Ulysses

INTRODUCTION

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF JAMES JOYCE

James Joyce grew up in a middle-class, nationalist, Catholic family in Dublin. He was the eldest of 12 siblings, and he saw his family gradually fall into poverty after his father declared bankruptcy and lost his job due to his alcoholism. Still, Joyce managed to attend two different private Jesuit schools, then go on to study English, French, and Italian at University College Dublin. In 1902, he moved to Paris to study medicine, hoping that a career as a doctor would give him the financial stability he needed to become a writer. This plan failed: Joyce quickly gave up on medicine and started spending all his time reading in the library instead. When his mother developed cancer, he had to return suddenly to Ireland. Since he no longer believed in God, he refused to pray at her deathbed. Over the next two years, he struggled to survive in Dublin and watched his family fall apart. The character of Stephen Dedalus is based on these years in Joyce's life. On June 16, 1904—the day when *Ulysses* is set—Joyce met the chambermaid Nora Barnacle who would become his wife. A few months later, after Joyce got into a drunken fight in a Dublin park, a good-humored Jewish man named Alfred H. Hunter brought him home and took care of him. After this incident, Joyce briefly moved into the Sandycove Martello tower, but quickly departed after his roommate nearly shot him. He and Nora decided to leave Ireland forever. They first moved to Zurich, and then to Trieste, where Joyce taught English for most of the next decade. Joyce occasionally returned to Ireland, helped many of his siblings move to other parts of Europe, and tried (and failed) to start a number of businesses. He moved back to Zurich during World War I and then on to Paris after the war, where he published *Ulysses* in 1922. Despite nearly going blind, he dedicated the rest of his life to writing *Finnegans Wake*. During World War II, he returned to Zurich, and he died there due to complications from a stomach surgery in 1941.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Ulysses is full of extremely specific references to Irish history, Dublin's geography, and turn-of-the-century culture, which would have been familiar to readers in Joyce's time but are likely to be very foreign to 21st-century, non-Irish readers. In 1904, when *Ulysses* is set, Dublin was a fast-growing, diverse, but relatively poor colonial city of about 400,000 people. While Dublin was politically significant, due to Ireland's situation as a British colony for more than 700 years, its small economy was based largely on agricultural exports and trade. Despite gaining slightly more power within the British Empire, Ireland remained poor and underdeveloped throughout the 1800s. Millions of Irish people emigrated to the United States during this period, especially after over a million people died during the Great Irish Famine of 1845-1851. But in the late 1800s, a powerful group of organized Irish nationalists started to publicly rebel against the British and call for Irish independence. This movement—and especially its famous political leader, Charles Stewart Parnell—is a constant reference point throughout *Ulysses*. Thus, in Joyce's time, Dublin was the capital of British rule in Ireland but also the capital of Irish nationalist resistance. These nationalists particularly focused on reviving rural Irish traditions, which Joyce repeatedly satirizes in *Ulysses*. Dublin was also a deeply religious city divided by an enduring conflict between a Catholic majority and an English-influenced Protestant minority. And the modern technologies changing the city—like tram cars, newspaper advertising, and photography—also make an appearance in *Ulysses*. Notably, most of the historical figures, places, and events mentioned in *Ulysses* are also real. Joyce even based the day's news—the Ascot Gold Cup race and Dan Dawson's impassioned patriotic speech—on real newspapers from June 16, 1904.

RELATED LITERARY WORKS

Ulysses is full of allusions to other works of Western literature, but by far the most important are Homer's *The Odyssey* and Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (1603). James Joyce is also remembered for three other landmark works of modernist literature besides *Ulysses*, all of which are set in Dublin and loosely feature the same cast of characters. Joyce's first major work is the short story collection *Dubliners* (1914), which is written in a more conventional realist style than *Ulysses* and introduces many characters and themes that appear in *Ulysses* (including Lenehan, Bob Doran, and Kathleen Kearney). Joyce's first novel, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916), recounts Stephen Dedalus's childhood, growth as a writer, and early struggles with religion. Finally, Joyce dedicated the last sixteen years of his career to writing *Finnegans Wake* (1939), a famously baffling novel written in a highly innovative and irregular version of the English language. Joyce also published the play *Exiles* (1918) and several poetry books, including *Chamber Music* (1907). Numerous critics have dedicated their careers to studying and writing about Joyce—and *Ulysses* in particular. (There are even scholarly journals entirely devoted to Joyce's work.) Stuart Gilbert, one of Joyce's personal friends, wrote the famous early study *James Joyce's Ulysses* (1930), which analyzes *Ulysses* largely in terms of its structure and correspondences with *The Odyssey*. Don Gifford's book *Ulysses Annotated* (1974) provides key explanations of thousands of

allusions in *Ulysses*, and Harry Blamires's *The New Bloomsday Book* (1966) offers a very detailed summary of the novel. One particularly important scholarly text about *Ulysses* is *James Joyce's Ulysses: Critical Essays* (1977), edited by Clive Hart and David Hayman. Some of the more eclectic recent guides to *Ulysses* include Ian Gunn and Clive Hart's *James Joyce's Dublin: A Topographical Guide to the Dublin of* Ulysses (2004) and Kevin Birmingham's history of the novel's publication, *The Most Dangerous Book: The Battle for James Joyce's* Ulysses (2014). Finally, the best-known biography of the author is Richard Ellmann's extremely long and in-depth *James Joyce* (1959).

KEY FACTS

- **Full Title:** Ulysses
- **When Written:** 1914-1921
- **Where Written:** Trieste (Austria-Hungary), Zurich (Switzerland), Paris (France)
- **When Published:** February 2, 1922 (Portions first serialized in 1918-1920)
- **Literary Period:** Modernism
- **Genre:** Modernist Novel
- **Setting:** Dublin, Ireland
- **Climax:** The brothel scene in "Circe" [Stephen Dedalus has a hallucinatory vision of his dead mother and Leopold Bloom cares for him]
- **Antagonist:** Alienation and meaninglessness, the irreversibility of fate, ignorance, religious orthodoxy, social prejudice, British imperialism, fanatical Irish nationalism, Blazes Boylan and several others (the citizen, Lenehan, Buck Mulligan, etc.)
- **Point of View:** Primarily third-person free indirect discourse with multiple narrators; also first-person stream of conscious monologue (Ep. 3, 13, 18); no point of view in Ep. 15

EXTRA CREDIT

Obscenity Controversy. *Ulysses* was almost immediately banned for its detailed descriptions of sex and masturbation, which were deemed obscene. The full text of this literary masterpiece was not available to the general public in the UK or US for more than a decade after its 1922 publication in Paris.

Where is Joyce? Although virtually all of the characters in *Ulysses* are based on real people, critics have argued at length about who in the novel (if anyone) represents James Joyce himself. While Stephen Dedalus certainly represents Joyce in his youth and Leopold Bloom represents certain dimensions of Joyce's adult persona (like his wild business schemes), other critics have suggested that he is really embodied in a more obscure, mysterious character: the man in the brown macintosh, who is never identified.

PLOT SUMMARY

James Joyce's famously dense and unconventional modernist novel *Ulysses* follows the advertiser Leopold Bloom as he goes about his day in Dublin, Ireland on June 16, 1904. Although the novel's plot is deceptively simple, its structure, style, and literary and historical references are incredibly complex. Leopold Bloom's quest through Dublin is loosely modeled on Homer's *Odyssey*—each of the novel's eighteen chapters (or "episodes") roughly corresponds to a book from the *Odyssey*. But it would be misleading to take this parallel too far and assume that every character, event, and theme in the *Odyssey* maps directly onto *Ulysses* (or vice-versa).

The novel's first three chapters deal not with Leopold Bloom, but with Stephen Dedalus, the twenty-two-year-old starving artist who was the protagonist of Joyce's previous novel, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Similarly, the *Odyssey* opens with the story of Odysseus's son Telemachus, rather than Odysseus himself—in fact, the first episode of *Ulysses* is called "Telemachus." In this episode, Stephen has breakfast with his roommates, the annoying students Buck Mulligan and Haines. They live in a Martello tower, which Stephen has been renting since he returned from Paris to Dublin to see his dying mother a year ago. He still feels guilty for refusing to pray at her deathbed after losing his faith in God, and his roommates are so intolerable that he decides to find another place to sleep that night.

In the next chapter, "Nestor," Stephen teaches at a nearby school and collects his monthly wages from Mr. Deasy, the schoolmaster. Deasy loyally defends England's imperial rule over Ireland and convinces Stephen to help him get a letter about cattle foot and mouth disease published in the local newspaper. In the third episode, "Proteus," Stephen goes on a long stream-of-consciousness soliloquy as he walks on the Sandymount Strand beach. He contemplates the nature of perception, history, courage, and much more.

The reader first meets Mr. Leopold Bloom in the fourth episode, "Calypso." Bloom wakes up, buys himself a pork kidney for breakfast, and serves tea and toast to his wife, the concert singer Molly Bloom. In episode five, "Lotus Eaters," Bloom strolls through Dublin, retrieves a love letter from his secret pen pal Martha Clifford, and wanders into a Catholic service (even though he's Jewish). In the following chapter, "Hades," Bloom attends the funeral of his acquaintance Paddy Dignam. While riding through town in a carriage with Martin Cunningham, Jack Power, and Simon Dedalus, Bloom sees the "worst man in Dublin"—Blazes Boylan, his wife's concert manager, who is probably sleeping with her. He also notices a

funeral procession for a child, which reminds him of his son Rudy, who died as an infant. During the funeral, Bloom contemplates the nature of death and tries to identify an unfamiliar man in a macintosh raincoat.

In the lively seventh episode, "Aeolus," Bloom visits Dublin's newspaper offices to try to set up an ad for a client. The men he meets mostly ignore him, preferring to joke about the day's news, Irish history, and the Ascot Gold Cup horserace. Stephen Dedalus also visits the offices with Mr. Deasy's letter, but he narrowly misses Bloom. In episode eight, "Lestrygonians," Bloom wanders around Dublin, looking for lunch. His mind also wanders: among other things, he contemplates modern technology, advertising strategies, and the meaninglessness of human existence. He pops into Burton's restaurant, but he can't stand the beastly sight of men devouring their lunches, so he has a cheese sandwich and glass of wine in Davy Byrne's pub instead.

In episode nine, "Scylla and Charybdis," the novel returns to Stephen Dedalus, who is explaining his complex theory about Shakespeare's *Hamlet* to the poet George Russell and the librarians Lyster, Eglinton, and Best in the Irish National Library. Stephen insists that *Hamlet* was really an expression of Shakespeare's bitterness at his adulterous wife Ann Hathaway and his despair at the death of his young son Hamnet. But the librarians reject his theory, and then Buck Mulligan shows up to interrupt Stephen with a series of absurd jokes. Stephen portrays Shakespeare as a vicious Jewish manipulator and declares that fatherhood is meaningless, but he eventually admits that he doesn't even believe what he's saying. Stephen and Buck pass "the wandering jew" Leopold Bloom on their way out of the library, narrowly missing him for the second time.

In the second half of *Ulysses*—episodes ten through eighteen—Joyce takes a series of daring risks with perspective and style. This shift is immediately clear in the tenth episode, "Wandering Rocks," which consists of nineteen short vignettes set at exactly the same time, in different places around Dublin. Episode eleven, "Sirens," opens with a sixty-line onomatopoetic overture and is written entirely in a rhythmic, musical style. This reflects its setting: the Ormond Hotel bar, where Simon Dedalus and Ben Dollard are singing parlor songs. Blazes Boylan meets his lowlife friend Lenehan in the bar, and Leopold Bloom wanders in to watch them from across the room. At four o'clock, Boylan leaves, and then the novel depicts his car jingling its way through Dublin to meet Molly. Leopold Bloom enjoys the music while writing back to Martha Clifford, then he leaves the bar and runs into the prostitute who took his virginity.

In episode twelve, "Cyclops," a group of men are drinking and talking about politics in Barney Kiernan's bar when Leopold Bloom wanders in to meet Martin Cunningham. This chapter introduces an entirely new narrator, a nameless Dublin debt collector. But new voices also repeatedly steal the show from this narrator, taking over the narrative for a page or two at a time. These voices all represent exaggerated stereotypes of different kinds of writing, ranging from ancient Gaelic epics and children's books to legal contracts. The debt collector and his friend, an aggressive and outspoken Irish nationalist named the citizen, take issue with Bloom's intelligence, pacifism, and Jewishness. Lenehan adds fuel to the fire by falsely declaring that Bloom won a fortune on the Ascot Gold Cup horserace by betting on the longshot horse, Throwaway. The citizen attacks Bloom, who narrowly escapes in Martin Cunningham's car.

Episode thirteen, "Nausicaa," begins with a completely different tone: a young woman named Gerty MacDowell is sitting on the rocks at Sandymount Strand, daydreaming innocently about meeting the perfect man and becoming the perfect housewife. She notices an older man standing nearby, staring at her, and moving his hand around in his pocket. She starts to fantasize about falling in love with him, and when fireworks start going off overhead, she passionately lifts her skirt and shows the man her legs. In fact, the man is Leopold Bloom, and he's been staring at Gerty and masturbating. In the second half of the chapter, Bloom sees Gerty limp away down the beach and realizes that she's lame. He thinks about all the women he knows and falls asleep on the rocks.

The novel's difficult fourteenth episode, "Oxen of the Sun," is written in a series of different literary styles that represent the whole development of the English language from prehistory to the early 20th century. Joyce closely imitates the prose of more than a dozen major writers, ranging from the 15th-century knight Sir Thomas Malory to the Victorian novelist Charles Dickens. In this chapter, Bloom goes to the hospital to visit the family friend Mrs. Purefoy, who is giving birth. But he ends up partying with a group of drunk medical students instead. These students—including Buck Mulligan, Stephen Dedalus, and their buddy Vincent Lynch—drink, sing, and boisterously debate about fertility and abortion. This disturbs Mrs. Purefoy, who is giving birth upstairs.

The fifteenth and longest episode of *Ulysses*, "Circe," is actually structured as a play. Set in "nighttown," Dublin's red-light-district, this chapter mixes reality, fantasy, and nightmare to the point that it's often impossible to tell what is real and what is imagined. At the beginning of this chapter, Bloom follow Stephen and Lynch into nighttown out of a feeling of fatherly responsibility. Bloom has visions of his mother, father, wife, and ex-girlfriend Josie Breen berating him, and then he fantasizes about the women he's sexually harassed (or thought about harassing) taking him to court over his perversions. In a third fantasy, he becomes "emperor-president and king-chairman," rebuilds Ireland in his own image, and is received as the Messiah by his people.

Back in the real world, Bloom follows the prostitute Zoe Higgins into Bella Cohen's brothel, where Stephen and Lynch are lounging around with two more prostitutes, Florry Talbot and Kitty Ricketts. Stephen spouts philosophical nonsense

about music, Bloom has more visions of friends and family, and Bella Cohen arrives and acts out a domination fantasy with Bloom. When Stephen has a vision of his mother's corpse, he breaks down and smashes Bella's chandelier. The men escape the brothel, but outside, Stephen gets into a fight with two English soldiers, Privates Compton and Carr. After he's knocked to the ground, Bloom helps him to his feet and takes care of him.

In the sixteenth episode, "Eumaeus," Bloom takes Stephen to rest in a nearby cabman's shelter, where a sailor named Murphy tells tall tales about his travels. Bloom admires Stephen's intelligence, shows him a picture of Molly, and tries to offer him fatherly advice (which Stephen ignores). The seventeenth chapter, "Ithaca," presents Bloom and Stephen's conversations in the form of a catechism—a detailed series of questions and answers, which are often used to clarify religious teachings. Bloom invites Stephen over to his home, and they chat about music, women, and religion on the walk over. Since Bloom forgot his keys, he has to jump over the fence and enter through his basement. Inside, Bloom and Stephen chat about family and philosophy over cocoa. Bloom offers Stephen his guest room for the night, but Stephen refuses. Bloom closes up the house and goes to bed. He kisses Molly on the butt and they chat about his day. He falls asleep upside-down, with his head at the foot of the bed.

The novel's famous last episode, "Penelope," consists of Molly Bloom's stream of consciousness as she falls asleep. Leopold has asked for breakfast in bed, and Molly thinks this is preposterous. She wonders if he is cheating on her, then remembers having extraordinary, athletic sex with Blazes Boylan. She considers having another child, thinks about the men she has loved, and reflects on her childhood in Gibraltar. She gets her period, then remembers when she first fell in love with Leopold and starts to fantasize about Stephen Dedalus. She decides to make Leopold breakfast in bed and "just give him one more chance," and as she finally falls asleep, her memories of the day Leopold proposed to her mix with her feelings about the men she loved in her youth.

CHARACTERS

MAJOR CHARACTERS

Leopold Bloom – The protagonist and unlikely hero of *Ulysses* is a thirty-eight-year-old Jewish advertising canvasser who lives on the north side of Dublin. Although he's a bit of an eccentric and an outcast, Bloom is still essentially an ordinary man who represents ordinary people's potential to become heroes in the modern world. In a parallel to Odysseus wandering around Greece in Homer's *The Odyssey*, Bloom spends much of *Ulysses* wandering around Dublin on June 16, 1904. Bloom is prudent and responsible (especially when it comes to his family), curious and knowledgeable (especially about science and business), and empathetic and charitable (especially compared to the often brash, insensitive men who surround him in Dublin). But he also sometimes proves too passive, meticulous, or sentimental for the people around him. He often feels out of place in Dublin and finds himself excluded from social groups, which is usually a product of other people's anti-Semitism combined with his own social awkwardness. He is a voracious eater, a constant blasphemer, and quite a bit of a pervert, as his voyeuristic tendencies and fantasies in nighttown demonstrate. Moreover, the world often frustrates his efforts, leading him to comically fall short of his goals. But this is what makes him an ordinary, relatable, and honest hero. He spends most of his day going about his daily business (attending Paddy Dignam's funeral, buying Alexander Keyes's ad, and visiting Mrs. Purefoy in the hospital) and fulfilling his bodily urges (for food, sex, and using the bathroom). But his interior monologue is constantly focused on other topics, the most important of which is his family. He is especially concerned about his wife Molly, who he knows is going to sleep with her manager Blazes Boylan in the afternoon. He also occasionally remembers the deaths of his father and his infant son Rudy, which still haunt him many years later. Bloom wishes that he could have another son, but he and Molly have not had sex in almost a decade, so he constantly questions the legitimacy of his marriage and his manhood. His strong desire to be a father to a son leads him to take care of Stephen Dedalus in the novel's final episodes, but their relationship is short-lived. In addition to serving as a father and son figure to one another, Bloom and Stephen are also each other's character foils: Bloom is practical while Stephen is creative, Bloom is humble and outward-looking while Stephen is overly serious and self-absorbed, and Bloom is fixated on the body while Stephen is completely trapped in his mind.

Stephen Dedalus – Stephen Dedalus is the novel's secondary protagonist and the main character in the first three episodes. He is a twenty-two-year-old aspiring writer who struggles to find a sense of identity and direction in colonized Dublin under the rule of England. Stephen is incredibly sensitive and at times narcissistic, but only because he believes that the artist's quest for truth must come before everything else. He spends much of the novel in inward contemplation, both because of his intellectual curiosity and because he broke his glasses the day before and can't see anything. Stephen essentially represents James Joyce in his early twenties—in fact, he was also the protagonist of Joyce's earlier autobiographical novel, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, which focused on his upbringing and artistic awakening. Stephen left Ireland for Paris at the end of *A Portrait*, but in *Ulysses*, the reader learns that he abandoned his studies, then had to return to Ireland upon learning that his mother was terminally ill with cancer. Having firmly given up his Catholic faith, Stephen refused to pray at his mother's deathbed, but he continues to feel an overwhelming sense of guilt about this during *Ulysses*. Meanwhile, Stephen has

essentially disowned his father, the irresponsible alcoholic Simon Dedalus, and he explores these feelings in part by developing elaborate theories about fatherhood and betrayal (including one about Shakespeare's *Hamlet*). In his quest for a father, he represents Telemachus from *The Odyssey*. In short, Stephen feels completely alienated from the people around him and yearns to find a sense of companionship and love, but he thinks that he can't do so without compromising his intellectual or artistic values. Moreover, he is struggling to make ends meet because he is a literal starving artist: he doesn't eat all day on June 16, and he owes far more than he could possibly pay back from his job teaching at Mr. Deasy's school. (He also blows most of his salary on beer and prostitutes on the same day he gets paid.) In addition, Stephen doesn't have a place to stay: he has been sharing a Martello tower with Buck Mulligan and Haines, but at the beginning of the novel, he realizes that he cannot stand them any longer, so he decides to move out. When they meet at the end of the novel, Leopold Bloom offers to give Stephen the family, stability, and home he needs—but Stephen rebuffs him and wanders off into the night instead.

Marion ("Molly") Bloom – Although she does not speak until the novel's last episode, Molly Bloom is undeniably one of the central characters in *Ulysses*. She is Leopold Bloom's wife, Blazes Boylan's lover, Milly Bloom's mother, and Major Tweedy's daughter. But she also represents womanhood, sexuality, and fertility more generally (especially in her husband's mind). She roughly corresponds to Penelope in the *Odyssey*, which is also why the episode where she speaks is called "Penelope." As she falls asleep in that episode, she thinks primarily about men, sex, and romance, and she also reveals much about her personality: she is tenacious, jealous of other women (including even her daughter Milly), and fully aware and accepting of her own sexuality. A concert singer by trade, Molly spends most of her days stuck at home, rehearsing and reading erotic novels, feeling lonely and bored to death. Indeed, the only things she does on June 16 are have sex with Blazes Boylan and toss a coin to a one-legged beggar who is singing on the street. She is famous around Dublin for her looks and—as is implied more than once—her promiscuity. Even though their marriage is rocky and they haven't had sex since their young son Rudy died almost a decade ago, her husband practically worships her—he repeatedly thinks about her beauty, he talks up her exotic upbringing in Gibraltar, and he even pulls out a photo of her to show to Stephen Dedalus in "Eumaeus." Although he writes naughty letters to Martha Clifford and meets the prostitute Zoe Higgins in nighttown, Bloom is still primarily committed to and preoccupied with Molly. But Molly doesn't know this, and she suspects that Leopold is having an affair with his ex-girlfriend Josie Breen. At the end of her soliloquy in "Penelope," Molly decides to recommit to him. Her famous last words "yes I said yes I will Yes," which are also the novel's closing line, reflect this commitment, but they also represent the broader affirmation of life, love, and humanity that Joyce associated with women.

Alf Bergan – Long John Fanning's assistant Alf Bergan drinks with the citizen, Joe Hynes, the debt-collecting narrator, and several other men in Barney Kiernan's pub during "Cyclops." His antics provide plenty of comic relief and local Dublin flavor. Alf laughs at Denis Breen's pointless legal crusade over the "U.P." postcard (which Alf himself might or might not have sent). He also reads his friends the application letters that several men (including the barber Rumbold) have sent to inquire about a job as an executioner. Most outrageously, Alf claims to have just seen Paddy Dignam in the street, and he's astonished when the other men explain that Paddy Dignam is dead.

Rudolf Bloom, Sr. – Leopold Bloom's father was a Hungarian Jewish immigrant who committed suicide in the Queen's Hotel (which he also managed). He briefly appears in a flashback in "Circe." Bloom thinks of his father's death, like his son Rudy's, throughout the day on June 16. Together, these two deaths represent the tragic break in Bloom's family bloodline.

Rudolf Bloom, Jr. – Leopold and Molly Bloom's son Rudy died eleven days after he was born, about a decade before the events of *Ulysses*. They also haven't had sex ever since. Bloom frequently remembers Rudy's death, which he sees as a representation of his failure as a father and husband. Stephen Dedalus stands in for Rudy in the final episodes of the novel—especially at the end of "Circe," when Bloom feels a sense of fatherly purpose while caring for Stephen, then has a vision of Rudy.

Hugh ("Blazes") Boylan – Blazes Boylan is the brash, flirtatious, and superficial (but extremely popular and successful) Dublin businessman with whom Molly Bloom starts an affair during the novel. He's also managing her upcoming concert tour, which is the pretense for their meeting on the afternoon of June 16 at the Bloom house. Leopold Bloom considers him the "worst man in Dublin" and thinks about him constantly. Bloom also nearly runs into Boylan several times during the day, almost always right after thinking about him. These close encounters cause Bloom considerable anxiety, but they also spark his curiosity—thus, in "Sirens," Bloom actually enters the Ormond Hotel bar in order to spy on Boylan. At four o'clock in the afternoon, Boylan leaves the hotel and rides his jingling car all the way to Bloom's house, where he and Molly have sex. In her soliloquy in the final episode of the novel, Molly reveals that Boylan is extraordinarily well-endowed and incredible in bed. Still, she recognizes that Boylan has no serious romantic intentions: he was essentially just interested in sex, and the most she can hope to get out of him are a few presents during her concert tour. In "Wandering Rocks" and "Sirens," the reader receives snapshots of Boylan that reinforce this point—he tries to seduce all the women he meets, and his tactics are unsophisticated and obviously insincere. He doesn't appear to have any greater sense of purpose in life besides immediate gratification, which is a direct contrast with Bloom's complete

moral seriousness. (This is similar to how Buck Mulligan's jokes and pranks make Stephen Dedalus's seriousness as an artist stand out.) In fact, the novel is full of comparisons between the two men—for instance, when they enter the Ormond Hotel bar, Lenehan calls Boylan "the conquering hero" and the novel refers to Bloom as an "unconquered hero." Boylan also loses a considerable sum of money on the Ascot Gold Cup race when the underdog, Throwaway, beats the favorite, Sceptre. This foreshadows the way that Molly definitively rejects Boylan for Bloom at the end of the novel.

Josie Breen – The baker Josie Breen is Leopold Bloom's ex-girlfriend, who went on to marry the lunatic Denis Breen instead. When Bloom first meets her in the novel, he notes that she has aged poorly and looks disheveled, perhaps because of her stressful, thankless marriage to Denis. She first tells Bloom that Mrs. Purefoy is in the hospital, and she reappears in one of Bloom's fantasies during "Circe" to reenact the time when they were dating. Many of the novel's characters (including the Blooms) feel sorry for her because of her marriage, but during "Penelope," Molly Bloom also speculates Leopold might be having an affair with her.

Cissy Caffrey – In "Nausicaa," Cissy Caffrey is Gerty MacDowell and Edy Boardman's outgoing, energetic, fearless friend. She plays with the baby, disciplines her younger brothers Jacky and Tommy, and asks Leopold Bloom for the time after she notices him staring at Gerty. In "Circe," she repeatedly appears with Privates Carr and Compton in nighttown, where she seems to be working as a prostitute. However, it is unclear whether she is really there or just a figment of Leopold Bloom's imagination.

Private Carr – In "Circe," Private Carr is the occupying English soldier who gets in a drunken fight with Stephen in nighttown. Stephen's advances towards Cissy Caffrey and insults towards the English infuriate Private Carr, who attacks Stephen and knocks him to the ground until Corny Kelleher and a policeman help break up the fight.

Martha Clifford – Martha Clifford is the pseudonym of Leopold Bloom's secret romantic pen pal. (She knows him only as "Henry Flower.") Bloom opens Martha's lusty letter in "Lotus Eaters," thinks about it all day, and writes her back in the bar during "Sirens." This represents his own mild flirtation with infidelity—which readers may or may not find comparable to Molly's affair with Blazes Boylan.

Bella Cohen – The imposing, elegant mistress Bella Cohen owns the brothel that Leopold Bloom, Stephen Dedalus, and Vincent Lynch visit in "Circe." She briefly transforms into "Bello" to fulfill Bloom's fantasy of being dominated and feminized. Later, she collects payment from Stephen and Bloom, then kicks the men out of her brothel after Stephen breaks her chandelier.

Father Cowley – Father Cowley is a priest with a questionable commitment to his profession. He owns back rent to his landlord, the Rev. Hugh C. Love, and enjoys playing the piano in bars. His friends Ben Dollard and Simon Dedalus help him figure out how to deal with the moneylender Reuben J. Dodd in "Wandering Rocks" and sing to his accompaniment in "Sirens."

Martin Cunningham – Easily the most sympathetic and caring of Leopold Bloom's friends, Martin Cunningham first appears in "Hades," when he rides with Bloom, Jack Power, and Simon Dedalus in the car to Paddy Dignam's funeral. He watches out for Bloom in minor conflicts with Power and John Henry Menton, and he helps Bloom escape the citizen's attack in "Cyclops." However, he spends most of the day organizing a charity drive to help cover Dignam's family's expenses. Bloom partially attributes Cunningham's sensitivity and benevolence to his difficult relationship with his wife, who is an alcoholic.

Garrett Deasy –Stephen Dedalus's boss at the school where he teaches, Deasy is an impassioned defender of the British Empire. He also gives Stephen the letter on foot and mouth disease that eventually gets published in the day's papers. Because he is pretentious, out-of-touch, and interested in publishing a letter with no literary value, he serves as a character foil to Stephen's literary, professional, and political ambitions.

Simon Dedalus – Stephen Dedalus's father is a popular, charming, but irresponsible man who prefers to spend his money drinking than taking care of his dozen children. Simon struggles to cope with his wife May Dedalus's death and despises her brother Richie, which leads him to drink and neglect his family even more. Moreover, he disapproves of Stephen's decision to become an artist, even though he also has immense artistic talent as a singer and is also struggling financially. In turn, Stephen resents his father's absence and disapproval, so he acts as if he simply didn't have a father. Simon's beautiful rendition of "M'appari" impresses the crowd at the Ormond Hotel in "Sirens," and his emotional range as a singer highlights the fact that he is a deeply tragic character, not a malicious antagonist. The character of Simon Dedalus is clearly based on James Joyce's own father, John Stanislaus Joyce.

Dilly Dedalus – The most significant of Stephen Dedalus's many sisters, Dilly appears in two important scenes. In the first, she coaxes money out of her drunk father Simon, which points to the Dedalus family's struggle to hold together after May Dedalus's death. In the second of these scenes, Dilly runs into Stephen at a Dublin bookstall. She is carrying a French book she recently bought, and this frightens Stephen, who fears that she will become a starving artist, just like him.

Dixon – Dixon seems to be the most sociable and trustworthy of the drunken medical students in "Oxen of the Sun." He is the one who first invites Leopold Bloom over, and he merrily pokes fun at Stephen Dedalus and Buck Mulligan later in the episode. Dixon appears to be close to Vincent Lynch and Nurse Callan,

who specifically approaches him to report that Mrs. Purefoy has given birth. He then runs off to assist her.

Reuben J. Dodd – Dodd is a Jewish moneylender whom many Dubliners dislike and disparage. In "Hades," Leopold Bloom, Martin Cunningham, Simon Dedalus, and Jack Power pass Dodd on the way to Paddy Dignam's funeral and remember how he paid a boatman to fish his son out of the River Liffey after a suicide attempt. Other characters' anti-Semitic remarks about Dodd point to the prejudice and exclusion that Leopold Bloom also faces in Dublin. In "Circe," Dodd appears as "Ruben J. Antichrist, wandering Jew," which underlines this point. In fact, even Bloom hates him and calls him a "dirty Jew."

Bob Doran – Bob Doran is a Dublin man who mostly avoids alcohol, but he goes on a wild drinking binge once a year. This happens to be on June 16, during the events of *Ulysses*. In the "Cyclops" episode, he rambles incoherently and stumbles over himself in Barney Kiernan's pub. He originally appeared in *Dubliners*.

Haines – Haines is a condescending but well-meaning English student of Irish folk traditions who lives with Stephen Dedalus and Buck Mulligan in the Martello tower. Stephen and Buck believe that Haines is only studying in Dublin because he feels guilty about the bloody legacy of English colonialism. However, he isn't willing to take personal responsibility for England's crimes—instead, he vaguely blames "history." Haines's guilt and resentment about the past make him a partial character foil for Stephen, who feels intensely guilty about failing to pray for his dying mother and sees history as "a nightmare from which [he is] trying to awake." Stephen and Buck also make fun of Haines's exaggerated reverence for Ireland, which is second only to that of delusional Irish nationalists like the citizen. Ironically, Haines also complains about Jews, which shows that his reverence for the Irish doesn't translate into a general tolerance towards all kinds of different people.

Zoe Higgins – Zoe is a young prostitute who works in Bella Cohen's brothel in nighttown with Florry Talbot and Kitty Ricketts. She first attracts Bloom, grabs his lucky potato out of his pocket, and brings him into the brothel, where he finds Stephen and Lynch. Later, she also reads Bloom and Stephen's palms. When Bloom's grandfather Lipoti Virag appears to him in a vision, he points out that Zoe isn't wearing any underwear and has an injection mark on her thigh. Bloom sometimes feels attracted to Zoe and sometimes protective of her. Curiously, Bloom's mother was also named Higgins, which further suggests that Zoe partially represents his struggle to separate family from sex.

Joe Hynes – The unscrupulous, nationalistic Dublin reporter Joe Hynes writes a piece on Dignam's funeral, borrows three shillings from Bloom but never pays him back, and drinks with his friends, the citizen and the debt collector, in "Cyclops." At Dignam's funeral, Hynes fulfills Bloom's request to take M'Coy's name down, then asks about the man in the macintosh, whose name he erroneously records as "M'intosh." He also misspells Bloom's own name as "Boom."

Corny Kelleher – Corny Kelleher is the assistant at H.J. O'Neill's funeral parlor, but he also works as a police informant on the side. He helps conduct Dignam's funeral in "Hades," appears briefly in "Wandering Rocks," and helps break up Stephen's fight with Private Carr in "Circe." During this last scene, he and Bloom acknowledge the awkwardness of seeing each other in nighttown—but it's unclear whether Corny is there for police business or personal pleasure.

Tom Kernan – Kernan is a Protestant tea merchant who mourns at Paddy Dignam's funeral in "Hades" (but criticizes the rushed Catholic services), congratulates himself on a business deal in "Wandering Rocks," and drinks at the Ormond Hotel in "Sirens." An intervention to stop his drinking was also the subject of the story "Grace" in Joyce's book of short stories, *Dubliners*.

Ned Lambert – Ned Lambert is a longtime friend of Simon Dedalus's from their shared hometown of Cork. They attend Paddy Dignam's funeral together in "Hades" and visit the *Evening Telegraph* office together in "Aeolus." He later gives Rev. Love a tour of St. Mary's Abbey, where he appears to work a job involving sacks of grain.

Matt Lenehan – Lenehan is a crude, lecherous, manipulative Dubliner who frequently follows other men around, making irrelevant jokes and trying to get favors or attention. At different points, he brags about once groping Molly Bloom, harasses Lydia Douce in the Ormond Hotel bar, and accuses Leopold Bloom of betting on the winning horse, Throwaway, in the Ascot Gold Cup race. In fact, Lenehan is obsessed with the race all day—he's convinced that Sceptre is going to win, so he bets a lot of money on it and tells all his friends to do the same. But he loses. Despite managing to make his way into virtually every group of men that forms throughout *Ulysses*, from the newspaper men in "Aeolus" to the medical students in "Oxen of the Sun," Lenehan doesn't appear to have any real friends besides Blazes Boylan. Lenehan and Boylan exemplify a superficial, exaggerated, narcissistic Dublin culture that makes Leopold Bloom's honesty, sincerity, and humility stand out by contrast. Lenehan also appeared alongside Corley in the Dubliners story "*Two Gallants*."

Vincent Lynch – Lynch is one of Stephen Dedalus and Buck Mulligan's medical student friends in "Oxen of the Sun," and he's the only one who follows Stephen into nighttown in "Circe." Like Buck, he enjoys living off Stephen's money and goodwill—but unlike Buck, he isn't particularly clever or interesting. Although he has a girlfriend—and Father Conmee almost catches them having sex in the bushes at the beginning of "Wandering Rocks"—Lynch runs off with the prostitute Kitty Ricketts at the end of "Circe." In the process, he abandons Stephen during his

fight with Private Carr. This leads Stephen to compare Lynch to the Biblical traitor Judas Iscariot.

Bantam Lyons – The unsanitary Dublin gambler Bantam Lyons spends the morning in pubs and creates a controversy after misunderstanding Bloom during a conversation on the street in "Lotus Eaters." Lyons asks to borrow Bloom's newspaper to check the odds for the Ascot Gold Cup horserace, and Bloom gives him the paper and comments that he was just "going to throw it away." Lyons thinks Bloom is hinting that the horse Throwaway will win the race, and he spreads a rumor about Bloom's bet throughout the day. When Throwaway *does* win, against all odds, Lenehan, Joe Hynes, and the citizen turn against Bloom because they assume he must have won a bunch of money.

Gerty MacDowell – The young Gertrude MacDowell is the central character in "Nausicaa." The first half of the episode is narrated in her sentimental, self-conscious voice and reveals her obsession with finding romance, maintaining proper etiquette, and conforming to the ideas about beauty that she reads about in *Princess Novelette* magazine. As she sits on the rocks by Sandymount Strand, Gerty laments her failed romance with Reggy Wylie—even though she scarcely knew him. She debates whether she will ever find a man better than Reggy, then is pleasantly surprised when an elegant-looking gentleman (Leopold Bloom) starts staring at her with his "superbly expressive" eyes. She develops an elaborate fantasy, in which Bloom sweeps her off her feet and becomes an ideal husband. In reality, Bloom is masturbating while he stares at her, and she doesn't seem to mind. She even shows off her legs and underwear during the fireworks scene that represents his orgasm. Meanwhile, she's careful to hide the flaw that she indirectly alludes to throughout the episode: her lame leg, which becomes apparent to Bloom when she stands up and limps down the beach. Her character is in large part a parody of the character of Gertrude Flint from Maria Susanna Cummins's 1854 novel *The Lamplighter*. On the one hand, *Ulysses*'s description of Gerty shows how male-dominated, materialistic modern cultures force women to evaluate themselves from men's perspective. Not only is Gerty singularly obsessed with how others will perceive her beauty, but the reader never learns if the narration is really a faithful representation of Gerty's own perspective (rather than, for instance, Bloom's projection of what Gerty might be thinking while he masturbates to her). On the other hand, Gerty is the first woman who gets a significant voice in *Ulysses*, and her appearance foreshadows the novel's final episode, in which Molly Bloom takes a much broader view of her value as a woman and a much more liberated approach to her sexuality.

Florence MacCabe – MacCabe is a midwife who walks on Sandymount Strand with a colleague to collect cockles in the "Proteus" episode. When she passes by, Stephen Dedalus starts thinking about how the nature of human birth means that all beings are physically interconnected in one giant web by the omphalos (navel). Later, he writes her into *The Parable of the Plums*, the story he pitches to Professor MacHugh and Myles Crawford.

C.P. M'Coy – M'Coy is a small-time local conman and swindler who meets Bloom on the street in "Lotus Eaters." He asks Bloom to put his name on the list of mourners at Paddy Dignam's funeral (even though he's not going), and he talks up his wife's singing career, despite knowing that Molly Bloom is far more successful. Bloom idly tolerates M'Coy and avoids asking about his wife's concerts, since he knows that M'Coy often makes up travel plans in order to justify borrowing suitcases that he never gives back.

Professor MacHugh – Although it's unclear what or where he teaches, Professor MacHugh chats with Ned Lambert, Simon Dedalus, J.J. O'Molloy, Myles Crawford, and Lenehan in the *Telegraph* offices during "Aeolus." He has strong feelings about Irish nationalism and history: he compares Ireland's attempt to preserve its culture in the face of British imperialism to Pyrrhus's attempt to save Greece from the Roman Empire. (This gives context to Stephen Dedalus's intellectual pretensions and capacity to, in Buck Mulligan's words, "Hellenise" Ireland.)

John Henry Menton – John Henry Menton is a fussy Dublin lawyer who has history with Molly Bloom. Because of this, he dislikes Leopold Bloom—even though he also doesn't recognize Bloom at Paddy Dignam's funeral. When Bloom tells Menton that his hat is dinged, Menton rudely ignores him until Martin Cunningham steps in to defend Bloom. Menton also frustrates Denis Breen's plan to sue over the "U.P." postcard by making him wait for hours outside his office.

Malachi ("Buck") Mulligan – The buffoonish medical student Buck Mulligan is Stephen Dedalus's roommate in the Martello tower and quite possibly his only friend. Buck takes advantage of Stephen by living in the tower rent-free and spending Stephen's money on beer, but he also shares his own clothes with Stephen. Although Buck is intelligent and extremely well-read, just like Stephen, his cynical and often obscene sense of humor contrasts strongly with Stephen's completely serious attitude towards his life and art. As a result, Buck repeatedly undercuts Stephen's goals and ambitions through satire. For instance, in the novel's opening scene, Buck both mocks the Catholic mass and ridicules Stephen's fear that he failed his dying mother by refusing to pray for her. Later, in "Scylla and Charybdis," he responds to Stephen's complex theory about Shakespeare by scribbling a short comic play about masturbation on a piece of scrap paper. He calls Stephen nicknames like "Kinch" (the sound of a cutting knife, meaning that he's sharp) and "the bard," but it's never clear if he sincerely believes in his friend's brilliance or is just mocking his pretentious belief in his own genius. For instance, Buck and Haines frequently make fun of Stephen in private. In fact,

Buck's shameless vanity, narcissism, and opportunism haunt Stephen because they remind him that he is also guilty of all the same personality flaws. Adults like Leopold Bloom and Simon Dedalus clearly see how Buck takes advantage of Stephen, and Stephen labels Buck a "usurper" at the end of the first episode, when he decides not to return home to the Martello tower. Buck Mulligan's character is based on James Joyce's real-life friend Oliver St. John Gogarty.

Murphy – In the cabman's shelter in "Eumaeus," a drunk red-haired man claims to be a sailor and introduces himself as "Murphy." But it's unclear if anything he says is true: he tells a series of improbable stories about sailing around South America, witnessing a stabbing in Italy, and returning to Dublin that morning after seven years at sea. Oddly enough, Murphy has never heard of Gibraltar, even though it's located on one of the busiest shipping lanes in the world. Combined with Murphy's outlandish stories, this leads Bloom to doubt whether he's telling the truth.

Joseph Patrick Nannetti – Nannetti is the *Freeman* newspaper's foreman and a rising Dublin politician. During the events of *Ulysses*, he is a Member of Parliament representing part of Dublin, and he is also running for mayor. (Nannetti is a real person—and he really did serve as mayor in 1906-7.) When Bloom visits the *Freeman* offices to place Alexander Keyes's ad, he sympathizes with Nannetti over their shared foreign origins (Nannetti's father was Italian). Nannetti essentially ignores Bloom, who can't tell if Nannetti dislikes him or is just a man of few words because he works next to the loud printing presses. Later, Nannetti goes off to London to speak about cattle foot and mouth disease, and Bloom feels betrayed because he never got to place Keyes's ad. Nannetti's indifference to Bloom reflects Bloom's powerlessness in the face of real national and imperial politics.

John Wyse Nolan – The nationalistic but level-headed Dubliner John Wyse Nolan appears briefly in "Wandering Rocks" and more extensively in "Cyclops." While he agrees with many of the citizen's beliefs about Ireland, British imperialism, and Jewish people, he is also relatively sympathetic to Leopold Bloom (until Lenehan brings up the rumor that he won money in the Ascot Gold Cup).

J.J. O'Molloy – J.J. O'Molloy is a brilliant but unsuccessful Dublin lawyer. While he keeps up a façade of respectability, he is secretly drowning in debt and resorting to desperate schemes to try to stay afloat. Unlike many of the novel's other characters, he seriously believes in Stephen Dedalus's potential as a writer, and he defends Bloom in the barroom scene in "Cyclops."

Jack Power – Mr. Power is a polite but distant (and occasionally insensitive) Dublin policeman. He goes to Paddy Dignam's funeral along with Bloom, Simon Dedalus, and Martin Cunningham in "Hades." During the carriage ride, he commits a major gaffe by proclaiming that suicide is disgraceful, without realizing that Bloom's father committed suicide. Later, he helps Bloom escape from the citizen in "Cyclops."

Mina Purefoy – Mrs. Purefoy, Leopold and Molly Bloom's family friend, is giving birth (for the twelfth time) during the events of *Ulysses*. In "Oxen of the Sun," Bloom goes to the hospital to check on her, because she has been in labor for three days and is reported to be in significant pain. However, Bloom gets distracted and ends up drinking with Stephen Dedalus and his medical student friends instead, while Mrs. Purefoy gives birth upstairs. This birth sets the stage for the novel's scientific, religious, and philosophical exploration of fundamental questions about creation, parenthood, and identity. In this vein, Mrs. Purefoy briefly appears in the role of the Virgin Mary during "Circe."

