The Hebrides (Fingal's Cave) Overture*, Op. 26. London Symphony Orchestra, Antal Dorati, conductor.

Page 35, *Jim and I Drink Too Much*

Wagner, *Siegfried*, Act I: *Nothung! Nothung! Neidliches Schwert!* Svet Svanholm, tenor.

Page 36, *Jim and I Drink Too Much*

Puccini, *La Bohème*. Prelude. Orchestra of the National Opera of Paris, Daniel Oren, conductor.

Verdi, *Rigoletto*, Act III: "La donna è mobile." Enrico Caruso, tenor.

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 37, *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.