Mrs. Riordan – Mrs. Riordan is an old woman who once lived with Stephen Dedalus's family and later moved to the City Arms Hotel, where Leopold and Molly Bloom lived. Leopold Bloom tried and failed to get into her will—instead, Mrs. Riordan left all her money to the church, so that it would perform prayers for her soul.

George Russell – In *Ulysses*, the eclectic Dublin poet George Russell is loosely acquainted with Stephen Dedalus. In "Scylla and Charybdis," Russell loans Stephen money, but doesn't include him in his anthology of young up-and-coming Irish poets. He also vigorously rejects Stephen's convoluted theory about Shakespeare's family because he views art as an expression of "eternal wisdom," or universal truths unconnected to the realities of everyday life. Joyce, who really met Russell in his youth, repeatedly pokes fun at Russell's theosophy and the unusual pseudonym he used to publish his work ("Æ").

Skin-the-Goat – Skin-the-Goat, whose real name is James Fitzharris, is a real-life Dublin cabman and former member of the Invincibles. He famously drove the getaway car for the Phoneix Park murderers, and he appears in "Eumaeus" as a virulent, conspiratorial nationalist. Bloom doesn't know whether to admire Skin-the-Goat's courage or abhor his crime.

Florry Talbot – Along with Zoe Higgins and Kitty Ricketts, Florry Talbot is one of the three prostitutes who Leopold Bloom, Stephen Dedalus, and Vincent Lynch meet in Bella Cohen's brothel during "Circe." She spends most of the episode laying seductively on the couch, bantering with Stephen and Zoe. Bloom appreciates her buxom appearance.

Lipoti Virag – During one of the fantasy scenes in "Circe," Leopold Bloom's eccentric Hungarian grandfather Lipoti Virag pops into Bella Cohen's brothel through a chimney, wearing Cashel Farrell's monocle and a brown macintosh (a reference to the man in the macintosh). He talks about sex in a sterile, scientific way and gives anatomical descriptions of the prostitutes Zoe Higgins, Kitty Ricketts, and Florry Talbot. He

represents Bloom's rationality, prudence, and worldly curiosity, but his obsession with sex also points to Bloom's concern about his ability to carry on his bloodline.

The Citizen – The "citizen" is the belligerent Irish nationalist and former champion shot-putter who attacks Bloom at Barney Kiernan's pub during "Cyclops." His blind love for Ireland leads him to praise anything connected to his country and reject anything and everything foreign. Although his complaints about the British Empire are largely accurate, the citizen also xenophobically blames immigrants and Jews for Ireland's woes, which leads him to identify Bloom as the enemy. This is ironic, because Bloom also sympathizes with the nationalists. (After all, the citizen's name is also an ironic joke on his virulent nationalism, because at the time, Irish people were only citizens of the British Empire.) In one of the novel's more direct Homeric parallels, the citizen arguably represents the brutish man-eating cyclops Polyphemus, who traps Odysseus in his cave and tries to eat him in the *Odyssey*. Odysseus outsmarts him by getting him drunk then stabbing him in his eye. Similarly, the citizen is so narrow-minded that he can only see things in one particular way, and his attack on Bloom fails because he's drunk and he gets blinded by the sun. He represents the backward tendencies that Joyce despised within the Irish nationalist movement: intolerance, anti-intellectualism, personal irresponsibility, and an insistence on defining Irish identity through the rural past.

The Hely's Admen – Five men walk around central Dublin wearing giant boards, each displaying one letter of "H-E-L-Y-S." They are advertisers working for Hely's stationery shop, where Leopold Bloom used to work. Bloom gets frustrated whenever he sees them, since he thought his own advertising proposals for Hely were far superior. For instance, he wanted to hire attractive young women to ride around Dublin in a cart with a "Hely's" sign, but Hely rejected this idea.

The Man in the Brown Macintosh – A mysterious character appears at Dignam's funeral wearing a brown macintosh raincoat, but nobody can figure out who he is. Bloom mentions him to the reporter Joe Hynes, who mistakenly records his name as "M'Intosh" on the list of mourners. Bloom repeatedly thinks about him for the rest of the day, but never learns who he is. Many critics have suggested that he represents James Joyce himself.

MINOR CHARACTERS

Almidano Artifoni – Almidano Artifoni is Stephen Dedalus's Italian voice teacher, who is named for the director of the school where James Joyce taught English in Trieste, Italy. In "Wandering Rocks," he encourages Stephen Dedalus to pursue a career in music.

Alec Bannon – Alec Bannon is Buck Mulligan's friend, who has recently started dating Milly Bloom. In "Oxen of the Sun," he and Buck meet their medical student friends, Stephen Dedalus, and Leopold Bloom at the Holles Street maternity hospital. Bannon eventually realizes that Bloom is his girlfriend's father.

Philip Beaufoy – Beaufoy is a fictional Dublin writer who wrote "Matcham's Masterstroke," a mediocre short story that won a prize in *Titbits* magazine. In "Calypso," Leopold Bloom reads the story in the outhouse and envies Beaufoy's success.

Richard Best – Richard Best is one of the three librarians who listens to Stephen Dedalus's theory about Shakespeare in "Scylla and Charybdis," along with William Lyster and John Eglinton.

Ellen Bloom – Ellen Bloom is Leopold Bloom's mother, who appears in a flashback from the "Circe" episode to scold her son for coming home covered in mud.

Millicent ("Milly") Bloom – Milly is Leopold and Molly Bloom's fifteen-year-old daughter, who has recently left home to study photography in the city of Mullingar. She writes her parents a letter mentioning a boy named Bannon, which leads both of her parents to speculate about her coming sexual awakening.

Edy Boardman – Edy Boardman is Gerty MacDowell and Cissy Caffrey's friend, who spends the afternoon with them on Sandymount Strand in "Nausicaa." She also brings her baby brother along. Edy is much more reserved and conservative than Cissy, and she seems to be angry at Gerty about something.

Denis Breen – Denis Breen is Josie Breen's mentally unstable husband who spends the day of June 16 obsessively seeking to hire a lawyer, figure out who sent him a postcard reading "U.P.," and sue the sender for libel. Throughout the novel, many Dubliners make fun of him and his pointless crusade.

Seymour Bushe – Bushe is the famous lawyer who defended Samuel Childs in the Childs murder case.

Davy Byrne – Davy Byrne owns the pub where Bloom has lunch in "Lestrygonians."

Jacky Caffrey – Jacky is Cissy Caffrey's younger brother and Tommy Caffrey's twin.

Tommy Caffrey –Tommy is Cissy Caffrey's younger brother and Jacky Caffrey's twin.

Nurse Callan – A nurse at the Holles Street Maternity Hospital and an acquaintance of Leopold Bloom, Nurse Callan repeatedly tells the medical students to be quiet out of respect to Mrs. Purefoy.

Father Coffey – Father Coffey is the priest who presides over funerals in Prospect Cemetery, including Paddy Dignam's. Bloom imagines that his life must be dreadfully boring, since he repeats the same ceremony every day.

Private Compton – Private Compton is Private Carr's comparatively level-headed companion.

Father John Conmee – Conmee is the priest whose diagonal

journey across Dublin serves as the opening scene to "Wandering Rocks." However, he is far more significant because of his role in Joyce's earlier *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*: he was the sympathetic rector at young Stephen Dedalus's school.

Father Conroy – Father Conroy is the priest who performs mass at the church near Sandymount Strand in "Nausicaa."

John Corley – John Corley is Stephen Dedalus's old friend, who manages to borrow money from him in "Eumaeus." The *Dubliners* story "Two Gallants" focuses on his and Lenehan's attempts to seduce and steal money from women.

Frank ("Punch") Costello – Punch Costello is the drunkest and most disrespectful of the partygoers in "Oxen of the Sun." Leopold Bloom disdains him for repeatedly interrupting Mrs. Purefoy's labor by singing drinking songs. The novel reveals that Punch is the good-for-nothing son of a privileged public servant.

Myles Crawford – The fast-talking, vulgar editor of the *Evening Telegraph*, Crawford rudely ignores Leopold Bloom and tries to convince Stephen Dedalus to publish something in his paper in "Aeolus."

Crotthers – One of the partygoers in "Oxen of the Sun," Crotthers largely fades into the background (except while he speculates about whether Theodore Purefoy is still capable of fathering children).

Mrs. Cunningham –Mrs. Cunningham is Martin Cunningham's wife, who is an alcoholic.

Miriam Dandrade – Miriam Dandrade is a woman who once sold Leopold Bloom her used underwear.

Bartell d'Arcy – Bartell d'Arcy is a tenor who once worked with Molly Bloom and kissed her after a rehearsal.

Dan Dawson – Dan Dawson is a local baker and politician who gave a passionate (and unnecessarily elaborate) patriotic speech the night before the events of *Ulysses*.

May Goulding Dedalus – May Goulding Dedalus is Stephen Dedalus's mother, who died just under a year before the events of *Ulysses*. Stephen feels guilty about failing to pray by her deathbed, and she repeatedly comes back to him in dreams and visions throughout the novel (most significantly in "Circe").

Boody Dedalus – Boody Dedalus is one of Stephen Dedalus's sisters.

Katey Dedalus – Katey is one of Stephen Dedalus's sisters.

Maggy Dedalus – Maggy is one of Stephen Dedalus's sisters.

Patrick ("Paddy") Dignam, Sr. – Dignam was an alcoholic Dubliner who died suddenly a few days before the events of *Ulysses*. His funeral is central to the "Hades" episode, and the novel's characters repeatedly lament his passing and worry about how his wife and children will survive.

Patrick Dignam, Jr. – Patrick is Paddy Dignam's young son, who struggles to process his father's death. Martin Cunningham leads a fundraising effort to support the young boy and his family.

Mrs. Dignam – Mrs. Dignam is Paddy Dignam's long-suffering wife.

Moses Dlugacz – A Hungarian Jewish butcher who—ironically enough—runs a pork shop in Dublin. Despite their shared heritage, Leopold Bloom avoids looking at or chatting with Dlugacz when he visits his shop to buy a pork kidney in "Calypso."

Ben Dollard – A popular singer with a "booming" bass voice, Ben Dollard sings "The Croppy Boy" during the climax scene in the "Sirens" episode.

Lydia Douce – In "Sirens," Lydia Douce is one of the barmaids who works at the Ormond Hotel, along with Mina Kennedy. The women joke together before the bar opens, compete for Blazes Boylan's attention when he walks in, and later ward off drunk men's insistent sexual advances.

John Alexander Dowie – John Alexander Dowie is an American preacher who is coming to preach in Dublin. He is the subject of the "Elijah is coming" pamphlet that Bloom receives at the beginning of "Lestrygonians," and in "Circe," he briefly appears with his name reversed (as "Alexander J. Dowie").

Mary Driscoll – Mary Driscoll is Leopold and Molly Bloom's former serving-girl. After Leopold tried to seduce Mary, Molly accused her of stealing oysters and fired her. She appears in the "Circe" episode to formally accuse Bloom of harassing her.

Kevin Egan – Kevin Egan is an Irish expatriate and nationalist whom Stephen Dedalus met in Paris. Stephen remembers him as lonely and miserable, even though his son Patrice also lived in Paris.

Patrice Egan – Patrice Egan is a young Irish socialist who lives as an exile in Paris, along with his father Kevin Egan.

John Eglinton (William Magee) – Eglinton, who is also occasionally called Magee, is a librarian at the National Library, where he works alongside Best and Lyster. Of the three librarians, he is the most forceful and unapologetic critic of Stephen Dedalus's convoluted theory about Shakespeare.

Sir Frederick Falkiner – Falkiner is a prominent judge.

Long John Fanning – Fanning is Dublin's sub-sheriff.

Cashel Boyle O'Connor Fitzmaurice Tisdall Farrell – Cashel is a well-known, eccentric, monocle-wearing Dubliner who often walks around town carrying a stick, umbrella, and dust coat.

Mrs. Fleming – Mrs. Fleming is Leopold and Molly Bloom's inept, elderly housekeeper.

Nosey Flynn – Nosey Flynn is a minor Dublin character who always hangs out in the same corner of Davy Byrne's bar and, as his name suggests, likes to ask other people annoying,

unwanted questions. He asks Leopold Bloom about Molly, Davy Byrne about the horseraces, and Tom Rochford about his invention.

Lieutenant Gardner – Lieutenant Gardner was Molly Bloom's second girlhood love interest in Gibraltar, after Lieutenant Mulvey. He died in the Boer War.

Garryowen – Garryowen is the citizen's vicious, unkempt dog who is constantly on the brink of attacking the men in Barney Kiernan's pub during the "Cyclops" episode. In "Nausicaa," readers learn that his real owner is actually Gerty MacDowell's grandfather, Giltrap.

Professor Goodwin – Goodwin is Molly Bloom's elderly former piano teacher who had some kind of romantic relationship with her.

Richie Goulding – The sickly lawyer and eccentric opera lover Richie Goulding is Stephen Dedalus's uncle (his mother May's brother). Simon Dedalus despises him, and Bloom pretends to be meeting him so that he can enter the Ormond Hotel bar and spy on Blazes Boylan in "Sirens."

Sara Goulding – Sara Goulding is Richie Goulding's wife and Stephen Dedalus's aunt.

Gumley – Gumley is an alcoholic night watchman who sleeps through his shift. He's a friend of Simon Dedalus.

Ann Hathaway – Ann Hathaway was William Shakespeare's wife. Very little is known about her, and Stephen Dedalus develops a complex theory about her and Shakespeare's relationship in the "Scylla and Charybdis" episode.

Hornblower – Hornblower is a porter at Dublin's Trinity College.

Georgina Johnson – Georgina Johnson is a prostitute whom Stephen Dedalus frequently visits in nighttown. He looks for her during "Circe" but learns that she married someone named Mr. Lambe and moved to London.

Bridie Kelly – Bridie Kelly is the prostitute with whom Bloom lost his virginity.

Mina Kennedy – In "Sirens," Mina Kennedy is a golden-haired barmaid who works at the Ormond Hotel. She and her bronze-haired counterpart Lydia Douce fight off obnoxious men's advances while fighting for Blazes Boylan's attention.

Alexander Keyes – Keyes is a "tea, wine and spirit merchant" who hires Bloom to run his advertisement in the *Freeman* newspaper.

George Lidwell – Lidwell is a solicitor who flirts with Lydia Douce in the Ormond Hotel bar.

Rev. Hugh C. Love – Rev. Love is a Protestant clergyman who tours St. Mary's Abbey with Ned Lambert. He is also Father Cowley's landlord—which is a metaphor for British Protestant rule over Irish Catholics—and he is writing a book about the Fitzgerald family.

William Lyster – Lyster is an inquisitive Quaker librarian at the National Library who politely listens to Stephen Dedalus's theory about Shakespeare in "Scylla and Charybdis."

William Madden – Madden is one of the medical students who appear in "Oxen of the Sun."

Denis Maginni – Maginni is a flamboyant Dublin dancing professor.

Lieutenant Mulvey – The soldier Lieutenant Mulvey was Molly Bloom's first love in Gibraltar, but their relationship was cut short when he suddenly had to sail off to India.

John O'Connell – John O'Connell is the caretaker of Prospect Cemetery, where Paddy Dignam is buried during "Hades."

Father O'Hanlon – Father O'Hanlon is a priest who conducts mass at the church near Sandymount Strand with Father Conroy.

Terry O'Ryan – Terry O'Ryan is the barman at Barney Kiernan's.

Kitty O'Shea – Kitty O'Shea was an English aristocrat whose long affair with Charles Stewart Parnell went public, ruined Parnell's reputation, and arguably delayed Ireland's independence.

John Howard Parnell – The Irish Nationalist leader Charles Stewart Parnell's older brother John carried on his legacy after his death, held minor political office, and occasionally appears around Dublin in *Ulysses*.

Pat – Pat is the bald waiter at the Ormond Hotel.

Theodore ("Doady") Purefoy – Theodore Purefoy is Mrs. Purefoy's husband, who the medical students at the Holles Street hospital think is too old to be the father of her child.

Nurse Quigley – Nurse Quigley is a nurse at the maternity hospital on Holles Street.

Kitty Ricketts – Along with Zoe Higgins and Florry Talbot, Kitty Ricketts is one of the three prostitutes who works in Bella Cohen's brothel. She is thin and pale, and Lipoti Virag notices that she seems depressed. She runs off with Vincent Lynch at the end of "Circe."

Tom Rochford – Tom Rochford is an ambitious Dubliner who invents a machine that displays who is onstage during a variety show, and he also once saved a man who fell into a sewer (which is a true story).

H. Rumbold – Rumbold is a barber who applies for a job as a hangman in Dublin and later shows up and prepares to execute Bloom in "Circe."

Sceptre – Sceptre is a horse who is favored to win the Ascot Gold Cup race but then loses to Throwaway. Madden, Lenehan, and Blazes Boylan all lose money by betting on Sceptre.

William Shakespeare – Shakespeare is the famous English playwright, poet, and actor who is the subject of Stephen

Dedalus's complicated, improbable theories in "Scylla and Charybdis."

Georgina Simpson – Georgina Simpson hosted the party where Leopold Bloom met Molly Tweedy.

John F. Taylor – Taylor is a genius Dublin lawyer whom Professor MacHugh praises for giving a brilliant patriotic speech about reviving the Irish language.

Throwaway – Throwaway is the underdog horse who pulls ahead of Sceptre to win the Ascot Gold Cup. (This arguably represents the underdog anti-hero Leopold Bloom defeating the intrepid seducer Blazes Boylan to win Molly Bloom's love.)

Major Brian Tweedy – Molly Bloom's father was a successful soldier who spent much of his career stationed in Gibraltar. Leopold Bloom greatly admires "old Tweedy," but the novel repeatedly questions his actual rank in the military.

Reggy Wylie – Gerty MacDowell's love interest, Reggy Wylie is a boy who once kissed her on the nose at a party and sometimes rides his bicycle by her window.

The Blind Piano Tuner – The blind "stripling" (young man) never speaks in the book, but he turns up in three different scenes: Bloom helps him cross the street in "Lestrygonians," he walks through Dublin in "Wandering Rocks," and he goes to the Ormond Hotel to retrieve his tuning fork in "Sirens."

The Boardman Baby – This is Edy Boardman's younger brother, who plays with Cissy Caffrey in "Nausicaa."

The Old Bawd – The old bawd is an ugly, elderly prostitute in nighttown. She tries to get Bloom's attention and set him up with a younger woman in "Circe."

The One-Legged Sailor – A gruff beggar sings a patriotic English song in "Wandering Rocks," and Molly Bloom tosses him a coin through the window.

The Narrator of Episode 12 – This narrator is a working-class Dublin debt collector who describes the fight between Bloom and the citizen in Barney Kiernan's bar.

The Navvy – In "Circe," the navy is a construction worker who steals a lamppost.

The Nymph – The nymph is a figure from a picture that Bloom cut out of a smutty magazine and framed on the wall next to his bed. She comes to life in "Circe" and reminds him about all his sins and sexual improprieties.

The Old Gummy Grammy – This is an elderly woman whom Stephen Dedalus hallucinates about meeting in "Circe." She represents an exaggerated stereotype of poor rural Irish nationalism, and she resembles the milkmaid who delivers Stephen, Buck Mulligan, and Haines's milk in the opening episode.

TERMS

Ascot Gold Cup – The Ascot Gold Cup is a prestigious horserace held in England every June.

Boer War – In South Africa, the British Empire went to war with two independent states of white settlers (Boers) from 1899 to 1902. Irishmen served in both sides of the war: thousands of Irish soldiers fought as part of the British Army, but many Irish nationalists also supported and fought with the Boers, whom they viewed as partners in the struggle against British imperialism.

Childs Murder Case – In a high-profile 1889 case that shook Dublin, Samuel Childs was accused of murdering his brother Thomas. Thanks to a brilliant defense by the attorney **Seymour Bushe**, Samuel Childs was acquitted. James Joyce attended the trial as a young man.

"The Croppy Boy" – "The Croppy Boy" is an Irish folk song about a young revolutionary (or "croppy") who participated in the failed Irish Rebellion of 1798. The young man stops in a church to confess his sins, but he doesn't realize that the priest is actually a British soldier in disguise. The soldier arrests the young croppy and takes him away to be executed.

Dead Sea – The Dead Sea is a famous saline lake on the present-day border between Israel, Palestine, and Jordan, which has been a significant religious and health tourism site for thousands of years.

Don Giovanni – *Don Giovanni* is a celebrated Mozart opera based on the legend of the seducer and rapist Don Juan. During *Ulysses*, **Molly Bloom** is practicing to sing "Là ci darem la mano," a duet from a seduction scene in *Don Giovanni*, on her upcoming concert tour.

"Là ci darem" – "Là ci darem la mano" (or "Là ci darem" for short) is a duet from a seduction scene in Mozart's celebrated opera *Don Giovanni*. The duet, whose name means "there we will give each other our hands," is one of the two songs that **Molly Bloom** is practicing to sing on her upcoming concert tour. While Joyce's allusion to "Là ci darem" clearly hints at the nature of Molly's relationship with her concert manager **Blazes Boylan**, the other song, "Love's Old Sweet Song," is a celebration of true love and hints at Molly's desire to reconcile with her husband **Leopold Bloom**.

Edward VII – Edward VII was the king of the United Kingdom and ruler of its empire from 1901 to 1910 (including during the events of *Ulysses* in 1904).

Elijah – Elijah is a prophet in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. According to the Hebrew Bible, Elijah lived in the ninth century B.C., performed miracles, and is fated to return some time before the end of days.

Foot and Mouth Disease – Foot and mouth disease is a severe, highly infectious viral disease that affects many kinds of

livestock, including cattle.

Gibraltar – Gibraltar, **Molly Bloom**'s hometown, is a small British territory and longtime military base located at the southern tip of Spain.

Guinness – Guinness is a well-known Irish beer and brewery.

Haroun al Raschid – The ruler of the Abbasid Caliphate in the late eighth and early ninth centuries, Haroun al Raschid helped launch the Islamic Golden Age by investing heavily in science, diplomacy, and trade. He is frequently referenced in Western literature.

Invincibles – The Invincibles were a group of radical Irish nationalists that briefly existed in the 1880s and committed the Phoenix Park murders.

Leah the Forsaken – *Leah the Forsaken* (or just *Leah*, for short) is the American dramatist Augustin Daly's 1862 play by about a Hungarian Jewish refugee woman who falls in love with an Austrian man named Rudolf, but is legally prohibited from staying in his village because of her religion.

Limerick – Limericks are a genre of comic Irish rhyming poem.

"Love's Old Sweet Song" – "Love's Old Sweet Song" is a popular 19th century love song about the endless and enduring nature of love. It is one of the two songs that **Molly Bloom** practices for her upcoming concert tour. Its tone contrasts strongly with the other, the seductive duet "Là ci darem" from Don Giovanni.

"M'appari" – "M'appari tutt'amor" is a famous aria from the Italian version of the extremely popular 19th century German romantic opera *Martha*.

Martello Tower – A Martello Tower is a kind of short defensive stone artillery tower that the English built across the United Kingdom and the British Empire during the 19th century. At the beginning of *Ulysses*, **Stephen Dedalus**, **Buck Mulligan**, and **Haines** are living in a disused Martello tower in Dublin's Sandycove neighborhood.

Metempsychosis – In ancient Greek philosophy, metempsychosis was the concept of reincarnation, or the idea that the soul migrates into a new body upon death.

Nelson's Pillar – Nelson's Pillar was a large, politically controversial granite monument to the British admiral Horatio Nelson that stood in central Dublin from 1809 until 1966.

Nighttown – The "Circe" episode is set in "nighttown," which is a code name for Dublin's notorious Monto neighborhood. In the early 20th century, this extremely poor area was the largest red-light district in Europe. Monto's prostitutes mostly catered to English soldiers like Privates **Carr** and **Compton**.

Omphalos – "Omphalos" is the Ancient Greek word for "navel," but it also referred to sacred stones—particularly the monument in Delphi that was believed to mark the center of the world.

Parallax – Parallax is the visual effect in which different observers located in different positions view the same object as located in different places or directions. In astronomy, parallax is also the name for the amount that this apparent position changes between the different observers.

Charles Stewart Parnell – Parnell was a popular, influential Irish nationalist politician, active in the late 1800s, who is widely seen as the Home Rule (independence) movement's greatest leader and popularizer.

Phoenix Park Murders – In Dublin's Phoenix Park in 1882, the Invincibles stabbed and killed two British imperial civil servants, the Chief Secretary and Permanent Undersecretary for Ireland. The killers were convicted and hanged, and **Skin-the-Goat**, the driver who helped them escape, was convicted as an accessory to murder.

Pianola – A pianola is a player piano.

Pyrrhus – In the third century B.C., Pyrrhus was the king of Epirus, a state located in modern-day Albania and Greece. Pyrrhus fought the Pyrrhic War to prevent the Romans from encroaching on Greece, and he was famous for narrowly winning battles despite suffering extremely devastating losses to his army. (This kind of counterproductive win is often called a "Pyrrhic victory.")

River Liffey – The Liffey is the main river that runs through Dublin.

Sandycove – Sandycove is the seaside neighborhood southeast of central Dublin where **Stephen Dedalus**, **Buck Mulligan**, and **Haines** live in the Martello tower.

Sandymount Strand – Sandymount Strand is a beach southeast of central Dublin and the setting of episodes three ("Proteus") and thirteen ("Nausicaa").

Shilling – A shilling was a unit in the old British currency system. Twelve pennies made a shilling, and twenty shillings made a pound.

Theosophy – Theosophy was an occultist religion founded in the 1870s by the Russian mystic Madame Blavatsky, which was based on eclectic, often exaggerated interpretations of Hindu and Buddhist philosophy.

"Who Goes With Fergus?" – "Who Goes With Fergus?" is a 1892 lyric poem by the Irish poet William Butler Yeats. In the poem, Yeats references the mythical Irish king and poet Fergus in order to encourage people to focus on the mystical beauty of the universe. In Yeats's play *The Countess Cathleen*, this song is sung to soothe the title character after she sells her soul to the devil. **Stephen Dedalus** repeatedly thinks of this poem, which he sang to **his mother** on her deathbed. He especially remembers the lines, "And no more turn aside and brood / Upon love's bitter mystery."

THEMES

In LitCharts literature guides, each theme gets its own color-coded icon. These icons make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. If you don't have a color printer, you can still use the icons to track themes in black and white.

ALIENATION AND THE QUEST FOR BELONGING

James Joyce's influential modernist novel *Ulysses* follows an ordinary man, the Dublin advertiser Leopold Bloom, on the ordinary day of June 16, 1904. Bloom eats breakfast, attends a funeral, fails to place an ad, thinks about his wife Molly's affair with her manager Blazes Boylan, and gets into a bar fight. In the evening, he meets the novel's second protagonist, the 22-year-old starving poet Stephen Dedalus, and follows him into Dublin's brothel district. Of course, Joyce's novel isn't really about Leopold Bloom's day. Fundamentally, it's about people's search for a meaningful life in the modern world. Leopold Bloom and Stephen Dedalus both feel completely alienated and alone in turn-of-the century Dublin: they don't get along with their families, nobody appreciates the work they do, and they're ostracized in the broader community. They spend their day drifting through Dublin, fantasizing about the fulfilling lives they want to live, and looking for a place where they truly feel like they belong. While their urban alienation might be a specifically modern feeling, Joyce suggests that their desire to figure out where one belongs is a powerful, universal feeling that motivates all human beings to go on quests of their own.

Leopold Bloom and Stephen Dedalus are modern-day exiles: they feel largely disconnected from Dublin society and search in vain for a place where they can fit in. Bloom's colleagues disrespect him, he fails to sell his ad, and he has few (if any) real friends. As the Jewish son of an immigrant, he also faces prejudice. Similarly, Stephen feels that his calling in life is to explore beauty and truth through literature, but nobody in Dublin takes him seriously, except to try to profit off him. His friends (like the cruel moocher Buck Mulligan) don't care about him. Meanwhile, he's drowning in debt and on the brink of starvation. Despite their differing circumstances, Bloom and Stephen share the feeling of being exiled within their own city.

Stephen and Bloom also become alienated from their families and lose control over their homes. After his mother dies and his irresponsible father takes over, Stephen's family falls into poverty and despair. Stephen leaves home, and his frustration and resentment at his father frequently resurface. For instance, he develops an elaborate theory of *Hamlet* to suggest that fatherhood is meaningless, even though he's really just trying to soothe the pain of his own abandonment. Similarly, Bloom struggles to feel that he truly belongs in his family. He's haunted by his father's suicide and his infant son Rudy's untimely death, and he thinks his male bloodline is all but cursed. He desperately wants to have a son, but he's too afraid of losing another child to even try to have another son. In turn, this fear threatens his relationship with his wife Molly, who has started seeing other men—like Blazes Boylan, her concert manager. Thus, Bloom's family life is just like his social and professional lives: he finds himself on the outside looking in, desperately trying to make a place for himself. Significantly, both Stephen and Bloom leave home without their **housekeys** and later find that other men (Buck and Boylan) have usurped their houses, which is a metaphor for the way they become exiles in the spaces where they are supposed to belong (family and society).

Therefore, in *Ulysses*, Bloom and Stephen's main concern is how they can overcome their sense of alienation. Concretely, this means that they want to define and claim a place in the world, so that they can feel that they belong somewhere and start to work towards a fulfilling, meaningful life. This is why Joyce links his protagonists to the *Odyssey* and *Hamlet*—which also focus on questions of home, belonging, identity, and dispossession. For years, Odysseus struggles to make it home to Ithaca, and he wonders if another man will have taken his place when he arrives. Similarly, Bloom wanders Dublin during the day, charting his course back home and wondering if Molly will leave him for Blazes Boylan. And Stephen struggles to cope with his identity and plan his future after his mother's death, just like Hamlet after his father's. Both protagonists also build up elaborate fantasies that represent the happy, fulfilled lives they want: Bloom dreams of becoming a politician, publishing stories in the paper, and of having a joyous, happy family. Stephen imagines himself as a literary Messiah, saving Ireland from ignorance through art. While unrealistic and unachievable, these fantasies show how deeply Bloom and Stephen want to overcome their personal, professional, and social exile.

Bloom and Stephen's epic journeys intersect halfway through the novel, and although they don't realize it at first, Joyce makes it clear that the key to their quests is *each other*. Like a father and son, Stephen and Bloom promise to help each other overcome alienation and establish a more solid identity. Bloom wants to care for a son and fill his house, while Stephen needs a responsible father figure and a place to stay. Bloom wants intellectual stimulation, while Stephen wants someone to take his writing seriously. Thus, Bloom takes a fatherly interest in Stephen, protectively follows him around, and then invites him over. But what happens next is surprising: they don't get along. Even while the novel repeatedly compares them to the Father and the Son (God and Jesus Christ), Stephen mostly ignores Bloom and looks down on him as intellectually inferior. He refuses to stay at Bloom's house and wanders off into the night. However, at the end of the novel, it becomes clear that their

meeting gives them both the tools they need to resolve their problems individually. After meeting Stephen, Bloom reevaluates his feelings about fatherhood and family, and he starts to reconcile with Molly. Meanwhile, Stephen finally gains the courage and conviction that he needs to dedicate himself to art. Thus, while they do not instantaneously find the sense of belonging that they fantasize about, Bloom and Stephen do overcome their alienation and take the first steps towards fulfilling their desires.

LITERATURE, MEANING, AND PERSPECTIVE

Joyce's *Ulysses* is famously modeled on Homer's *Odyssey*: in addition to naming his book after the Homeric hero Odysseus (or "Ulysses" in Latin), Joyce also titled his chapters (or "episodes") after different books of Homer's epic. But despite the significant correspondences between *Ulysses* and the *Odyssey*, it would be wrong to treat Joyce's work as a mere adaptation or reinterpretation of Homer's work. In addition to the *Odyssey*, Joyce frequently alludes to hundreds of other famous texts (most significantly, Shakespeare's *Hamlet*). These allusions enrich his novel, allow him to investigate the purpose and value of literature, and make a case for including *Ulysses* alongside the other masterpieces of the Western canon. At the same time, Joyce also questions the value of this canon and asks what kind of literature humankind needs in order to cope with the new conditions of the 20th century (like industrialization, technological progress, secularism, colonialism, and global integration). Through his allusions, his use of literature as a plot device, and most of all his mastery of a wide range of literary styles, Joyce argues for a broader conception of literary value. He suggests that the truest depiction of reality in literature is one that faithfully portrays multiple perspectives on the same question, rather than trying to seek a single truth.

Ulysses is a highly intertextual novel, which means that its meaning depends largely on its constant references to other works of literature. *Ulysses* cites hundreds upon hundreds of other books, but it's easy to miss the vast majority of these references because Joyce almost never explicitly points them out and most of them are relatively subtle. (Often, they'll just involve one significant word or image.) In particular, Joyce focuses on some of the works considered the greatest exemplars of the Western canon, like *Hamlet* and the *Odyssey*. The *Odyssey* provides Joyce with a structure for his novel, but he by no means copies it exactly—for instance, while Gerty MacDowell closely resembles the princess Nausicaa, Molly Bloom's resemblance to Penelope is somewhat ironic, because Penelope goes to great lengths to stay loyal to Odysseus for years, while Molly casually cheats on her husband. Joyce doesn't try to simply repeat the tried-and-true formulas that made literary classics succeed: rather, he adapts these classics to his own purposes in order to ask how they are relevant to modern life. Thus, when he draws an analogy between Leopold Bloom's journey on one ordinary day and Odysseus's epic journey over a decade, Joyce suggests that average people's lives are as complex and significant as those of ancient heroes, if readers and writers are willing to take a close enough look at them. Throughout the novel, Joyce repeats this move, using other literature as context and commentary for his characters' experiences.

On the other hand, Joyce also intentionally subverts literary norms in order to show that they're subjective and changeable. Sometimes, he pushes his allusions so far that they become parodies. For instance, Stephen Dedalus presents an elaborate theory of *Hamlet* that doesn't hold together and that Stephen himself doesn't even believe. Through Stephen's theory, Joyce undercuts his use of canonical works as source texts. He mocks both the attempt to try to understand the original meaning of a work of art and the tendency to try too hard to make literature inform life. Most importantly, he uses a variety of different styles and points of view to suggest that literature shouldn't be held to singular norms and standards at all. Rather than sticking to a fixed, conventional narrator throughout the novel, *Ulysses* narrates every single chapter through a different voice and perspectives. Many chapters use free indirect discourse, while some of the most famous ("Proteus" and "Penelope") are stream-of-consciousness soliloquies. "Aeolus" is full of newspaper headlines, "Wandering Rocks" switches perspective eighteen times (like the novel as a whole), and "Circe" is a play. In "Cyclops," Joyce parodies different styles of popular writing, and in "Oxen of the Sun," he adopts historical prose styles ranging from Tacitus's Roman histories to Dickens's Victorian novels. By using multiple voices, Joyce points out that literary styles are constantly changing and he shows how form shapes content. He also makes a case for his own greatness as a writer, as he proves that he can do everything that any great writer of the past has done. Thus, Joyce doesn't just incorporate other literature into *Ulysses* so that he can prove his reverence for the past: he also does so in order to remind the reader that all perspectives are subjective and show that simplistic norms of literary greatness don't do justice to the complexity of life and literature.

Instead, Joyce suggests that the best way for literature to truly represent reality is by offering multiple different perspectives on it. He frequently presents this idea through the astronomical concept of parallax, which refers to the effect in which different observers will see the same object as located in different places. In a nutshell, parallax simply means that the world looks different to different observers. In the context of literature, this means that a single style or perspective is never enough to get a full view of the world. Instead, Joyce's multiple styles give a parallax view of the world, and he mocks his own ambition and reverence for great works of the past in order to

give a parallax view of those works' importance. Most significantly, his characters frequently give parallax views of the events in his novel. For instance, the reader hears about Bloom's proposal from him in "Lestrygonians," then learns about Molly's perspective on the same events at the end of the novel in "Penelope." The best way to understand their relationship is not to choose one of their perspectives over the other: rather, it's to lay them side-by-side and look at *both*, even if they don't necessarily agree. For Joyce, then, literature has to embrace the complexity of multiple perspectives if it wants to provide a more realistic and comprehensive picture of the world.

LOVE AND SEX

For the first decade after its publication, *Ulysses* was the subject of an international scandal: because he dared to describe sex in realistic detail, Joyce saw his novel banned and censored around the world. While Joyce's treatment of sex is far less transgressive by 21st century standards, its frankness and vulgarity can still be surprising to many readers. Ironically, however, the sex in *Ulysses* isn't particularly passionate, erotic, or meaningful to the characters who engage in it—rather, Joyce places far more significance on love. Although Molly Bloom's affair with Blazes Boylan is central to the plot, Bloom knows about it and doesn't try to stop them. Moreover, when Molly speaks in the novel's final episode, she makes it clear that she has no serious feelings for Boylan, but she ends up passionately proclaiming her love for her husband. Meanwhile, Bloom's most sympathetic trait as a character is his profound sense of love and sympathy, which extends not only to Molly, but also to animals, the poor, and even those who attack and ostracize him. Although he struggles to say it without sounding cliched and sentimental, Bloom thinks of love as the key to maintaining peace and preventing conflict in society. Joyce values both sex and love for different reasons, and while he understands that they're generally connected, he suggests that they don't always have to be. He views sex as the height of human pleasure and a sacred reproductive ritual, while he sees love as the essential force that sustains and nourishes human life.

Joyce takes a remarkably positive and accepting view of sex, which he depicts in far more detail than most early 20th century writers. In fact, Joyce was famously obsessive about getting all his details right, down to Bloom's specific sexual fantasies and Boylan's penis size. But this doesn't mean that his writing about sex is overly precise or boring. Rather, he actually uses euphemism and metaphor to narrate the novel's most important sex scenes: Molly's tryst with Blazes Boylan in "Sirens" and Bloom's masturbation scene in "Nausciaa." In these scenes, he presents the characters' pleasure without guilt—even though Bloom has clearly crossed a line in "Nausicaa," by masturbating to Gerty MacDowell on the public beach. In "Circe," Bloom rightly feels guilty about sexually harassing various women and masturbating in public—but when it comes to consensual sex, Joyce pretty much only has positive things to say. Most notably, Molly Bloom talks often and openly about sex, pleasure, and fertility in "Penelope." She suggests that it's healthier to embrace sexuality than repress it. Indeed, Joyce is extremely open about and accepting of sex in part because he wants to fight conservative Ireland's intense secrecy and shame about sex. He illustrates this from time to time in the novel, like during a brief scene in "Wandering Rocks" where the priest Father Conmee catches Lynch and his girlfriend coming out of the bushes after having sex. In fact, Joyce thinks the Catholic Church has it all backwards: sex isn't sinful and impure; it's sacred. In "Oxen of the Sun," Joyce repeatedly links sex to the wonder of pregnancy and childbirth, which he in turn connects to the divine act of creation. Thus, Joyce praises sex as a kind of holy act, the nexus between pleasure and reproduction. But first, he wants to simply demystify it, so that his readers can start to abandon their shame and see its beauty.

In addition to his complex view of sex, however, Joyce also has plenty to say about love: he essentially argues that love makes life worth living and maintains peace in human society. While he admits that this theory is cliched and unoriginal by making fun of it in "Cyclops," he clearly still views it as an important truth. In fact, love provides the novel's ultimate resolution in "Penelope"—in her final lines, Molly reaffirms her enduring love for Bloom, which implies that Bloom's love has won out over Blazes Boylan's sex. Similarly, Bloom thinks about his profound love for Molly throughout the novel, even while he also agonizes about her having sex with Boylan. And when Bloom returns home in "Ithaca," he decides that he'll forgive her—he muses that her adultery is not too serious because it doesn't threaten her love for him. This shows that Joyce views love as an enduring, binding force that helps people overcome obstacles and divisions. He also implies that it can absolutely be separated from sex, if necessary. Finally, Bloom also gives love a significant political meaning during his argument with the citizen in "Cyclops." Thinking about his Jewish community, Bloom declares that different groups have always persecuted each other throughout history, but the solution to their political conflicts is love. The other men laugh him off, but he's being sincere: he thinks that loving one's enemies is the only way to heal enduring wounds. On a mass scale, this kind of love can pave the way for a peaceful, tolerant, and prosperous society. Fittingly, Bloom's most heroic trait is arguably his sense of love, or his empathy and affection for others—especially animals, his daughter Milly, and Stephen Dedalus (who also yearns for love throughout the novel, in order to replace the love he's lost after his mother's death). If sex is holy for Joyce, then love is heroic.

Joyce's critics were right to portray his novel as, in some fundamental way, a story about sex. But they also proved his

point by censoring it: shame and secrecy about sex actually prevent people from understanding *love*, because it wrongly encourages them to think that sex is always an expression of romantic love, while true romantic love always requires sex. Joyce moves past this narrow-eyed view by first rejecting the stigma around sex and secondly showing how it's possible to separate (or combine) sex and love while still enjoying the benefits of each.

FATE VS. FREE WILL

On their epic journeys through Dublin, Leopold Bloom and Stephen Dedalus don't magically save the day like superheroes. Instead, they spend plenty of time stuck, bogged down in guilt, regret, confusion, and fear. Like most ordinary people, Joyce's protagonists struggle to cope with things that are out of their control—especially their inability to change the past and their certainty that they will die in the future. In a word, they are grappling with fate, which is the ultimate limit to human freedom. Joyce shows how it's easy to give up on the struggle between fate and freedom: when they realize that they will face frustrations, fall short of their goals, and eventually die, Bloom and Stephen decide that life is meaningless and resolve not to try in the first place. Joyce thinks it's necessary for people to accept what they cannot control, so that they do not give up or get discouraged when they fail. But he also affirms that it's always worth struggling against fate, even when the odds are long.

Throughout the novel, Joyce's protagonists grapple with fate in ways that range from the absurd to the life-shattering. Leopold Bloom's everyday frustrations are one of the most humorous and relatable parts of *Ulysses*. For instance, the newspaper foreman Nannetti doesn't answer Bloom, and he doesn't know if he's being ignored or just overreacting. Later, he forgets to look while crossing the street and nearly gets run over by a tram. In other scenes, he forgets his wife Molly's lotion recipe and he leaves his **key** in the wrong pants. Of course, most epic heroes wouldn't have to deal with these kinds of minor inconveniences—so Bloom's minor frustrations actually set him up as an imperfect, all-too-human kind of epic hero.

On the other end of the spectrum, the novel's protagonists also have to confront death, which is the most consequential turn of fate for human beings. Throughout the novel, Stephen grieves for his dead mother, while Bloom grieves for Paddy Dignam, his son Rudy, and his father. In the process, Bloom and Stephen also confront the inevitability of their own deaths. For instance, during "Oxen of the Sun," a deafening thunderbolt reminds Stephen of his fear of death. Terrified, he briefly considers taking back up religion. During his courtroom fantasy in "Circe," Bloom gets sentenced to death and tries to escape his fate through metempsychosis. To Stephen and Bloom—like to most people—death is frightening precisely because it's unpredictable and inescapable. We have no control over when and how we will die, and death will leave our projects incomplete and our goals unfulfilled. Therefore, death is the ultimate expression of fate, and it represents the absolute limit of human free will.

Similarly, other people's deaths also make our errors irreversible and our transgressions unforgivable. This is why Stephen's failure to pray for his mother tortures him throughout the novel: he can't undo his mistake. He knows that time only flows in one direction, and it's only truly possible to evaluate actions in retrospect. (Joyce uses this principle to manipulate the reader by releasing important details long after they're needed—for instance, Bloom thinks of his father's death several times before the novel reveals that he died by suicide.) Therefore, Stephen feels that all decisions are risky and imperfect, and he's terrified of making another mistake that he will later come to regret. So just like death leads Stephen and Bloom to doubt whether their free will means anything, regret leads them to doubt whether acting is worth the effort at all, like Shakespeare's Hamlet.

However, Joyce suggests that the only way to deal with these limits to free will is by fully accepting them and continuing to struggle against fate anyway. At times, fearing death, regret, or error, Stephen and Bloom decide to passively give themselves over to fate instead of taking action. The most obvious examples of this are Bloom's decision not to have another child (because he's too afraid to lose it) and Stephen's decision not to write (because he's too afraid that the people who surround him will reject his work). They decide not to create what they most want because they're afraid that fate will snatch it away from them. Put differently, when they realize that their free will has limits, they decide that it's safer not to act. Other times, they indulge in fantasies in the hopes of forgetting about fate—like when Bloom imagines himself as Ireland's all-powerful king-emperor during "Circe."

A third solution to the problem of fate is to deny that free will exists in the first place. This is what Mr. Deasy does in "Nestor," when he declares that all of history is pre-ordained by God, so there's no point in trying to do anything. But Joyce expresses his disagreement through Stephen's famous response: "history is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake." Although it may not work, trying to change the world by rebelling against history is still better than not trying at all. For Stephen, this is doubly true because rebellion is at least an affirmation of one's own freedom, and he values his artistic freedom above all else. Thus, he decides to continue trying to change history, even though he knows that it may not be possible.

Similarly, in the novel's climax during the brothel scene in "Circe," Stephen has a vision of his mother rising from the dead, and he tells her "*Non serviam!*" ("I will not serve!"). With this act of rebellion, he affirms his earlier decision not to pray for her—even though he later came to regret it during the events

of the novel. This shows that he manages to hold two seemingly contradictory ideas together: first, that it's worth struggling against fate even when the odds are long, and secondly, that accepting the inevitability of fate is actually the best way to prepare for the struggle against it.

RELIGION, ATHEISM, AND PHILOSOPHY

In the early 20th century Dublin of James Joyce's *Ulysses*, modernity is fast displacing tradition. Where collective life used to be totally organized around the church, it's quickly shifting to modern institutions (like newspapers, universities, and corporations) and urban social spaces (like pubs, beaches, and street corners). In turn, Joyce's Dubliners increasingly choose the excitement, consumerism, and vice of modern urban life over the traditional Catholic values of their parents and grandparents. But when religion disappears as an explanation of people's place in the world, something has to fill the gap. Therefore, it's significant that Leopold Bloom and Stephen Dedalus, Joyce's two protagonists, are both atheists. Stephen and Bloom represent two different alternatives to religion. Stephen believes in art, philosophy, and creativity, whereas Bloom believes in science, business, and rationality. Roughly speaking, then, Stephen is the mind and Bloom is the body—but both are incomplete, because religion explains the relationship *between* body and mind. Ultimately, by integrating Stephen Dedalus and Leopold Bloom's perspectives in the closing chapters of *Ulysses*, Joyce shows that it's possible to unite body and mind by finding spiritual meaning in the physical world itself.

Ulysses depicts a fast-modernizing society where the church, especially the Catholic Church, is traditionally powerful but starting to quickly lose importance. That said, it's still everywhere—the novel includes a dizzying number of priests (Coffey, Conmee, Conroy, Cowley, and O'Hanlon), even if they do travel around by electric tram (Conmee) or amass substantial debts and play the piano in rowdy hotel bars (Cowley). But under English rule, the Catholic Church has little formal power, and most of the Dubliners in *Ulysses* care far more about Parnell than the Pope. In fact, Stephen and his friends repeatedly compare the Church to the English—as they're Ireland's two foreign masters. In short, the Church traditions are still alive, but they are growing more and more irrelevant to modern life.

Meanwhile, Joyce's protagonists are already one step ahead: they're atheists who have already rejected the church's authority. As an alternative to religion, Bloom chooses to explain the world through science, while Stephen Dedalus chooses to explain it through ideas. In other words, Bloom thinks that everything in the universe is actually physical and there is no such thing as a soul, while Stephen thinks that everything is just a product of the mind and physical objects aren't necessarily real. Bloom grew up Jewish, but he has never believed in God. He even views religion through the lens of science: when he stumbles into mass, he notes how the congregants appear drugged, and at Dignam's funeral, he thinks about how wasteful it is to spend money burying loved ones instead of on charity. He's the typical modern man of the early 1900s: he believes in throwing religion out and replacing it with technology, progress, and technocratic social reforms.

Meanwhile, Stephen Dedalus abandons religion in the opposite way, and he represents a philosophical response to the fading power of the Church. When he realized that his Catholic upbringing could no longer provide meaning, guidance, and structure in his life, Stephen gave up believing in God but kept looking at the world like a Jesuit. In *Ulysses*, he tries to understand the universe by asking philosophical questions, analyzing art, and searching for the ultimate truth hidden behind the physical world (which he considers a set of mere illusions). In the process, he totally ignores the outside world: he throws away his money, antagonizes his friends, and stops bathing. In short, whereas Bloom is a scientific thinker who copes with the decline of religion by focusing his energy entirely on the physical world around him, Stephen is an artistic thinker who copes with the decline of religion by turning his energy inward and focusing entirely on the mind. But Bloom neglects the mind and Stephen neglects the body.

In order to find a viable alternative to religion, Joyce spends the last few chapters of the novel looking for a way to integrate Bloom and Stephen's worldviews into a kind of atheism that captures *both* body and soul. He offers several hints, but three are worth noting. The first is that the "Ithaca" episode presents Bloom and Stephen's views together through a catechism (a series of questions and answers ordinarily used to clarify religious doctrines). While Bloom and Stephen often speak past each other, it's often possible for the reader to see where their views intersect. For instance, in one moment, they both see the other as the Messiah, and Stephen thinks about St. John of Damascus, who said that the Father and Son are co-substantial (or made of the same substance). Essentially, Stephen and Bloom symbolically merge into a Messiah-like figure who will bring humankind an alternative to religion.

Secondly, Joyce repeatedly talks about metempsychosis (reincarnation), which explains how souls can continue to exist in the physical world, moving from body to body, without being created or destroyed. Third and finally, Molly Bloom's worldview integrates the physicality of Bloom's with the spirituality of Stephen's. Joyce strongly associates Molly with the natural world. And at the end of her monologue, she expresses frustration with people who argue about the existence of God and the soul. She thinks that people should affirm the world itself, rather than trying to figure out where it came from. So whereas Christians say that the soul comes from God, Bloom would say that it's just a product of "brainpower," and Stephen would say that the world is a reflection of the

mind, Molly says that the soul already exists within the natural world, in its beauty, force, and dynamism.

While Joyce doesn't give any single answer to the question of what people should believe in a modern secular society, he affirms that it's possible to give up on religion and still have a coherent view of the world. Accordingly, even though Stephen and Bloom don't change each other's minds, Joyce offers his readers the tools and ideas they need in order to confront a world without God.

IRISH IDENTITY AND NATIONALISM

Ulysses is Joyce's ambitious attempt to condense the universal range of human experience into one novel, but it's also deeply rooted in the particular historical, cultural, and political context of a specific place and time: Dublin, the capital of colonized Ireland, at the turn of the 20th century. Joyce's distinctive local dialects and wordplay, his meticulous attention to Dublin's geography, and his constant references to Irish history and politics make *Ulysses* as much a distinctively Irish novel as it is a canonical work of Western literature in general. Joyce wrote and published *Ulysses* during the period when Ireland was securing its independence from Britain (the late 1910s and early 1920s). However, he chose to set the novel in 1904, when political life was overwhelmingly focused on the question of independence, but the path to it was not yet clear. As a result, Ireland's predicament as a long-suffering colony constantly materializes in the background of *Ulysses*, most prominently in terms of the conflict between pro-British unionists and pro-independence nationalists. Joyce supports the cause of Irish independence in *Ulysses* by showing how British colonialism devastated Ireland. But he also viciously mocks Irish nationalists, whom he presents as absurdly narrow-minded and intolerant: in *Ulysses*, they're so focused on praising Ireland's greatness and getting back at the British that they reject everything foreign and never actually work to build a better society. Always suspicious of grand political dogmas and promises, Joyce supports Irish independence but argues that nationalism is self-defeating because it leads people to turn inward, limits their horizons to their own small group, and overlooks more meaningful political questions about how society and public life should be organized.

Ulysses is set against the backdrop of English colonialism in Ireland and the Irish nationalists' struggle for independence. The novel repeatedly suggests that Dublin's political tensions are coming to a boil. Almost every extended conversation in *Ulysses* eventually touches on politics—for instance, Stephen Dedalus can't even pick up his paycheck without sitting through a political rant from his obnoxious unionist headmaster Mr. Deasy. Protestants and Catholics are at each other's throats. The novel's characters walk past Nelson's Pillar, a giant monument to English colonialism in central Dublin, and then listen to Ben Dollard sing the patriotic nationalist song "The Croppy Boy" in the Ormond Hotel. In short, Dublin is split in two by politics.

On the one hand, Joyce thinks that the nationalists are right to blame British colonialism for Ireland's problems. He shows that resentment, poverty, and despair plagued Dublin in 1904. The city was less industrialized than other comparable British cities, so its economy was based on trade, government, and services like the numerous prostitutes who serve British soldiers in nighttown. In fact, Joyce uses prostitution as a metaphor for Ireland's situation: the island's labor and resources have been prostituted off to the British. Bloom also sees the evidence of English colonialism firsthand: Irish cattle get herded onto ships to be slaughtered and eaten in England, for instance, while he can only afford to eat cheaper meat, like pork kidneys. Bloom's parents' generation also remembers the devastating potato famine of the 1840s-50s, which shows that historical wounds are still open in 1904. Similarly, Stephen Dedalus's poverty was not by any means unusual. It's no surprise that Bloom constantly thinks about business ideas to enrich the Irish economy, while Stephen imagines that his literature could help the Irish people build a new identity and a more promising future. At the end of "Circe," his insults against the English win him the ire of Privates Compton and Carr, who go on to viciously attack him. In a nutshell, then, Stephen, Bloom, and virtually all of their acquaintances understand that colonialism is a bad deal for Ireland—the only people who actually support the English in this novel are pretentious dupes like Mr. Deasy.

However, Joyce is suspicious of *both* sides: while he agrees with the nationalists' call for independence, he fundamentally rejects their view of Irish identity, culture, and art. Specifically, he thinks that many nationalists are attached to an outdated and backwards vision of Irish identity, in which "true" Irish people are poor rural peasants. Even Dublin's literary scene is divided: one faction thinks Irish literature should focus on the traditional characters and concerns of the Irish countryside, while another group (which includes Joyce) thinks that Irish literature should speak to more universal concerns. Meanwhile, some of the more rigid nationalists, like the citizen, reject anyone who doesn't fit their personal mold of an Irishman. This creates lots of problems for Bloom, whose father was a Hungarian Jewish immigrant and whose dark features stand out in Ireland. During the "Cyclops" episode, this leads him into a bar fight with the citizen, whose pride in Ireland is so excessive that he cannot stand to see the value in any other culture or country. He hates anything English, to the point of declaring that England has never produced any meaningful art and cursing the local paper for publishing Englishmen's obituaries alongside native Irishmen's. The citizen also hates Jews, science, and political tolerance, among other Bloomian values. Unsurprisingly, he absolutely despises Leopold Bloom and ends up attacking him. While Joyce certainly didn't mean to

suggest that all (or even most) Irish nationalists were as narrow-minded or violent as the citizen, he does make a strong case against the nationalists' anti-modern, racist, and reactionary elements.

For Joyce, the key question is not whether Ireland ought to be independent from English rule, but rather what kind of independent country it ought to be. Although he could have scarcely avoided politics in *Ulysses* if he wanted to, he actively chose to make it central to the plot and make his hero a Jewish immigrant. So clearly, he was deeply concerned about Ireland's ability to become the tolerant, peaceful, pluralistic, Bloomian nation of his dreams.

SYMBOLS

Symbols appear in **teal text** throughout the Summary and Analysis sections of this LitChart.

ASHPLANT

Stephen's "ashplant," his walking stick made out of an ash sapling, symbolizes his divinity because it represents his connections to both the natural and supernatural worlds. It connects him to the earth because it's made of an uprooted tree and he uses it to balance on the ground, while it connects him to God because he believes it has magical powers and Joyce associates it with ritual objects in a variety of religious traditions. But it also takes on various connotations throughout the novel, which is why critics have interpreted it in very different ways—for instance, as the cross, a phallus, a supernatural pen, or even a magic wand from harlequinade theater.

Although it appears periodically throughout the novel, the ashplant is most significant during the brothel scene in "Circe." Stephen dances his "dance of death" with his ashplant, then he uses it to smash Bella Cohen's chandelier in an act of rebellion against God and religion after he has a vision of his mother. When Stephen runs out of the brothel, Bloom takes the ashplant and follows after him. And at the end of "Circe," Bloom protectively holds the ashplant over the fallen Stephen before helping him off the ground.

The ashplant also connects Stephen to several religious and literary traditions, which represents his desire to transform the whole of Western culture through his art. Most simply, it's a traditional Irish cane that roots Stephen in his heritage. In "Proteus," it becomes a Roman "augur's rod" (a curved stick used to watch birds for omens of the future). During the brothel scene in "Circe," it transforms into Nothung, a magical sword from Norse mythology that plays an important part in Richard Wagner's *Ring* opera cycle. And throughout "Circe," Stephen carrying the ashplant is associated with Christ carrying the cross.

PLUMTREE'S POTTED MEAT

Plumtree's Potted Meat represents Bloom's frustration with his failures in his home, job, and marriage. It's also a prime example of Joyce's masterful wordplay. In Joyce's Dublin, "potting meat" was slang for having sex, and Bloom also uses "potted meat" as a euphemism for Paddy Dignam's corpse ("meat") getting buried ("potted") at his funeral.

Bloom first comes across Plumtree's Potted Meat in a newspaper advertisement: "*What is home without / Plumtree's Potted Meat? / Incomplete. / With it an abode of bliss.*" Bloom considers this ad awful, and strangely enough, it's placed under the obituaries (which foreshadows the pun about Dignam's corpse). In comparison, Bloom's ads are much better—but he struggles to sell them because other people don't take him seriously. Accordingly, the Plumtree's ad reminds Bloom of his frustration at work.

The ad promises "an abode of bliss," or a happy home—something else that Bloom desperately wants but can't have. Joyce is joking that Bloom has to "pot the meat" (have sex with Molly) in order to make his home blissful. In this way, the ad is also taunting Bloom about his unhappy, sexless marriage. Surely enough, Blazes Boylan brings a pot of Plumtree's over to Bloom's house, shares it (has sex) with Molly, and leaves "some flakes of potted meat" in the bed.

Plumtree's also connects to the sexual metaphors in Stephen's "Parable of the Plums." And finally, beef is a symbol of English colonialism in *Ulysses*: Bloom sees cattle getting exported to England for slaughter, which symbolizes England's theft of Ireland's labor and natural resources. Curiously, while Plumtree's was an English brand in real life, in *Ulysses* Joyce makes it Irish. Perhaps, by bringing Plumtree's back, he hoped to help make Ireland an independent "abode of bliss."

JINGLING

Jingling represents sex—specifically Blazes Boylan's affair with Molly Bloom. It also illustrates how Joyce connects music and sound to thought and memory. The jingling sound appears in two main forms. First, the quoits (brass rings) on Leopold and Molly Bloom's bed are loose, so they jingle whenever anyone moves on the bed. Secondly, the horses who pull Boylan's car wear bells, so his car is always jingling.

Joyce introduces the jingling bed early in the novel, during "Calypso." Later, the novel repeatedly describes Boylan's jingling car in "Sirens," while he's making his way across Dublin to visit Molly. The implication is clear: when Molly and Boylan have sex, the bed is going to jingle like crazy. Surely enough, in "Penelope," Molly says that the bed jingled so loud that she and Boylan decided to have sex on the floor instead. Whenever the

jingling sound appears, then, it's a reference to Molly's affair with Boylan.

Joyce's "jogjaunty" jingle sounds also show how Bloom's awareness of Molly's affair is constantly haunting him. It lingers in the back of his mind, just like the jingling sound lingers throughout the "Sirens" episode. Every so often, the main storyline pauses and a line about Boylan jingles into the story. For instance, when Bloom thinks of Molly, the novel cuts to the "jingling, hoofthuds" of Boylan's horses across town. When Father Cowley plays the piano, Bloom notices his "conductors legs too, bagstrousers, jiggedy jiggedy," and then he thinks of Boylan: "jiggedy jingle jaunty jaunty." In addition to showing how Joyce uses repeated sounds and unusual syntax to give this episode's prose a musical quality, these examples show how the sounds of the Ormond Hotel bar keep reminding Bloom of Boylan's jingling carriage (and by extension his affair with Molly).

KEYS

Keys represent the loss of home and the quest to recover it. At the beginning of the novel, Stephen Dedalus gives Buck Mulligan the key to his Martello tower and decides not to return. Meanwhile, Leopold Bloom leaves his key in the wrong pair of pants in the morning and forgets to retrieve it before Dignam's funeral. Thus, Stephen and Bloom both leave home without their housekeys, which represents their sense of dispossession after other men (Buck and Boylan) usurp their authority over their houses. In turn, this loss of home represents their deeper sense of loneliness, confusion, and frustration with their lives in turn-of-the-century Dublin.

Meanwhile, the protagonists' search for a key to their homes represents their search for a sense of belonging, connection, and purpose in life. But it's not clear that they find it. Stephen ends the day literally homeless, wandering Dublin without a key or place to stay. Bloom ends the day comfortably in bed, but he has to break into his house through the basement because he doesn't have his key. (In contrast, Blazes Boylan walked right through the front door when he visited to have sex with Molly.)

Secondarily, "keys"—or, in this case, Keyes—also represent Ireland's quest for home rule (or independence from the English). A beverage merchant named Alexander Keyes hires Bloom to run an ad featuring a pair of crossed keys. This image is the logo for the House of Keys, the Isle of Man's semi-independent parliament, which was a model for Irish nationalists seeking independence. In the context of the novel as a whole, these crossed keys also represent how Bloom and Stephen offer each other a fleeting sense of comfort and belonging when they cross paths.

QUOTES

Note: all page numbers for the quotes below refer to the Vintage edition of *Ulysses* published in 1986.

Episode 1: Telemachus Quotes

Stately, plump Buck Mulligan came from the stairhead, bearing a bowl of lather on which a mirror and a razor lay crossed. A yellow dressinggown, ungirdled, was sustained gently behind him on the mild morning air. He held the bowl aloft and intoned:

—*Introibo ad altare Dei.*

Halted, he peered down the dark winding stairs and called out coarsely:

—Come up, Kinch! Come up, you fearful jesuit!

Related Characters: Malachi ("Buck") Mulligan (speaker), Stephen Dedalus

Related Themes:

Page Number: 3

Explanation and Analysis

Ulysses opens with Buck Mulligan's parody of the Catholic mass, which is his elaborate way of mocking the "fearful jesuit" Stephen Dedalus. As he shaves in the morning, his bowl of lather represents the chalice, while his mirror and razor make the sign of the cross. But the symbolism goes further. Later in this first episode, Joyce explicitly points out that the mirror represents Irish art. Meanwhile, the razor refers to "Kinch," or Stephen Dedalus. In a typical example of Joyce's dense symbolism, "Kinch" is an Irish slang word for a child, but it's also Buck's idea of what a cutting blade sounds like—so Buck is referring to Stephen's sharp mind and demeaning him as immature, all in one word. Together, the crossed mirror and razor suggest that Stephen will be a savior figure for Irish art—which is a reference to the way Stephen views himself as a poetic genius. Of course, since Stephen is just a younger version of the author, Joyce is also poking fun at his own inflated ambitions in writing this book.

Next, Buck says "*Introibo ad altare Dei*," which means "I go to the altar of God." This is the opening of a traditional Latin mass. He calls down to Stephen and makes fun of his "fearful jesuit" education. By starting with Buck Mulligan mocking Stephen, rather than Stephen himself, Joyce emphasizes how Stephen's intense intellectualism often comes off as absurd and esoteric to the people around him. Joyce thereby primes the reader to be critical of Stephen rather than taking him at face value.

As is typical throughout this novel, Joyce uses this opening to make several different and even contradictory points. Most directly, he's setting the stage for Stephen Dedalus's internal battle over religion. Stephen's mother died about a year before the events of the novel, but Stephen refused to pray at her deathbed because he no longer believed in God. Now, during the novel, he intensely regrets this decision: he feels that he let his mother down or even caused her death, and he continues to doubt whether God might really exist. Thus, with his mock religious ritual, Buck is primarily poking fun at Stephen's grief and solemnity. However, Joyce is also poking fun at religion's exaggerated place in Irish life. He's also arguably mocking the way that Homeric epics like the *Odyssey* began with a religious invocation of the muses. And most of all, he's preparing the reader for how this novel consistently treats the mundane rituals of everyday life (like Buck's morning shave) as significant events with deep symbolic meaning.

> In a dream, silently, she had come to him, her wasted body within its loose graveclothes giving off an odour of wax and rosewood, her breath, bent over him with mute secret words, faint odour of wetted ashes.
> Her glazing eyes, staring out of death, to shake and bend my soul. On me alone. The ghostcandle to light her agony. Ghostly light on the tortured face. Her hoarse loud breath rattling in horror, while all prayed on their knees. Her eyes on me to strike me down. *Liliata rutilantium te confessorum turma circumdet: iubilantium te virginum chorus excipiat.*
> Ghoul! Chewer of corpses!
> No, mother! Let me be and let me live.

Related Characters: Stephen Dedalus (speaker), Malachi ("Buck") Mulligan, May Goulding Dedalus

Related Themes:

Page Number: 9

Explanation and Analysis

While Buck Mulligan makes breakfast downstairs inside the Martello Tower, Stephen Dedalus lurks on its roof, brooding about his dead mother. He remembers dreaming of her as an evil spirit, haunting him from beyond the grave, reminding him about his failure to pray for her. (The Latin passage that he quotes here is a prayer for the dead.) But Stephen works up the courage to reject this ghoulish apparition of his mother, which represents him learning to banish his guilt and move on with his life.

This passage establishes much of the important symbolism surrounding Stephen's loss of faith and relationship with his mother. Of course, Stephen's vision of his mother directly represents the guilt and regret that haunt him over his decision not to pray. Her rise from the dead also points to the novel's important motif of resurrection. For Stephen, Jesus's resurrection represents the chance to forgive himself and move on to his art. Meanwhile, for the novel's other main protagonist, Leopold Bloom, resurrection gets tied to the concept of "metempsychosis," or reincarnation. This becomes a metaphor for how things evolve in life and literature, because metempsychosis shows that it's possible to create something new without entirely abandoning the old.

In addition to its religious significance, this passage also makes two important allusions. First, it heavily foreshadows the vision Stephen has of his mother in "Circe," at the novel's climax. He responds in the same way—rather than indulging his mother's ghost by praying for her, which means fully admitting that his decision was wrong, he chooses to reject her, in order to move on with his life and the art. Secondly, this passage also establishes the novel's important correspondence with *Hamlet*, in which the ghost of Prince Hamlet's father haunts him in much the same way as Stephen's mother does. Stephen repeatedly uses Hamlet as a model to understand his own regret, existential confusion, and social alienation. And in the "Scylla and Charybdis" episode, Stephen develops an elaborate theory of *Hamlet* in order to help process his own resentment towards his family (especially his irresponsible father).

> I will not sleep here tonight. Home also I cannot go.
> A voice, sweettoned and sustained, called to him from the sea. Turning the curve he waved his hand. It called again. A sleek brown head, a seal's, far out on the water, round. Usurper.

Related Characters: Stephen Dedalus (speaker), Malachi ("Buck") Mulligan, Haines

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 19

Explanation and Analysis

At the end of the novel's first episode, Stephen Dedalus leaves the Martello Tower where he's living to go teach his

morning class. He can't stand his roommates: Buck Mulligan is cruel and takes advantage of him, while Haines almost shot him during a violent nightmare. But even though Stephen actually pays the rent for everyone, he ends up giving Buck his key at the end of the first episode. Here, in the episode's closing lines, Stephen realizes for the first time that he will not return home to the Martello Tower at night. Then, he watches Buck bathing in the sea and calls him a "usurper."

In this passage, Joyce introduces one of the novel's most important and pervasive motifs: dispossession. Stephen and Bloom both lose their housekeys, and other men usurp their homes—Buck takes over Stephen's Martello Tower, and Blazes Boylan takes Bloom's rightful place in his home by sleeping with his wife Molly. In addition to driving the novel's plot, this usurpation is also an important metaphor for the protagonists' sense of alienation in Irish society, as well as Ireland's status under British rule. Of course, the usurpation motif also ties *Ulysses* to Joyce's two most important literary influences: the *Odyssey* and *Hamlet*, both of which center on unworthy men's attempt to usurp the title character's throne.

Episode 2: Nestor Quotes

❝ —History, Stephen said, is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake.
From the playfield the boys raised a shout. A whirring whistle: goal. What if that nightmare gave you a back kick?
—The ways of the Creator are not our ways, Mr Deasy said. All human history moves towards one great goal, the manifestation of God.
Stephen jerked his thumb towards the window, saying:
—That is God.
Hooray! Ay! Whrrwhee!
—What? Mr Deasy asked.
—A shout in the street, Stephen answered, shrugging his shoulders.

Related Characters: Garrett Deasy, Stephen Dedalus (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 28

Explanation and Analysis

In "Nestor," Stephen teaches his morning class at a private boys' school near his house, then he goes to collect his wages from his boss, the nitwit headmaster Mr. Deasy. Like so many conversations in *Ulysses*, Stephen and Deasy's inevitably turns to politics: Deasy is a Unionist who wants the Irish to remain under British control, while Stephen is committed to the cause of Irish independence, like virtually all of the other characters in the novel. Moreover, Deasy is a virulent anti-Semite: he blames Jewish merchants for Britain's problems, setting the stage for the novel's Jewish businessman protagonist, Leopold Bloom, to arrive on the scene in episode four. Deasy argues that the Jews are damned by their ancestors' sin (rejecting and killing Jesus), but Stephen responds that it's wrong to view people's lives as totally determined by history.

Instead, Stephen argues, history is like a "nightmare" that people must "awake" from. He's really talking about the human will's battle against fate. In other words, while people have to respond to the conditions that history has set up for them, history does not have to totally determine what will happen in their lives. Stephen's great challenge in *Ulysses* is finding a way to break with the past and do something original. This applies to art, politics, and family. He wants to create a new kind of literature that responds to the past but isn't derivative of it. He wants to discover how Ireland can break free from British rule, so that its fate in the future is not totally determined by its past. And he wants to find love and connection even though he and his biological family have failed each other.

In contrast to Stephen, Deasy views history as a process predetermined by God. This partially explains why he accepts the status quo of British rule: he thinks that all the inequities and injustices in the world are really just part of God's plan. But rather than seeing God as an independent divine force that governs the world and determines what happens to people, Stephen sees God in human beings' spontaneous everyday actions, their "shout[s] in the street." In other words, the divine force in human life is not the fate that constrains people, but rather the freedom and creative energy that allows people to overcome (or at least struggle against) fate.

Episode 3: Proteus Quotes

❝ Ineluctable modality of the visible: at least that if no more, thought through my eyes.

Related Characters: Stephen Dedalus (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 31

Explanation and Analysis

The third episode of *Ulysses*, "Proteus," is a record of Stephen Dedalus's stream of consciousness as he walks along Sandymount Strand in the Dublin suburbs. It gives the reader a close view of Stephen's extremely complex reflections on life and the universe. In its opening lines, Stephen meditates on the "ineluctable modality of the visible." "Ineluctable" means unavoidable, and "modality" is a term for any kind of sensory perception, so Stephen is pointing out that vision is generally people's primary source of information about the world. He contemplates a few different theories about how vision works, but he concentrates on the philosophers Aristotle and George Berkeley. Their views are both based on the idea that the things people see are really just marks or "signatures" that real objects leave behind. He focuses on color: an object's color is not really part of it, but it's a "signature" of that object, a trace of its existence that makes it possible for us to perceive it.

As a result, Stephen thinks that the true nature of things is hiding beyond our perceptions—which means that it's difficult to know if what we perceive accurately represents what really exists. Stephen knows that thoughts, perceptions, and ideas exist, but he questions whether the physical world is really as we see it. He believes in the mental world (or the mind), but he's not sure about the physical world (or the body). But the point of Stephen's philosophizing isn't just to understand the true nature of reality: it's also to understand perception itself. He concludes that perception isn't passive or automatic—it's like "thought through [the] eyes," or an active process of gathering and processing information about the world. This is why he goes on to compare perception to reading: it's a subjective process that depends on the observer.

This passage becomes all the more significant later on in the novel. Careful readers will note that, during "Circe," Stephen admits that he broke his glasses the day before. Thus, when he's contemplating the nature of sight in this episode (and throughout the novel), he actually can't see very much at all. He's trying to figure out how to go about his daily life based on other senses besides vision.

In addition to commenting on the relationship between mind and body, Stephen's philosophizing also lets Joyce comment on the way that people perceive literature. Form affects content: the reader is understanding the "signatures" of Stephen's experience by reading his stream of consciousness. Just like vision is an indirect way to understand the true nature of things, Joyce suggests, any literary form is only an indirect path to the true reality—and different forms all give different views of that reality. (This is one reason that Joyce tries to combine as many different forms as possible in *Ulysses*.)

> The cords of all link back, strandentwining cable of all flesh. That is why mystic monks. Will you be as gods? Gaze in your *omphalos*. Hello. Kinch here. Put me on to Edenville. Aleph, alpha: nought, nought, one.
> Spouse and helpmate of Adam Kadmon: Heva, naked Eve. She had no navel. Gaze. Belly without blemish, bulging big, a buckler of taut vellum, no, whiteheaped corn, orient and immortal, standing from everlasting to everlasting. Womb of sin.

Related Characters: Stephen Dedalus (speaker), Florence MacCabe

Related Themes:

Page Number: 31-32

Explanation and Analysis

As he walks along Sandymount Strand, Stephen notices two midwives walking with a bag in the distance. He imagines that the bag contains a miscarried fetus, and this leads him to start musing on the symbolic importance of the umbilical cord, which connects people to their mothers. Therefore, the navel represents the maternal bloodline and the point of connection between mothers and sons. This was why the Ancient Greeks associated the navel (or "omphalos") with the center or origin point of the world.

Stephen knows that his metaphor is extravagant—he even makes fun of himself for navel-gazing ("gaze into your *omphalos*"). But he's enjoying himself, so he takes it even further. He suggests that "the cords of all link back," meaning that people are indirectly linked to their maternal ancestors by their umbilical cords. The cord links child to mother, mother to grandmother, grandmother to great-grandmother, and so on, all the way back to the first human woman—Eve, in the Christian tradition. Thus, Stephen imagines a giant web of umbilical cords connecting people to their ancestors like a family tree, and then he pictures this as a network of phone cables. This is why he jokes about calling Eve in Edenville. But since Eve was the first woman, "she had no navel." She did not come from anyone else: her existence was absolutely independent and autonomous.

Stephen's thoughts here provide important clues about his relationship with his family, his vision of creativity, and his overwhelming feelings of guilt and regret. Stephen is estranged from his family, and he particularly resents his father, a sympathetic but neglectful alcoholic who drinks

away his little income while Stephen and his numerous siblings fall into poverty. He directs all of his love and compassion to his sisters and, particularly, his dead mother. Thus, it's significant that he envisions humankind as linked by a maternal bond—the umbilical cord—instead of the conventional paternal bloodline. This represents his desire to cut his father out of his life and define his identity through the women in his life instead.

Next, Stephen strives to create original art that isn't merely derivative of the past. But he wonders how it's possible to do so if everyone has already been created by someone else, and all art refers to other art that was created before it. The web of umbilical cords linking back to Eve represents this predicament, but also suggests that people can indirectly connect back to the original, divine aspect of our being. Finally, Stephen links his vision with the concept of original sin by suggesting that Eve was unblemished, but her "womb of sin" led to the creation of the human race. By extension, then, Stephen sees the navel as a mark of human sinfulness and the womb as its origin. This reflects his own feelings of guilt and regret about his failure to pray for his dying mother, the woman who birthed him. Just like people cannot possibly go back in time and remove the umbilical cord that links them to their mothers (and therefore to sin), Stephen thinks, he cannot go back and correct his own error.

❝ After he woke me last night same dream or was it? Wait. Open hallway. Street of harlots. Remember. Haroun al Raschid. I am almosting it. That man led me, spoke. I was not afraid. The melon he had he held against my face. Smiled: creamfruit smell. That was the rule, said. In. Come. Red carpet spread. You will see who.

Related Characters: Stephen Dedalus (speaker), Leopold Bloom

Related Themes:

Page Number: 39

Explanation and Analysis

During his soliloquy on Sandymount Strand, Stephen Dedalus remembers a dream he had the previous night: he was in a "street of harlots" following a melon-smelling man who resembled the Persian king Haroun al Raschid (an important ruler who frequently appears in literature). Of course, this dream makes an uncanny prediction about Stephen's evening. He ends up in nighttown, Dublin's red light district (or a "street of harlots"). He's accompanied by Leopold Bloom, whom the novel indirectly associates with Haroun. Bloom is constantly dreaming of the mystical East, he's a Jewish outsider (so he would have been associated with the Middle East in Joyce's time), and in "Circe" he has a grand vision of becoming Ireland's noble, progressive ruler. An important sentence at the end of "Ithaca" connects Molly Bloom's buttocks to melons, and surely enough, Bloom sticks his head between them and remarks on her smell. In the episode before, Bloom showed Stephen a picture of Molly, thereby fulfilling the dream's prediction that Haroun will hold a melon up to Stephen's face.

Thus, Stephen's dream prophecies his meeting with Bloom. In this light, it's clear that the last line in this paragraph—"You will see who"—is explicitly telling the reader that they're about to meet this mystical Haroun figure. (Bloom appears for the first time in the novel just a few pages after this paragraph.) Of course, like so many of Joyce's references and jokes, this is only clear in retrospect—for many readers, this means the second time they read through the book. At first, the reference might not even be clear.

Finally, the word "almosting" provides a reasonable metaphor for Joyce's style and strategy in this episode. A dreamlike free flow of thoughts, ideas, and associations dominates Stephen's soliloquy. He tries to hold onto these ideas, but always falls just short. Stephen's language almost forms complete ideas and almost gives the reader full access to his mind, but not quite: there are always gaps left to be filled. Ultimately, Joyce suggests that this "almosting" thought process is a more accurate representation of human experience than the "ineluctable modality of the visible," or the clear-cut but limited picture of the world we receive through our eyes.

Episode 4: Calypso Quotes

❝ —Here, she said. What does that mean?
He leaned downward and read near her polished thumbnail.
—Metempsychosis?
—Yes. Who's he when he's at home?
—Metempsychosis, he said, frowning. It's Greek: from the Greek. That means the transmigration of souls.
—O, rocks! she said. Tell us in plain words.

Related Characters: Marion ("Molly") Bloom, Leopold Bloom (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 52

Explanation and Analysis

Bloom brings Molly tea in bed, and she asks him about a difficult word from one of her books: metempsychosis, which she pronounces as "met him pike hoses" and Bloom defines as "the transmigration of souls." As usual, his complicated definition confuses Molly even more: what he really means is reincarnation. According to the doctrine of metempsychosis, which originates in Indian and Greek philosophy, people's souls can migrate into other beings after death (especially animals and plants).

Thus, metempsychosis ties the novel to Greek tradition, and it also serves as an important counterpart to the Christian vision of death that Bloom and Stephen find limiting. This Christian vision is based on the linear, individualistic concept of a human life as birth, growth, death, and judgment. Stephen and Bloom's notions of atheism are similar to this, just without an afterlife. But metempsychosis proposes something closer to a cycle of life, in which people's souls live on because they originate from and eventually return to the Earth. Whereas the Christian vision of creation as a divine, autonomous act leads Bloom to feel that he cannot have a son and Stephen to feel that he cannot create art, metempsychosis makes it possible for them to create because it suggests that the death of the old is precisely what allows the birth of the new.

Throughout the novel, metempsychosis also becomes a recurring metaphor for the way that living beings change over time and interconnect with one another. For example, Bloom often remembers metempsychosis when he imagines how other people might feel. Similarly, Molly's cryptic reply in this passage—"Who's he when he's at home"—alludes to the ways that Bloom's personality changes when he's with her at home and when he's out in town alone. Metempsychosis also provides a new lens for understanding why Bloom is both constantly hungry for animal meat and constantly feeding the animals around him (they're all part of the same cycle of life). It even suggests that human waste is somehow significant, and it also applies to literature: over the course of human history, different writers and poets create work by transforming and modifying that which precedes them. Of course, the most important example of this in Joyce's novel is Odysseus's transformation into Leopold Bloom.

Episode 6: Hades Quotes

❝ White horses with white frontlet plumes came round the Rotunda corner, galloping. A tiny coffin flashed by. In a hurry to bury. A mourning coach. Unmarried. Black for the married. Piebald for bachelors. Dun for a nun.
—Sad, Martin Cunningham said. A child.
A dwarf's face, mauve and wrinkled like little Rudy's was. Dwarf's body, weak as putty, in a whitelined deal box. Burial friendly society pays. Penny a week for a sod of turf. Our. Little. Beggar. Baby. Meant nothing. Mistake of nature. If it's healthy it's from the mother. If not from the man. Better luck next time.
—Poor little thing, Mr Dedalus said. It's well out of it.
The carriage climbed more slowly the hill of Rutland square. Rattle his bones. Over the stones. Only a pauper. Nobody owns.
—In the midst of life, Martin Cunningham said.
—But the worst of all, Mr Power said, is the man who takes his own life.

Related Characters: Jack Power, Simon Dedalus, Martin Cunningham (speaker), Patrick ("Paddy") Dignam, Sr., Rudolf Bloom, Sr., Leopold Bloom

Related Themes:

Page Number: 79

Explanation and Analysis

On their way to Paddy Dignam's funeral, Bloom and the men he's traveling with pass another funeral procession. The child-sized coffin elicits sympathetic comments from the other men, who are not close enough to Bloom to fully understand his personal tragedy. Meanwhile, the coffin reminds Bloom of his own son, Rudy, who died as an infant.

Rudy's death hangs over Bloom, making him question his value as a father and husband. Bloom is convinced that Rudy's life and death "meant nothing" and was just a "mistake of nature." And his thoughts about the mother, the father, and the baby's health suggest that he blames himself for Rudy's death. While he tries to cheer himself up with the offhand comment "better luck next time," in fact his fear of repeating the same tragedy is what prevents him and Molly from having another baby. Bloom doesn't want to get her pregnant because he's afraid that his next son will also die young.

As though to add insult to injury, Jack Power mentions suicide, which also evokes personal tragedy for Bloom: his father, who was also named Rudolf, committed suicide. Caught between his father and son's tragic deaths, then, Bloom feels that fate is stacked against him. While he desperately wants to have a son and reestablish his male bloodline, he is terrified of failing again and watching his

family tragedy repeat.

Episode 8: Lestrygonians Quotes

❝ His smile faded as he walked, a heavy cloud hiding the sun slowly, shadowing Trinity's surly front. Trams passed one another, ingoing, outgoing, clanging. Useless words. Things go on same, day after day: squads of police marching out, back: trams in, out. Those two loonies mooching about. Dignam carted off. Mina Purefoy swollen belly on a bed groaning to have a child tugged out of her. One born every second somewhere. Other dying every second.
[…]
Cityful passing away, other cityful coming, passing away too: other coming on, passing on. Houses, lines of houses, streets, miles of pavements, piledup bricks, stones. Changing hands. This owner, that. Landlord never dies they say. Other steps into his shoes when he gets his notice to quit. They buy the place up with gold and still they have all the gold. Swindle in it somewhere. Piled up in cities, worn away age after age. Pyramids in sand.
[…]
No-one is anything.

Related Characters: Leopold Bloom (speaker), Patrick ("Paddy") Dignam, Sr., Mina Purefoy

Related Themes:

Page Number: 134-135

Explanation and Analysis

Bloom is walking around central Dublin when a passing cloud reminds him of the way things are constantly changing in the universe. At any moment, different people are simultaneously being born and dying, coming and going; and over the course of their lives, individual people are born and die, come and go. In other words, Bloom examines change in two different directions: he looks at the way everything is different at a single moment in time, and he looks at the way the same thing becomes different things over the course of time. These two perspectives correspond to the two paragraphs in this passage. In turn, these two paragraphs correspond to two of the central concepts in Joyce's theory of identity: parallax and metempsychosis.

Parallax is the effect in which the same object appears different from different perspectives, while *metempsychosis* is reincarnation, or the soul's change into a different body over time. Thus, parallax corresponds to difference across space in a single moment of time, while metempsychosis represents how a single thing can take on a different identity over time. Joyce turns to both of these as narrative techniques throughout the novel. For instance, the "Wandering Rocks" episode shows a series of different Dubliners going about their different daily routine at the exact same moment, which represents a parallax view of the city. Meanwhile, Joyce's stream of consciousness episodes (especially "Proteus" and "Penelope") show how a single character's thoughts evolve and transform over time, which represents the notion that people can change over time and take on new lives—or undergo metempsychosis.

Stephen Dedalus used a different set of terms to represent this same principle at the very beginning of "Proteus." He noted that some things are laid out one-after-the-other because the changes that make them perceptible occur through time. (In the words of German philosopher Gotthold Lessing, they are "Nacheinander.") This is like metempsychosis, or the transformation of identity over time, through death and rebirth. Meanwhile, other things are laid out one-next-to-the-other ("Nebeneinander") because the differences that make them perceptible occur across space. This is like parallax, or discerning something's identity by perceiving it from different points in space.

Thus, metempsychosis and parallax explain how change and creation are possible. This is essential because Bloom and Stephen are both struggling to overcome their sense of stagnation and alienation, and their plans to do so revolve around creation. Bloom is chasing after creation in terms of reproduction, as he wants to have a son and redeem his bloodline. Meanwhile, Stephen is chasing after an artistic ideal of creation that would allow him to innovate without simply being derivative of the past.

Episode 9: Scylla and Charybdis Quotes

❝ —Our young Irish bards, John Eglinton censured, have yet to create a figure which the world will set beside Saxon Shakespeare's Hamlet though I admire him, as old Ben did, on this side idolatry.

Related Characters: John Eglinton (William Magee) (speaker), William Lyster, Richard Best, William Shakespeare, Stephen Dedalus

Related Themes:

Page Number: 152

Explanation and Analysis

In "Scylla and Charybdis," Stephen Dedalus goes to the Irish

National Library and tells the librarians Eglinton, Lyster, and Best about his elaborate theory of *Hamlet*. In many ways, this theory is a reflection of Stephen's own anxieties about his family, life decisions, and writer's block. Eglinton's comment is at once a statement of fact, an insult to Stephen, and a commentary on Joyce's ambitions as an author.

First, Eglinton is pointing out that Ireland struggled to make a place for itself in the literary world. In large part because it was a poor, subjugated colony whose people were forced to learn a foreign language, Ireland faced significant barriers to cultural development and flourishing. But conversely, by elevating Irish literature, many writers hoped they could also elevate Ireland—even to the point of helping it achieve independence. While Joyce agreed with this project in broad terms, he was extremely critical of those Irish writers and poets who tried to revive outdated customs, praise Irish rural poverty, or speak exclusively to the Irish public. Instead, Joyce thought that Ireland had to prove itself through innovation, by producing a body of literature that would win it international recognition and acclaim.

Of course, during the events of *Ulysses*, that's exactly what Stephen Dedalus hopes to do as a writer. (This should be no surprise, since Stephen is a lightly-fictionalized version of Joyce in his early twenties.) When Eglinton points out that the Irish have not created any literary greats, he is also mocking Stephen's pretentious belief that in his own artistic genius. Throughout "Scylla and Charybdis," Stephen makes a point of rejecting accepted scholarly consensus in an attempt to prove his genius and tenacity—but he ends up looking like a fool instead. In fact, he doesn't even get invited to join an anthology of young Irish poets, which shows that nobody takes him seriously—except himself.

The same thing applied to Joyce early in his career: although he was brilliant, his ambitions were so exaggerated and improbable that he often didn't get taken seriously. He struggled to make a living for the majority of his life, and his ego caused plenty of conflicts in his personal and professional life. When he writes about the lack of great Irish writers, then, Joyce is also trying to throw his hat in the ring and suggest that *Ulysses* will be Ireland's first national masterpiece. After all, it's an incredibly ambitious book, not least of all because it tries to subsume two of the most important works of Western literature ever—the *Odyssey* and *Hamlet*.

> —As we, or mother Dana, weave and unweave our bodies, Stephen said, from day to day, their molecules shuttled to and fro, so does the artist weave and unweave his image. And as the mole on my right breast is where it was when I was born, though all my body has been woven of new stuff time after time, so through the ghost of the unquiet father the image of the unliving son looks forth. In the intense instant of imagination, when the mind, Shelley says, is a fading coal, that which I was is that which I am and that which in possibility I may come to be. So in the future, the sister of the past, I may see myself as I sit here now but by reflection from that which then I shall be.

Related Characters: Stephen Dedalus (speaker), William Lyster, Richard Best, John Eglinton (William Magee), William Shakespeare

Related Themes:

Page Number: 159-160

Explanation and Analysis

After Stephen starts to present his complicated reading of *Hamlet*—which includes the idea that Shakespeare represents both Prince Hamlet and his dead father—he goes on a brief tangent to explain his pretentious theory of meaning and symbolism in literature. This speech is particularly significant because Joyce uses it to give the reader a hint about how to interpret *Ulysses*. Of course, the reader must take Stephen's words with a grain of salt—Joyce is certainly making fun of his own style at the same time as he's explaining it.

Like the rest of Stephen's monologues, this paragraph is full of literary references. "Dana" is a reference to a goddess in Celtic mythology, and the mole under the breast is a reference to an important plot point involving the king's daughter Imogen in Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*. When he mentions Shelley, he's referring to a line from the essay "A Defence of Poetry." But these references do not change his main point: that symbolism in literature is not about stable one-to-one correspondences between symbols and a fixed meaning. Rather, symbols take on different meanings over time and in different contexts. This is why Stephen thinks that "through the ghost of the unquiet father the image of the unliving son looks forth"—he's saying that Shakespeare's dead son was speaking through his art. This allowed Shakespeare to give meaning to his son's death and process his grief. Of course, this is also an indirect comment about Leopold Bloom. In short, Bloom's "unquiet" ruminations about his "unliving" son Rudy culminate in an "intense moment of imagination" at the end of the "Circe" episode,

when he has a beautiful vision of Rudy while standing over Stephen.

Most importantly, Stephen is also commenting on the structure of the novel itself. Joyce deliberately "weaves and unweaves" symbolic correspondences throughout Ulysses. For instance, Stephen sometimes appears as a Jesus figure and sometimes as a Lucifer figure; Bloom is sometimes Jesus, sometimes Moses, and sometimes God himself. If the God and the Son are really different aspects of the same being, as some versions of Christian theology insist, then Stephen and Bloom are inherently interconnected in ways they might not even realize. Finally, it's often necessary to understand later events in the novel in order to make sense of things that happen earlier on—as Stephen puts it, "I may see myself as I sit here now but by reflection from that which then I shall be." Stephen and Bloom's past only makes sense in retrospect, after the reader already sees their future.

❝ Fatherhood, in the sense of conscious begetting, is unknown to man. It is a mystical estate, an apostolic succession, from only begetter to only begotten. On that mystery and not on the madonna which the cunning Italian intellect flung to the mob of Europe the church is founded and founded irremovably because founded, like the world, macro and microcosm, upon the void. Upon incertitude, upon unlikelihood. *Amor matris*, subjective and objective genitive, may be the only true thing in life. Paternity may be a legal fiction. Who is the father of any son that any son should love him or he any son?

Related Characters: Stephen Dedalus (speaker), William Lyster, Richard Best, John Eglinton (William Magee), William Shakespeare

Related Themes:

Page Number: 170-171

Explanation and Analysis

Stephen presents this theory of fatherhood when he is already deep into his story about Shakespeare, his dead father, and his dead son—who also represent Bloom, his father, and his son Rudy. Speaking as the bitter son of a distant and neglectful father, Stephen argues that fatherhood is not a "conscious begetting," which means that fathers don't have any conscious link with their children because they don't have any physical evidence that any child is theirs. (Paternity tests didn't exist yet in 1904.) In contrast, mothers obviously can, because they give birth to children, and therefore "*amor matris*"—a mother's love—is far more valuable than a father's love to Stephen. The "mystical estate" of fatherhood is really just a story that families and societies tell themselves; fathers do not know if their children are really theirs, and even though the law and the church depend on passing inheritance down through the male bloodline, this bloodline is really a "legal fiction" (especially compared to the physical, biological link of the umbilical cord).

At the end of this passage, Stephen asks a very simple question in unnecessarily fancy language: why should fathers love their sons and sons love their fathers? What he's really saying is that he feels no attachment to the father who has done nothing for him and clearly does not love him. By disowning his father, Stephen thinks he can become an independent and autonomous creator of his own art and destiny. He thinks that Shakespeare had similar goals when he wrote *Hamlet*: in order to become truly self-sufficient as a man and artist, he had to sever his connections to his male bloodline (his father and son). Of course, this entire theory is profoundly ironic in the context of the book, because Leopold Bloom wants the exact opposite: he wants to reestablish his bloodline by having (or finding) another son, so that he doesn't have to be so alienated and alone. It's no wonder that he turns to the essentially fatherless Stephen—and that Stephen rebuffs him rather than accepting another father figure in his life.

Episode 11: Sirens Quotes

❝ Bronze by gold heard the hoofirons, steelyringing.
Imperthnthn thnthnthn.
Chips, picking chips off rocky thumbnail, chips.
Horrid! And gold flushed more.
A husky fifenote blew.
Blew. Blue bloom is on the.
Goldpinnacled hair.
A jumping rose on satiny breast of satin, rose of Castile.
Trilling, trilling: Idolores.
Peep! Who's in the … peepofgold?
Tink cried to bronze in pity.
And a call, pure, long and throbbing. Longindying call.
Decoy. Soft word. But look: the bright stars fade. Notes chirruping answer.
O rose! Castile. The morn is breaking.
Jingle jingle jaunted jingling.
[…]
Done.
Begin!

Related Characters: Hugh ("Blazes") Boylan, Ben Dollard, Pat , Martha Clifford, Matt Lenehan, Leopold Bloom, Simon Dedalus, Mina Kennedy, Lydia Douce

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 210-211

Explanation and Analysis

"Sirens" is set in the Ormond Hotel bar, where Leopold Bloom takes his dinner while various Dubliners sing parlor songs. Meanwhile, Blazes Boylan is on his way to have sex with Molly, and Bloom is fully aware of his plans. Joyce writes the entire episode in a musical style, using repetition and onomatopoeia to create a variety of distinct sounds and a consistent sense of rhythm. In addition to generally introducing that style, however, this opening 60-line sequence also introduces several of the specific musical motifs that Joyce uses throughout the episode. For instance, "bronze by gold heard the hoofirons, steelyringing" is a reference to the barmaids Douce and Kennedy (who the novel repeatedly points out have bronze and gold hair, respectively) watching the viceregal cavalcade travel through Dublin. The next line is a fussy bar worker's way of saying "impertinent insolence" during an argument with Douce, and the following one is about Simon Dedalus examining his chipped fingernails. Most significantly, "jingle jingle jaunted jingling" is the sound of Blazes Boylan's car as it makes its way through Dublin—first to the Ormond Hotel and later to the Bloom household.

By presenting these motifs in the same order as they later appear, Joyce turns this 60-line introduction into a miniature of the episode as a whole: it's like a condensed version of "Sirens," reduced to just its key sounds. But while it's important to think about this verse's content, the much more interesting questions are about its form: why does Joyce include this medley of key sounds, and what kind of musical performance does it represent? It could be a version of the episode rewritten as a song, or it could be a kind of overture or prelude to the rest of the episode, which presents the basic melodies that later get modified and expanded over the course of the episode. Some critics liken it to a jam session, or an orchestra tuning before a concert: all the novel's key melodies and motifs are present, but they do not yet have meaning because they are not organized logically into a coherent narrative. The sounds and their makers seem to understand what everything means, but the reader doesn't yet. So like an auditory index, this introduction distills all of this episode's radical linguistic experiments into their most minimal form and makes it possible for the reader to take them all in, all at once.

Episode 12: Cyclops Quotes

❝ The figure seated on a large boulder at the foot of a round tower was that of a broadshouldered deepchested stronglimbed frankeyed redhaired freelyfreckled shaggybearded widemouthed largenosed longheaded deepvoiced barekneed brawnyhanded hairylegged ruddyfaced sinewyarmed hero. From shoulder to shoulder he measured several ells and his rocklike mountainous knees were covered, as was likewise the rest of his body wherever visible, with a strong growth of tawny prickly hair in hue and toughness similar to the mountain gorse (*Ulex Europeus*). The widewinged nostrils, from which bristles of the same tawny hue projected, were of such capaciousness that within their cavernous obscurity the fieldlark might easily have lodged her nest. The eyes in which a tear and a smile strove ever for the mastery were of the dimensions of a goodsized cauliflower.

Related Characters: The Citizen

Related Themes:

Page Number: 243

Explanation and Analysis

In "Cyclops," Bloom gets into a fight with the valiant Irish hero described in this passage. But he's not actually a manly warrior: he's actually a mediocre, drunk Irish Nationalist who unironically goes by the ridiculous moniker "the citizen." This episode of the novel juxtaposes a first-person narration of the afternoon by the citizen's friend, a nameless debt collector, with a series of absurd and exaggerated voices like this one, which comment on the episode's action in a wide variety of different literary styles.

First and foremost, this description is Joyce's way of mocking the citizen's inflated ego and Irish nationalists' tendency to define Irish identity through premodern Celtic culture. Even though he's just a normal man, the citizen seems to think that he will save his country by personally defending its greatness. He has a widely exaggerated sense of his own importance and takes his commitment to Ireland way too seriously—to the point of complaining about seeing British people's names in the newspaper and refusing to criticize anything associated with Ireland. This is what leads him to attack Bloom: he thinks he's on a sacred mission to keep Ireland pure and free of outsiders. Meanwhile, he belongs to a broader cultural movement of Irish people who

turned to the distant past (and especially early Irish literature) in order to define their identity as Irish people and fight for independence. By mocking that literature's unsophisticated voice, Joyce suggests that it distorts reality and isn't well suited for the independence movement's cultural needs in the 20th century.

Moreover, this description is also Joyce's way of mocking himself. If it's ridiculous for the citizen to imagine himself as a brawny Celtic hero, then it's also certainly ridiculous for Joyce to paint Bloom as such a modern-day hero—and yet he wrote an extremely complex epic doing just that. Joyce is stubbornly attached to the old epics, too: he's obsessed with heroes like Odysseus and Hamlet, to the point that he fills his novel with obscure references to their stories. Meanwhile, *Ulysses* is full of exaggerated narrators just as absurd and unreliable as the voice that compares the citizen to a hero. So through this parody and exaggeration, Joyce is commenting on his own use of parody and exaggeration to paint Bloom as a hero.

❝ —I'm talking about injustice, says Bloom.
—Right, says John Wyse. Stand up to it then with force like men.
[…]
—But it's no use, says he. Force, hatred, history, all that. That's not life for men and women, insult and hatred. And everybody knows that it's the very opposite of that that is really life.
—What? says Alf.
—Love, says Bloom. I mean the opposite of hatred.

Related Characters: Alf Bergan, John Wyse Nolan, Leopold Bloom (speaker), The Narrator of Episode 12, The Citizen

Related Themes:

Page Number: 273

Explanation and Analysis

"Cyclops" is set in Barney Kiernan's pub, where Bloom joins a group of men who start talking about politics. While the citizen proudly praises his country and eagerly awaits the day when the Irish can overthrow the English colonial government with force, Bloom points out that different groups have always persecuted and attacked each other throughout history, and he argues that the only way to improve the world is to stop the cycle of violence. He uses his own Jewish community as an example (but this doesn't sit too well with the citizen, who's pretty outspoken about his anti-Semitism).

In this passage, John Wyse Nolan voices his agreement with the citizen and suggests that Jewish people should band together and fight back against their oppressors. But Bloom thinks that fighting violence with violence is actually foolish and counterproductive (especially for less powerful minorities like the Jews and the Irish). Instead, Bloom makes a rather cliched and uninspired appeal to love, which he considers the truly noble response to violence and hatred. Needless to say, this doesn't go over well with the other men—and Bloom soon ends up fleeing violence himself, doing his best to love his enemy.

While Joyce purposefully makes Bloom's appeal to love sound stale and unoriginal, this isn't because he rejects it. Instead, Joyce actually wants to show that Bloom is right to believe in the power of love, even if this is also merely a common platitude. (In fact, this is also what makes it universal.) Bloom's argument is as simple: hatred begets more hatred, while love, tolerance, and forgiveness can replace conflict with cooperation. While the other men laugh him off, he doesn't regret or feel ashamed about what he has said—rather, he has simply laid out his basic moral values, and if the other men can't understand him, it's their loss. In fact, Joyce consistently shows how Bloom's sense of sympathy and tolerance is his greatest strength as a man and literary character. Moreover, he repeatedly affirms that love is the basic force that holds families, communities, and nations together. In particular, he shows his deep faith in love by having Bloom care for Stephen and reconnect with Molly at the end of *Ulysses*. The novel's conclusion hinges on Bloom and Molly separately rediscovering their love for each other, which allows them to embrace the future that they spent most of the novel anxiously fearing. Thus, although Bloom's political manifesto is remarkably meek and unimpressive, it's also one of Joyce's most direct and sincere statements about his own social and political values.

Episode 13: Nausicaa Quotes

❝ Yes, it was her he was looking at, and there was meaning in his look. His eyes burned into her as though they would search her through and through, read her very soul. Wonderful eyes they were, superbly expressive, but could you trust them? People were so queer. […] Here was that of which she had so often dreamed. It was he who mattered and there was joy on her face because she wanted him because she felt instinctively that he was like no-one else. The very heart of the girlwoman went out to him, her dreamhusband, because she knew on the instant it was him.

Related Characters: Gerty MacDowell (speaker), Leopold Bloom

Related Themes:

Page Number: 293-294

Explanation and Analysis

In "Nausicaa," an innocent young woman named Gerty MacDowell sits on the Sandymount Strand rocks and daydreams about romance while her friends play nearby. She notices Leopold Bloom staring at her from across the beach, and she starts to direct her romantic fantasies towards him, imagining him as a caring "dreamhusband" who will fulfill her desire for a blissful domestic life.

Of course, Gerty's naïve, sentimental perspective on Bloom couldn't be more wrong. She assumes he's thinking deep thoughts or mourning someone close to him, but he's not. She fantasizes about falling in love with him and getting married, while he doesn't even intend to approach her. In fact, while Gerty is looking at Bloom affectionately and trying to empathize with the deep emotional pain she sees in his eyes, Bloom's mind is somewhere else entirely: he's staring at her and masturbating.

Since the reader first sees this encounter through Gerty's eyes and then jumps into to Bloom's mind halfway through the episode, "Nausicaa" clearly shows how perspective shapes meaning. Namely, for the first half of the episode, Gerty's innocent, romantic mindset totally masks the dark reality of Bloom's behavior. Readers might not even understand what he's doing, because Gerty portrays their connection as entirely romantic. This passage shows how, by projecting her desire for a happy, conventional marriage onto Bloom, Gerty actually ends up deceiving herself. At least, that's the most straightforward way of interpreting her narration: it's also possible that she's deliberately using innocent, romantic language in order to cover up her own unsavory sexual desires. The strongest evidence for this perspective is that Gerty clearly knows what Bloom is doing and eggs him on.

Finally, it's also possible that Gerty's voice isn't truly hers at all—rather, it could just represent what the masturbating Bloom imagines that she's thinking. In this case, the gap between her narrative and Bloom's predatory behavior becomes far wider and more disturbing. Moreover, this would mean that this passage doesn't represent Gerty projecting a fantasy onto Bloom so much as Bloom projecting a fantasy onto Gerty. But because Joyce's narrators are unreliable, there is no right answer to the question of what Gerty is really thinking. Like Gerty and Bloom, Joyce's readers have no choice but to make educated guesses about characters' true thoughts and feelings. But this requires that readers bring their own feelings, assumptions, and experiences to the table.

> And she saw a long Roman candle going up over the trees, up, up, and, in the tense hush, they were all breathless with excitement as it went higher and higher [...] it went so high it went out of sight a moment and she was trembling in every limb from being bent so far back that he had a full view high up above her knee [...] O! then the Roman candle burst and it was like a sigh of O! and everyone cried O! O! in raptures and it gushed out of it a stream of rain gold hair threads and they shed and ah! they were all greeny dewy stars falling with golden, O so lovely, O, soft, sweet, soft!

Related Characters: Leopold Bloom, Jacky Caffrey, Gerty MacDowell

Related Themes:

Page Number: 300

Explanation and Analysis

During the episode "Nausicaa," Bloom masturbates while staring at young Gerty MacDowell on Sandymount Strand outside Dublin. Joyce uses these bursting fireworks as an extended metaphor for Bloom's orgasm ("O!"). This also happens to coincide with the benediction in the church (and the "roman candle" firework is probably also an allusion to the altar candles used during mass). So unsurprisingly, this was the section that got *Ulysses* banned from most English-speaking countries for another "O" word: "obscenity."

Joyce deliberately structured this paragraph like a crescendo: its escalating intensity parallels the roman candle flying "higher and higher," Gerty showing off more and more of her legs, and Bloom getting closer and closer to orgasm. While Gerty knows that Bloom is masturbating, she never explicitly mentions it, so this might also be the first time that many readers understand what's happening in the episode. Thus, for better or worse, the roman candle's eruption and Bloom's "O!" is also designed to coincide with an "Aha!" moment for the reader.

Joyce also intends for this moment of realization to completely invert the meaning of the "Nausicaa" episode. Joyce constantly compares Gerty to the Virgin Mary, and her romantic reflections give her an innocent, naïve persona—which Bloom now totally violates by blasphemously sexualizing her. Readers are left to wonder if

she can and does truly consent to this treatment. Thus, readers are still likely to find this scene disturbing—enough that it may completely change our view of who Leopold Bloom is and whether he's fundamentally a good person. At the same time, feminist critics have debated the significance of Gerty MacDowell for decades. Is she liberating herself from an oppressive society by showing off her legs to Bloom? Is their interaction exploitative, or is it mutually beneficial because it lets both Gerty and Bloom indulge in their fantasies without guilt? Or is Gerty's entire monologue just an elaborate fantasy of Bloom's creation, and therefore really just a portrait of how sexual predators justify their behavior to themselves?

Episode 14: Oxen of the Sun Quotes

Deshil Holles Eamus. Deshil Holles Eamus. Deshil Holles Eamus.
Send us bright one, light one, Horhorn, quickening and wombfruit. Send us bright one, light one, Horhorn, quickening and wombfruit. Send us bright one, light one, Horhorn, quickening and wombfruit.
Hoopsa boyaboy hoopsa! Hoopsa boyaboy hoopsa! Hoopsa boyaboy hoopsa!
Universally that person's acumen is esteemed very little perceptive concerning whatsoever matters are being held as most profitably by mortals with sapience endowed to be studied who is ignorant of that which the most in doctrine erudite and certainly by reason of that in them high mind's ornament deserving of veneration constantly maintain when by general consent they affirm that other circumstances being equal by no exterior splendour is the prosperity of a nation more efficaciously asserted than by the measure of how far forward may have progressed the tribute of its solicitude for that proliferent continuance which of evils the original if it be absent when fortunately present constitutes the certain sign of omnipollent nature's incorrupted benefaction.

Related Characters: Mina Purefoy

Related Themes:

Page Number: 314

Explanation and Analysis

In the novel's fourteenth episode, "Oxen of the Sun," Joyce borrows dozens of literary styles from the past in order to draw an extended metaphor between human development in the womb and the historical development of the English language. The unfamiliar, complex, shifting styles can make this episode extremely difficult to read—fortunately, the episode is light on plot, and it's significant primarily because it represents such a daring experiment in literary form.

These are the episode's opening lines, and they're likely to be completely incomprehensible to readers. The three repeated chants are based on Pagan Roman fertility ceremonies, and the convoluted sentence that follows is closely modeled on the structure and style of early Latin historians.

The first of the chants, "Deshil Holles Eamus," means something like "let's turn rightward (or South) and go to to Holles Street." Bloom is going to the National Maternity Hospital on Holles Street to visit Mrs. Purefoy. Curiously, "Deshil" is the only Irish word in this episode—it means to the right, or towards the sun. By starting his chant with Irish, Joyce nods to the Irish language's enduring influence on Irish English.

The second chant is a prayer for babies directed at "Horhorn"—Dr. Horne, the head obstetrician at the hospital. In *Ulysses*, doctors are the modern, secular equivalent of priests, because they have a god-like power over human life, death, and health. This chant also establishes a clear link between fertility and the sun (as well as "the son"). Joyce borrows this association from the *Odyssey*, in which the sun-god Helios has a herd of cattle who represent fertility.

The last of three chants ("Hoopsa boyaboy hoopsa!") essentially just means, "hurrah, it's a boy!" This is a reference to Mrs. Purefoy's baby boy, Bloom's desire for a son, and Stephen's belief that a son's connection to his mother is the only true family bond. Each of these chants is repeated three times, as though to emphasize the trinities associated with birth (mother, father, offspring and Father, Son, Holy Ghost). The total of nine chants represents the nine months of pregnancy.

Next, the long Latin sentence is really just saying, "Intelligent people agree that people have a duty to procreate." Because Latin had plenty of syntactical structures and inflected case markers that English lacks, this sentence would have been comprehensible in Latin—but it's virtually unreadable in English, especially when it's littered with so many archaic words of Latin origin (like "omnipollent nature's incorrupted benefaction"). By opening with Latin, Joyce also identifies the origins of his Irish English prose in Rome—the empire that conquered the empire that conquered Ireland.

But was young Boasthard's fear vanquished by Calmer's words? No, for he had in his bosom a spike named Bitterness which could not by words be done away. […] Heard he then in that clap the voice of the god Bringforth or, what Calmer said, a hubbub of Phenomenon? Heard? Why, he could not but hear unless he had plugged him up the tube Understanding (which he had not done). For through that tube he saw that he was in the land of Phenomenon where he must for a certain one day die as he was like the rest too a passing show. And would he not accept to die like the rest and pass away? By no means would he though he must.

Related Characters: Leopold Bloom, William Madden, Matt Lenehan, Frank ("Punch") Costello, Vincent Lynch, Stephen Dedalus

Related Themes:

Page Number: 323-324

Explanation and Analysis

Partway through "Oxen of the Sun," the revelers in the maternity hospital hear a loud bolt of thunder. This quite literally scares the bejesus out of Stephen ("young Boasthard"): he suddenly doubts his atheism, wonders if the lightning might represent a punishment from God, and realizes that he's terrified of dying. Bloom ("Calmer") tries to remind Stephen that lightning is just a normal natural phenomenon, but this doesn't help. If there's no God, Stephen realizes, then he has to confront his inevitable death—and while religion promises him afterlife (which this narrator calls "Believe-on-Me"), he can't sincerely bring himself to believe in it.

Therefore, this passage is a succinct explanation of Stephen's existential struggle with religion. Either he chooses religion—even though this means rejecting his own power as an autonomous human being with free will and admitting that he might have prevented his mother from getting to Heaven by failing to pray for her—or he chooses atheism, but he has to confront the terrifying prospect of a meaningless death.

Like all of the passages in "Oxen of the Sun," this paragraph is a difficult to follow and occasionally hilarious parody of a significant literary style in the past. Joyce is mocking John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*, an elaborate allegory about the faithful undertaking the journey to Heaven. In particular, with phrases like "plugged him up the tube of Understanding," he's making fun of Bunyan's extremely heavy-handed metaphors (for instance, the pilgrim meets people named "Goodwill," "Hypocrisy," and "Lord Hate-Good").

Episode 15: Circe Quotes

THE CRIER: *(loudly)* Whereas Leopold Bloom of no fixed abode is a wellknown dynamitard, forger, bigamist, bawd and cuckold and a public nuisance to the citizens of Dublin and whereas at this commission of assizes the most honourable …

Related Characters: Leopold Bloom

Related Themes:

Page Number: 384

Explanation and Analysis

In the wild "Circe" episode, Bloom has a series of fantastic visions that represent his deepest unconscious fears, wants, and needs. In the second of these fantasies, he goes on trial for a series of increasingly outlandish crimes. The accusations begin with his actual misbehavior—like when he sexually harassed the maid, Mary Driscoll. But Bloom also finds himself on trial for sexual fantasies he never acted out and a series of crimes that he never committed. (The exception is cuckoldry—but he wasn't even the one who did it). He gets convicted of all these crimes and hanged by the court. (Fortunately, he comes back to his senses before the end of the fantasy scene.)

Of course, one purpose of this trial scene is simply to offer a humorous and straightforward respite from the more difficult sections of the book that precede and follow it ("Oxen of the Sun" and the novel's climax in the brothel scene). But while it might seem tangential to the novel's plot, it's not: it's actually a personification of the feelings of guilt and inadequacy that constantly plague Bloom. During the rest of the novel, as Bloom goes about his everyday life, he manages to repress these feelings (so they aren't necessarily apparent to the reader). But in "Circe," where dream sequences act out the chaos of Bloom's unconscious mind, the reader learns that Bloom's guilt is actually haunting him. It's both rational and irrational: he has made plenty of serious mistakes in his life and he knows it, but he also feels like the whole world's sins are falling on his shoulders.

In fact, these complex feelings all reflect Bloom's underlying sense of failure as a businessman and patriarch. His son died, he can't sexually satisfy his wife, and he can't afford to buy his family the luxuries they want. His mediocre income hasn't risen in years, he doesn't have a college education, and other men in Dublin don't take him seriously as an advertiser because he's Jewish and eccentric. Bloom views all his imperfections as personal failures and blames himself for the misfortune that befalls him. Of course, Joyce knows

that these kinds of feelings are probably relatable to his readers. He uses Bloom's battle with guilt, shame, and regret in order to illustrate the modern human condition. He shows that everyone ultimately has to accept their own imperfections and their ultimate powerlessness in the face of fate if they ever want to take even the first steps toward happiness and fulfillment.

STEPHEN: Here's another for you. (*he frowns*) The reason is because the fundamental and the dominant are separated by the greatest possible interval which …
THE CAP: Which? Finish. You can't.
STEPHEN: (*with an effort*) Interval which. Is the greatest possible ellipse. Consistent with. The ultimate return. The octave. Which.
THE CAP: Which?
(*Outside the gramophone begins to blare* The Holy City.)
STEPHEN: (*abruptly*) What went forth to the ends of the world to traverse not itself, God, the sun, Shakespeare, a commercial traveller, having itself traversed in reality itself becomes that self. Wait a moment. Wait a second. Damn that fellow's noise in the street. Self which it itself was ineluctably preconditioned to become. *Ecco!*

Related Characters: Vincent Lynch, Stephen Dedalus (speaker), Leopold Bloom, William Shakespeare

Related Themes:

Page Number: 411-412

Explanation and Analysis

In "Circe," Bloom finds Stephen Dedalus lounging around with his friend Lynch and several prostitutes in Bella Cohen's brothel. Stephen is poking around at the player piano and blathering to nobody in particular about philosophy. In this scene, he imagines Lynch's cap taunting him, insisting that his monologue is really complete nonsense and he doesn't even have a fully-formed idea to communicate. Stephen strains to meet the challenge, but he manages to produce this metaphor linking the musical interval of a perfect fifth (for example, C to G or E to B) to the motif of a journey and homecoming.

There is no wider interval than a perfect fifth: for instance, G is further from C than any other note on the scale. (Going in either direction—up to A or down to F—makes the interval narrower because the new note is closer to C.) Therefore, the perfect fifth is "the greatest possible interval"—if C is like the "home" tone, then G is as far as one can possibly get from "home." This represents the furthest point on a journey—the point when one stops traveling away from home and starts coming back towards it. For instance, on a journey around the earth, the first half would be traveling away from home and the second half would be traveling back to home.

Stephen explicitly connects this metaphor to a series of things and people that made a journey and then a homecoming. Most significantly, this corresponds to several beliefs in Christian theology. God traveled into the world in the form of Jesus Christ and then ascended back to heaven. Jesus died during the crucifixion, then underwent resurrection and appeared for forty days. And in ascending to heaven, the Messiah left, but He will return in the Second Coming. The music outside in the street reinforces this Christian symbolism because, in "Nestor," Stephen memorably defined God as "a shout in the street."

Of course, Stephen also compares his metaphor to the sun (which rises to its peak and then sets every day) and Shakespeare (who left Stratford to spend his career in London, then only returned in old age). Finally, he mysteriously mentions "a commercial traveler." While it's unclear whom Stephen might be thinking about, for the reader, this obviously points to Bloom—for whom the entire novel takes the form of a long journey and then a gradual return back home. Stephen is on a similar journey, although it's not clear what home he'll be returning to. Of course, the archetypal version of this journey is Odysseus's decade-long campaign in the Trojan War and his decade-long return trip home in the *Odyssey*.

Stephen's metaphor serves several different purposes in the novel. It subtly suggests that this scene is the book's climax—the point at which the plot stops building up and starts to settle down. This is analogous to the furthest distance from home, or the point at which the characters complete their exploration and begin their return. It also points to how Stephen and Bloom gradually learn to view the world in terms of constant change rather than linear development. As Bloom noted in "Lestrygonians," everything in the world is constantly coming and going, in an endless cycle of adventure and return. This idea is what lets Stephen and Bloom accept their failures and continue striving for improvement. Its most complete expression occurs at the very end of the novel, during Molly Bloom's soliloquy, when she contemplates the beauty of nature and decides that she must say "yes" to life.

BLOOM: (*mumbles*) Awaiting your further orders we remain, gentlemen,...
BELLO: (*with a hard basilisk stare, in a baritone voice*) Hound of dishonour!
BLOOM: (*infatuated*) Empress!
BELLO: (*his heavy cheekchops sagging*) Adorer of the adulterous rump!
BLOOM: (*plaintively*) Hugeness!
BELLO: Dungdevourer!
BLOOM: (*with sinews semiflexed*) Magmagnificence!
BELLO: Down! (*he taps her on the shoulder with his fan*) Incline feet forward! Slide left foot one pace back! You will fall. You are falling. On the hands down!
BLOOM: (*her eyes upturned in the sign of admiration, closing, yaps*) Truffles!
(*With a piercing epileptic cry she sinks on all fours, grunting, snuffling, rooting at his feet: then lies, shamming dead, with eyes shut tight, trembling eyelids, bowed upon the ground in the attitude of most excellent master.*)

Related Characters: Bella Cohen, Leopold Bloom (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 432-433

Explanation and Analysis

In the brothel during "Circe," Bloom develops an elaborate domination fantasy with the "massive whoremistress" Bella Cohen. He imagines Bella insulting and degrading him. In fact, he loves the idea. In addition to outrageous comedy, Bloom's domination fantasy offers the reader a clearer sense of what's really causing his sexual hang-ups and family drama. In a nutshell, Bloom wants to be dominated because he feels insecure and impotent. He doesn't want to have sex with Molly because he doesn't want to father another son who fails to survive until adulthood. And Molly's infidelity leaves him feeling denigrated and rejected. Therefore, although he adores Molly's "adulterous rump' and constantly desires sex, he's afraid that he'll become an emasculated failure if he actively pursues it. Instead, by becoming a passive "hound of dishonour," he can enjoy himself *and* embrace his inner feelings of inadequacy at the same time.

Another notable aspect of this passage is that it shows multiple transformations. Bella becomes "Bello" and starts using traditionally male pronouns, while Bloom suddenly becomes a "she." Of course, concepts of gender change over time, and Western cultures no longer strictly associate domination with men and submission with women in this way. But while Joyce constantly suggests that Bloom is an unconventional, feminine man, he also associates this with Bloom's greatest personal strengths: his empathy, morality, and fairness. During this interaction, in addition to becoming female, Bloom also transforms into a dog. This is curious, because throughout the rest of the novel, Stephen is consistently associated with dogs, while Bloom is linked to cats. It would be possible to draw many different conclusions from this transformation. Two of the most obvious ones are that this is a reference to the *Odyssey*, in which Circe transforms Odysseus's men into pigs, and that Joyce is riffing on the motif of metempsychosis (the soul's ability to inhabit different bodies in past and future lives).

STEPHEN: (*eagerly*) Tell me the word, mother, if you know now. The word known to all men.

Related Characters: Stephen Dedalus (speaker), May Goulding Dedalus

Related Themes:

Page Number: 474

Explanation and Analysis

At the novel's climax, during the end of the brothel scene in "Circe," Stephen has a vision of his dead mother, which is very similar to the dream about her that he recounted at the very beginning of the novel. She shows him that he will also inevitably die, and she brings out all of his guilt and shame about his refusal to pray for her when she was dying of cancer.

In this passage, he pleads with her to say "the word known to all men," which could theoretically be anything. Notably, Stephen's question about "the word known to all men" has already appeared twice in the novel, in "Proteus" and "Scylla and Charybdis." (However, the second is controversial: nobody knows if Joyce meant to include it, so it only appears in some editions of the novel.)

But in the context of this novel, the word is almost certainly "love." There's no complex Joycean allusions or metaphors here: Stephen honestly just wants to know that his mother really loved him. He's incredibly lonely and isolated; there's nobody in the world he cares about, and there's nobody who genuinely cares about him (except arguably Leopold Bloom). So he's still grieving for his mother in part because she was the only person he ever loved. Just like Bloom's entire day is in many ways just a complicated expression of his need to fix his marriage with Molly, Stephen's brooding,

philosophizing, and drinking are really just complicated responses to the absence of love in his life.

STEPHEN: *Non serviam!*
[…]
(*He lifts his ashplant high with both hands and smashes the chandelier. Time's livid final flame leaps and, in the following darkness, ruin of all space, shattered glass and toppling masonry.*)

Related Characters: Stephen Dedalus (speaker), May Goulding Dedalus

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 475

Explanation and Analysis

When Stephen has a vision of his dead mother, he initially pleads for her love, but then he quickly turns against her. She asks him to pray and repent for his sins, but he refuses. He still doesn't believe in God, so he can't pray with any integrity. No matter how much Stephen loves his mother, his commitment to the truth is even greater. So in the ultimate act of rebellion, he repeats Lucifer's famous line: "*non serviam!*" ("I will not serve"). In an attempt to become his own master, he is refusing to serve his mother or the Catholic Church. He shatters Bella Cohen's chandelier with his ashplant (his walking stick, which temporarily takes on the properties of the mythological Norse sword Nothung). In a reference to the apocalyptic predictions of poet William Blake, Stephen smashes the chandelier (which represents the light of God), and he symbolically destroys space, time, and history.

Arguably, this event is the climax of the entire novel: it represents Stephen affirming his decision to abandon religion, even if it meant disappointing his mother. He gets the opportunity to symbolically go back in time and correct his decision not to pray for his mother. But he chooses not to take it: he affirms his artistic independence and rejects all other values for its sake. Thus, this scene shows Stephen resolving the internal conflict that has plagued him throughout the entire novel. Stephen's actions may seem to contradict his plea for his mother's love, just a page before. And they do: his desire for love and connection absolutely contradicts his passionate need to be autonomous and independent. This is the tragic fate of artists in Joyce's work: they have to alienate themselves from others in order to remain free. (Arguably, in his life, Joyce maintained his artistic independence *and* his passionate marriage only by completely separating them.)

(*Against the dark wall a figure appears slowly, a fairy boy of eleven, a changeling, kidnapped, dressed in an Eton suit with glass shoes and a little bronze helmet, holding a book in his hand. He reads from right to left inaudibly, smiling, kissing the page.*)
BLOOM: (*wonderstruck, calls inaudibly*) Rudy!
RUDY: (*gazes, unseeing, into Bloom's eyes and goes on reading, kissing, smiling. He has a delicate mauve face. On his suit he has diamond and ruby buttons. In his free left hand he holds a slim ivory cane with a violet bowknot. A white lambkin peeps out of his waistcoat pocket.*)

Related Characters: Leopold Bloom (speaker), Rudolf Bloom, Jr., Stephen Dedalus

Related Themes:

Page Number: 497

Explanation and Analysis

At the very end of "Circe," Bloom has a vision of his son Rudy as the schoolboy who he would be if he hadn't died as an infant. During this vision, Bloom is standing over the fallen Stephen Dedalus, who the belligerent English soldier Private Carr has knocked unconscious. Of course, throughout the novel, Joyce has consistently linked Stephen with Rudy. Bloom feels lost and impotent because of Rudy's death, while Stephen feels abandoned and rejected by his own father. Therefore, early on in the novel, Joyce sets them up as foils for each other—Bloom can give Stephen the father he's missing and Stephen can take on the role of the son Bloom always wanted. After all, during the first half of the novel, Bloom and Stephen nearly intersect several times. When they finally do meet, Joyce makes it clear that this represents a symbolic union between father and son (in the context of the *Odyssey*, it represents Odysseus and Telemachus's long-awaited reunion).

But for the first several hours of their time together, Bloom is frantically chasing after Stephen in an attempt to save him from his worst instincts—drunkenness, sexual impropriety, and extravagant spending. Stephen mostly ignores and runs away from him, until he gets knocked to the ground and Bloom finally gets the opportunity to save the day. Thus, it's perfectly logical that this is the precise moment when Bloom has his serene vision of Rudy, the son he never got to

see grow up.

Of course, this scene is also full of other symbolism. For instance, Bloom is like God standing over the fallen Jesus, waiting to resurrect him. This connects to his desire to resurrect Rudy, who appears as a Stephen-like schoolboy, reading from right to left (which implies that he's reading the Torah in Hebrew). Bloom sees Rudy in Stephen and Stephen in Rudy, so this is also a notable example of metempsychosis—which is reincarnation, or souls traveling into other bodies. In short, this vision shows Bloom that it's possible to address his grief over Rudy's death and anxiety about his ability to father children by transferring those feelings onto another young man. For the time being, it's Stephen, but the novel implies that he can also go on to have another son. Thus, this vision is Bloom's great epiphany in the novel: it gives him the feeling of serenity, confidence, and fulfillment that he carries through the rest of *Ulysses*.

Episode 17: Ithaca Quotes

What reflection concerning the irregular sequence of dates 1884, 1885, 1886, 1888, 1892, 1893, 1904 did Bloom make before their arrival at their destination?
He reflected that the progressive extension of the field of individual development and experience was regressively accompanied by a restriction of the converse domain of interindividual relations.

As in what ways?
From inexistence to existence he came to many and was as one received: existence with existence he was with any as any with any: from existence to nonexistence gone he would be by all as none perceived.

Related Characters: Leopold Bloom

Related Themes:

Page Number: 545

Explanation and Analysis

The "Ithaca" episode's precision distinguishes it from the rest of *Ulysses*. In other episodes, the narration freely drifts from one topic to another, and characters often vaguely allude to what they're thinking rather than saying it outright. (For instance, Bloom subtly mentions his father's suicide several times before the novel ever states what happened.) "Ithaca" gives the reader cold hard facts, which help illuminate not only Bloom and Stephen's night, but also many other important events and motifs in the novel.

However, in this episode Joyce also frequently subverts the assumption that facts will make everything clearer. He turns precision into a barrier to understanding, rather than an aid to it. This passage offers an excellent example of how Ithaca's excessively precise language can actually make it difficult to understand. Just like getting at the novel's real meaning requires interpretation and guesswork in other episodes, in "Ithaca," it requires decoding complex logic and unusual vocabulary.

In these two questions-and-answers, Bloom is reflecting on his empty social life. He notes that aging, or "the progressive extension of the field of individual development and experience," has led him to fewer friendships, or "a restriction of the converse domain of interindividual relation." His "irregular sequence of dates" seems to be a list of the times when he has shared similar conversations with other companions on late-night walks. He hasn't done this since the significant year of 1893—which was the year of Rudy's birth and death, a decade before the events of the novel. He also hasn't fully had sex with Molly since that year, so it's clear that he seriously struggles to connect or relate to other people since losing Rudy.

Next, he notes that in birth ("from inexistence to existence") he was treated as an individual within the group ("came to many and was as one received"). During middle age ("existence with existence") he increasingly became an everyman, unexceptional and similar to everyone else ("with any as any with any"). And he predicts that he will age and die alone (pass "from existence to nonexistence [...] by all as none perceived"). In other words, Bloom feels his individuality fading and his relationships crumbling as he ages. He's jealous of Stephen's youth because he thinks Stephen can still have more friends and connections than he does. Ironically, however, little does Bloom know that Stephen is actually even more lonely and isolated than he is. Thus, although it's couched in complex, analytical language, this passage is really just a lonely man's cry for help and connection.

What reason did Stephen give for declining Bloom's offer?
That he was hydrophobe, hating partial contact by immersion or total by submersion in cold water, (his last bath having taken place in the month of October of the preceding year), disliking the aqueous substances of glass and crystal, distrusting aquacities of thought and language.

What impeded Bloom from giving Stephen counsels of hygiene and prophylactic to which should be added suggestions concerning a preliminary wetting of the head and contraction of the muscles with rapid splashing of the face and neck and thoracic and epigastric region in case of sea or river bathing, the parts of the human anatomy most sensitive to cold being the nape, stomach and thenar or sole of foot?
The incompatibility of aquacity with the erratic originality of genius.

Related Characters: Leopold Bloom, Stephen Dedalus

Related Themes:

Page Number: 550

Explanation and Analysis

When they arrive at Bloom's house, Bloom notes that Stephen is filthy and offers him some water, so that he can wash his hands and face. But Stephen turns him down, blaming his hydrophobia, and then the unfailingly precise narrator of "Ithaca" offers up the remarkable information that Stephen hasn't bathed in almost a year, from October of 1903 to June of 1904. This is one of many examples of how the details in "Ithaca" clarify the rest of the novel, giving them new significance in retrospect.

This brief exchange foreshadows Stephen's final rejection of Bloom at the end of the episode and illustrates the constant miscommunication between them. To a rather absurd extent, Stephen views the world as if it were a work of literature: he rejects water because of its symbolic associations with baptism (immersion and submersion), transparency (glass and crystal), and "acquacities of thought and language," which could mean one of many things. It could mean he dislikes watered-down thinking and ideas, as opposed to strong ideas expressed succinctly. It could mean that he dislikes inconsistent, wishy-washy thinking (like the streams of consciousness that fill this novel), as opposed to more rigorous, analytical deductions (like the catechism that makes up this episode).

Of course, "acquacities of thought and language" might not mean anything at all: Stephen could also just be playing games with Bloom by spewing more nonsense. The joke here is that the reader can't tell whether Stephen is being serious or facetious, but Bloom takes him absolutely seriously and chalks his aquaphobia up to his "erratic originality" and "genius." In other words, Bloom is easily impressed by ideas that he doesn't understand, and therefore he doesn't give Stephen the hygiene advice he desperately needs. He and Stephen are so unalike that they simply talk past one another and fail to connect. The men's consistent, deep misunderstandings show that there's something absurd and impossible about the grand promise raised in "Circe": that Bloom could become a kind of surrogate father to Stephen.

What was Stephen's auditive sensation?
He heard in a profound ancient male unfamiliar melody the accumulation of the past.

What was Bloom's visual sensation?
He saw in a quick young male familiar form the predestination of a future.

What were Stephen's and Bloom's quasisimultaneous volitional quasisensations of concealed identities?
Visually, Stephen's: The traditional figure of hypostasis, depicted by Johannes Damascenus, Lentulus Romanus and Epiphanius Monachus as leucodermic, sesquipedalian with winedark hair.
Auditively, Bloom's: The traditional accent of the ecstasy of catastrophe.

Related Characters: Leopold Bloom, Stephen Dedalus

Related Themes:

Page Number: 565

Explanation and Analysis

Most of Stephen and Bloom's conversations in "Eumaeus" and "Ithaca" follow a general pattern. Bloom sympathetically reaches out to Stephen, who either ignores him, makes sarcastic comments, or invents a complicated literary response that Bloom doesn't understand. But every once in a while, they do manage to connect—often because they interpret the same situation in compatible ways. This is one such moment. Their conversation has turned to theology, and although they don't say it out loud, Bloom and Stephen end up seeing each other as representatives of the past and the future.

Stephen hears Bloom as representing "the accumulation of the past" and sees him as "the traditional figure of

hypostasis," or Jesus Christ. Johannes Damascenus (St. John of Damascus), Lentulus Romanus (a ruler of Judea), and Epiphanius Monachus (St. Epiphanius) are only significant because they provided the physical descriptions of Jesus that Stephen combines to fit Bloom. "Leucodermic" just means white-skinned and "winedark" is both a description of Bloom's brown hair and a reference to the *Odyssey*, in which Homer repeatedly calls the sea "winedark." A "sedquipedalian" is someone who uses a lot of long words. (In reality, that one applies as much to Stephen's literary rants as Bloom's scientific ones.) Despite his complicated language, Stephen is really just saying that Bloom looks like Jesus.

In turn, Bloom sees Stephen as representing "the predestination of a future" and speaking with the "traditional accent of the ecstasy of catastrophe." This imagery also clearly refers to the Messiah and recalls the poetry of William Blake, which Stephen frequently quotes. (Of course, it's unlikely that Bloom would recognize his inadvertent allusion.)

Therefore, Stephen and Bloom aren't just talking about the fact that Bloom is older than Stephen: they're also projecting the image of the Messiah onto one another. And since each of them is the Messiah, this suggests that they really *are* forming some kind of deep spiritual connection in this episode. Just like in the Holy Trinity, they become different manifestations of the same divine being. (This is why, at one point in "Ithaca," Joyce even calls them "Blephen" and "Stoom.")

> His (Bloom's) logical conclusion, having weighed the matter and allowing for possible error?
> That it was not a heaventree, not a heavengrot, not a heavenbeast, not a heavenman. That it was a Utopia, there being no known method from the known to the unknown.

Related Characters: Leopold Bloom

Related Themes:

Page Number: 575

Explanation and Analysis

Bloom and Stephen are lingering outside Bloom's house in the garden, and Stephen is about to leave. Although Bloom has offered him a place to stay, he said no: he has to forge his own path as an artist, even if this means being broke, filthy, and homeless. The novel strongly associates them leaving the house with Moses leading the Exodus into Egypt, and when they first look up at the stars, they see "the heaventree of stars hung with humid nightblue fruit." (This is a reference to Psalm 113.) However, a few paragraphs later, Bloom voices the opposite idea: there is no "heaventree" or heaven-anything. The idea of heaven is just a utopian fantasy, he says, and in reality, the stars are just faraway moving objects.

Even though Bloom and Stephen both reject religion, this passage shows how they take totally opposite approaches to atheism. Bloom insists that there's "no known method from the known to the unknown," meaning that it would be impossible for people to know about any otherworldly place like heaven—not to mention go there after they die. Bloom, the man of science, doesn't believe in the soul or spirit (just "brainpower"). Thus, it's illogical to him that the mind could survive death. Meanwhile, Stephen also rejects God and the idea of heaven, but his worldview is still entirely based on the mind and spirit. (In "Proteus," he even doubted whether the objects people can see and touch are physically real.) Thus for Stephen, who lives in the realm of ideas, the very point of existence is to go "from the known to the unknown." This is his purpose as an artist: to push the frontiers of human knowledge and possibility.

> He kissed the plump mellow yellow smellow melons of her rump, on each plump melonous hemisphere, in their mellow yellow furrow, with obscure prolonged provocative melonsmellonous osculation.

Related Characters: Marion ("Molly") Bloom, Leopold Bloom

Related Themes:

Page Number: 604

Explanation and Analysis

At the end of "Ithaca," Bloom gets in bed with Molly, thinks about her relationships with other men, and starts to think about the similarities between Earth's two hemispheres and women's various round body parts. This leads him to give Molly's "plump mellow yellow smellow melons" a kiss.

Although it seems like an innocent affectionate and sexual gesture, these kisses are actually extremely significant in the context of the book as a whole. First, the reference to Molly's "melons" refers back to two other moments where "melons" have appeared in the novel. In "Proteus," Stephen commented on his dream about Haroun al Raschid (Bloom)

feeding him melons. Thus, by kissing Molly's "melons," Bloom is fulfilling the last part of Stephen's prophecy. Next, in "Calypso," Bloom saw an ad for Agendath Netaim, a company that sells melon-fields in Israel. Here, melons are associated with fertility, wealth, and (again) the fulfillment of dreams and fantasies. (Her soliloquy in the novel's final episode will take this analogy even further.)

When Bloom kisses Molly's bottom like a pair of melons, then, this suggests that he's overcoming his doubts about their marriage and giving her another shot. (She decides to do the same for him at the end of "Penelope.") Like the melon-fields in the promised land, Molly appears to hold the key to Bloom's happiness, fulfillment, and future bloodline. Bloom has spent the entire novel doubting whether he can achieve true happiness through his marriage, but when he meets Molly at the end of the day in this scene, he seems to have made up his mind. Even after considering Molly's relationships with other men, and even though he knows that they haven't tried to have another child in more than a decade, Bloom reaffirms his commitment to her with this salacious kiss. If Bloom is on an epic journey to find his way home, just like Odysseus, then this is the moment when he arrives.

Episode 18: Penelope Quotes

❝ Supposing I risked having another not off him though still if he was married Im sure hed have a fine strong child but I dont know Poldy has more spunk in him yes thatd be awfully jolly

Related Characters: Marion ("Molly") Bloom (speaker), Hugh ("Blazes") Boylan, Leopold Bloom

Related Themes:

Page Number: 611

Explanation and Analysis

In the last episode of *Ulysses*, the reader finally gets to hear from Molly Bloom. She touches on a variety of different topics but always comes back to love, sex, and men. The reader has heard about her and Bloom's marital problems from *his* perspective—they don't have sex, their son Rudy died as a baby, they won't have another son, Bloom craves affection, and Molly is sleeping with her manager Blazes Boylan. The reader also knows that Bloom continues to love and appreciate her despite their issues. Accordingly, during most of the novel, it's easy to assume that *Molly* is rejecting *Bloom*.

However, it's actually the other way around. This becomes increasingly apparent in the book's final episodes, but readers could easily miss it until this passage, where Molly explicitly says that she'd love to have a child, and she wants it to be with her husband rather than with "him" (Blazes Boylan). In fact, over the course of "Penelope," it becomes clear that Molly views Boylan as nothing more than an exciting distraction from her boring everyday life. Molly indicates that she will never leave Bloom for Boylan, nor even fall in love with Boylan. She's just having an affair with him because her husband isn't meeting her needs. Of course, it's true that Molly has plenty of doubts about her love for Bloom during "Penelope," but she never seriously considers leaving him.

Thus, Molly's interest in having a child with Bloom illustrates the stakes of his internal conflict over the course of the novel. He struggles with the tension between his desire to have a son with Molly and his fear of losing another child. But Molly is ready and waiting for him to overcome his anxiety. The only person stopping him is himself.

❝ I thought to myself afterwards it must be real love if a man gives up his life for her that way for nothing I suppose there are a few men like that left its hard to believe in it though unless it really happened to me the majority of them with not a particle of love in their natures to find two people like that nowadays full up of each other that would feel the same way as you do theyre usually a bit foolish in the head his father must have been a bit queer to go and poison himself after her still poor old man I suppose he felt lost

Related Characters: Marion ("Molly") Bloom (speaker), Rudolf Bloom, Sr., Millicent ("Milly") Bloom, Leopold Bloom, Ellen Bloom

Related Themes:

Page Number: 631

Explanation and Analysis

About two-thirds of the way through her soliloquy in "Penelope," Molly Bloom starts to think about various models of love. She notes that her daughter Milly is coming of age and starting to date boys, then thinks about love stories that she saw in the theater. Finally, she remembers how Bloom's father was so dismayed at his wife's death that he took his own life. Whereas Milly is just learning to love and certainly couldn't form a real, mature bond with a man,

Molly feels that her relationship with Bloom *could* be deep and mature (but often isn't, because they're so emotionally estranged from each other). Meanwhile, she can't imagine a marriage like Bloom's parents', in which life would not be worth living without the other person. This is what she's contemplating in this passage: does real love have to be completely selfless? Does Molly believe in real love in the same way as Bloom's parents, or someone like Gerty MacDowell? Isn't it "a bit foolish in the head" to commit suicide over a lover's death?

Although he doesn't directly answer these questions, Joyce is using this passage to point out how people model their personal relationships on various fantasies and cultural expectations. Molly doesn't know if her relationship counts as "real love," and she's only interested in defining "real love" so that she can distinguish her serious marriage to Bloom with Milly's whimsical dates with teenage boys her age. If real love is commitment and attachment, though, then clearly Rudolf and Ellen Bloom took it too far. So Molly realizes that she's caught between different visions of love: none of them specifically fit her relationship or her needs.

As the novel's conclusion shows, Joyce is certainly a romantic, but he also sees that fantasies and cultural expectations about love (like the idea that real love means life isn't worth living without one's partner) can prevent people from building their own authentic relationships. In turn, he knows that his novel will also become part of the popular and literary culture that defines "real love" for the public, and this is why he focuses on freedom and authenticity in relationships. Love is in the eye of the beholder—it only means what its participants decide. Bloom loves Molly despite her cheating, and Molly loves Bloom despite his perversions and eccentricities. Ultimately, they unite at the end of the novel because they both decide to push forward with the other person, and not because they believe that their relationship fits the proper mold.

❝ Im sure hes very distinguished Id like to meet a man like that God not those other ruck besides hes young those fine young men I could see down in Margate strand bathingplace from the side of the rock standing up in the sun naked like a God or something and then plunging into the sea with them why arent all men like that thered be some consolation for a woman like that lovely little statue he bought I could look at him all day long curly head and his shoulders his finger up for you to listen theres real beauty and poetry for you I often felt I wanted to kiss him all over

Related Characters: Marion ("Molly") Bloom (speaker), Stephen Dedalus

Related Themes:

Page Number: 637-638

Explanation and Analysis

Near the end of her soliloquy, Molly Bloom remembers that her husband reported meeting the "author" and "university professor" Stephen Dedalus earlier that evening. She starts to imagine what Stephen could be like and fantasize about having sex with him. Of course, she's hilariously off the mark—for instance, she imagines that he'd be clean and bathe regularly, when he actually never bathes, and she imagines that he'd be sensitive and charming, when he's actually blunt and totally indifferent to other people's feelings.

But even though Molly never actually meets Stephen, her fantasies about him still play an important part in the novel's conclusion. Specifically, they enable her personal transformation. Just as Bloom rediscovered his capacity to become a father by caring for Stephen (even though they didn't necessarily get along), Molly rediscovers her love for Bloom by means of thinking about Stephen. In fact, she thinks almost exactly what Bloom predicted: Stephen could move into their home and live under their care like a son, or he could become her lover. He could teach her Italian or she could teach him Spanish. And he would definitively replace Blazes Boylan, whose only favorable qualities seem to be his bank account and his skill in bed. At the end of her soliloquy, Molly pictures a love triangle—or, symbolically, a kind of unholy trinity—involving Bloom, Stephen, and herself. This is what leads her to realize that she can still have a future with Bloom and decide to "just give him one more chance."

❝ I was a Flower of the mountain yes when I put the rose in my hair like the Andalusian girls used or shall I wear a red yes and how he kissed me under the Moorish wall and I thought well as well him as another and then I asked him with my eyes to ask again yes and then he asked me would I yes to say yes my mountain flower and first I put my arms around him yes and drew him down to me so he could feel my breasts all perfume yes and his heart was going like mad and yes I said yes I will Yes.

Related Characters: Marion ("Molly") Bloom (speaker), Lieutenant Mulvey, Leopold Bloom

Related Themes:

Page Number: 643-644

Explanation and Analysis

Famously, Molly Bloom gets the last word in *Ulysses*, and that word is "Yes." After starting the novel by mumbling "no" to her husband from bed, she ends with a "Yes" that represents her unconditionally affirming the relationship. Specifically, this "Yes" refers to several different decisions that she's made: her decision to make Bloom breakfast in bed, her decision to try to have another child with him, and the decision she made 16 years ago to marry him.

While Molly spent much of her soliloquy remembering the different men she has loved and dated, in the novel's closing lines, her recollection of Bloom's proposal on Howth Head outside Dublin takes over and subsumes all these other memories. For instance, the lines "I put the rose in my hair like the Andalusian girls" and "he kissed me under the Moorish wall" refer to her earlier memories of Lieutenant Mulvey, whom she dated as a girl in Gibraltar. But now, they appear in the context of her love for Bloom. In other words, she re-imagines her past as a long search for love that culminated in her marriage. Much like Stephen at the end of "Circe" and Bloom at the end of "Ithaca," then, Molly overcomes her doubts and regrets by explicitly affirming that she made the right decision in the past and would stand by it today.

Still, there's an important difference between Stephen, Bloom, and Molly's personal achievements in the novel. Bloom and Stephen affirm the world by imposing their will on it, while Molly affirms it as it is. Put otherwise, Bloom and Stephen seek to affirm themselves, while Molly affirms others. What this means is that Bloom and Stephen are motivated by the desire to create—Bloom wants to create children and build a business, while Stephen wants to create art. They feel uncomfortable in the world because Irish society does not accept them and, on some level, they also do not accept themselves. So they get unstuck by affirming *themselves*.

When Stephen finally affirms his creativity, he does so by rejecting others: he rebels against his mother's ghost, discards religion, and even refuses to sleep in Bloom's home in order to maintain his autonomy. Thus, his creativity requires that he remain an exile. Similarly, Bloom affirms his desire to create a family by finally confronting and overcoming his fears of failure and impotence. But Molly never has to go through the process of self-acceptance, because she always affirms herself, from the very beginning of her soliloquy. Although she's certainly planning to take action and make changes—like by rekindling her sex life with Bloom—she doesn't feel a need to control the world in order to accept it. She puts her trust in cycles of change and the beauty of nature; where Stephen and Bloom stress about the existence of God and the meaning of life, she says that this doesn't truly matter, because we have enough beauty and wonder to work with in the world as it is. Therefore, while Bloom and Stephen say "Yes" to a creative mission at the end of the novel, Molly says "Yes" to the world.

SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

The color-coded icons under each analysis entry make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. Each icon corresponds to one of the themes explained in the Themes section of this LitChart.

EPISODE 1: TELEMACHUS

"Stately, plump Buck Mulligan" walks out onto the roof of a Martello Tower on the seashore near Dublin. He carries his razor and shaving mirror in the shape of a cross and sings out the first words of the Latin mass, then calls down into the tower for his friend "Kinch" (Stephen Dedalus). When Stephen comes up the stairs, Buck vigorously makes the sign of the cross, as though trying to banish a demon. Buck jokes that it's time for the Eucharist and smiles, showing off his gold-tipped teeth. Stephen thinks of "chrysostomos," a Greek word that means "golden-mouthed." Buck remarks that both of their names are absurd—Stephen Dedalus and Malachi Mulligan—and starts shaving.

This episode, like all the episodes (or episodes) in Ulysses, corresponds to a specific section of The Odyssey. Telemachus is Odysseus's son, who is yearning for his father to return from the Trojan War. At the beginning of the Odyssey, *Telemachus sets off on a journey to look for news about his father's whereabouts. From this first episode, it would be easy to mistakenly assume that Stephen Dedalus (or even Buck Mulligan) is the protagonist of* Ulysses. *But actually, just as the* Odyssey *starts with the story of Odysseus's son,* Ulysses *starts with the story of Stephen Dedalus, who soon proves to be a kind of surrogate or symbolic son to the novel's real protagonist, Leopold Bloom. This opening scene introduces readers to Joyce's complex, allusive, and often indirect style, which turns everyday events into rich metaphors. For instance, few readers are likely to immediately understand that "Kinch" is both an Irish slang word for a child and Buck's interpretation of the sound of a knife (and therefore a reference to how "sharp," or intelligent, Stephen is). Similarly, "chrysostomos" is an obscure epithet commonly used for great Greek philosophers and Orthodox bishops (most notably St. John Chrysostom). This word is a reference to Buck's wit as a speaker, but also to the tension between Greek and Christian traditions in Western culture, which is absolutely central to this scene. But Buck mocks both of these traditions, pointing out what he sees as their meaninglessness, but also revealing his own absurdity as a character. Meanwhile, Stephen seems to take both traditions absolutely seriously. This contrast reveals another important tension in the novel: seriousness versus satire, or the tragic versus the comic. As later becomes clear in the novel, Greece also represents Ireland, while Rome (and its Christian tradition) represents England; Greece represents the intellect (which is associated with Stephen Dedalus) while Rome represents practicality (which is associated with Leopold Bloom); and Greece represents the lost origins—or paternity—that Western artists and thinkers are trying to recover (much like Stephen Dedalus and Leopold Bloom try to redeem their own bloodlines in the novel).*


Stephen and Buck complain about Haines, their unpleasant English roommate, who had a nightmare the previous evening and woke up ranting about shooting black panthers. To clean his razor, Buck borrows "the bard's noserag"—or Stephen's "snotgreen" colored handkerchief. Buck then looks out at the "snotgreen," "scrotumtightening" Irish ocean, describes it as a mother figure, and calls out to it in Ancient Greek. Buck's aunt blames Stephen for his own mother's death, because he refused to pray for her on her deathbed. Stephen remembers dreaming about his mother's corpse and thinks about the sea.

Haines's presence in Stephen's home clearly represents British colonialism in Ireland, and Buck's nicknames for Stephen allude to his literary aspirations. Stephen's mother's death is absolutely central to understanding him as a character. Stephen gave up on religion in A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man *(Joyce's previous novel, which narrates Stephen's upbringing). Because he did not believe in God, he did not want to pray for his dying mother, even though she wanted him to. Now, a year later, he views this decision as a mistake and intensely regrets it. But he also knows that he can neither bring his mother back to life nor go back into the past and pray for her. He constantly imagines doing so, but he knows that this will only ever be a fantasy. Of course, this is also a commentary on the relationship between reality and literature, which can break reality's rules but never fully correct its flaws. This is also the main connection between Stephen and Hamlet, who faces a similar kind of struggle against fate and meets his dead father as a ghost.*

Buck asks about the trousers he has lent Stephen, then jokes that there's a rumor Stephen has "g.p.i." (syphilis) and makes fun of Stephen's appearance. Stephen briefly looks at himself in Buck's shaving mirror, and he barely recognizes himself. When Buck comments that he stole the cracked mirror from a servant woman, Stephen jokes that this is "a symbol of Irish art." Buck comments that he and Stephen are smart enough to "Hellenise" Ireland, then jokes about beating up Haines. Remembering a brutal attack against someone named Clive Kempthorpe, Stephen decides it would be wrong to kick Haines out.

Buck's comments about Stephen are really just cruel, unwanted insults disguised as friendly jokes. While Buck's comments about Haines suggest that this is just his personality, Stephen is also clearly uncomfortable with him, which raises the question of why they're roommates at all. In addition to its obvious connection to identity, the mirror in this scene is also a reference to both Shakespeare's Hamlet *and the Irish satirist Oscar Wilde. Buck's desire to "Hellenise" Ireland (or make it Greek) is a reference to his and Stephen's literary ambitions—since Stephen is a young version of James Joyce, this is really a reference of* Ulysses*'s attempt to stage a modern* Odyssey *in Ireland.*

Buck notes that Stephen is in a bad mood and asks what the problem is between them. Buck claims not to remember any conflicts they might have had in the past. But Stephen explains how, a few days after his mother passed away, Buck heartlessly called her "beastly dead." But Buck, a medical student, insists that death is a normal biological event that he sees every day in the hospital. Buck repeats that Stephen was wrong for denying his mother's dying wish and refusing to pray for her, then apologizes for offending her memory. But Stephen complains that Buck has offended *him*.

This exchange between Stephen and Buck is a direct reference to a conversation in Shakespeare's Hamlet between Hamlet and his uncle Claudius. While Buck feigns ignorance about the past, Stephen punishes him for the unintended consequences of his mistakes in the past—just as he does to himself. Buck retreats from his insults and tries to win back his goodwill, but this appears to be motivated by self-interest more than genuine affection. Although they both reject religion, Buck's materialist view of life and death strongly contrasts with Stephen's spiritual, philosophical perspective on them.

Haines calls up for Buck from within the tower, asking for breakfast. Buck tells Stephen to stop brooding, then sings the Yeats song "Who Goes with Fergus?" as he goes down the stairs. Stephen looks out at the sea and remembers singing this same song to his mother on her deathbed. He thinks of the objects that filled her room and again remembers the nightmare in which her corpse haunts him. He remembers a Latin prayer for the dead, but then thinks, "No, mother! Let me be and let me live."

"Who Goes with Fergus?" is a soulful Irish mourning song, and it represents Stephen's sincere love for his dying mother. (This contrasts with his total disdain and indifference towards his father.) Thus, he continues to obsessively mourn his mother's death and regret his actions. But by abruptly remarking, "let me be and let me live," he shows that his disobedience had a purpose. Namely, it was a way for him to secure his freedom as an adult and artist. It also recalls famous Biblical stories of disobedience (like original sin).

Stephen goes down for breakfast, and Buck advises him to ask Haines for money. Stephen explains that he's about to get paid, so Buck proposes they go drinking and sings a jolly English song. Stephen decides to bring Buck's shaving bowl downstairs, and then they have breakfast with Haines. Buck complains that there's no milk for the tea, but fortunately the milkwoman is about to come. Haines comments that the tea is strong, and Buck and Stephen make fun of him by suggesting that this is a great Irish folk tradition that Haines can cover in his research.

Stephen's roommates aren't exactly good company. Stephen is clearly broke, but Buck is willing to take advantage of him anyway. While Haines represents the English colonialism that impoverished and devastated Ireland, he also deeply sympathizes with the Irish. In fact, he seems to worship everything Irish, to the extent that Buck and Stephen openly mock him. Much like Stephen, he is trying to atone for the past, but he is not at all up to the task. However, unlike Stephen, he doesn't seem to be aware of his failure.

When the milkmaid arrives, Stephen imagines her as a stereotypical poor old Irishwoman, milking cows in the pasture. They drink their tea, Buck praises the delicious milk, and Haines says something in Irish—but the milkwoman thinks it's French. Buck points out that it's ironic for the Englishman to be insisting they should speak Irish, but the milkmaid agrees with Haines. The men pay—they're two pence short.

The milkmaid represents an archetypal figure of Irish identity under English colonialism. In this way, she represents Haines's view of what the "real" Ireland is: poor, rural, traditional, and backward-looking. But Joyce disagrees with this view: he thinks Ireland should prove its mettle by forming a thriving, independent, modern society. He sides with the literary avant-garde over the literary revivalists. Therefore, when Haines absurdly tries to speak Irish to the milkmaid, he represents the way well-meaning writers, politicians, and sympathizers sabotage Ireland's progress by trying to vindicate a traditional Celtic Ireland that no longer exists.

Buck tells Stephen to go get his paycheck from the school so that they can get drunk, and to wash, because he's filthy. He also asks Stephen to explain his complex theory of *Hamlet*. Haines tells Stephen he wants to write down his "sayings," and Stephen rudely asks if he'll get paid for it. He tells Buck that he just needs to find a way to get some money, and then they strip off their clothes to go swimming.

Although clearly interested in Stephen's opinions, Haines condescendingly views him more as a curious research subject than as a serious peer. This represents the power structure of English colonialism and also points to how important it is to Stephen to be taken seriously as an artist. Still, Stephen's financial concerns are clearly getting in the way of his artistic achievement. He truly is a starving artist: on his quest for truth and purity, he has only found poverty and loneliness. Buck's direct reference to Hamlet hints at the significant correspondences between Stephen and Prince Hamlet throughout this episode. (The reader will learn about Stephen's theory in the ninth episode.)

On their way out, Stephen grabs his **ashplant** and **key**, then explains to Haines that he rents the Martello tower for twelve pounds. He calls it "the omphalos" (Greek for "navel"). Haines asks Stephen about *Hamlet*, but Buck quickly summarizes Stephen's theory—Hamlet is his own father's ghost—and insists they wait until they're drunk for Stephen to explain it. Haines compares the Dublin seashore to Elsinore, the setting of *Hamlet*, and comments that the play might be a religious metaphor for "the Father and the Son." Buck goes down to the water ahead of the others and sings "the ballad of joking Jesus," a satirical song about Jesus, Joseph, and Mary.

The comparison between the tower and an "omphalos," the Greek word for navel, *is an example of how Joyce layers different allusions in order to create strong associations between his characters, their aspirations, and literary tradition. First, the word "omphalos" refers to the Oracle at Delphi (the fortunetelling priestess whose temple was believed to lie at the navel, or center, of the world). Secondly, it refers to Calypso's island, the "navel of the sea," where Odysseus is stranded at the start of the* Odyssey. *For Stephen, "omphalos" refers to the way the Martello tower is the center of his world and literary ambitions, and also the starting point of the novel, the place that links it to other traditions (like an umbilical cord, which creates a human navel). Haines bluntly points out the clear metaphorical link between* Hamlet, *Christian tradition, and the idea of fatherhood. This is an unusually direct kind of symbolism in* Ulysses, *and it should settle any doubts the reader may have about whether Stephen's struggle with his own identity and parenthood really makes him a stand-in for Hamlet and Jesus.*

Haines offers Stephen a smoke from his emerald-studded cigarette case and asks if he believes in God. Stephen replies that he's a free thinker, but when Haines says that he must be his "own master," Stephen replies that he has two masters: the British state and the Roman Catholic Church. Haines admits that the English have been unfair to Ireland, and "history is to blame." Stephen thinks about the heretics who have challenged the teachings of the church. Meanwhile, Haines complains that the Jews are trying to take over Britain.

The emerald in Haines's cigarette case clearly represents Ireland—and the way England debases Ireland by reducing the nation to a pretty accessory. While Haines understands what English imperialism has done to Ireland, he only acknowledges this in the abstract, without assigning blame or considering his own personal place in the equation. This suggests that he is less interested in helping Ireland than curing his own guilt by playing with it. (Of course, this perpetuates British rule rather than challenging it.) His simplistic advice to Stephen about religion shows that he clearly doesn't understand Stephen's intellectual sophistication or recognize that Stephen is playing with him—just like the British play with Ireland. Finally, Haines's comment about Jews is the first hint of the anti-Semitism that plagued Europe in the early 20th century. Anti-Semitism leads other Dubliners to exclude Leopold Bloom throughout the novel.

Two men stand atop a cliff and talk about a man who drowned nine days ago; they are still waiting for his body to turn up. Down on the beach, Buck chats with another young man about a friend who recently met "a sweet young thing," a photographer. A priest gets out of the water, and Buck and his friend chat about Seymour, a buddy who is joining the army and dating a girl named Lily Carlisle. Buck makes a joke about the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche and gets in the water, while Haines sits on a rock and smokes. Stephen says he's leaving. Before walking off, Stephen tosses Buck two pennies and the **key** to the tower, then promises to meet him at a bar called The Ship at 12:30.

Stephen continues to brood while Buck socializes and swims. It turns out that the friend Buck meets is Alec Bannon and the photographer he's talking about is Milly Bloom. But, like many of Joyce's hints and allusions, this doesn't start to make sense until much later, in retrospect. When Stephen passes Buck the key, this symbolizes him giving up control of the home he has paid for, much like Haines represents the British stealing control over Ireland.

The church bells ring, and on his way up the path, Stephen thinks of a Latin prayer recited by his mother's deathbed. He realizes that he can't return to the tower that night, but also can't go home to his family. Buck calls out to Stephen from the ocean, and Stephen thinks, "Usurper."

Stephen connects his sense of grief, guilt, and alienation about his family to his feeling of betrayal by Buck and (to lesser extent) Haines. In other words, Stephen has lost his family, his home, and his country. In this novel, he will undertake a quest to recover them. Again, this is a direct reference to Claudius usurping Hamlet's right to the throne. Soon, it will also resemble Blazes Boylan usurping Leopold Bloom's place in his home.

EPISODE 2: NESTOR

Stephen quizzes his classroom full of students about the Greek king Pyrrhus and thinks about the meaning of human history and memory. One of his students, Armstrong, thinks Stephen is talking about "a pier," which Stephen jokes is just "a disappointed bridge." But the students don't get it, and Stephen thinks he'll save the quip for Haines, like a court jester writing jokes for his master. He decides that it's a tragedy that, in the course of history, so many possibilities never get realized.

The second episode is set on the same morning as the first, but some time has clearly passed, as Stephen has come from the Martello tower to the school. In the Odyssey, *Nestor is the wise old king of Pylos. Telemachus visits Nestor to seek information about his long-lost father Odysseus, but Nestor knows nothing. In this episode, the opinionated old buffoon Mr. Deasy represents a kind of parody of Nestor: he gives advice that is neither asked for nor correct. Stephen clearly isn't well suited for teaching—he doesn't find his students intelligent or stimulating enough, and his internal monologue is far more interesting than his lesson. Still, his thought about Haines shows that he recognizes that he needs an audience for his genius and is ultimately dependent on other people. His commentary on the unrealized possibilities in history is a reference to William Blake. It is also a reflection of his fear that he will not reach his potential because of the circumstances he's forced to live in—like having to teach instead of being able to write, or having nobody's attention but Haines's.*

Next, Stephen leads his students through John Milton's poem "Lycidas." He remembers spending his evenings in a Paris library reading Aristotle, who argued that the mind is the highest form of existence, but he also remembers Jesus telling the Pharisees, "To Caesar what is Caesar's, to God what is God's."

Milton wrote "Lycidas" to memorialize a dear friend, an intelligent clergyman who died in a shipwreck. This imagery recalls the report of a drowning man from the previous episode, and the motif of young potential being wasted refers back to Stephen. In fact, his months in the library in Paris were the one time he tasted his dream of complete intellectual freedom. Meanwhile, Jesus's line to the Pharisees is a reference to the importance of separating one's obligations to the state from one's duties to God. This is especially significant for Ireland, which is caught between two dominant external powers: the British Empire and the Roman Catholic Church.

It's 10:00 AM, time for hockey, so the students pack their things. They ask Stephen to give them a riddle, and he gives them an unanswerable rhyme about "the fox burying his grandmother under a hollybush."

Stephen's riddle is clearly a reflection of his own shame over his mother's death. Its incomprehensibility again shows that Stephen's intellect alienates him from the people around him—including his students, whom he baffles instead of educating.

A struggling, shy student named Cyril Sargent approaches Stephen for help with some math problems. Stephen imagines Cyril's mother loving and nurturing her "ugly and futile" son. Then, he thinks of his own mother's skeleton in her grave (from his dream) and the fox burying his grandmother (from his riddle). Stephen helps Cyril work out the problem and sees a reflection of his own childhood "gracelessness" in the boy. Then, Cyril joins his classmates to play hockey.

Stephen's interactions with Cyril call back significant associations from his own childhood, as Joyce narrated in A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. Reflecting on the seemingly unlovable Cyril, Stephen starts to view unconditional motherly love as a kind of miracle: it's inexplicable and irrational, but it holds families and communities together. But since his own mother is dead, Stephen views himself as disgraced and helpless.

Mr. Deasy, the schoolmaster, sorts out an argument about the hockey teams and then meets Stephen in his office, with his wage of three pounds and twelve shillings. Deasy shows off the little box where he keeps his money and suggests that Stephen get one, but Stephen points out that he doesn't have money to put in it. Misquoting Shakespeare's Iago, Deasy complains that young people are no good at saving, unlike the English, who manage their money well and don't amass debts. Stephen remembers his own sizeable debts to ten different people.

Deasy is a frustrating foil for Stephen, because (like Stephen) he's convinced of his moral and intellectual superiority, but (unlike Stephen) he's actually a fool and traitor to the Irish. Deasy's cliched commentary about the English is a thin excuse for English colonialism, which portrays England's power as the result of its people's moral superiority (when it's really the result of power and conquest). Although it might not be clear to modern readers, Stephen is drowning in debt. His wage of £3,12s would be a several hundred pounds or dollars today, while his debts would be several thousand.

Mr. Deasy looks at a portrait of King Edward VII hanging above the mantlepiece, then starts talking about the old days of the Irish Nationalist movement, in an attempt to win Stephen's sympathy. But this doesn't work. Stephen remembers how the English subjugated Ireland and stays silent.

In the early 20th century, independence (or Home Rule) was the central question in Irish politics. Deasy belongs to the minority that believed Ireland should remain under British rule. His attempts to win Stephen's respect are foolish and misplaced, which attests to the foolishness of his position: he prefers for his people to be subservient because he believes in the platitudes of the English.

Mr. Deasy asks Stephen to bring a letter to his "literary friends" and sits down to finish typing it up. Meanwhile, Stephen looks around at the paintings of champion racehorses that cover the walls, and he remembers going to the races with his friend Cranly. He listens to the boys playing outside and imagines their hockey match turning into a bloody battle.

Deasy's peculiar obsession with horses foreshadows the Ascot Gold Cup race that later plays a major role in the plot. When he imagines the boys' hockey match as a battle, Stephen is not just being dramatic. He is also commenting on the history of violence and injustice that has shaped Ireland, creating a troubled society that people have come to accept as normal in their everyday lives.

Mr. Deasy comes over with his letter, which is about how his cousin has learned to treat the foot and mouth disease that afflicts Irish cattle and threatens Irish exports. He hopes that his letter can win attention, and he blames Jewish merchants for conspiring against him. In fact, he thinks that they are destroying England, and he thinks they are immoral for sinning against God. But Stephen says that everyone sins. He remembers seeing Jewish merchants in Paris and decides that, in time, all wealth will be scattered.

Deasy usurps Stephen's writing, just as Buck has usurped his home at the Martello tower and Haines has usurped his history as an Irishman. Not only does Stephen lose his independence and autonomy if he becomes a vessel for the writing of a man he hates: he also has to publish a dry letter about practical concerns, even while he struggles to publish his own poetry and fiction. Like Haines, Deasy makes anti-Semitic remarks that later become far more significant, when the reader learns that the novel's main protagonist, Leopold Bloom, is Jewish. Meanwhile, Stephen clearly sees through Deasy's prejudiced tirade. Stephen is more accepting and less judgmental: like any respectable artist, he views people as individuals rather than making blanket judgments about groups.

Stephen tells Deasy that he's "trying to awake" from the nightmare of history, but Deasy argues that human history is a constant motion towards unity with God. Stephen points to the children playing hockey outside and says, "that is God," meaning "a shout in the street." Undeterred, Deasy rants about all the sinful women who have betrayed their men. He also tells Stephen he's not suited for teaching and probably won't last long in the school.

While Deasy coasts on naïve beliefs about life, history, and God, Stephen confronts the reality of the human condition: people pursue freedom by making significant decisions with uncertain outcomes in response to an unforgiving history. Many people around Stephen likely share Deasy's worldview, which helps explain Stephen's sense of alienation and despair. In his famous line about history, Stephen is referring to both his personal history and Ireland's national history. He's trying to overcome his family's poverty, his mother's death, and his failed move to Paris. Meanwhile, British colonialism in Irish history is responsible for Ireland's political, economic, and creative marginalization in Europe. While Deasy's faith in God leads him to think that the world will always get better and human effort is essentially irrelevant, Stephen sees this worldview as a naïve fantasy. Instead, Stephen thinks that humans are responsible for history—both making it and responding to it. Thus, history constrains him, and he hopes to improve history through art that breaks free of the past. When Stephen says that God is "a shout in the street," his main point is that salvation is random and unpredictable, and not at all a certain outcome of a predetermined process.

Stephen promises to try to publish Deasy's letter, and he leaves and goes out the school gate. But Deasy runs after him: he has one more thing to say. Unlike every other country, Deasy says, Ireland hasn't persecuted Jewish people, because it never welcomed them to begin with. He repeats his joke and laughs on his way back into the schoolhouse.

Deasy literally adds insult to injury by punctuating a morning full of ignorance with one last, cruel anti-Semitic joke. Of course, his joke is not only offensive—as Leopold Bloom will soon prove, it's also simply wrong. Although he generally tries to avoid taking clear political positions, Joyce is absolutely clear about rejecting prejudice in all its forms.

EPISODE 3: PROTEUS

Stephen Dedalus goes on a long soliloquy as he walks on Sandymount Strand, a Dublin beach, in the late morning. He begins by noting that people first see the signatures that changing objects leave behind—like their color and shape—rather than objects themselves. He closes his eyes and starts to navigate by hearing instead of seeing. Thinking of German philosophy, he realizes that people *hear* things one after the other ("*Nacheinander*"), in the same space but different points in time, but they *see* things one next to the other ("*Nebeneinander*"), in the same time but different points in space. The rhythm of his walk reminds him of poetry, and then he decides to open his eyes.

In the Odyssey, *Proteus is the god of the sea, who constantly changes form. The legendary Spartan king Menelaus struggled to stop Proteus and ask him questions, but when he succeeded, Proteus told Menelaus that Odysseus was stranded on Calypso's island. (Menelaus then passed this information on to Telemachus.) In this episode, Stephen Dedalus's thoughts, beliefs, and feelings constantly shift, much like Proteus, and he struggles to pin down what he really wants and believes. Notably, this episode is a mirror image of an important scene in* A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, *in which Stephen also went on a monologue on Sandymount Strand. Thus far, Joyce has mostly written a conventional realist narrative while occasionally jumping into his characters' stream of consciousness. In this episode, the stream of consciousness takes over, and the reader gets a relatively direct view of how Stephen views the world. In fact, at the beginning of the episode, Stephen is asking about exactly that: the nature of perception. He sees the world as a set of concepts, not necessarily as a physical realm of things. He hears things before he sees them, and he even doubts the reality of the information he gets through his senses. In short, for Stephen, ideas are more real than physical things, and the mind (or soul) is more real than the body.*

Stephen sees two midwives descend from the street to the beach, and he imagines that one (Florence MacCabe) might have a stillborn fetus in her bag. He thinks of how the umbilical cord links a child to their mother's omphalos (navel). He imagines all of humanity linked by umbilical cords, almost like a network of telephone wires, all the way back to Adam and Eve. He thinks of his own parents: his ghostly dead mother, as she appears in his dreams, and his distant father. By making Stephen, they fulfilled God's will. In contrast to the teachings of the Roman theologian Arius—who died in a public toilet, Stephen notes—this suggests that the Father and the Son are really one and the same.

With the image of an umbilical cord telephone network, Stephen clearly links ancestry, identity, and communication. Namely, the navel marks people's connection to their mothers (and, by extension, grandmothers, great-grandmothers, and so on). Thus, all of humanity can be viewed as interconnected because of people's common origins in their most distant ancestors. When viewing all people throughout history as members of the same giant web, history and art appear to reflect the spirit of humanity as a whole. At the same time, Stephen also feels like a mere individual, entirely cut off from his own family and beholden to no force except his own freedom. He wants to create art and history as a free individual, not as the latest product of a long bloodline. His question about whether the father and the son are one and the same therefore isn't just a reference to Hamlet, *the Bible, and his own conflicts with his father: it's also a question about human freedom, or people's ability to deviate from (or transcend) the plan that their ancestors (or God) has set out for them. Of course, it's also significant that Stephen theorizes about ancestry in terms of matrilineal descent (through the mother's line—or umbilical cord—and not the father's bloodline). This worldview ties naturally into his own love for his mother and his disdain for his neglectful father, whom he views as irrelevant to his own identity.*

The wind blows and the waves crash onto the shore. Stephen remembers that he must deliver Mr. Deasy's letter and meet Buck Mulligan at the pub at 12:30. He ponders moving in with his aunt Sara. He imagines his father's voice mocking her family and daydreams about paying her a visit. Stephen's cousin Walter would let him in, and he would drink with his eccentric, bedridden uncle Richie Goulding, who would sing along to his favorite opera aria, from Verdi's *Il Trovatore*. Stephen concludes that his and Sara's homes are both "houses of decay."

Suddenly, the sounds of the world draw Stephen's attention away from his innermost thoughts. He turns back to the practical question that underlies all his morning philosophizing: where is he going to sleep tonight? Of course, this is also a question about home, belonging, and identity: does Stephen belong with his family, or can he forge his own path yet again? His uncle Richie's favorite Verdi aria is actually a song about a feuding family falling into decay, and this appears to give Stephen his answer: he has to fend for himself.

Stephen decides that he can't find the "beauty" he's looking for with his family, nor in his studies, nor his intellectual friendships with people like Buck Mulligan. But he also thinks he's wrong to turn away from the world, like all the priests conducting their empty rituals. He remembers the naïve sins of his childhood: his blind religious devotion, his sexual awakening, and his arrogant aspiration to write classic books that scholars would admire for generations.

Stephen views his alienation as related to his genius: he feels that his artistic commitment to finding beauty and truth prevents him from connecting with other people, who have lesser goals and concerns in life. Therefore, he does not belong in any of the places or communities he visits. At the same time, he fears becoming like the priests, who share his sense of a higher calling but end up giving up on action in the real world in order to fulfill it. While he recognizes that his ambition is overly grandiose and self-centered—and that he has learned much even in the short years since his childhood—he feels that he cannot give up his quest for beauty while staying true to himself.

Stephen trudges down the polluted wet sand, noticing the trash all around him, and realizes he's already passed the turn to Sara's house. He turns towards the Pigeon House power plant, remembers a line about pigeons from a French novel, and starts thinking about his time in Paris. He remembers chatting with the Irish expats Kevin and Patrice Egan, failing out of medical school, eating cheap food, and dressing like a bohemian artist. One day, he went to the post office to receive money from his parents, but instead received a telegram saying that his mother was dying.

While Stephen hopes to capture the purity of absolute beauty through his art, he's actually surrounded by filth and trash in Dublin. This is an apt metaphor for his unfortunate fate: he feels that he cannot achieve his potential as an artist because of the unfavorable historical, social, religious, and economic conditions he has to live in. In contrast, his time in Paris now represents his brief taste of personal, artistic, and political freedom.

Stephen looks out at the seawall made of boulders and notes how the sun strikes them and the sea. This reminds him of the morning sunlight in Paris, which makes him think of the city's pastries and adulterers. Stephen remembers drinking after dinner with Kevin Egan, who gossiped about the news and tried to get him to join the revolutionary cause. Otherwise, Kevin was poor and forgotten, although Stephen tried to help out his son Patrice by teaching him to sing.

Stephen pities old Kevin Egan for his loneliness and irrelevance, but he is also frightened of turning out like him. After all, he already feels isolated and unappreciated as a young man. Kevin's fate is proof of how the world abuses people who dedicate their lives to causes and ideas—meaning artists, in Stephen's mind.

Stephen approaches the shore and looks down towards the Martello tower, where he's decided not to return at night. He feels exiled, like Hamlet. Next, he sits on a rock and notices a dog's carcass and wrecked boat laying next to each other in a bed of seaweed, then he notices another dog running across the beach and briefly worries it will attack him, until it runs away. Stephen thinks of how the Vikings invaded this coastline and a pod of whales once conveniently beached itself there during a famine. Buck Mulligan even saved a man from drowning on this beach, but Stephen is a coward afraid of a barking dog. He honestly doesn't think he would have been able to save the drowning man, although maybe he would have tried.

Literature and history fundamentally inform Stephen's view of the world: when he looks out at the sea, he sees Shakespeare and Viking invaders. And yet he's dismayed to see that this real life doesn't add up to the standards of either history or literature—in other words, he realizes that he's not a conventional hero, despite his lofty ambitions. Meanwhile, Buck Mulligan's reputation as a hero is ironic, because he totally lacks any sense of morality or integrity. In contrast, Stephen has dedicated himself to these values, yet he has completely failed to achieve all of his ambitions. Kind of like Mr. Deasy, Buck serves to expose how unfairly fate has treated Stephen.

The dog runs around the beach, chasing seagulls and barking at the waves, scaring people off and sniffing at the dead dog's carcass. The dog's owner, who is collecting cockles along with a woman, calls it over and gives it a kick. Then, it pees on some rocks and digs in the sand for something—perhaps its grandmother. Stephen struggles to remember his dream from the night before, in which he met a man resembling the Persian king Haroun in a "street of harlots."

With its athletic jaunts around the beach, even the dog seems to Stephen to be mocking his passivity and indecision. Its digging reminds Stephen of the riddle he invented for his class in the last episode, which was really an expression of his own guilt about his mother's death ("the fox burying his grandmother under a hollybush"). Finally, while his dream about king Haroun might seem random and out of place, it's actually extremely significant because it foreshadows events at the end of the novel, when Stephen and Leopold Bloom meet at night.

Stephen looks at the cockle-pickers walking down the beach and starts fantasizing about the woman. They walk past and glance at Stephen, who starts composing poetry about them in his head. He rips a scrap off Mr. Deasy's letter and starts writing, bent over and casting a shadow on the rocks. He wonders if anyone will see his shadow or read the words he's writing. In his writing, he speculates about the nature of distance and describes a woman he saw on the street on Monday. He asks what he's trying to do by writing about her and yearns for a woman's touch, for "that word known to all men."

After reaching for consistent meaning throughout the entire episode so far, Stephen has a flash of inspiration, and he finally shifts from detached thinking to genuine emotional engagement with the world. In this moment, he finally admits his own vulnerability and need for love (which is "that word known to all men"). He has mostly tried to ignore this topic during this episode so far by emphasizing his absolute faith in beauty and truth, as well as his distaste for other people. But here, Joyce reminds the reader that everyone wants to feel loved, even intellectuals like Stephen.

Stephen is done writing, so he shoves his pencil and paper into his pocket. He repeats the line, "*And no more turn aside and brood*," from Yeats's "Who Goes with Fergus?" But he starts to brood anyway: he laments having to wear Buck Mulligan's secondhand boots and comments that their friendship is practically homoerotic. Then, in a paragraph full of suggestive onomatopoeias, he urinates into the rocks. He remembers the man who drowned off the coast and thinks about how the man's flesh will become part of the food chain and transform into fish, geese, and mountains—just as he breathes the same air and steps on the same dust as people from the past.

In Joyce's writing, even Stephen peeing on the beach has deep significance as a symbolic, creative act: he is contributing to the same cycle of life that he describes in the rest of this passage. His meditations on the interconnectedness of life show that he has at least temporarily overcome his sense of separation from the world and alienation from other living things. He reaffirms that his art cannot spring entirely from his own individuality, but must involve him reaching out and engaging with the world around him. This cycle of life also hints at the concept of transubstantiation in the Catholic eucharist, as well as Jesus's transmutation and resurrection. (In the next episode, Leopold Bloom puts a new twist on it when he tells Molly about "metempsychosis.") In short, the cycle of life points to the potential for salvation *through an act of creation, which is really just a transformation of things that already exist. This is the solution to Stephen's dilemma between freedom and obedience, or artistic truth and the world around him.*

Stephen thinks about the clouds, his thirst, the evening, and then his rotting teeth, which lead him to contemplate visiting a dentist. He reaches for his handkerchief, but realizes he doesn't have it, so he picks his nose and wipes his snot on the rock, then walks off. He feels like there's someone behind him, watching; when he turns around, he sees a giant ship, with its three masts poking up against the horizon like crosses.

Stephen lent his handkerchief to Buck at the beginning of the first episode, which is why he doesn't have it here. Similarly, Stephen's rotting teeth contrast with Buck's gold-tipped teeth, and they relate to all the other decaying objects in this episode (like houses, trash, and the dog's corpse) that are associated with Stephen. The introductory portion of the book dealing with Stephen ends here, with Stephen feeling that someone is behind him. This feeling foreshadows his later encounters with Bloom and the ship represents a promise of salvation on the horizon.

EPISODE 4: CALYPSO

Mr. Leopold Bloom, who loves devouring animal organs, wants kidneys for breakfast. He prepares buttered bread and tea for his wife, then turns to the meowing cat, who is asking for milk. Bloom marvels at her cunning and wonders how she perceives the world. She probably sees Bloom like a tower. She blinks her green eyes, and he pours her milk from the jug that the milkman just filled up. Bloom decides to buy a pork kidney from the butcher Dlugacz, so he climbs the stairs to tell his wife that he's running out for a minute and ask if she wants breakfast. Half-asleep, she says "Mn" ("no") and rolls over, causing the brass rings on the bedstand to **jingle**.

In this fourth episode, the novel abruptly shifts to center its main protagonist, Mr. Leopold Bloom. In the Odyssey, *Calypso was the goddess who held Odysseus captive on her island for seven years. In* Ulysses, *Calypso loosely corresponds to Molly in this episode, but is also just a reference to the starting point of Bloom's journey. Notably, many of the symbols from the first episode recur in this opening scene—like tea and milk, the tower, and emerald-like flashes of green. While these symbols clearly tie the two episodes together, Bloom's view of the world could not be more different from Stephen's. Notably, Joyce's third-person narrator also changes to resemble Bloom's light, curious, whimsical perspective. Although he likes to devour their organs, Bloom is also remarkably kind to animals—he's obviously an empathetic and caring man. Molly's first word, "mn" (her grumbled way of saying "no"), foreshadows the end of the novel, when her final word, "Yes," suggests that she has transformed. Finally, the bedstand's jingling rings foreshadow the jingling sound that later gets associated with Blazes Boylan, the man with whom Molly goes on to have an affair.*

Bloom checks for his secret piece of paper inside his hat and his lucky potato in his pants pocket. His **key** is in another pair of pants, but he doesn't want to disturb his wife by searching for it, so he goes out and leaves the door open. He notes the sun striking the church and predicts that it'll be a hot day, especially in the black suit he has to wear. As he walks through Dublin, he imagines visiting an exotic city in the East, at least the way it's depicted in books.

Just like Stephen, Bloom leaves without the key to his own home. This foreshadows the way that—again, just like Stephen—he will soon see his home usurped by a traitor. Outside on the street, Bloom is attentive to small details in the world around him, but his kind of awareness is also remarkably different from Stephen's. Whereas Stephen focused on sounds and let them spiral out into thoughts and theories, Bloom is more attuned to sights and physical sensations, and his interest in them is practical. Thus, while Bloom is also clearly a thoughtful and educated man, his concerns are essentially worldly and external, while Stephen's are fundamentally mental, spiritual, and internal.

Passing Larry O'Rourke's bar, Bloom remembers that O'Rourke never wants to buy ads and how Simon Dedalus imitates him. He considers discussing Dignam's funeral, but just bids O'Rourke "good day" instead. Bloom wonders how barmen like O'Rourke make a living and starts calculating his sales, but gets distracted when he reaches Dlugacz's window, which displays sausages and one last kidney. His neighbor's serving-girl is there, buying sausages, and he remembers the way her skirt swings around when she hits a carpet on a clothesline. Bloom looks at a newspaper ad for a cattle farm, and since he hopes to gawk at the serving-girl on her way home, he rushes to buy his kidney. He evades Dlugacz's gaze and quickly says goodbye, but the girl is already gone.

When he passes O'Rourke's, Bloom's comments give away his profession as an ad salesman. This job is firmly middle-class, which reinforces Bloom's status as an everyman hero. But the newspaper ads he sells are also tied to the development of new media and technologies, which suggests that Bloom also represents the spirit of the times. His calculations make his good business sense obvious, but this good judgment does not seem to extend to the way he treats women. When he gawks at the serving-girl, this is the first sign in the novel of his sexual eccentricities (and occasional predatory behavior). Of course, it's deeply ironic that Bloom buys a pork kidney for breakfast, because he's Jewish (and so is Dlugacz, the butcher). At the very least, this signals that he's probably not very religious.

Bloom walks home, reading a newspaper ad for Agendath Netaim, a company selling fruit fields in Israel. He thinks of old friends, passes a man he vaguely remembers, and notices a cloud passing in front of the sun, which makes him think of darker imagery, like the desert, the Dead Sea, and Sodom and Gomorrah. An old woman crosses in front of him, reminding him of the horrible inevitability of death. But he concludes that he's just having a bad morning. He observes the other houses beside his on Eccles street, and the sunlight returns.

Like almost everything else in this novel, Agendath Netaim is an elaborate metaphor: it represents fertility and abundance in the promised land. But when the cloud passes by, Bloom sees a series of symbols that represent the opposite: barrenness, punishment, and death. Both of these opposed concepts are frequently associated with women throughout the novel. This symbolism suggests that Bloom's quest will be at least partially about finding fertility—in other words, reuniting with his wife and securing a future for his children. In fact, this is the form of creation that Bloom seeks, in order to find his place in and leave his mark on the world. Stephen is also obsessed with creation, but he conceptualizes his goals in terms of art.

Inside Bloom's house, a card and two letters are waiting. There's a letter for Bloom from his daughter Milly, and a letter in suspicious handwriting and a card for his wife Molly. Upstairs, Molly hides the letter under her pillow and asks Leopold ("Poldy") for tea. Bloom boils tea, fries the pork kidney with pepper, and gives its bloody wrapping paper to the cat. He scans his letter from Milly, drinks his tea out of a cup she gave him for his birthday, and remembers her happy childhood.

Molly's suspicious letter is the first sign of her infidelity in the novel. Yet Bloom still loyally makes her breakfast. It's possible to interpret this in a number of different ways: he might be blissfully unaware of her relationship, he might simply not care, he might be pathetically trying to win her back, or he might just feel a sense of duty to her regardless. Only time will tell. Again, the cat becomes a symbol of Bloom's gentle nature, and his letter from Milly suggests that he is a beloved father.

Leopold Bloom brings Molly breakfast in bed and asks about her letter, which is from Boylan, the man who organizes her concerts. She'll be singing "Là ci darem" (a duet from *Don Giovanni*) and "Love's Old Sweet Song." She points Leopold to the foot of her bed; he retrieves her underwear, but she's actually asking for a book. She's marked a word she doesn't understand: "metempsychosis," which Leopold defines as "the transmigration of souls," or reincarnation. The book is a circus-themed erotic novel that reminds Bloom of trapeze accidents, death, reincarnation, and Dignam's funeral. Molly reports that the novel wasn't "smutty" enough, and she asks for a Paul de Kock novel instead. Leopold briefly explains reincarnation to Molly, in the process glancing at the picture of a naked nymph above their bed, which reminds him of her.

It might not be obvious to the reader yet, but Boylan is the man Molly will be sleeping with later today. This detail is absolutely essential to understanding the symbolism in this passage. The songs that Molly will sing are both love songs, but their tones and messages are remarkably different. Namely, "Là ci darem" is a song about Don Juan manipulating a woman into sleeping with him, while "Love's Old Sweet Song" is a ballad about the enduring power of lifelong love. In short, "Là ci darem" represents Molly's relationship with Boylan, and "Love's Old Sweet Song" represents her enduring relationship with Bloom—and especially the possibility that their love will eventually win out over their extramarital adventures. "Metempsychosis," or reincarnation, is also an essential concept to understanding this novel. Like the "omphalos," metempsychosis ties Joyce's characters to the ancient models and archetypes of Greece through a metaphor of rebirth. It refers to the way such models and archetypes get recycled and reenacted over time, but also explains where people come from and how the soul can continue to exist after death. In other words, like the cycle of life, metempsychosis suggests that everything new is really the result of things that previously existed, and that after people die, their souls and legacies really live on in an altered form. Finally, Molly's interest in eclectic, "smutty" novels gives the reader significant insight about gender roles in Joyce's Dublin. It shows that Molly is unusually open about her sexuality, but also that she's essentially stuck at home all day with little to do besides read. "Paul de Kock" is one of Joyce's clever, easy-to-miss puns: it means "Poldy [Leopold] cock."

Molly smells smoke from the kitchen, and Bloom rushes downstairs to serve himself the slightly burned kidney with tea and bread dipped in gravy. He reads Milly's letter in full: she thanks her parents for her 15th birthday present, lovingly writes that her photography studies are going well, and mentions a boy named Bannon who sings Boylan's "seaside girls" song. Bloom remembers when Milly was born and laments that his and Molly's son, Rudy, died as an infant. He rereads the letter and wonders about her inevitable sexual awakening.

Bloom's reference to his dead son Rudy is extremely significant, because Rudy's death is the greatest symbol of Bloom's sense of failure as a father and husband. Milly's letter gives further proof that she loves her father, and the fact that he's reading it as soon as he can in the morning suggests that Bloom also deeply loves his daughter. It's easy to miss, but Bannon and Milly came up at the end of episode one, when Buck Mulligan was talking to a friend while bathing. This shows that Bloom and Stephen's social circles are at least loosely connected. Milly's profession, photography, is a clear sign of how modern media technologies are fast changing Dublin society (which Bloom clearly understands, as an adman). It also recalls Stephen's musings at the beginning of episode three about the nature of what is visible and its resemblance to the true underlying reality.

The cat meows at the door, hoping to go outside, but Bloom has to go to the bathroom first. He grabs an old newspaper and heads out into the garden, which he thinks about redoing on his way to the outhouse. Inside, he sits and starts to do his business while reading Philip Beaufoy's *Titbits* newspaper's prizewinning story, "Matcham's Masterstroke." He smartly skims the beginning and end, and he thinks he could write a winning story, too. He thinks about Molly getting dressed the morning after she met Blazes Boylan. He's done, so he tears apart the winning story and wipes himself with it. Leaving the outhouse, he hears the church bells ring 8:45 AM and thinks about "Poor Dignam!"

Bloom's extremely detailed outhouse scene again indicates that Joyce is interested in portraying all aspects of human life, including those generally considered too vulgar for respectable literature. The popular British newspaper Titbits *compiled quotes, jokes, and short articles from other publications around the world; it could be seen as the earliest version of what is now clickbait journalism. Bloom is evidently interested in the paper's strategy and success, and his own literary aspirations are mostly about getting published, not about creating exquisite art. Between* Titbits *and Molly's erotic novels, it's clear that the Blooms don't share Stephen Dedalus's sophisticated taste in literature and belief in the absolute purity of art. Finally, the church bells that Bloom hears in this passage are the same ones that Stephen heard at the end of the first episode. This shows that the events of these episodes are happening simultaneously.. It's one of the first times in the book that Joyce applies his literary interpretation of the astronomical concept of "parallax"—the same event is seen from two distinct perspectives, which makes it possible to understand the difference between these perspectives. While they're both also thinking about death at this moment, Stephen is fixated on the past (his mother's death) while Bloom is thinking about the future (his friend Dignam's funeral).*

EPISODE 5: LOTUS EATERS

Leopold Bloom walks through Dublin, observing the homes, businesses, and people he passes. He thinks about the "police tout" Corny Kelleher and stops to look in the Belfast and Oriental Tea Company shop window. After pulling his white card out of his hat and moving it to his pocket, he imagines lounging in lush, tropical Ceylon, where the Tea Company grows its crop. He compares this to floating in the Dead Sea and remembers learning about physics in school.

In the Odyssey, *the Lotus Eaters feed Odysseus's men lotus, which sedates them and leads them to lose all motivation to continue on their quest. While this doesn't correspond to any single moment in this episode, it does include numerous allusions to comfort, idleness, and complacency—starting with Bloom's vision of lounging in Ceylon or floating in the Dead Sea.*

Bloom saunters overs to the post office, where he gives the postmistress his white namecard and receives a letter addressed to "Henry Flower." He ponders a poster depicting soldiers—which reminds him of Molly's father—then continues on his way.

The secret identity "Henry Flower" is an obvious play on Bloom's name. Although he seems like an honest and conventional man, Bloom evidently keeps some secrets. But he's much better at keeping them than Molly: his prudence in having the letter sent elsewhere and using a fake name contrasts with Blazes Boylan's total unscrupulousness in delivering a letter directly to Molly, for Leopold to find.

Bloom runs into his friend M'Coy and they idly chat about Dignam's funeral. Bloom gets distracted watching a beautiful, well-dressed woman get into a carriage across the street. A passing tramcar interrupts Bloom's view, and he unrolls his newspaper and casually glances down at an advertisement for **Plumtree's Potted Meat**, which makes home "*an abode of bliss*." M'Coy comments that his wife, a singer like Molly, might have "an engagement" lined up. Bloom comments on Molly's coming concert tour and thinks of "Love's Old Sweet Song." M'Coy asks to have his name put on the list at the funeral, and then the two men part. Bloom thinks that M'Coy was just making up his wife's "engagement" so that he could borrow (and never return) a suitcase—he's done it before. Bloom also reminds himself that Molly is a better singer than M'Coy's wife.

M'Coy clearly bores Bloom, who sees through his fibs, scams, and posturing. Bloom's honesty, relative financial stability, and more successful wife show that he's generally done better than M'Coy (and many of the other Dubliners he meets throughout the novel). Again, it's clear that Bloom has a propensity for voyeurism, and this foreshadows the "Nausicaa" episode. Just like the advertisement for Agendath Netaim evoked fertile fruit fields in the holy land, Plumtree Potted Meat promises a happy home to all who eat it. This slogan is clearly saying something about advertising's ability to manipulate the human psyche and the fundamental human desire to belong and feel at home. Of course, since Bloom works in advertising, the Plumtree slogan is also Joyce's comment on Bloom's own marital frustrations at home. Finally, this episode is one of many direct links to Joyce's first work, Dubliners, *in which one of Joyce's stories described M'Coy's suitcase scam. While the reference may be obscure to readers who are unfamiliar with* Dubliners, *it rewards those who dig deep.*

Bloom sees an ad for a performance of Leah tonight, with Mrs. Bandmann Palmer playing the title role. She played Hamlet the night before, which reminds Bloom of Ophelia's suicide, and then his own father's. Bloom passes some carriage-horses, whose heads are hiding in their feedbags. He hums "Là ci darem" and makes his way to a quiet part of Cumberland Street, where he pulls out the letter he retrieved at the post office.

Joyce keeps citing artworks that comment on his characters' predicaments. Leah, *a play about a Hungarian Jewish refugee who falls in love with a man named Rudolf, is a direct reference to Bloom's heritage: his father was a Hungarian Jewish immigrant named Rudolf. Another reference to Hamlet recalls Stephen Dedalus's existential dilemmas in the opening episodes, and Ophelia is strongly associated with many of the novel's symbols—flowers, drowning, and the death of the father. Bloom's revelation about his own father gives more context to his own feelings about his family: with his father and his son's deaths, his male bloodline has extinguished itself. Of course, Bloom's brief meditation on death heavily foreshadows the next episode, in which he attends Dignam's funeral. Finally, "Là ci darem" gestures to the seductive content of his secret letter.*

There's a yellow flower inside Bloom's letter, which is from someone named Martha. She calls Henry Flower a "poor little naughty boy" and asks when they can meet. Bloom puts the flower in his shirt pocket and rereads the letter. He thinks about how Martha's tone has changed since their first letters, then he tosses away the safety pin holding the letter together and shreds the letter itself. He thinks about how paper can be so significant, like a million-pound check—he calculates how much beer a barman would have to sell to make a million pounds.

Bloom's infidelity is more cautious and emotional than Molly's, which turns out to be entirely sexual and not secretive at all. In fact, it seems that Bloom doesn't even want to meet Martha—he prefers to keep her at a distance and avoid getting too involved. Blazes Boylan later appears with a flower in his shirt, just like Bloom in this scene, which suggests that these serve as a symbol of promiscuity or infidelity.

Bloom goes inside the All Hallows church. He sees a notice about Rev. Conmee's sermon and a mission to Africa, then starts thinking about Christians absurdly trying to convert opium-smoking Chinese Buddhists. He stares at stupefied women taking communion from the priest, sits on a bench, and tries to imagine how the women must feel: safe and happy, like they're joining a big family in the kingdom of God. Bloom remembers Martha first requesting to meet him and watches the priest wash out the chalice, which he compares to Guinness. He sees that the choir is out and remembers when Molly sang in that same church, then he thinks of other church music.

Bloom wanders into a church right after reading his adulterous letter, and surely enough, he continues to blaspheme. His description of Chinese opium smokers and Irish Catholics taking communion both return to the episode's overarching motif of leisure and idleness. Joyce may or may not agree with Bloom's suspicion that religion stupefies people into blissful ignorance. While Bloom associates the image of the chalice with alcohol (which is stupefying), the narrative also clearly links it with women and fertility, the underlying concern to which Bloom always keeps returning.

The congregation stands up, and Bloom follows them. When they kneel down, Bloom sits to watch. The priest starts praying in Latin, but then he switches to English. Bloom sorts through memories of religion: mass, confession, penance, shame, and prayer. The priest finishes his prayer and then leaves. Bloom stands up, realizes that his waistcoat is unbuttoned, and walks out of the church. He remembers that he's supposed to buy lotion for Molly at Sweny's pharmacy. While the elderly chemist searches for the right recipe in his prescription book, Bloom looks around at all the shop's medicines and poisons. He thinks about how the lotion left Molly's skin so delicate and beautiful. The chemist finds the lotion recipe, but since Bloom forgot to bring a bottle, he has to return later. For now, he buys some soap.

Unlike Stephen, Bloom thinks about the church primarily in terms of its rituals and activities in the world—and not its theological doctrines. Since Bloom is nominally Jewish, but really an atheist, it's no surprise that he mostly doesn't understand what's happening during the services. His visit to the pharmacy could be interpreted as the secular equivalent of a visit to church, because he's going to buy products that will soothe and comfort him and Molly (just like the congregants go to church for spiritual comfort). He buys the lotion as an act of love for Molly, but it's unclear whether he has some ulterior motive (like he knows that she's cheating on him and is somehow trying to win her back).

On his way out of the chemist's shop, Bloom runs into Bantam Lyons, who grabs the newspaper from under Bloom's armpit because he wants to see the listings about the Ascot Gold Cup horserace. Bloom notices Bantam's filthy fingers and dandruff-covered shoulders, then tells him to keep the newspaper, because he's "going to throw it away." Bantam cryptically replies, "I'll risk it," and gives the newspaper back to Bloom, who wraps the soap inside and marvels at how Dublin's youth are wasting their money gambling. Bloom heads for the baths, greeting the porter Hornblower on the way. He imagines seeing his body, and especially his penis ("the limp father of thousands"), float peacefully in the womb-like bathtub.

Like almost every other event in this novel, Bloom's chance encounter with Bantam Lyons is no coincidence: it has an important effect on the plot and comes back to haunt him later in the day. (One of the horses in the Ascot Gold Cup is named "Throwaway," and he ends up winning.) Like M'Coy, Lyons is clearly less put-together than Bloom, which hints at Dublin's difficult socioeconomic situation overall. After meeting the filthy Lyons, it's only natural that Bloom's next step is to bathe himself. His vision of idly floating in the tub again recalls the leisurely lotus-eaters in the Odyssey, *but also returns to fertility and creation. Like the previous two episodes, then, this episode also ends with basic bodily functions, which are characters' way of returning back to the natural world.*

EPISODE 6: HADES

Martin Cunningham, Mr. Power, Simon Dedalus, and Leopold Bloom get into a carriage to join Dignam's funeral procession. Bloom notices an old woman looking at them, and after some time, they start moving slowly through Dublin. Sitting uncomfortably on the bar of soap in his pocket, Bloom notices Stephen Dedalus pass their carriage, dressed in black for mourning. But Simon Dedalus doesn't see him; instead, he complains about his son's friendship with Buck Mulligan, a "bloody doubledeyed ruffian" who he thinks will "ruin" Stephen. Bloom starts thinking about how his own son, Rudy, would be if he had survived and grown up. He remembers the day he and Molly conceived Rudy and thinks about how his daughter, Milly, is coming of age.

In the Odyssey, *Odysseus visits Hades, the land of the dead, where the prophet Tiresias gives him advice on the trials that lie ahead during his journey home to Ithaca. In* Ulysses, *Leopold Bloom confronts death in a distinctively modern way: by ceremoniously crossing downtown Dublin and attending a friend's funeral. For the first of many times, Bloom and Stephen Dedalus's paths cross. The fact that Simon Dedalus doesn't recognize his son is a testament to the distance and ill will between them. Still, even though he can't recognize Stephen, Simon can still tell that Buck is a bad influence. (It's really obvious to everyone who knows him.) Ironically, Stephen is also dressed for mourning, even though he's not going to Dignam's funeral—he's still mourning for his mother. When the topic of death comes up, it's natural that Bloom starts to think about his son, who represented the future, bloodline, and happy family that fate have tragically cut off for him. But it's significant that he thinks about Rudy right after thinking about Stephen—this is the first of many symbolic links between the two, which sets up Stephen as a kind of symbolic replacement for Rudy.*

The men notice that the cramped carriage is full of breadcrumbs, and they comment on the other guests attending the funeral. When the carriage stops by the gas plant and dogs' home, Bloom thinks of Milly's childhood illnesses and his father's beloved dog Athos. The men discuss Tom Kernan's impressive singing last night and Dan Dawson's speech, which has been printed in the newspaper. Bloom pulls out the newspaper, but scans the obituaries instead. The men's carriage passes a school, the cab stand from the previous episode, the railway controlman's stand, and numerous Dublin landmarks like the Queen's Theatre. Bloom remembers tearing up Martha's letter and wonders about the performance of Leah that night.

The details that Joyce includes in the cab-ride scene show off his incredibly deep and wide-ranging knowledge of Dublin, which is key to the realistic texture of all his work (but especially Ulysses*). His remarkable attention to detail has also inspired fans to reenact scenes like this one and preserve many of the places and traditions mentioned in the novel. Bloom and the other men politely chatter on, but they're clearly not close friends—their conversation is nothing like the boisterous talk that fills Dublin pubs during the episodes set later in the day.*

Then, Bloom remembers that "he's coming in the afternoon" just as the carriage passes by Blazes Boylan. Bloom gazes at his fingernails and asks what "they she sees" in Blazes Boylan, "worst man in Dublin." He ponders Molly's aging body, which he still finds delightful and shapely. Mr. Power politely asks about Molly's concert tour, and Bloom explains that he can't go due to business commitments, but several respected musicians will be accompanying Molly's singing. Bloom is delighted when Mr. Power calls Molly "*madame*," and he starts wondering what she is doing now. (She's probably humming "Là ci darem" and getting dressed.)

Bloom clearly knows about Molly's affair, but he almost never refers to Blazes Boylan by name, which suggests that he's trying to repress his distress and anxiety. His wandering mind even appears to conjure Boylan up in the kind of literary coincidence that makes it absolutely clear who he's thinking about. Readers will later see that it's both ironic and insightful when Bloom calls Boylan the "worst man in Dublin." It's ironic because Boylan is extremely popular, and it's insightful because Boylan is a superficial man with little integrity or moral direction. Bloom not attending Molly's concert tour may have something to do with Boylan's presence, and Mr. Power may or may not know about her affair (and be asking in order to poke fun at Bloom). Bloom's love for his wife mixes with his disdain for Boylan, and when Bloom imagines Molly singing the seduction song "Là ci darem," he's clearly thinking about her infidelity again, too.

Cunningham, Dedalus, Power, and Bloom pass Reuben J, laugh at him, and chat about how his son tried to drown himself in the Liffey, but a boatman pulled him out and saved him. Reuben gave the boatman a florin (two shillings) for his trouble, which Simon Dedalus jokes is far too much. They fondly remember Paddy Dignam, who died suddenly a few days ago. (Bloom privately attributes Dignam's death to alcoholism and then comments that it's best to die quickly, but nobody responds.)

The men's disparaging commentary about Reuben J. Dodd reeks of thinly-veiled anti-Semitism (and veiled only because of Bloom's presence). It also repeats the key motifs of drowning and suicide, Then, they finally acknowledge the reason they've assembled—Dignam's death—and try to make the best of it, even though they all know that tragedies like death are unavoidable and irreversible.

The men pass another funeral procession carrying a tiny child's coffin. Bloom again remembers his son Rudy, and Power comments that suicide is "the greatest disgrace to have in the family," but Cunningham insists that it's "not for us to judge." Bloom is grateful for Cunningham's sympathy; he reflects on the Catholic disdain for suicide and infanticide, and he remembers Cunningham's difficult home life with his alcoholic wife. Then, Bloom remembers finding his father dead of an overdose in a hotel room. The carriage rattles on the cobblestones and passes Bloom's house in Eccles Street, then a hospice that again reminds Bloom of death.

As Bloom grapples with death in this episode, his father and son's tragic deaths are always in the back of his mind. But in this brief section, they rush back to the forefront of his thoughts. Even though Cunningham (who knows about Bloom's father) sympathetically steps in to defend Bloom, Power's comment makes it clear how other Dubliners are likely to judge Bloom and his family. Bloom clearly feels disgraced himself, as he struggles to build a family that isn't defined by his father and son's deaths.

A herd of cattle and a flock of sheep march through the streets, blocking the carriage's path. "Emigrants," quips Mr. Power, noting that the animals are probably heading to England for slaughter. Bloom points out that it would be far more efficient to transport the animals by tram. They could make another tram for funeral processions, too. Cunningham remembers how a hearse turned over at the corner they're approaching, and Bloom imagines Dignam's corpse falling out of its coffin onto the street. As the carriage crosses another bridge, Bloom considers paying Milly a surprise visit. But after passing a miserable tramp and a house where the Childs murder took place, Bloom decides not to visit Milly unannounced.

Power's joke about the animals is really a comment on Ireland's political situation: because of English rule, Irish people are emigrating to other countries (mostly the U.S.) and Ireland's animals are being sent abroad to feed the English. Bloom's tramline proposal yet again reveals his sharp mind for business, and also the way that 20th century technologies are reshaping Dublin into a modern metropolis, run on technology and consumer capitalism. There's a kind of two-way communication between the city and the men in the carriage: the city affects their thoughts and impressions (like when it makes Bloom change his mind about visiting Milly), but the men also give significance to certain places they see in town (like when they remember where the hearse turned over and the Childs murder occurred).

The carriage reaches Prospect Cemetery and the men step out. Bloom sees the mourners from another funeral leave and watches men carry Dignam's coffin inside. Cunningham tells Power that Bloom's father poisoned himself, while Bloom asks Kernan about Dignam's life insurance and expresses his sympathies for Dignam's wife and children. Simon Dedalus and Ned Lambert chat about events in their hometown of Cork. Bloom looks at Dignam's son and imagines his pain. The funeral services begin. Bloom kneels with everyone else and listens to the Latin prayers, which he doesn't understand. Bloom imagines Father Coffey conducting the same funeral ceremony over and over again every day, all year, and figures he must have a "tiresome kind of a job."

Cunningham alerts Power to his gaffe, which is ironic because Power was careful to be overly polite and courteous to Bloom when talking about Molly (whom he called "madame"). While the other men mostly chat about things affecting themselves, Bloom takes the time to ask about the Dignam's family's insurance situation, which shows his genuine sense of empathy and goodwill for the family. In other words, Bloom is fundamentally a kind and caring person—and more importantly, he's like this while the majority of Dubliners clearly are not. *Again, these religious rituals remind the reader that Bloom is fundamentally an outsider, but this outsider status lets him make interesting comments on the clergy that God-fearing Catholics would probably avoid.*

The gravediggers carry Dignam's coffin out to the churchyard and the mourners follow. Simon Dedalus breaks down when he thinks of his late wife, who is buried nearby. Tom Kernan criticizes Father Coffey for rushing through the ceremony and comments that he prefers the Church of Ireland's Protestant ceremonies. Bloom thinks about what happens when people's hearts stop pumping blood, and he feels that resurrection is impossible. John Henry Menton asks Ned Lambert who Bloom is, and Lambert explains that he's Molly Tweedy's husband, an ad canvasser. Menton is surprised—he thinks Molly can do far better than Leopold Bloom. Then, John O'Connell, the cemetery caretaker, arrives and tells a joke about two drunks mistaking a statue of Jesus for one of the deceased.

Dignam's death reminds Simon Dedalus of his own personal tragedy, just like it does to Bloom. And just like Bloom, Tom Kernan isn't Catholic (he's Protestant), so he has some interesting comments on the Catholic Church. However, Dedalus isn't restrained enough to contain his feelings, and Kernan isn't tactful enough to keep his mouth shut. Meanwhile, the ever-practical Bloom starts thinking about the objective physiological aspects of death. This is, again, the polar opposite of Stephen Dedalus's sentimental and existential view of death in the opening episodes of the novel. In other words, while Stephen views death from a human perspective, Bloom views it from a scientific perspective that gives the reader little information about how he views his own mortality.

Meanwhile, Leopold Bloom imagines John O'Connell's romantic life, wondering if any woman would want to live with him in the graveyard. He thinks about the soil, packed full of decomposing corpses and probably maggots, too. Bloom wonders when it's appropriate to joke about the dead and, while the gravediggers prepare to lower the coffin, he tries to figure out who an unfamiliar man wearing a macintosh raincoat in the corner might be. He asks whether it's necessary to waste so much wood on coffins, and he sees that there are thirteen mourners, which is a conveniently superstitious number. He admires Ned Lambert's suit and wonders how life would be, "if we were all suddenly somebody else."

Bloom's quirky questions and final comment, "if we were all suddenly somebody else," reveal his genuine curiosity about other people's perspectives and experiences. Of course, Joyce's strategy as an author is precisely to dig into other people's lives, feelings, and thoughts in order to present a composite view of the world from multiple perspectives. But this is only possible in literature—never in reality. Bloom also realizes that his curiosity violates social norms. Clearly, Joyce is interested in showing how such norms are artificial, and people are constantly violating and ignoring them in their minds. The man in the macintosh is one of the enduring mysteries in Ulysses*—Joyce chooses never to identify him, and he could represent anyone or anything. (One popular theory is that he's James Joyce himself, and another popular theory is that he's a red herring, inserted in the novel to send readers on wild goose chases.)*

When it's their turn to die, Bloom thinks, nobody ever believes it—dying must feel strange and unnatural. During the final prayer for Dignam, Bloom figures that it's odd to pray for loved ones not to burn in hellfire. The gravediggers start filling in the grave and Bloom briefly wonders whether Dignam might still be alive, and whether anyone would even know it. The mourners put their hats on and start to disperse. Hynes, who works for the newspaper, is taking the mourners' names. Bloom adds M'Coy's, and Hynes comments that M'Coy was fired from the newspaper for stealing money. Hynes asks about the mysterious stranger in the macintosh, but mistakenly records his name as "M'Intosh" and disappears before Bloom can correct him.

Joyce seemingly wants to make Bloom's train of thought as hilarious as possible during this funeral scene. His outsider perspective again lets him expose the strangeness of norms that everyone else takes for granted (like praying that loved ones don't burn in hell). And Hynes's matter-of-fact, error-prone reporting for the newspaper adds to this mixture of the tragic and comic. Meanwhile, Bloom finally confronts death from a first-person, subjective perspective when he asks how people should confront their own deaths (which seem to be random and unpredictable).

The gravediggers fill Dignam's grave and the ceremony ends. The mourners walk over to Parnell's grave, and Bloom muses that it's a waste to spend money on fancy graves instead of donating to "some charity for the living." He watches a bird sitting on a branch, which reminds him of Milly burying a dead bird as a girl. He realizes just how many departed Dubliners are buried in the cemetery and quips that it'd be possible to remember the dead by getting photos and gramophone voice recordings of them. He watches a rat scurry into a man's crypt and imagines the rat gnawing the man's flesh off his bones. He concludes that it would be easier to cremate bodies and imagines that the animals are eager to start on Dignam's.

Bloom's concern for charity reminds the reader that his utterly practical, efficiency-focused, and occasionally unsentimental mindset is really driven by his sense of how much important work is left to be done in the world. Bloom's calculating mindset isn't a replacement for sentimentality: it's a strategy for getting the most out of what truly matters to him and those around him. His remarks about the sheer quantity of the dead show that he understands the weight of history and fate, much like Stephen. And there's another important parallel with Stephen here: the rat reminds Bloom of the circle of life, which Stephen also contemplated while peeing into the Sandymount Strand rocks at the end of "Proteus."

Bloom sees the cemetery gates and realizes he's ready to get "back to the world," but he still thinks about getting haunted by ghosts. Martin Cunningham approaches Bloom alongside John Henry Menton, who Bloom remembers used to dislike him. Bloom points out that Menton's hat is dinged, but Menton ignores it until Cunningham repeats the comment to him. He begrudgingly thanks Cunningham and they walk off ahead of Bloom, who takes the insult in stride.

Bloom's return "to the world" is a kind of symbolic resurrection after his encounter with death in the cemetery. Menton's rude behavior is another clear sign of Bloom's unpopularity in Dublin—just like Stephen, he can't avoid being an outsider everywhere he goes, even if he tries to be helpful and sympathetic.

EPISODE 7: AEOLUS

Newspaper headlines interrupt the text throughout this episode, which begins, "In the Heart of the Hibernian [Irish] Metropolis," then describes busy tramcars rushing around the city. Under "The Wearer of the Crown," the novel depicts British royal mail cars unloading letters and packages outside the post office. After the headline "Gentlemen of the Press," a newspaperman named Red Murray cuts an old Alexander Keyes ad out of the paper for Bloom. A headline names William Brayden, an imposing, Jesus-like bearded man who climbs the stairs and draws Bloom and Red Murray's attention.

This is the first episode where Joyce starts innovating with his novel's form—and his innovations only get more radical and complex from here onward. While it's easy to mistake the newspaper headlines for summaries of discrete sections of the story, they're not: they're more like a running commentary on events. Sometimes they just describe things, but often they also offer opinions or sarcastic remarks. And they're not always located at natural transition points in the text. Through these formal experiments, Joyce challenges the notion that a single coherent point of view must hold a novel together, and he explores the way different genres can give readers access to the same story in different ways. In the Odyssey, *Aeolus is the god of wind, and he gives Odysseus a bag of wind to help bring his boat home to Ithaca. But Odysseus's men foolishly open the bag too soon, blow his ship off its path, and get stranded. Aeolus refuses to help Odysseus a second time. Aeolus loosely corresponds to the newspaper editor Myles Crawford, who blows Bloom's plans off course. The episode's tone breaks sharply with the sleepiness of "Lotus Eaters" and reflectiveness of "Hades," but it also closely alludes to the* Odyssey*: its rushed prose and references to rhythmic, noisy action in the heart of Dublin resemble blowing wind, or (as Joyce put it) the lungs breathing in and out. The clang of tram cars and thud of unloaded cargo set up this rhythm from the start of the episode.*

Bloom takes the Keyes ad clipping to the office of the *Freeman* newspaper, but the paper's manager Nannetti is busy with Hynes, who is filing his story on Dignam's funeral. While Bloom waits, he notes that Nannetti "never saw his real country" and thinks about all the different sections of a newspaper, while the machines mechanically print out copies in the background. Hynes finishes, and before he runs out, Bloom comments that he should visit the cashier soon—Hynes owes Bloom money.

Bloom's client, Alexander Keyes, is also a pun on the "keys" that Bloom and Stephen have lost during the day. Bloom's comment suggests that he identifies with Nannetti, who is also the son of immigrants. However, Nannetti has clearly achieved more status and success than Bloom—in fact, he's even a Member of Parliament. Even Hynes clearly gets preference before Bloom, even though his reporting at Dignam's funeral was clearly less than perfect and he owes Bloom money. In a nutshell, Bloom feels that he doesn't get the respect he deserves in Dublin, and readers may or may not agree with him.

"We See the Canvasser at Work," the novel announces. Bloom gives the old Keyes ad to the unspeaking Nannetti and explains that Keyes wants to reprint it, along with a new logo: two crossed **keys** surrounded by a circle. Bloom explains that this is a reference to the fight for independence in the Isle of Man (which lies in the Irish Sea between England and Ireland). Nannetti says that he needs a copy of the design, but that he can run it if Keyes will renew his ad for three months. Bloom watches the staff work in silence amidst the printing machines' deafening, rhythmic noise.

By referencing the fight for home rule in the Isle of Man, Keyes's logo makes a clear political statement—he is linking his business to the popular desire for Irish independence. But since Keyes's name (and the two keys in his logo) is also a reference to Stephen and Bloom, the logo has a symbolic meaning: like Ireland, Stephen is trying to become free and independent, while Bloom is trying to achieve true "Home Rule" in his family.

Nannetti begins spellchecking a set of proofs, and Bloom wonders if he should have said something else in order to capture the man's attention. He leaves after Nannetti starts arguing with the head typesetter, Monks, about a letter from the archbishop. On his way out, Bloom wonders about Monks's life and notices him setting type backwards, which makes him think of his father reading Hebrew. He decides to call Keyes—but first, a headline announces, "Only Once More That Soap." Bloom smells the soap on his handkerchief and moves it to his other pocket. It reminds him of Martha asking about his wife's perfume in her letter, and he briefly considers visiting Molly at home.

Nannetti pays Bloom very little attention, reinforcing his perception that others don't take him seriously. But it's also possible that the newspaper room is simply too loud for the workers to bother having unnecessary conversations. Here, the headline snarkily predicts Bloom's behavior, which raises the question of what kind of voice is narrating the novel—clearly, it has access to future events, and it appears to be somehow structuring these events so as to control the reader's perception of them. In fact, setting type backwards is an apt metaphor for this kind of narration, as is the important phrase "retrospective arrangement," which recurs throughout the novel. In part, this is a play on the fact that Joyce (like any author) did retrospectively rearrange and rewrite large parts of Ulysses *in order to make the symbolism from different episodes coincide.*

Bloom hears Ned Lambert's voice in the *Evening Telegraph* office and decides to use the phone inside. He enters to find Ned, Simon Dedalus, and Professor MacHugh mocking an overelaborate speech made by the politician and baker Dan Dawson the previous night. J.J. O'Molloy enters the office, and the headline "Sad" comments on his failed career as a lawyer. O'Molloy asks for the editor Myles Crawford, and Bloom thinks it has something to do with his debts. Lambert, Dedalus, and MacHugh return to mocking Dawson's speech, focusing on an absurd description of the beautiful Irish countryside. Dedalus calls it "Shite and onions!" and the men laugh. Bloom wonders if the speech was more inspiring in person.

For the second time in two episodes, a group of Dubliners assembles to mock Dan Dawson's patriotic speech, which seems to have embodied the wrong kind of nationalism. But while they bond over ridiculing Dawson, Bloom feels sympathy for the man, which again shows that he doesn't particularly fit in with his fellow Dublin professionals, but suggests that this might be a sign of his virtue. And for the second time this episode, a struggling Dublin professional is failing to pay his debts, which gives readers further reason to doubt the virtue of Bloom's peers.

The harsh, imposing editor Myles Crawford rushes into the room. He and Professor MacHugh start making fun of each other, and then Ned Lambert and Simon Dedalus leave for a drink, making cryptic references to Irish military history on their way out. Bloom asks Crawford to use the phone, and Crawford ignores him, but he makes the call anyway.

Lambert and Dedalus's inside jokes again exclude Bloom, and they specifically imply that he isn't Irish enough to understand. Meanwhile, Crawford refuses to acknowledge his existence. Perhaps fed up with waiting for disrespectful people to finally pay him attention, Bloom takes matters into his own hands.

After the headline "Spot the Winner," Lenehan emerges from an office with the paper *Sport* and says that Sceptre is going to win the Ascot Gold Cup. One of the rowdy paper staff bursts in the door by accident, letting in a draft that shuffles around the paper's pages. MacHugh kicks the staffer out. Meanwhile, Bloom finishes his phone call and crashes into Lenehan on his way out of the office. When he announces he's leaving to find Keyes, Crawford jokingly yells at him, "Begone! [...] the world is before you."

When the Ascot Gold Cup horserace gets mentioned yet again, Joyce's readers should start to ask what it means, both symbolically and for the novel's plot. It could represent Dubliners' competition for status and resources, men's competition for women, or the sheer luck that determines people's outcomes in society. The draft of wind that shuffles the pages on the floor is another clear reference to the story of Aeolus in the Odyssey*, but MacHugh and Crawford reply to it with an equally aggressive energy. Crawford's blunt reply to Bloom toes the line between humor and insult.*

Lenehan and MacHugh watch through the window as Bloom walks away, and Crawford **jingles** his **keys** around and proposes the newsmen go drink with Lambert and Dedalus. O'Molloy, MacHugh, and Crawford light cigarettes and joke about how the British Empire has subjugated Ireland. MacHugh half-seriously declares that the British Empire's true strength comes from its toilets—just as the Romans conquered the world by building sewers.

When Crawford jingles his keys, he's combining two important symbols of Bloom's alienation: the jingling bed that represents Molly's relationship with Blazes Boylan and the keys that ultimately literally lock Bloom out of his own house. With his toilet humor, MacHugh actually makes an important point about the nature of British colonialism in Ireland: Britain conquered Ireland because of its mindless practicality, or its obsession with amassing raw power and building infrastructure. In other words, MacHugh thinks that the British successfully colonized Ireland (and much of the rest of the world) because they lacked true art, robust culture, and the ability to live in harmony with nature. This idea has interesting implications for Leopold Bloom, who is also essentially practical in his outlook (and, memorably, visited the toilet a few episodes ago).

Mr. O'Madden Burke and Stephen Dedalus enter the office. Stephen presents Crawford with Mr. Deasy's letter, which is missing the corner Stephen tore off to write poetry. Crawford remembers how Deasy's cranky ex-wife once threw her bowl of soup at a waiter, and Stephen suddenly understands Deasy's misogyny. Professor MacHugh talks about how the Irish are "loyal to lost causes," because they have lived under the control of more practical rulers (like the Romans and English) but still fight to preserve "the radiance of the intellect," kind of like Pyrrhus fought to save Greece.

Stephen Dedalus has a second close call with Bloom. Readers might be surprised that he carries through with his promise to help his vile boss, Mr. Deasy, publish his letter about foot and mouth disease. (Of course, it's deeply ironic that this is the only thing Stephen, an aspiring poet, gets published in the entire novel.) Crawford's story about Deasy helps Stephen and the reader empathize with him—a skill that Bloom seems to possess naturally. But when evaluating Deasy as a man, it's also worth comparing him to Martin Cunningham, who also faces a difficult situation with his wife—but handles it in the opposite manner, through sympathy and understanding rather than bitterness. MacHugh clarifies his theory about the British (who are like the practical Romans—or Leopold Bloom) and the Irish (who are like the Greeks—or Stephen Dedalus). This gives legitimacy to Buck Mulligan's idea that Stephen is on a quest to "Hellenise" Ireland through his art, as he champions the "lost cause" of truth and beauty against the modern world's oppressive practicality and unimaginativeness.

Lenehan invents a limerick about MacHugh and makes a bad joke: the title of the English opera *The Rose of Castille* sounds like a railway line, "rows of cast steel." The other men generally ignore him. Under the imitation Latin headline "Omnium Gatherum," the men compliment each other's talents and note that they're missing Bloom, who's skilled in "the gentle art of advertisement," and his wife, "Dublin's prime favorite" singer. Lenehan coughs and jokes about coming down with a cold in the park.

Like Bloom, Lenehan gets ignored—but unlike Bloom, he seems to deserve it, because he's quite obnoxious and insensitive. The men's celebration of talents is quite ironic to attentive readers, since they're mostly failures at their respective professions. Crawford is a drunk, O'Molloy is broke, and there's no evidence that Lenehan has a job at all. The only person they mention who is successful is Molly, and they seem to appreciate her more as a sex object than a singer. (At least, Lenehan does—his joke is a reference to sex.)

Crawford asks Stephen to try writing something for the paper. He thinks Stephen could "paralyse Europe" with something inventive, like how the journalist Ignatius Gallaher sent encoded information to New York about the 1881 Phoenix Park murders committed by the invincibles (a group of Irish nationalists). The phone rings, and MacHugh answers: it's Bloom, calling for Crawford. But Crawford asks MacHugh to pass on a message: "Tell him to go to hell." The newspapermen continue reminiscing about the Phoenix Park case, remembering how a noblewoman accidentally bought a postcard commemorating one of the murderers, right outside a government building. Crawford concludes that Ireland's reporters are deteriorating as much as its legal system.

Unlike virtually everyone Stephen has met so far, Crawford genuinely believes in him. But since Stephen considers himself an artist, he is more likely to look for fulfillment elsewhere. Of course, readers might find it frustrating that Stephen doesn't particularly care about journalism, while Crawford clearly doesn't believe in Bloom, who does. *(He fantasized about getting into the paper while reading* Titbits *in the morning—and, of course, he wants to get Keyes's ad published.) Thus, Stephen is wanted somewhere he doesn't belong, and Bloom isn't wanted where he thinks he belongs. Crawford's references to hidden and garbled communication—his commentary on Gallagher's cryptic messages and the noblewoman with the postcard—are obvious references to Joyce's own method. In particular, they're commentaries on his propensity to give away important symbols and even plot points through code rather than direct narration, and also on his use of miscommunication for comic and narrative effect. Of course, they're also concrete examples of how journalism can make a political impact—which is ironic, as the journalists themselves don't seem to be doing much of anything about the current political situation (except Nannetti, who isn't even in the room anymore).*

Stephen's mind drifts to his poetry, and then to some rhyming Italian lines from Dante. O'Molloy insists that Ireland still has excellent jurists, like Seymour Bushe, who defended the accused in the Childs murder case. This case reminds Stephen of the scene in *Hamlet* when the king's ghost explains how he was murdered. O'Molloy strikes a match and lights his cigar. (Thinking in retrospect, Stephen remarks that this action—striking the match—was far more important than it initially seemed.) O'Molloy recites Seymour Bushe's greatest line from the trial, a convoluted explanation of the ancient laws of evidence, then he asks if Stephen likes the line, but Stephen just blushes and takes a cigarette instead. O'Molloy remarks that he chatted with Professor Magennis about Stephen, who apparently asked a visiting American researcher about Madame Blavatsky's theosophists. Stephen wants to ask what Magennis said, but he knows he shouldn't.

Seymour Bushe's defense, the scene with King Hamlet's ghost, and Stephen's remark about O'Molloy striking the match all have one important thing in common: they deal with the difference between knowing about the present and knowing retrospectively about the past (when it's possible to understand events better, but no longer possible to change them). Legal defenses are about arranging the events of the past into a persuasive narrative; Hamlet's ghost mysteriously knows how he was killed (even if Stephen can't figure out why); and a future Stephen interjects to point out that O'Molloy's match only became significant far later. In other words, the meaning of events is only ever decided after the fact. Of course, Joyce also follows this rule in his novel—Stephen's interjection from the future is a clear example of it. Stephen's response to Bushe's line suggests that he isn't actually impressed—and, by extension, that O'Molloy doesn't have particularly good literary taste. As a result, when O'Molloy immediately starts praising Stephen, it doesn't count for much to him (he's far more interested in what Professor Magennis said).

MacHugh interrupts to declare that John F. Taylor gave the best speech he ever saw in a debate over reviving the Irish language. In fact, MacHugh knows the speech by heart, and he recites it. Taylor compares England's domination over the Irish to the way the Egyptians tried to force their language, culture, and rule on the Israelites, who managed to escape bondage by following Moses's lead. But O'Molloy laments that Moses "died without having entered the land of promise." Similarly, Stephen thinks that Taylor's speech was ultimately "gone with the wind," turned into "dead noise" by the course of history.

Keeping with the theme of retrospectively assessing the past, MacHugh adds another historical parallel to his previous argument that England is like Rome and Ireland is like Greece: England is also like Egypt, and Ireland is also like Israel. Patterns from history repeat themselves. Moses, who saved the Israelites from conquest, becomes a metaphor for the kind of spiritual and cultural leader that both Bloom and Stephen imagine being for Ireland. (Joyce's point is in part that most people wish they could be a hero and save the world.) But Stephen rejects Taylor's speech because of his despairing view of history as a process of bitter and unforgiving destruction, in which the sterile but powerful win out over the inspired and creative but weak.

Stephen asks the men if it isn't time to depart, and the group agrees to go for a drink at Mooney's pub. As the newsboys run into the office with news from the races, Stephen realizes, "I have much, much to learn." He starts telling MacHugh about the story he's hoping to write under the headlines "Dear Dirty Dublin" and "Life on the Raw." Stephen imagines two elderly virgins who save up their money so that they can see Dublin from atop Nelson's pillar. They bring 24 plums as a snack, but they're unprepared for the long walk up the pillar. The women, who are Florence MacCabe and Anne Kearns, struggle to climb the stairs.

Stephen has a rare moment of humility when he realizes that he's still young and has plenty more to learn in his life, but then he swings back in the other direction by boldly proposing his extremely obscure parable to the newsmen. The women in his story are the midwives from Sandymount Strand in episode three, and by making them into virgins, Stephen turns them from symbols of fertility into symbols of purity. Their climb up Nelson's pillar (which symbolizes British imperialism) is a quest to capture the right kind of perspective on Ireland—which may be the bird's eye view that Joyce takes in episode ten, or perhaps the nationalists' proud, independent view of their country.

A flurry of activity interrupts Stephen's story—the newsboys have more updates from the Ascot Gold Cup horseraces. Leopold Bloom also returns to the office. He tells Crawford that Keyes will run his ad for two months, if the *Telegraph* is willing to publish a paragraph about his business. Crawford matter-of-factly says that Keyes can "kiss [his] arse," and Bloom replies with confusion and disappointment before Crawford repeats what he said. Crawford also rejects J.J. O'Molloy's request for a loan.

Notably, this is the first time that Bloom and Stephen are in the same room. The frantic bustle that dominates this episode comes back to interrupt Stephen. Ultimately, Crawford crushes Bloom's hopes for no clear reason—he seems to have just been acting on a whim. This speaks to the role of fate and frustration in both Ulysses *and in epics like the* Odyssey*: there are certain vitally important things that people simply never can or will control in their lives.*

MacHugh mentions Stephen's story to Crawford, which gives Stephen a chance to finish telling it. The two elderly virgins hurt their necks looking at the statue of the "onehanded adulterer" Nelson atop the pillar. Then, they eat their plums and spit them out over the edge of the railing. MacHugh compares Stephen to the Greek philosopher Antisthenes, who gave "the palm of beauty [...] to poor Penelope."

The end of Stephen's story appears to be a metaphor for British oppression. The twenty-four plums are likely a reference to the "four and twenty blackbirds" who fly out of a pie in the nursery rhyme "Sing a Song of Sixpence." By spitting out the pits and making them fly down to the street, the women invert the nursery rhyme's meaning: flight comes to signify failure, not freedom. The reference to Penelope and the palm of beauty is a clear reference to Molly Bloom (whose soliloquy at the end of the novel is called "Penelope"). By linking her to Stephen, MacHugh foreshadows the end of the novel, when both Molly and Leopold Bloom start to imagine Stephen as a kind of sexual mediator for them.

On their way to the pub, the men pass the busy tram lines next to Nelson's pillar, but the cars aren't running because of a short circuit. Crawford admits that he doesn't understand Stephen's story, but MacHugh proposes a Latin name for it. Stephen prefers "*A Pisgah Sight of Palestine* or *The Parable of the Plums*." O'Molloy looks up at the pillar and smiles at Stephen's idea that Nelson is a "onehanded adulterer."

The stalled cars represent another frustrating failure, much like Bloom's failure to sell the ad or the sexual frustration that ends Stephen's parable. Indeed, his parable's titles reference this: a "Pisgah sight" means a vision that will not be achieved. Where the "onehanded adulterer" Nelson was supposed to take the women's virginity, they end up spitting out plum-stones instead. This contrasts with the other important plum in Ulysses*: Plumtree's Potted Meat. According to its terrible advertisement, Plumtree makes a home complete. Moreover, it's a proudly Irish-made product, which represents nationalists' industrial ambitions. And of course, in Joyce's Ireland,* potting the meat *was also slang for having sex. Stephen's plum-stones signify the opposite: an unhappy family, national stagnation, and sexual frustration.*

EPISODE 8: LESTRYGONIANS

Leopold Bloom passes a candy shop, and then a YMCA man gives him a pamphlet announcing that "Elijah is coming"—the evangelist John Alexander Dowie is coming to Dublin. Bloom thinks these new churches are a scheme to make money—he remembers how one company sold glowing crucifixes, which reminds him of the color of a can of codfish he opened one night in Spain. He notices Stephen Dedalus's sister outside an auction house and assumes that the family is selling its furniture. Bloom wonders how the fifteen children are surviving without their mother, and he laments how well-heeled Catholic priests irresponsibly encourage women to have large families. He notes that Stephen's sister is wearing old clothes and looks malnourished.

In the Odyssey, *the Lestrygonians are a tribe of cannibals who attack Odysseus and his crew. This is the basis for this episode's frequent references to food, starting with the reference to codfish in this scene. The YMCA man's pamphlet clearly predicts the second coming, a motif that gets attached to both Bloom and Stephen at the end of the novel. Bloom is justifiably suspicious of John Alexander Dowie, as he's seen too many convenient marriages between the religious traditions of the past and the profit motive of late 19th and early 20th century consumer society. He also gives the reader important context about the Dedalus family's socioeconomic situation—which certainly helps explain Stephen's resentment towards his father and general feeling of social alienation.*

While crossing a bridge, Bloom notices a barge carrying beer for export to England, and he remembers how rats frequently fall into the brewery vats. He watches hungry seagulls flying over the river and remembers the story of Reuben J's son, who fell inside. He throws the religious pamphlet down into the water, thinking the gulls might mistake it for food, but they don't. Bloom buys two cakes from an apple stall and tosses them to the gulls, who devour them immediately. He reflects on their diet of fish and wonders what swan tastes like.

This passage recalls the beginning of "Calypso," as Bloom returns to two of his favorite topics: food and animals. He again displays his kindness towards animals by tossing the gulls some cake, but he flips this kindness on its head when he starts to imagine eating swans. This contradiction—the fact that Bloom both adores and savagely devours animals—illuminates the way that base, animalistic urges are really the foundation of "civilized" society. When the gulls don't take the bait and eat the pamphlet, this suggests that they are smarter than people, who fall for false prophets like Dowie.

Bloom notices an ad for trousers plastered on a boat in the river, and he's impressed by the clever strategy. He remembers how quack doctors advertised STI treatments in public urinals. Mysteriously, Bloom asks himself, "If he…?," but concludes, "No, no." He passes a public clock, remembers reading about astronomy, and reflects on the concept of "parallax," which he never fully understood. He remembers Molly asking about "met him pike hoses" (metempsychosis) and remarking, "O rocks!"

Unsurprisingly, ads are one of the first things to catch Bloom's eye: he's constantly looking for ways to improve his business. By mysteriously asking "If he…?," Bloom seems to be considering the possibility that Blazes Boylan will have a STI. The concept of "parallax" is incredibly important in this novel: it refers to the way that two different observers see the same object as located in different places. This is a metaphor for Joyce's approach to narration in Ulysses: *he gives different perspectives on the same thing in order to build a richer composite picture. Bloom also returns to another key concept, metempsychosis (a difficult word which Molly sounded out as "met him pike hoses"). Although the technical explanation is extremely complicated, both parallax and metempsychosis offer answers to the question of how things can change over time. In turn, this hints at the fundamental question that haunts Bloom throughout the novel: how can he overcome his sterile relationship with Molly and create a bloodline?*

Bloom sees five men wearing boards and hats to advertise Hely's stationery company, where he used to work. He remarks that this is an inefficient and ineffective way to advertise—his own proposals were better, but Hely was too stubborn to consider them. Plus, Bloom hated his job collecting payments from nuns for Hely. But he was happier then, since he'd just married Molly and had Milly. He reminisces about old acquaintances.

Bloom's resentment at Hely's backwards advertising techniques again indicates that other men don't recognize or appreciate his good ideas. He also clearly acknowledges to the reader that he has fallen into a rut—especially since Rudy's death, a few years after Milly was born. He is constantly searching for a way to reverse the course of history and return to this happier (although imperfect) past. One way is through memory, an another is by creating a better future.

Bloom runs into Mrs. Breen, a baker and his ex-girlfriend. They exchange pleasantries, and Bloom explains that he has just come from Dignam's funeral. He asks about Mrs. Breen's husband, and Mrs. Breen replies that he's busy suing someone for libel over a postcard he received that reads, "U.P." Confused, Bloom examines Breen's shabby clothes and aging face. He asks about another acquaintance, Mrs. Purefoy—but he accidentally says "Beaufoy" instead. Breen explains that Purefoy is in the hospital after a difficult birth. An eccentric man named Cashel Boyle O'Connor Fitzmaurice Tisdall Farrell walks by, reminding Breen of her husband Denis. She sees Denis ahead and runs off to meet him. Bloom walks on, speculating about who might have sent Denis the cryptic postcard.

Mrs. Breen (formerly Josie Powell) also represents Bloom's nostalgia for the past. And Bloom can tell that he certainly represents a better past for her, because she has had far worse luck in her marriage than he has. While they both secretly yearn to turn back the clock and choose each other instead of their eventual spouses, they know that, tragically, they cannot. Like Cashel Farrell's funny walk, the lunatic Denis Breen adds another quirky, humorous, but ultimately inconsequential Joycean mystery to the novel. The reader will never learn who sent the "U.P." postcard or what it means. One possibility is that it's toilet humor ("you pee" or "you pee up[wards]"). Another is that his time is "up" (he's spent or run out). A third is that it's a meaningless message planted to mess with the unstable Breen (and the reader). In contrast, Mrs. Purefoy is extremely important to the novel as a plot point and symbol (even though she never actually appears). She becomes the central focus of episode fourteen, and her name speaks to her symbolic association with purity and the Virgin Mary. Of course, it's telling that her latest birth comes up in Bloom and Breen's conversation: this points to the children that they could have had if they stayed together.

Bloom walks past the *Irish Times* office and remembers the ad he put out, "Wanted, smart lady typist to aid gentleman in literary work." This is how he met Martha. He reflects on the *Times*'s successful ad page and thinks about a series of women: Lady Mountcashel, who goes fox-hunting like a man; the elegant woman he saw get into a carriage earlier in the morning; and Miriam Dandrade, who sold him her old underwear. Bloom thinks about Mrs. Purefoy's husband, an old Protestant who keeps a rigid schedule, and her numerous children. He imagines Purefoy's agonizing pain during childbirth and wonders why the government doesn't invest in medicine for them (and small pensions for children). He remembers Molly's pregnancy and thinks about dedicated midwives and doctors.

It's telling that Bloom met Martha based on an ad looking for help with "literary work." This speaks to Bloom's prudence and his aspiration to participate in sophisticated highbrow culture, but it suggests that this aspiration is really just a fantasy motivated by more animalistic desires for lowbrow goals like sex and status. It also comments on the way Joyce believes smut, newspaper ads, and cheap romantic letters can still be valuable "literary work." Bloom's disapproval of Purefoy's large family is at least partially ironic, because Bloom secretly yearns to have more children. This disapproval also echoes his criticism of the Dedalus family. While the Purefoys' clocklike, stereotypically Protestant regularity contrasts with the Dedaluses' chaotic, typically Catholic disorganization, both families end up making the same mistakes. As always, Bloom's political opinions are unmistakably modern: where he blames religion for Ireland's problems, he sees modern technology (birth control and family planning) as the solution.

Pigeons fly by the Irish parliament, defecating on passersby, and a group of policemen walks past after finishing their lunch. Bloom recalls once watching a group of policemen beat up young students during a demonstration. But he notes how easily people change sides: rebellious students become loyal civil servants, some activists are really spies, and others accidentally give away their plans. He thinks about how politics is really based on people meeting in teahouses and dinner parties, persuading each other with hospitality.

By having Bloom feed the seagulls at the beginning of the episode, Joyce sets up a clear link between birds and his protagonist. Therefore, when the birds poop on the Irish parliament and police, this is a witty metaphor for Bloom's feelings about his country's dysfunctional government. The problem, he sees, is that even politically idealistic people don't put the national interest before their self-interest. (Of course, Bloom himself is no exception, as the reader will learn in "Circe" when he governs Ireland in a fantasy.) His thoughts on hospitality echo the Odyssey*'s emphasis on* xenia *(hospitality towards foreigners through ritualized gift exchanges), and especially the way the Lestrygonians betray it by eating their guests.*

As Dublin mechanically goes about its business around him, Bloom starts to think about all the people who are born and die every second and all the buildings being built, bought, and sold in cities throughout the world. He realizes that "no-one is anything" and starts to feel sick. Then, Bloom suddenly passes Charles Parnell's brother John on the street. The poet George Russell cycles past with a woman. The coincidence of seeing another famous person astonishes Bloom, who goes on to criticize literary people's vegetarianism, poor fashion sense, and "dreamy, cloudy, symbolistic" thinking.

Bloom boomerangs from curiosity into existential angst and then back again. This is revealing about his character and his fundamental purpose in the novel. He starts to feel depressed when he considers the world's vastness and repetitiveness, which makes his individual life seem tiny and insignificant by comparison. "No-one is anything" is a classic statement of the meaninglessness of the universe, but it depends on the idea that meaning comes from people's identity. *Thus, Bloom seeks to define his identity in order to make his life meaningful. But he* also *wants to create something new throughout the novel (especially because he yearns for a complete family, which means a son). He therefore gets caught in a kind of tug-of-war between these competing forces: the comforting pull of fixed, certain, identity and the exciting push towards creating something new. So does Stephen. By critiquing the Irish literary establishment, Bloom hints at the way Stephen will try to define his own identity in the following episode. But he also communicates Joyce's dissatisfaction with other Irish poets. Moreover, when he critiques "dreamy, cloudy, symbolistic" literature, Bloom also makes a point about the way that he intends on defining his identity: through action, not thought. As the reader will learn in the next episode, Stephen is planning the opposite. That's why this episode focuses on the body (or action) and the next episode focuses on the mind (or thought).*

Bloom looks in an optician's window and remembers that he has to fix his glasses. He looks across the street at a clock to test his lenses, and he realizes he can't make it out; he tries covering up the sun with his finger, which leads him to think about meeting Professor Joly to ask what parallax means. He gives up, figuring that astronomy is really just about stars and planets doing the same thing over and over.

Bloom builds on his philosophical reflection about the nature of identity and change. Whereas concepts like metempsychosis and parallax indicate that identities are subjective and ever-changing, Bloom wants a more solid sense of identity to hang his hat on. His interest in astronomy, the oldest and most mathematically precise of the sciences, illustrates the rational, prudent way that he tries to understand the universe and his place in it. This correspondence between astronomy and Bloom's search for meaning recurs throughout the book. So does the pun between the "sun" and the "son" (when Bloom covers up the sun, he's thinking about his fate as a man without a son).

Bloom thinks about a pair of lovers walking together under the full moon, but he quickly forces himself to stop thinking about this scene. He's distracted by the sight of Bob Doran on his once-a-year drinking bender. In the early years of his marriage, he and Molly were happier. But he admits that Molly "could never like it again after Rudy," and he starts to think about Martha's letter. Bloom looks around at the textile shop windows and considers buying Molly a pincushion, but decides against it.

The lovers remind Bloom of his own marital troubles, and Bob Doran's binge drinking again shows how people can self-destruct when they get too fixated on what could have been. (Dubliners *includes Bob Doran's backstory: he drinks because of an unhappy marriage, too.) Bloom can't manage to keep his mind off his family, and he hints that Rudy's death also ended his sex life with Molly. This makes it all the more clear that his desire for happiness, sex, and a son are all linked. They all fundamentally depend on his relationship to Molly.*

Feeling hungry for both food and "warm human plumpness," Bloom goes to Burton's restaurant. But at the sight of unkempt men aggressively devouring their food, he decides to go to Davy Byrne's instead. He imagines a dystopian world in which everyone has to fight over food from a "communal kitchen," and he starts to think that the vegetarians might have a point.

In Bloom's mind, phrases like "warm human plumpness" almost always represent Molly. Thus, he's turning to food in an attempt to indirectly satisfy his desire for love, sex, happiness, family, identity, and belonging. But he gets the opposite of what he's looking for when he sees men chomping on animal parts like primitive beasts. This scene is a direct a nod to the Lestrygonians in the Odyssey *and the first line of "Calypso," which reads, "Mr Leopold Bloom ate with relish the inner organs of beasts and fowls."*

At Davy Byrne's, Bloom thinks about fish, **Plumtree's Potted Meat**, Dignam, cannibalism, Kosher laws, and animal slaughter, then he decides to order a cheese sandwich and some wine. Another patron, Nosey Flynn, asks about Molly. Bloom explains that she's going on tour, and Flynn asks, "Isn't Blazes Boylan mixed up in it?" Bloom panics, checks the time (2 PM), and gulps down his wine before calmly responding yes. He realizes that Flynn is too stupid to be making a point about Boylan. Nosey Flynn asks Davy Byrne for tips about the Ascot Gold Cup horseraces, but Byrne says he's not a gambler. While Bloom enjoys his simple, clean lunch, Flynn goes on about Lenehan's tips and the money he could have won. Bloom decides not to warn him that Lenehan was wrong today.

The inhumanity of meat-eating pushes Bloom to have a vegetarian lunch. He's temporarily relieved, but then Nosey Flynn's question about Boylan reminds him of everything he was dreading just a few paragraphs before (meaninglessness, meat, and his decaying relationship with his wife). Nosey Flynn's name practically announces that he's a gossip. It's significant that his next conversation topic is the Ascot Gold Cup race because, by this point in the novel, the race is a clear metaphor for Bloom and Boylan's competition for Molly's heart and bed.

No longer hungry, Bloom starts to think about "the odd things people pick up for food," ranging from canned fish and oysters to Chinese century eggs and aristocrats' stuffed geese. He sees two flies on the window and starts to remember the early days of his marriage, when he and Molly joyously laid together, kissing. The oak bar reminds him of women's curves, and he starts thinking about statues of goddesses in the museum, which represent an immortal ideal of beauty (unlike people, who spend their lives "stuffing food in one hole and [letting it] out behind").

Joyce again shows off his wide-ranging knowledge in Bloom's rich and entertaining monologue about food. Bloom's memory of Molly recurs in an important form at the very end of the novel, when it also represents marital bliss and fulfillment. But Bloom's interest in the museum statues (and specifically whether they have genitals) is a mirror image of his interest in his wife. Molly is a living, breathing, changing woman—which is why she may no longer love him—while the statues are frozen and immortal. The choice between Molly and the statues is another reflection of the dilemma that Bloom has faced throughout this episode. This could be seen as the choice between change and immobility, human and inhuman, fertility and sterility, or universal and particular.

While Bloom goes out to the yard to relieve his full bladder, Davy Byrne asks Nosey Flynn who Bloom is and why he's in mourning. Flynn says that Bloom is an ad canvasser for the *Freeman* and announces that he's definitely not mourning for Molly, who is alive and well. Flynn doesn't think Bloom can make a good living just by selling ads, so he suggests that Bloom might have help from the "ancient free and accepted order." Flynn and Byrne agree that Bloom is prudent and disciplined: he doesn't drink too much, he sometimes helps the less fortunate, and he never signs his name on legal documents.

While the reader has total access to Bloom's complex interior life, this scene is a reminder that the people around Bloom have no idea what he's thinking. In other words, Byrne and Flynn's chat highlights the vast difference between knowing about someone through literature and meeting someone in real life. They suggest that Bloom is a member of the Freemasons, but the reader will never know for sure. Still, their suspicion that he's party to an extensive, secret conspiracy is obviously anti-Semitic.

Paddy Leonard, Bantam Lyons, and Tom Rochford enter Davy Byrne's and start chatting with Nosey Flynn. When Bloom walks out of the pub, Lyons tells the other men that Bloom gave him a faulty tip for the Ascot Gold Cup horserace.

In a turn of bad luck, Bloom's chance encounter with Lyons at the end of "Lotus Eaters" comes back to bite him. Lyons is convinced that Bloom was telling him to bet on "Throwaway," when Bloom was really saying that he was about to "throw away" his newspaper. Lyons sees that Throwaway is the long shot, so he assumes that Bloom has nefarious intentions. There is clearly a subtext of anti-Semitism underlying this interaction, and this again reveals how Bloom's religion leaves him mistreated and excluded in Dublin society.

As Bloom walks down the street, he watches a dog choke and then eat its half-digested food, and he hums "Là ci darem." Calculating his income, he thinks about buying Molly a silk petticoat—or, better yet, taking her on a tour of England. He passes a Protestant bookstore and thinks about how Protestants used to offer starving people food if they were willing to convert.

The dog is another joke about food and, specifically, about the fact that Bloom has only partially digested his lunch. When Bloom thinks about "Là ci darem," Molly's petticoats, and taking a tour with her (like Boylan is taking her to Belfast), this clearly shows that his mind is drifting back toward the subject of Molly's infidelity. The Protestants are connected to both England (where Bloom wants to take Molly) and this theme of Molly's betrayal, as they dress up a bribe to pretend that it's charity.

Bloom helps a blind man cross the street and points him the way to his destination. He starts to wonder how blind people manage to navigate Dublin, and he asks himself if their other senses really are stronger. How do blind men perceive women, Bloom asks himself, if they can't actually see them? He tries to imagine it by touching his own cheek and then his belly. He wonders if reincarnation can explain the seeming injustice that some people are simply born blind. Bloom sees Sir Frederick Falkiner, a judge, walking into the freemasons' lodge. He imagines Falkiner punishing the guilty, like Reuben J, whom Bloom considers a real "dirty jew." Bloom also passes a placard announcing a fundraiser for Mercer Hospital, the location of the first performance of Handel's *Messiah*.

Unlike the Protestants he's just referenced, Bloom's acts of kindness are truly spontaneous. After generously going out of his way to help the blind man, Bloom also starts to empathize with the man and imagine his radically different perception of the world. (Stephen reached similar conclusions at the beginning of episode three, but only because of his abstract philosophical interest in the topic.) Even though he doesn't know what "parallax" means, Bloom is using it right here, when his curiosity leads him to consider differing perspectives on the same thing. He also returns to metempsychosis when he considers reincarnation as a solution to injustice and tragic fate. This is an appealing idea for him, since it means that justice is built into the very cycle of life, without the need for a God-like judge. Of course, the novel quickly returns to Christian imagery when it juxtaposes the guilty "dirty jew" Reuben J. Dodd with a reference to Handel's Messiah, *which is about Christ.*

Suddenly, Bloom sees someone in tan shoes and a straw hat. "It is," he repeats to himself, and he turns into the museum to avoid the man. He wonders if the man saw him, and he notices his heart beating wildly. In order to look like he's busy doing something, he starts digging around randomly in his pockets, until he finds his bar of soap.

Bloom is looking at Blazes Boylan. His extreme anxiety reflects his desire to avoid confronting the truth about Molly's adultery. The soap serves as a kind of talisman or shield that protects Bloom, as though it could wash away the stain of infidelity. Tellingly, Bloom called Ruben J. Dodd a "dirty jew" less than a page before—this suggests that the soap is associated with Bloom's need to feel "clean," or socially accepted. Like his sexual interest in the museum statues, this obsession with cleanliness also clearly represents Bloom's affinity for the sterilized, controlled, predictable routine of his life in the modern city.

EPISODE 9: SCYLLA AND CHARYBDIS

In the Irish National Library, the Quaker librarian William Lyster praises Goethe's commentary on Hamlet in his novel *Wilhelm Meister*. Stephen Dedalus mocks Lyster's obvious remarks, and in turn, librarian John Eglinton mocks Stephen's ego by suggesting that he views himself as another Milton or Shakespeare. The poet George Russell comments that authors' biographies and correspondences with their characters are irrelevant: what's really important is how art expresses "eternal wisdom." Stephen disagrees, referencing a long list of prominent scholars and concluding that "the life esoteric is not for ordinary person." Stephen explains that he considers Aristotle superior to Plato, but Eglinton takes the opposite view.

In the Odyssey, *Scylla is a sea-monster and Charybdis is a dangerous whirlpool. Odysseus has to carefully navigate between them. These opposite dangers are a metaphor for Stephen's struggle to cope with many of the same dilemmas that Bloom faced in "Lestrygonians," like identity versus change and the universe versus the individual. Lyster and Eglinton voice the literary establishment's conventional view that literature is a reflection of a specific time and place, while George Russell takes the opposite view in the dilemma by viewing literature as a universal expression of "eternal wisdom." In Stephen's quest to become an artist, he has to find a way to split the difference between these two worldviews, just like Odysseus had to navigate between Scylla and Charybdis. (The views are Eglinton and Lyster's, on the one hand, and Russell's, on the other.) Namely, Stephen has to figure out how he can make art that both represents his individual genius and transcends his individuality to engage eternal truths. Of course, Joyce was asking the same question about combining the universal and the particular when he wrote* Ulysses. *His answer is to embody universal themes through an extremely particular, local portrait of a few men in one city. In other words, he firmly believes that normal people contain all the wisdom and beauty of the universe within them.*

While Stephen mentally prepares his arguments, another librarian, Mr. Best, reports that Haines has left to go buy a book of Irish folk poetry. Russell argues that common people are the true source of all meaningful artistic and political movements, and Best comments on the French poet Mallarmé's commentary on *Hamlet*, which leads the conversation to Stephen's theory about the play, and specifically the identity of King Hamlet's ghost.

Stephen is about to present the analysis of Hamlet *that Buck Mulligan and Haines were chatting about in "Telemachus." Ironically, however, Haines isn't present—even though he was the one who wanted to hear Stephen's theory. Russell's comment about the source of true art revives the questions about true Irish identity from the beginning of the book: are rural farmers more "purely" Irish than highly-educated Dubliners like Stephen? Does this threaten to compromise the quality of Stephen's art?*

Recalling how Shakespeare played the role of King Hamlet's ghost during productions of *Hamlet*, Stephen asks if he might not have really been speaking to his son Hamnet, who died as a boy just before Shakespeare wrote the play. Russell objects that the "the family life of a great man" is irrelevant to the man's "immortal" works. Stephen feels conflicted, as he remembers that Russell loaned him money. He nearly convinces himself that he shouldn't have to pay it back, since all the molecules in his body have changed since he took the loan five months ago.

With his idea that Shakespeare's son inspired Hamlet, Stephen asserts that artists' work is a mirror of their lives. He also returns to the questions that were occupying him during "Proteus" and Bloom during "Lestrygonians": paternity, descent, change, and identity. Of course, the death of Shakespeare's young son directly corresponds with the death of Rudy, Leopold Bloom's young son. The motif of the father and the son also has religious resonances with God and Jesus Christ. All of Stephen's ideas about Shakespeare are therefore also comments on fatherhood more generally. This means that Stephen's theories have important implications for Bloom's anxieties about fatherhood, Stephen's anxieties about his own father, and Stephen's desire to create a work of art. Russell once again asserts that art's value must be totally independent of its creator. Not only is the artist's life totally irrelevant to the work they produce, Russell thinks, but it's wrong to even ask about it. Obviously, Joyce firmly rejects this idea, because Stephen Dedalus is just a slightly fictionalized version of Joyce himself.

Eglinton insists that Ann Hathaway, Shakespeare's wife, has no literary significance and was merely "a mistake" in the man's life. But Stephen disagrees: he thinks she clearly influenced Shakespeare, even if he spent most of his life living away from her in London. In fact, Stephen thinks that the older Ann Hathaway probably seduced Shakespeare.

Shakespeare's family continues to look just like Bloom's: just like the discussion of Shakespeare's son also answers questions about Bloom's relationship with his dead son Rudy, the discussion of Ann Hathaway clearly evokes Molly Bloom, who is also emotionally estranged from her husband. (By giving Molly the last word in Ulysses, *Joyce clearly takes a stand on Eglinton's point: Molly absolutely has literary merit and significance.)*

Russell comments that he has to leave, then tells Eglinton that he won't be able to make it to the party they're both supposed to attend that night. Stephen thinks of Eastern mysticism and a whirlpool engulfing people's souls. Lyster asks Russell about his upcoming anthology of young Irish poets' work, and Stephen anxiously listens to their conversation about the Dublin literary scene. Stephen politely asks Russell to pass on Deasy's letter about foot and mouth disease, and Russell goes out.

Stephen's mental image of a whirlpool directly refers to Charybdis, the whirlpool from the Odyssey. *Although he views himself as a poet, Stephen is neither invited to the party nor included in Russell's anthology. Apparently, the literary men around him do not take him nearly as seriously as he takes himself. Like Bloom in "Aeolus," Stephen is basically excluded from the profession he dreams of joining, and he can't do anything about it. On an even more humiliating note, he presents Russell with Mr. Deasy's letter instead of his own work. While he dreams of becoming a respected artist, Stephen is reduced to peddling someone else's second-rate writing.*

Lyster again asks Stephen about his "illuminating" theories of Shakespeare. Stephen thinks that Ann Hathaway betrayed Shakespeare, and he ponders the importance of academic debates about "what might have been." Eglinton and Best agree that Shakespeare's personal life was a great mystery and *Hamlet* was somehow a shadow of this life. Eglinton tells Stephen it'll be difficult to convince him that Shakespeare identifies with Hamlet's father, not Hamlet himself. Stephen argues that artists "weave and unweave" meaning in their work: they fixate on specific moments and images, which take on new meanings. One important example of this is the identity of the self, which is both the same and different between the past, present, and future.

Although he is passionately attached to his theory about Shakespeare, Stephen also starts to question its value. He understands that he is really just speculating about settled events from the past. Rather than presenting his theory because he genuinely thinks he's right, Stephen seems to be driven by his sense of vanity, desire for social status, and need to process his estrangement from his father. Joyce also subtly explains his authorial strategy through Stephen's commentary on the use of symbols and imagery in art: rather than having fixed correspondences, his symbols take on a range of meanings in order to create connections among otherwise disconnected ideas. Stephen returns to one of the novel's central questions: the nature of identity, or how it is that people can both remain the same and change over time.

Eglinton and Best agree that Shakespeare's later plays show a sense of reconciliation. Stephen argues that this points to how severe Shakespeare's problems were in the middle of his life, when he wrote darker works like *Hamlet*, *Othello*, and *King Lear*. Eglinton thinks this eccentric theory is wrong and argues the conventional critics are right.

Stephen again looks for clues to Shakespeare's life in his plays, but readers might think he is weighting Shakespeare's biography too heavily as a factor in his work. Although Eglinton's defense of the conventional theories may seem boring, it's worth remembering that 22-year-old Stephen is fighting a lonely battle against centuries of careful scholarship.

Stephen strongly disagrees with Eglinton. He argues that Shakespeare found some resolution to his troubles in his final period because of the birth of his granddaughter, and that different women characters in his late plays symbolically represent her. Stephen believes that Shakespeare's genius led him to believe in himself, but he lost this confidence when Ann Hathaway seduced him in a ryefield, which made him feel like a loser and which he could never overcome. But much like King Hamlet, who was killed in his sleep, Shakespeare never fully understood what happened to him—instead, as he constantly reflects on his own past in his plays, the real meaning reveals itself to his readers. Hence, he becomes a ghost of his past self, like the ghost of King Hamlet.

While Bloom links his troubles to not having a son, Stephen suggests that Shakespeare resolved his troubles by having a granddaughter. Like Stephen's idea of the umbilical cord phone network in "Proteus," this involves switching from a paternalistic concept of family and fulfillment to one based on maternity. When Stephen suggests that Shakespeare covertly exposes his life to his readers through his plays without meaning it, he's suggesting that an artist's life is so inseparable from their art that all good literary criticism is really also biography. Of course, this is significant for Ulysses*, since Stephen Dedalus is really just James Joyce's younger self. It's notable that Stephen believes artists cannot truly understand what their work means, as this real meaning is only discernible in retrospect—this implies that Joyce's readers will determine the meaning of his work. Of course, it's also a reference to the way Joyce deliberately delays the reader's gratification in Ulysses by leaving out essential details for understanding events until long after they happen. (For instance, the reader doesn't fully learn about Stephen's family's poverty until the sixth episode.) Finally, the details of Ann Hathaway seducing Shakespeare in a field closely resemble the scene of conjugal bliss that Bloom recalled with Molly—but when this scene recurs later at the end of the book, it becomes clear that it has the opposite meaning. It represents true love, not deception.*

Buck Mulligan suddenly arrives at the library, announcing his entrance with an "Amen!" As Buck mocks Stephen's serious demeanor, Stephen mocks Buck's lighthearted entrance, thinking about the Christian God who apparently sent Himself down to Earth, was killed by His own creations, resurrected Himself, and then went to Heaven to judge people. The musical notation for a hymn interrupts the text. Lyster asks Buck about his own thoughts on Shakespeare, and Buck jokes that he thinks he's heard of the man. The librarians debate other theories about Shakespeare, such as Oscar Wilde's theory that a man named Willie Hughes really wrote the sonnets. Stephen's mind drifts to drinking, overspending, and women—specifically, Eve and the serpent.

Buck Mulligan again chooses the worst possible moment to step in with his comic relief—just like he mocked Stephen's grief in the opening scene, here he mocks Stephen's Hamlet theory right when he's about to finish it. Stephen responds blasphemously, by comparing Buck's foolishness to the God who managed to get Himself killed on Earth. But whenever Joyce mentions God, he's also talking about the artist as creator. Stephen's story also describes Joyce writing himself (Stephen) into this scene and then watching the other characters abuse him. In turn, it's fair to assume that Stephen is projecting his own experiences and insecurities onto his story about Shakespeare. (This explains why he thinks about drinking, spending, women, and the seducing serpent.)

Buck produces a telegram from Stephen, who sent it in the morning instead of meeting him at the pub, like he promised. Mocking the Irish playwright John Millington Synge, Buck recounts waiting with Haines in the pub, and then he jokes with Stephen that Synge is going to murder him. Stephen thinks about the time he actually met Synge in a Paris café.

Stephen's telegram is one of the many important events on June 16 that Joyce simply skips over the first time around. Like the meaning of art (according to Stephen), such events only become apparent later on, when readers encounter them in retrospect. The Irish playwright Synge is significant because his plays focused on Irish peasants and were often seen as demeaning them. Buck is essentially suggesting that Stephen is a lowlife for standing him up. In 1907, three years after the events of Ulysses *(but well before Joyce wrote it), Synge wrote a controversial play about a man killing his father, which resonates with Stephen's desire to define himself as an independent man with no ties to his father.*

An assistant calls for Mr. Lyster, explaining that a visitor from the *Freeman* is looking for old copies of a newspaper from the town of Kilkenny. While Lyster leaves the office and goes to help the man, Buck Mulligan says that the mysterious visitor is a "sheeny" (an offensive word for Jewish people) and grabs his namecard: "Bloom." Buck comments that he saw Bloom staring at a statue of Aphrodite in the museum, and that Bloom knows Stephen's father.

It's time for the third close call between Stephen and Bloom. (Bloom is looking for the old ad that he's planning to use as the model for Alexander Keyes's ad.) Unsurprisingly, Buck's first reaction is anti-Semitic, and he confirms another event that Joyce hinted at but left out of the main narrative: Bloom actually did go to the museum and check out the statues of women after the end of "Lestrygonians." (In the Odyssey, *the goddess Aphrodite cheated on her husband, so it's significant that she's the one who Bloom was gawking at.)*

Eglinton and Best ask Stephen to continue on with his theory about Ann Hathaway, whom they had always assumed to be "a Penelope stay-at-home." Stephen explains that Shakespeare spent 20 years living lavishly in London, enjoying plenty of fancy food and women. Meanwhile, Stephen argues, Ann Hathaway was busy with other men. As evidence, Stephen cites Shakespeare's sonnets and *Hamlet*, with its emphasis on broken vows. He asks why there is no record of Ann's existence between her marriage and her death, besides her taking a loan from a shepherd. Moreover, in his will, Shakespeare left her nothing but his second-best bed. Eglinton thinks this was just a legal convention, but Stephen insists that Shakespeare omitted his wife's name from the first draft of his will and was wealthy enough to leave her plenty of money (and beds).

The reference to Penelope, Odysseus's wife in the Odyssey, *furthers the parallel between the adulterous wives Ann Hathaway and Molly Bloom (whose soliloquy at the end of the novel makes up an episode called "Penelope"). Of course, Penelope went to great lengths to avoid committing adultery. Shakespeare, Odysseus, and Bloom all take long voyages away from home—Shakespeare spends twenty years in London, Odysseus spends ten years fighting the Trojan War and ten years returning during the Odyssey (also for a total of twenty), and Bloom spends almost twenty hours away from home on June 16. These correspondences clearly set up Bloom as an epic hero and also comment on the way patterns inevitably repeat themselves in literature and history.*

Stephen goes on to argue that Shakespeare was a cruel, manipulative man who ran moneylending scams and shamelessly pandered to public opinion and flattered powerful people with his plays. Eglinton dares him to "prove that [Shakespeare] was a Jew." Stephen offers his proof by absurdly combining St. Thomas Aquinas's views on incest with the assumption that Jewish people are avaricious and frequently intermarry.

As Stephen's theory becomes more and more outlandish, it is obvious that he and Eglinton are playing an intellectual game rather than having an honest debate. This supports the theory that Stephen is really more interested in proving his intelligence than making a compelling point—but it also challenges the reader to think about how much it's reasonable to speculate about characters' and authors' true motivations. In fact, it's possible to interpret this whole episode as Joyce taunting the reader who is looking for deeper meaning in his novel (and especially looking for correspondences with the author's life).

Eglinton insists that Shakespeare would not involve his family in his work. Stephen thinks about Eglinton's own father, an uncultured man from the countryside. Then, Stephen's thoughts drift to his own father greeting him when he returned from Paris to Ireland. Fatherhood is "a necessary evil," Stephen decides, a "mystical estate" that fathers pass down. But it's not a "conscious begetting."

When he calls fatherhood a "mystical estate," Stephen is essentially saying that fatherhood is always an imagined relationship, because men can never prove that they are or are not fathers. (There were no paternity tests in Joyce's day.) Therefore, fatherhood is an example of a "mythical" belief operating in everyday life: it fundamentally depends on a story people tell each other about their relationship, and there is no perfect way to verify that story.

Shakespeare cannot be Prince Hamlet, Stephen says, because his elderly mother cannot be "the lustful queen" and his father Simon cannot be the troubled King's ghost. There is no true natural connection between fathers and sons, Stephen continues, and they are naturally enemies, fighting for control. Stephen thinks that, when their parents and sons die, men act as their own fathers, so when he wrote *Hamlet*, with his father and son both dead, Shakespeare was acting as "the father of all his race." So he wrote his family members into his plays.

In this portion of his theory about fatherhood, Stephen gets into the critical analogies between Hamlet, *Shakespeare, Stephen himself, Bloom, and Jesus Christ. All are fatherless and sonless, in their own differing ways. And they all seek to build their own legacies for the future. So Stephen is asking whether they can break free from the fate their fathers have set out for them and become truly independent, autonomous creators. (This is what he wants to do with his art and Bloom wants to do with his bloodline.)*

In a short passage formatted as a play, Stephen argues that Shakespeare named his two greatest villains after his brothers, Richard and Edmund. He also argues that Shakespeare wrote himself into minor characters. Stephen asks, "What's in a name?" He compares names to the stars under which people are born: they're signs of people's destiny. He starts thinking about his own name and destiny. When Eglinton points out that "Dedalus" is a curious name, Stephen thinks about the Greek myth of the master craftsman Daedalus. Stephen compares his own travels in Paris with the famous story of Icarus, Daedalus's son, who flew too close to the sun, melted the wings his father built for him, and fell to his death in the sea.

The brief change in literary form again pushes the boundaries of the novel, and it also suggests that Stephen is having a brief moment of Shakespearean genius. Like numerous other lines throughout this episode, "What's in a name?" is a direct quote from Shakespeare. Of course, since people's parents choose their names, this represents one aspect of fate that will always tie sons to their fathers. Through Eglinton's comment, Joyce analyzes the symbolism of Stephen's name—again, this is one of the rare moments when Joyce actually makes these connections explicit for the reader. If Stephen represents Icarus in the tale of Daedalus and Icarus, this suggests that he was living out the destiny that his father set up for him—but if he melted the wings his father built for him, this means that he inadvertently throws off his father's influence and becomes autonomous. Finally, when he comments that authors often write themselves into minor characters, Stephen deliberately opens an intriguing question for the reader: where has Joyce written himself in?

Lyster asks Stephen what exactly he's saying about Shakespeare's brothers, but then an attendant calls him away for library business. Stephen explains his theory to Eglinton instead. Shakespeare consistently wrote about adulterous brothers and men being banished from their homes. Eglinton concludes that Stephen thinks Shakespeare is "the ghost and the prince" all at once, and Stephen adds that Shakespeare is part of all of his characters. At the end of his life, he returned home to Stratford and died, and like all men, he truly encountered himself, as people do in Heaven or Hell, when they have to atone for their own actions.

When Eglinton summarizes Stephen's theory, he's referring to "the ghost" of King Hamlet and "the prince" Hamlet. But Stephen takes "the ghost and the prince" further, as a metaphor for Shakespeare representing the trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Ghost) in Hamlet. He is also a ghostlike presence lurking everywhere throughout his work. According to Stephen, this work became a way for Shakespeare to confront his personal problems by proxy, through ideas rather than reality. But he had to finally confront them when it was time for him to go home to his family in Stratford. The theme of homecoming also recurs throughout this novel—it directly refers to Bloom's journey home end in the final episodes (like Odysseus's), but it's also a metaphor for people fulfilling their destiny and achieving self-knowledge.

Buck Mulligan randomly yells out, "*Eureka!*" He explains that God is talking to him and starts writing on a piece of scrap paper. Eglinton asks Stephen if he believes in his own theory about Shakespeare, and Stephen says no. He starts thinking about where the impulse to believe comes from in the first place. Eglinton says that Stephen shouldn't expect to be paid for publishing his theory if he doesn't believe it. Stephen proposes that Eglinton could pay him to publish their conversation as an interview. Buck Mulligan mocks the idea and invites "Kinch" (Stephen) to leave the library with him. Buck promises Eglinton that he'll see him at the party tonight, and he and Stephen walk out, passing the eccentric Cashel Boyle O'Connor Fitzmaurice Tisdall Farrell on the way.

When Stephen admits that he doesn't believe his theory, he also ties this in with a broader rejection of the whole system of Heaven and Hell where he postulated that Shakespeare would end up. Of course, it's also worth asking why he'd come up with such an elaborate theory that he doesn't believe in—the obvious answers are to make money or to prove his own intelligence. Either way, this suggests that he's starting to explore ideas and create art for the wrong reasons (not to capture absolute beauty, which is what he always planned to do). Poverty seems to be getting in his way.

On their way out of the library, Buck sings in amusement and complains about Irish theater, while Stephen keeps thinking about Shakespeare. Standing in the doorway in front of the library, Buck declares that he's started writing an obscene play about masturbation entitled *Everyman His Own Wife, or, A Honeymoon in the Hand*.

Buck's play is in part an elaborate joke on Stephen, whose theorizing about Shakespeare resembled intellectual masturbation more than serious literary criticism, and whose anxieties about fatherhood could be resolved if people just masturbated instead of having sex. But more importantly, this play also foreshadows Bloom's masturbation in the "Nausciaa" episode and strongly implies that he is an "Everyman."

A man passes between Stephen and Buck. Stephen remembers watching the birds from this place "for augury" (fortunetelling) and remembers his dream about a "street of harlots" and melons from the last night. The man passing between them turns out to be Bloom, whom Buck calls "the wandering jew." As he and Buck follow Bloom down the stairs, Stephen thinks about the end of *Cymbeline*, when Shakespeare writes about "ceas[ing] to strive" and making peace with one's destiny.

Bloom's presence, the reference to fortunetelling, and the flight of birds (which were associated with Bloom in "Lestrygonians") strongly imply that Bloom will have something to do with realizing Stephen's dream later in the novel. The anti-Semitic trope of "the wandering jew" who is doomed to roam around until the Second Coming fits well with the novel's representation of Bloom. For one, he spends most of his day wandering around Dublin. And more importantly, he's an exile who constantly feels alienated, no matter where he goes. Finally, when Stephen considers making peace with fate, he's not only thinking about giving up his theory about Shakespeare: he's also considering whether it's still worth trying to exercise creative control over his own life and art.

EPISODE 10: WANDERING ROCKS

This episode consists of nineteen short sections narrating the adventures of different characters around Dublin. Often, moments from these scenes break into one another, randomly disrupting the flow of the narrative with unrelated action. The first scene focuses on the reverend John Conmee, who leaves the church at 3 PM with a letter about Dignam from Martin Cunningham. He blesses a begging sailor with one leg and briefly chats with a parliamentarian's wife in Mountjoy Square. He greets three schoolboys and asks them to post the letter for him. Meanwhile, a half-mile away, the colorfully-dressed dancing professor Denis Maginni passes Lady Maxwell.

Named after a series of moving rocks that frequently destroy ships in the Odyssey, *"Wandering Rocks" is a welcome break for the weary reader who has just managed to finish half the novel's episodes. But it's also an important microcosm of the novel as a whole. Its structure (nineteen short fragments) plainly comments on the structure of the novel as a whole (which consists of eighteen episodes, most of which are distinct enough to essentially stand alone as short stories). But just as different episodes can portray the same memories, events, characters, and moments in time, "Wandering Rocks" jumps around among simultaneous events in order to emphasize their interconnectedness. In this sense, it's the clearest example of parallax storytelling in Joyce's novel: it shows Dubliners looking at the same time and place from a series of different perspectives (like Father Conmee and Denis Maginni's), which produce a series of different portraits as a result. It also allows Joyce to show off his incredibly detailed knowledge of Dublin (down to transit times) and explore the possibilities of his unconventional narrator. This narrator not only knows everything that's happening in Dublin, but also can switch perspectives and move time forwards and backwards at will.*

On his walk, Father Conmee sees the polite old Mrs. M'Guinness in her carriage, then he passes two churches and a number of local businesses, like H.J. O'Neill's funeral parlor, where Corny Kelleher works. He salutes the parlor's owners and patrons. Conmee boards a tram on Newcomen Bridge and silently wishes the other passengers would be cheerier. An old woman struggles to get off the tram, and Conmee thinks about how to Christianize as many "black and brown and yellow men" as possible.

The Catholic priest Father Conmee symbolizes Dublin's respected old guard, both because of his role at the All Hallows church and because he clearly seems to know everyone in town. Thus, his journey through Dublin represents traditional sources of institutional power. Of course, he also conducts this journey on a tram, the greatest symbol of Dublin's transformation into a modern capitalist metropolis, and his thoughts are almost absurdly orthodox, so it's reasonable to think that Joyce is making fun of him and suggesting that he's a relic of an obsolete past.

Father Conmee gets off the tram at Howth Road and thinks about the Countess of Belvedere, who may or may not have committed adultery with her husband's brother. He concludes that people simply can't know why God would make the "tyrannous incontinence" of sex. He wishes he lived in the past, when men of his profession were taken seriously. He watches the clouds and reads Latin prayers. A man and woman emerge from a bush, and the woman pulls a twig out of her skirt. Conmee blesses them, while recognizing them as sinners.

Conmee recognizes that Ireland is moving on without him, and he tries to rebel against modernity by clinging to history. Here, he confronts one of the novel's major motifs, betrayal, but his response to it is stilted and traditional—it offers no real solution to people like Bloom, Stephen, or Hamlet, who have to decide what to do *about betrayal. Conmee views modern life as a kind of fallen world compared to the past. The couple having sex in the bushes represents this fall from grace, as the bushes are likely a vague reference to the Garden of Eden.*

The episode's second section starts with Corny Kelleher closing the funeral parlor's account book. He spins around a coffin lid, chews on a blade of hay, and looks out on the street. He watches Father John Conmee get onto the tram at Newcomen Bridge, sees someone toss a coin from an Eccles Street window, and chats with a constable, who mentions seeing "that particular party" the night before.

Father Conmee saw Corny Kelleher in the last vignette, and now the perspective is switched, and Corny Kelleher sees Father Conmee. This episode is full of such interlaced, parallax perspectives. Through this approach, Joyce gives the reader a composite picture of the world through multiple eyes, rather than a single perspective that presents itself as the end-all-be-all. In a relatively minor side-plot, Corny's meeting with the constable suggests that Bloom was correct to suspect that Corny is a police informant at the beginning of "Lotus Eaters."

In the third vignette, the one-legged sailor walks up Eccles Street, grumbling a song, "*For England [...] home and beauty*." He passes Katey and Boody Dedalus, Stephen's sisters, and two street children stare at him. A woman in an Eccles Street House (Molly Bloom) hears the sailor's song and opens the window to toss the sailor a coin, knocking over a card that says "*Unfurnished Apartments*" in the process. One of the street children picks up the coin and puts it in the sailor's cap.

*The one-legged sailor who literally sings England's praises symbolizes how the British Empire has both wounded and brainwashed the Irish. It might not be obvious that the woman who tosses the sailor a coin is Molly Bloom, but this kind of detail is precisely why Joyce offers multiple parallax perspectives: it allows readers to piece together a complete story while also getting a full picture of different people's limited, flawed perspectives. The "*Unfurnished Apartments*" card suggests that the Blooms are renting out Milly's old room.*

In this episode's fourth scene, Katey and Boody Dedalus arrive home and tell Maggy that M'Guinness wouldn't take Stephen's books at the pawn shop. Maggy has two pots boiling, one with laundry and one with pea soup. She serves Katey and Boody the pea soup, which is a gift from Sister Mary Patrick, and explains that their sister Dilly went to see their father. Boody replies, "our father who art not in heaven." Meanwhile, the religious pamphlet that Bloom threw into the River Liffey in "Lestrygonians" passes under the Loopline Bridge.

This scene paints a gloomy picture of the Dedalus family's poverty. However, Stephen's sisters actually seem to be coping with their circumstances better than he is. Boody's comment about their father Simon suggests that Stephen isn't the only one who resents his absence and neglect. But when the narration cuts to the "Elijah is coming" pamphlet sailing down the Liffey, it implies that help might actually be on the way.

In the fifth fragment, Blazes Boylan buys a basket of fruit in Thornton's shop, hides a bottle and a jar inside, and asks the assistant to send it by tram to a specific address. The Hely's advertisers walk past. Boylan stares at the young assistant's chest, seductively takes a red carnation, and asks permission to use the telephone.

This is the first vignette that is not directly connected to the previous one, but it's still clearly happening at the same time as all the other events in this episode. Even though Boylan is sending a romantic gift to someone—presumably Molly—he's still flirting brazenly with the assistant. This speaks volumes about his personality: he's a shameless flirt, not a true romantic, and he probably has little interest in Molly beyond sex and power.

In the sixth short scene, Stephen chats with the music teacher Almidano Artifoni on the street in Italian. Artifoni praises Stephen's singing voice and tells him to think about performing professionally. Stephen says thanks and Artifoni runs after a tram, which doesn't notice him.

Like much of Ulysses, *this scene is probably incomprehensible to most readers at first, since it's in Italian. But Joyce didn't seem to think this would be a problem. Readers unwilling to translate will miss Stephen turning down yet another potentially lucrative opportunity because of his desire to stay pure as an artist.*

In the seventh section, the secretary Miss Dunne puts aside *The Woman in White*, a Wilkie Collins novel that she thinks has "too much mystery business." She types the date, "16 June 1904," looks at a poster on her wall, scribbles aimlessly, and thinks about her plans for the night. The phone rings: it's Blazes Boylan, her boss, with a message. She tells him that someone from *Sport* was looking for him.

Miss Dunne's boredom, like Molly Bloom's, is a subtle sign of how Dublin women were confined to the home in the early 20th century and therefore largely unable to partake in all the excitements and pleasures of modern Dublin. Boylan's comment seems to involve the Ascot Gold Cup, the horserace that could be seen as a metaphor for his competition with Bloom over Molly. There are two other curious details in this short passage: it's the only place in the novel that mentions the date ("16 June 1904"), and Wilkie Collins's The Woman in White was one of the first popular English novels to feature multiple narrators.

In the eighth vignette, J.J. O'Molloy joins Ned Lambert in the dark St. Mary's Abbey, where Ned is giving a clergyman (Rev. Hugh C. Love) a tour. Ned calls the church "the most historic spot in all Dublin." The rebel Silken Thomas led a rebellion at St. Mary's in the 16th century, and the abbey was also once a bank and a synagogue. (Now, it's a warehouse for storing grain.) The clergyman asks if he can bring a camera on his next visit, and Ned agrees. Oddly, the narrative jumps to a bearded man (John Howard Parnell) looking at a chessboard. Then, the clergyman thanks Ned and leaves. Ned tells O'Molloy that the clergyman is writing a book on the powerful Fitzgerald family. Again, the narrative jumps around, this time to the image of the young woman pulling a twig off of her skirt. On the way out of the Abbey, Ned sneezes and explains that he has a cold.

This seemingly innocent scene is full of significant political overtones. Readers might recall from Dignam's funeral that Ned Lambert is one of the novel's few Protestants. Rev. Hugh C. Love is another. Since the Protestant Church of Ireland is closely associated with the British Crown, Love probably isn't interested in venerating Silken Thomas. The narrator's jump to John Howard Parnell is significant, because as the brother of Charles Stewart Parnell, he's the most visible figurehead for the Irish nationalist movement. The abbey's long history demonstrates that Ireland's past is more diverse and complex than many of the novel's fervent Irish nationalists would like to admit.

In the ninth short section, Tom Rochford shows off his machine for music halls, which shows late-arriving audience members who's currently performing. The narrative briefly jumps to the lawyer Richie Goulding and an elderly lady in a black skirt separately going to court. Nosey Flynn asks how Rochford's invention works, while M'Coy and Lenehan leave and chat about how Rochford heroically saved someone who fell into a manhole.

Tom Rochford's heroism and clever invention are both responses to problems that were relatively new in the early 20th century (with the creation of city-wide sewer systems and rising popularity of variety shows). In "Aeolus," Professor MacHugh claimed that sanitation systems were the British and Roman Empires' greatest achievements, so it would be reasonable to view Rochford pulling a man out of the sewer as a metaphor for a hero saving Ireland from British imperialism.

Lenehan checks on the Ascot Gold Cup in Lyman's bar and then reports that Bantam Lyons is planning to make a ridiculous bet on a sure loser. The men continue their walk and pass Leopold Bloom buying books on the street. The narrative unexpectedly jumps to young Patrick Dignam buying pork steaks from a butcher shop and the "*Unfinished Apartments*" card getting returned to the window of 7 Eccles Street. Then, it returns to Lenehan telling M'Coy about groping Molly Bloom in a car on the way back from dinner many years ago. Laughing, Lenehan explains hat Leopold didn't even realize because he was busy talking about the stars. M'Coy is unimpressed, and Lenehan admits that Bloom is "cultured" and even a bit of an "artist."

Lenehan is referring to Lyons betting on Throwaway after misunderstanding Bloom when they met in "Lotus Eaters." But Throwaway's name practically announces that it's a poor investment. There is a clear connection between the rapid-fire scenes of Bloom buying books, the Dignam boy walking, and someone (probably Molly) returning the card announcing empty rooms. Namely, by juxtaposing these three scenes, Joyce implies that a fatherless child like the Dignam boy could fulfill the needs of the sonless father Bloom and the childless house at Eccles Street. Like his appearances in "Aeolus," Lenehan's lewd behavior towards Molly suggests that he represents the worst kind of Dublin lowlife.

In the tenth vignette, Leopold Bloom is looking for a novel for Molly. After leafing through a series of options, he settles on *Sweets of Sin*, a tacky erotic novel about a couple's love triangle with a man named Raoul. Even Bloom gets excited reading it. Meanwhile, the old lady from the previous fragment leaves the courthouse. Bloom buys *Sweets of Sin* from the bookseller, who has a horrible cough.

Bloom is fulfilling Molly's morning request to buy her a new erotic novel. It's telling that he has to do this for her—apparently, respectable women can't go out and buy their own books in male-dominated turn-of-the-century Dublin. The love-triangle motif in Sweets of Sin obviously corresponds to Bloom, Molly, and Boylan. This makes it all the more surprising that Bloom enjoys the book.

In the episode's eleventh short fragment, Simon Dedalus meets his daughter Dilly outside the Dillon auction house and orders her to fix her poor posture. Dilly asks if he found any money—he says he didn't, but she knows he's lying, since she knows he's been drinking. He gives her a shilling, but when she asks for more, he angrily calls his children "an insolent pack of little bitches." He eventually offers her two pennies more, and then tells her to meet him at home and walks off. Meanwhile, elsewhere in Dublin, the viceroy's parade passes through the streets.

This scene gives the reader a much less favorable view of Simon Dedalus than they received in "Hades" and "Aeolus." Dilly has been waiting at Dillon's for hours, since Bloom first saw her in "Lestrygonians" and assumed that her family was selling its possessions. Dilly evidently understands her father's shortcomings just as much as Stephen does, and she seems to know exactly what she is doing, which suggests that this is not *the first time she's had to take care of her sisters while he drinks away the family money.*

This episode's twelfth section starts with Tom Kernan walking through Dublin and congratulating himself for closing a business deal with a Mr. Crimmins. They discussed the explosion of the General Slocum steamer ship in New York and blamed American corruption for it. Kernan fondly replays their conversation in his mind and remembers how Crimmins admired his coat. The narration briefly cuts from Kernan admiring himself to show Simon Dedalus meeting Father Cowley on the street, then Bloom's pamphlet floating in the sea, and Denis Breen visiting a new lawyer after John Henry Menton made him wait too long. Kernan appreciates the fine gin that Crimmins gave him, and he thinks about political violence in the past and Ben Dollard singing an old ballad. He narrowly misses seeing the viceregal cavalcade go by.

The General Slocum disaster was a real event that happened on June 15, 1904, the day before Ulysses *is set. Joyce's decision to include it again testifies to his attention to detail and desire to stay as close as possible to reality, especially in this section that depicts a cross-section of Dublin life. While Kernan recognizes that the disaster was tragic, he's really more interested in saying the right thing and looking good in his expensive coat than the more than thousand people who died. In other words, he lacks the inherent empathy of people like Leopold Bloom. In fact, Kernan's joy at his business deal is an obvious foil for Bloom's disappointment at his inability to sell the Keyes ad. This suggests that Bloom is too kind to succeed in Dublin's clannish, immoral business environment.*


In the thirteenth vignette, Stephen Dedalus looks through the dusty window of a stonecutter's shop and imagines that precious stones are really stars thrown down from the sky by angels. He compares the stonecutter Russell polishing a gem with himself "wrest[ing] old images from the burial earth." (The narrative jumps to Florence MacCabe and her fellow midwife walking through Dublin with a bag full of cockles.) Hearing the whirr of a nearby powerplant, Stephen decides to move on and think about the conflict "between two roaring worlds"—the exterior and the interior.

Stephen views gem-polishing through the lens of artistic creation: it's about uncovering and accentuating natural beauty. His reference to "burial earth" associates this artistic process with resurrecting the dead—which in turn suggests the Christian iconography of Jesus's resurrection or the Greek concept of metempsychosis. This is clearly related to the midwives pulling living cockles out of the sand (or "burial earth"). His comment about the "two roaring worlds" references the conflict between his humanistic belief in the human individual (which means that he controls his own destiny) and his old religious beliefs in God (which would mean that he doesn't).




Stephen walks down the street and stops at a book vendor, hoping he might encounter "one of [his] pawned schoolprizes." (A flashback shows Father Conmee walking.) Stephen finds a well-worn volume with instructions on "How to win a woman's love." Suddenly, Stephen's sister Dilly appears with an introductory French book that she's bought for a penny. Stephen panics, feeling that Dilly is "drowning" just like him.

The fact that Stephen's family pawned away his schoolbooks is a clear indicator of how desperately impoverished they actually are. Again, the flashes of other Dubliners' days in this episode are far from random: Father Conmee is a significant figure for Stephen because he was the head of Stephen's school. Thus, the flashback to him suggests that he's somehow watching over Stephen as he tries to recover the evidence of his schooling (which can be compared to the hunt to uncover beauty through art, or "wrest old images from the burial earth"). The book on winning a woman's love symbolizes Stephen's sense of loneliness and despair, especially since he lost his mother (the one woman who loved him). Finally, the metaphor of drowning returns again (recalling the drowning case in the first episode, Reuben J. Dodd's son, and so on). Here, it represents Stephen's feeling of despair, poverty, and hopelessness. He worries that Dilly will fall into the same intellectual habits, interests, and professions as him—and that this will doom her to the same despair.

The fourteenth fragment starts with the scene of Father Cowley meeting Simon Dedalus from the twelfth vignette. Cowley reports that the moneylender Reuben J. Dodd is sending men to intimidate him, but Ben Dollard is coming to help out. Dollard arrives almost at once, and Dedalus makes fun of his trousers while Father Cowley compliments his singing. (At different moments, the narration randomly cuts to Cashel Boyle O'Connor Fitzmaurice Tisdall Farrell walking by the Kildare Street Club and Reverend Hugh C. Love leaving St. Mary's Abbey.) Dollard explains that he's already settled Cowley's debts with the landlord, Rev. Love.

It's ironic that Simon Dedalus is helping Father Cowley overcome his debts when he can't even get his own family out of poverty. Reuben J. Dodd again appears as a foreboding, vicious, hard-nosed man. Not only is this depiction clearly colored by the anti-Semitism that makes Bloom's life in Dublin difficult, but it seems that many Dubliners conflate their opinions about men like Dodd with their view of all Jewish people. Since Rev. Love appears in a flashback right before Dollard starts talking about him, it's evident that Joyce isn't juxtaposing the action and flashbacks at random. Rather, he's showing how the people who some characters are considering from the outside also have their own rich interior lives and points of view. Finally, the Catholic Father Cowley owing money to the Protestant Reverend Love is another clear metaphor for the British occupation of Ireland. It also suggests that the clergy is branching out into modern capitalist business schemes.

In the fifteenth vignette, Martin Cunningham and Mr. Power talk about the Dignam boy's plight. (The narrative briefly jumps to show Miss Kennedy and Miss Douce looking out from the Ormond Hotel, where they work.) Cunningham says he wrote to Father Conmee. Power suggests asking chemist Boyd for money, but Cunningham rejects the idea. John Wyse Nolan catches up to them, and then the narrative flashes back to Councilor Nannetti, Alderman Cowley, and Councilor Lyon passing one another on the City Hall steps. Nolan tells Cunningham that Bloom has already offered five shillings for Dignam's son. The men compliment Bloom's benevolence. Then, the narrative flashes over to Blazes Boylan meeting someone outside a shop.

Cunningham is essentially spearheading the effort to provide for Dignam's family while they wait for his insurance to pay out. He may be the only man as decent and sympathetic as Bloom in the entire novel. Meanwhile, numerous people whose professions supposedly involve helping others—priests, lawyers, and politicians—don't seem to be interested in charity. This is how Joyce criticizes what he perceived as the immorality and hypocrisy of public life in Dublin.

Cunningham slows down to help the assistant town clerk, who is struggling to watch and complains of corns on his feet. The men meet the sub-sheriff, Lord John Fanning, in Cunningham's office. Fanning also refuses to contribute to young Patrick Dignam's fund, and so does the assistant, who keeps complaining about corns on his feet. The men hear horses and look outside to see the general governor's formal procession coming down Parliament Street.

It's telling that the assistant clerk is happy to get help from Cunningham but unwilling to pay it back by contributing to Dignam's fund. Again, this shows that, despite his position in public service, he's more interested in helping himself than helping others. The procession outside the window ties these men's indifference to Dignam's family's suffering to the corruption of British rule in Ireland.

In the sixteenth fragment, Buck Mulligan and Haines are eating in a restaurant. Buck points to John Howard Parnell, a bearded man looking at a chessboard. They order cakes and Buck jokes that Haines missed out on Stephen's theory of *Hamlet*. Haines replies that only mentally unstable people obsess about Shakespeare. (The narrative briefly returns to the one-legged sailor begging for money.) Haines asks what delusion led Stephen astray, and Buck blames Catholic "visions of hell" for blocking him from experiencing "the joy of creation" and thereby ruining his art. Haines comments that this is strange, because there's nothing of this idea in ancient Irish traditions. Buck jokes that it'll take Stephen a decade to write anything. At the end of this fragment, the narrative returns to Bloom's religious pamphlet sailing down the River Liffey.

Haines's comments about Stephen suggest that he might not have been taking him entirely seriously in the morning, when asking about his Shakespeare theory. John Howard Parnell (independence leader Charles Stewart Parnell's brother) is sitting in the corner with a chessboard, which may represent him strategizing for Ireland's future. This is significant because, if Haines represents British colonialism and a vision of Ireland that's stuck in the past (and synonymous with folklore), Parnell represents the Irish people autonomously building a future for themselves. Buck reasonably explains Stephen's main conflict in the novel when he says that Stephen's "visions of hell"—or his philosophical and theological doubts—are getting in the way of "the joy of creation," which is exactly what Stephen is chasing after throughout the novel. In other words, Stephen's main conflict is about how to overcome the grief, doubt, and alienation that are blocking him artistically.

In the short seventeenth vignette, the music teacher Almidano Artifoni walks through Dublin. Behind him are Cashel Boyle O'Connor Fitzmaurice Tisdall Farrell and the blind man whom Bloom helped across the street in "Lestrygonians." Farrell turns around and eventually knocks into the blind man, who curses at him.

Three eccentric minor characters intersect. All of them are misfits in Dublin: Artifoni because he's an immigrant, Cashel Farrell because he dresses and walks ridiculously, and the blind man because of his disability. In this sense, they are foils for the novel's main protagonists, outsiders who could be heroes, just like Bloom and Stephen, but never quite get the chance to have their perspectives included in the book.

In the episode's eighteenth section, young Patrick Dignam walks down Wicklow Street with his pound and a half of porksteaks. He doesn't want to sit with his mourning family members. In a shop window, he sees a poster for a boxing match, but he soon realizes that it's already over. He walks on and sees a dandy (Blazes Boylan) holding a flower in his mouth and talking to a drunk man (Bob Doran). He runs into other schoolboys and wonders if they see him mourning, or if he'll get his name in the paper. Patrick isn't sure how to feel about his father's death. He remembers the last time he saw his dad, drunk and looking for his boots to go out and drink more, and then on his deathbed. He hopes his dad made it to Purgatory.

Patrick Dignam, Jr. is the mirror image of Stephen Dedalus: his father has died (not his mother) and he is just starting to process it (whereas Stephen cannot stop mourning for his mother). Like Simon Dedalus, Patrick's father seems to have been an alcoholic who mistreated his family. As a result, Patrick feels that he failed to connect with his dad on some significant level, and while he knows he will never be able to have this connection, he has not fully worked out the consequences of not having a father.

In this episode's nineteenth and final section, the Earl of Dudley and his wife drive through Dublin from West to East with their royal cavalcade. The numerous Dubliners they pass react in different ways, ranging from admiration to surprise to indifference. These people include nearly everyone named in this episode, such as Tom Kernan, Reuben J. Dodd, the barmaids Miss Kennedy and Miss Douce, Simon Dedalus, Reverend Hugh C. Love, Lenehan and M'Coy, Buck Mulligan and Haines, John Howard Parnell, Dilly Dedalus, John Henry Menton, Denis J. Maginni, Blazes Boylan, Cashel Boyle O'Connor Fitzmaurice Tisdall Farrell, Patrick Dignam, and the man in the brown macintosh.

While this episode began with a journey representing the church, here it ends with a journey in a perpendicular direction, representing the state. More precisely, these journeys represent the two foreign institutions competing for power in Dublin: the Catholic Church and the British Empire. While other vignettes in this episode only briefly intersected, the viceregal cavalcade seems to encompass absolutely all of them, to the point that it almost looks like Joyce is parodying his own choice of form. Perhaps he's suggesting that the British are the closest thing to the omniscient narrator with absolute knowledge and control over everyone in Dublin (except maybe the man in the macintosh, who remains mysterious even to them). Or perhaps he just wants to hammer home the point that all his characters are coexisting in the same city at the exact same time, and therefore have different parallax perspectives on more or less the same set of events. Interestingly, throughout the rest of this episode, different simultaneous vignettes intruded on one another, but each essentially gave the reader a private glimpse into the lives of a few Dubliners. But in this final vignette, the novel's characters *become the spectators, because they're staring at the cavalcade. Thus, the roles switch: the reader is no longer watching the Dubliners, but being watched by them. And the people watching no longer have their own stories and contexts—instead, they're practically frozen in time.*

EPISODE 11: SIRENS

A cryptic introduction made up of sixty fragments opens this episode, foreshadowing key moments in its plot, introducing its major themes, and presenting its key motifs. This introductory section is full of imagery related to sounds, like "steelyringing," "trilling," "**jingling**," "warbling," and "tschink [and] tschunk." This introduction ends, "Done. / Begin!"

In the Odyssey, *the Sirens were two mythical mermaids who sang beautiful songs to attract sailors, then led those sailors to shipwreck. Odysseus managed to get past them by tying himself to the boat's mast (so he could hear the songs without being tempted to steer the ship towards them) and plugging his men's ears with wax (so they couldn't hear the songs). In this episode, the Sirens loosely correspond to the barmaids Douce and Kennedy, and the episode's focus is also on music. This poetic overture is definitely a way to introduce that point of focus, but it's also a microcosm of the whole episode's plot. It borrows many phrases that occur throughout the episode, and it structures them in broadly chronological order. In particular, "Done. / Begin!" suggests that this poem is like a warm-up for the rest of the episode, or a presentation of the core melodies on which the rest of the episode improvises. Curiously, this suggests that "Sirens" is less an organic narrative than a pre-rehearsed performance.*

The plot of this episode begins with Miss Douce (who has bronze hair) and Miss Kennedy (who has golden hair) watching the viceregal cavalcade pass by from the Ormond Hotel bar, where they work. Kennedy considers Lady Dudley "exquisite," while Douce notices a handsome man in the next carriage, and he sees her watching him. Meanwhile, Bloom walks nearby, carrying the novel *The Sweets of Sin*.

The episode's action picks up immediately after "Wandering Rocks," with one of the events that was frequently interpolated into it: Douce and Kennedy working in the bar, watching the cavalcade. By picking up this thread, Joyce implies that any of the moments in "Wandering Rocks" could be extended in this way—this adds to his suggestion that anyone can be a hero in the modern world, like his everyman Bloom.

One of the bar workers brings Douce and Kennedy their tea and rudely asks what they're looking at out the window; Douce replies that she's going to report his "impertinent insolence," and he mocks her, saying "imperthnthn thnthnthn," which is one of the lines from the episode's introduction. While their tea brews, Douce and Kennedy chat about Douce's sunburn and make fun of the "old fogey" who works in Boyd's chemist shop. They laugh heartily and make a racket.

Even before it introduces any actual music, the episode is already quite musical in its style and tone. Joyce uses assonant sounds, repeats words, and carefully breaks up sentences to give his prose a rhythmic flow. Plus, Douce and Kennedy's lively conversation, onomatopoetic jokes, and hearty laughter suggest that this episode is practically meant to be read aloud.

Bloom walks past statues of the Virgin Mary in a shop window and remembers staring at the statues of Greek goddesses in the museum, before Buck Mulligan started talking to him. Meanwhile, Miss Douce and Miss Kennedy continue to laugh uncontrollably, spitting out their tea and yelling in delight when they consider the ridiculous possibility of marrying the "old fogey" from Boyd's shop. At the same moment, Bloom passes several pictures of virgins in the frame-maker's shop window, which reminds him of Nannetti's father (who made similar paintings) and the ad he still owes Nannetti. He remembers that it's four o'clock and thinks of "the sweets of sin."

With his characteristic ignorance about religion, Bloom ironically sexualizes the Virgin Mary. He returns to the binary opposition he outlined in "Lestrygonians"—on the one hand is the real but imperfect beauty of living, breathing women, and on the other is the eternal but unattainable beauty of the statues. By juxtaposing this with the barmaids Douce and Kennedy, Joyce further suggests that these women represent the mythical Greek Sirens. Bloom also adds the opposition from "Aeolus" between the creative Greeks and the practical Romans (or Catholics). Joyce may be faintly implying that the Greeks embraced "the sweets of sin" while the Catholics repress it. But he's also undoubtedly referring to the four o'clock meeting between Molly and Blazes Boylan.

Simon Dedalus walks into the bar and starts suggestively chatting up Miss Douce, who brushes off his advances. He orders a whiskey, and Douce quickly serves him after he pulls out a flute and starts playing. Lenehan enters the bar just when Bloom is reaching the Essex Bridge and thinking about writing back to Martha. Lenehan asks for Blazes Boylan, but Miss Kennedy says that Boylan isn't around. Lenehan condescendingly tries to strike up a conversation with Kennedy, but she ignores him. The narration comments, "**jingle** jaunty jingle."

By jumping around between different characters, this episode borrows subtly from the narrative structure of "Wandering Rocks." This suggests that, while Joyce's different episodes explore a wide variety of different narrative styles, they aren't all necessarily independent—rather, they bleed into one another. It's telling that Simon Dedalus orders a whiskey at the bar here, after meeting his starving daughter in the last episode and barely giving her any money—although it's easy to miss, this is more clear evidence of his brazen failure as a father, and it helps put Stephen's resentment toward his father in the proper context.

Lenehan turns to Simon Dedalus and starts chatting about his "famous son," Stephen. But Simon doesn't know anything about Stephen's life. Lenehan reports that Dublin's literary elite is fawning over Stephen, but Simon scarcely cares. Instead, Simon remarks to the barmaids that someone has moved the piano, and Douce speaks fondly of the young blind pianist who came to tune it that morning. A bell rings and the waiter Pat comes to retrieve a beer. As he impatiently awaits Blazes Boylan, Lenehan starts testing out the freshly tuned piano.

Simon's ignorance about Stephen and indifference to his "fame" also underlines the vast distance and misunderstanding between them. That said, Lenehan has already proven himself to be an untrustworthy panderer, and this conversation shows that his tactics still aren't working. Simon recognizes that someone moved the piano, which means that he's clearly a regular at the bar. It's important to know that the blind pianist is the same youngster whom Bloom helped cross the street at the end of "Lestrygonians." He can't see, but is an expert with sound—just like Stephen Dedalus in the "Proteus" episode, when he contemplated the nature of vision and hearing.

Just across the river, Bloom is buying stationery for his return letter to Martha. In the store, he notices a poster showing a mermaid, and he thinks of the love triangle in *The Sweets of Sin*. At just that moment, four o'clock, Bloom notices a **jingling** carriage crossing the Essex Bridge and feels that he ought to follow it. The shopgirl kindly reminds him that he hasn't paid yet.

A cluster of motifs that represent adultery (Martha, the mermaids or sirens, and the Sweets of Sin *love triangle) foreshadow Blazes Boylan's jingling car, which appears immediately afterwards. Bloom's curiosity gets the best of him, unlike in "Hades " and "Lestrygonians," when he tried his darndest to avoid looking at Boylan.*

The piano tuner has accidentally left a tuning fork lying around in the Ormond bar. Someone strikes it, and it lets out a "dying call." Simon Dedalus plays the piano and sings, "Goodbye, Sweetheart, Goodbye," while Lenehan keeps trying to get Miss Kennedy's attention. She looks up from her book and tells him, "ask no questions and you'll hear no lies."

The tuning fork's "dying call," Simon Dedalus's song, and Lenehan's failed attempts to chat up Miss Kennedy all comment on the motif of rejection and failure. Of course, this is also a reference to how Boylan's affair with Molly turns Bloom into a lonely failure. Kennedy's response to Lenehan is not only a clever rebuke to a gossipy liar—it's also a comment on Bloom's struggle to manage his own curiosity in this episode. (He's just curious enough to follow Boylan into the bar, but he knows that he has to keep a distance in order to protect his own feelings.)

Blazes Boylan marches into the bar and Lenehan greets him as "the conquering hero." Meanwhile, Leopold Bloom, an "unconquered hero," passes by and sees Boylan's car. Confused, he realizes that he can enter the bar under the pretense of meeting Richie Goulding, who's also inside. Miss Douce "outsmile[s]" Miss Kennedy to win Boylan's attention and take his drink order. Across the pub, Bloom strikes up a conversation with Goulding. While Miss Douce pours Boylan's drink order, Boylan and Lenehan gawk at her chest.

At first glance, it seems like the contrast between Lenehan's description of Boylan and the novel's description of Leopold Bloom refers to the fact that Boylan will sleep with ("conquer") Molly, and Bloom will not. However, a closer look reveals that Bloom isn't "unconquering," but rather "unconquered." This suggests that Bloom doesn't really want to seduce anyone—he wants to be seduced or dominated. (This foreshadows an interesting sexual fantasy scene in "Circe.") The attention that Boylan receives from Kennedy and Douce suggests that he's popular and attractive, unlike his friend Lenehan and his rival Leopold Bloom.

The clock strikes four o'clock, which means it's time for the Ascot Gold Cup results. Lenehan is eagerly hoping for the horse Sceptre to win. Bloom sits near the door with Goulding and his buddies, wondering if Boylan has forgotten his four o'clock appointment—or is just trying to "whet [the] appetite." Lenehan repeatedly pleads with Miss Douce to do something, and she eventually obliges: she stretches out her elastic garter and lets it snap back against her bare thigh. Lenehan is thrilled, but Miss Douce calls him "the essence of vulgarity." She smiles at Boylan instead. However, Boylan quickly downs his drink, gazes at her, and says he's leaving.

It's significant that the Ascot Gold Cup results come out at four, the exact time of Boylan's appointment with Molly Bloom. This further cements the analogy between the horserace and the race for Molly's heart between Bloom and Boylan. Sceptre represents Boylan, the favorite, while Throwaway represents Bloom, the underdog. Lenehan, the vulgar lowlife, falls for Douce's siren song—but Boylan resists it and goes off to meet Molly. All things considered, there wasn't much for Bloom to see here.

On their way out, Boylan and Lenehan run into Ben Dollard and Father Cowley. Simon Dedalus comes over to chat with Dollard, who encourages Simon to keep singing. A **jingling** sound means that Boylan's car is leaving. Bloom and Douce both watch, and they're both disappointed, although for very different reasons. Cowley, Simon Dedalus, and Dollard remember one night when Professor Goodwin sang horribly at the piano, then Dollard showed up without formal clothes. He managed to rent some from Molly, who (according to Simon) "has left off clothes of all descriptions." Bloom remembers his conversation with Molly from the morning while the other men comment on her "buxom" beauty.

The jingling sound that represents Boylan and Molly's affair first appeared in "Calypso," when Bloom thought about repairing the jingling quoits (brass rings) on his and Molly's bed. In this episode, the jingling is associated with Boylan's car, which is taking him to Bloom's house. This sound recurs periodically, suggesting that Bloom knows in the back of his mind what is happening. The other men's comments about Molly suggest that they don't notice Bloom at the table by the corner. Clearly, her looks—and perhaps her promiscuity—have made her famous in Dublin. Thus, Bloom feels like he's the only one around who isn't somehow sexually engaged with her.

Pat serves the food, and everyone at Bloom and Goulding's table eats silently. Dollard sings love songs in his "booming" voice. Bloom again remembers Dollard borrowing his extremely tight pants. Miss Douce greets the solicitor George Lidwell as he enters the bar. Meanwhile, Bloom continues listening to the piano, thinking of Molly, and remembering the "jiggedy **jingle** jaunty jaunty" of concert music.

Dollard's love-songs make it hard for Bloom to avoid thinking about Molly and Boylan's affair. In fact, the songs provide an ideal environment for self-pity and regret. In an ironic twist of fate, then, Bloom first wandered in after Boylan because he hoped Boylan wouldn't go to visit Molly. Then he ordered dinner, and now he's stuck listening to love songs while Boylan is with Molly.

Father Cowley convinces Simon Dedalus to sing the aria "M'appari" from the opera *Martha*, then offers to accompany him on the piano. Richie Goulding says that his favorite opera is Bellini's *La Sonnambula*, and he claims to remember seeing an excellent performance of it. Bloom notices that Goulding is sick from alcoholism and judges that he's probably making up this story. Richie hums the aria "All Is Lost Now," which reminds Bloom of the scene in Sonnambula when a woman sleepwalks to the man she desires—and, in turn, of Blazes Boylan's "**jingle** jaunty."

"M'appari," a love song expressing a man's hope that the title character of Martha *will return to him, appears to refer to Bloom's desire for the absent Martha Clifford. But this is actually a bit of a red herring, because even though he's just bought paper to write Martha back, Bloom clearly doesn't care much about her: all he can think about is Molly. So "M'appari" and the scene from* La Sonnambula *both represent Bloom's hope that Molly will give up on Boylan and return to him. Meanwhile, the titles "All Is Lost Now" and* La Sonnambula *("The Sleepwalker") are both apt jokes about Goulding's ill health. Of course, he's only one of perhaps a dozen men in this novel who ruin their lives by drinking. Joyce is clearly trying to show that this was a significant social problem in Dublin.*

Dollard and Cowley cheer Simon Dedalus on, and he begins to sing in a beautiful, sweeping voice that fills Bloom with a sense of peace and wonder. Fiddling with a rubber band in his pocket, Bloom thinks about how women love good singers, and imagines Blazes Boylan meeting Molly at his house. Bloom laments the fact that Simon didn't make singing into his career, then recognizes the funny coincidence that he's singing from an opera named *Martha* (just like his pen pal). He remembers the night he first met Molly: they played musical chairs, and then she sang to him. Simon Dedalus gets to the aria's desperate and lonely climax, and Bloom feels "consumed" by the music. The audience applauds lavishly.

Simon Dedalus is a complex character, because even though he's deeply cruel and irresponsible as a father, he's also incredibly soulful and emotionally complex as an artist. In particular, since it's a ballad to a departed woman, "M'appari" almost certainly also represents Simon Dedalus's grief for his dead wife. Through Simon's performance, then, Joyce asks whether art can make up for someone's personal failings. He also asks this question of Stephen. (Of course, since Stephen and Simon represent Joyce and his father, Joyce was probably grappling with this question himself, too.) Bloom realizes the connection between the song and the message he's about to write to his pen pal "Martha," but his thoughts return to Molly, so it again becomes clear that his true loyalties lie with his wife.

The narration briefly cuts to Blazes Boylan, who is slowly making his way across town in his **jingling** carriage. Then it returns to the bar, where the men continue drinking and enjoying the music. Richie starts babbling incoherently about a time Simon sang the song "'Twas Rank and Fame," and Bloom thinks about the tragic rift between Simon and Richie (who are brothers-in-law). He reflects on death, Dignam, and the fragility of human life.

Whenever the novel describes Boylan jingling across Dublin, it's not clear whether it's actually giving a faithful description of where he's headed, or if it's just describing how Bloom imagines his journey. But is there a difference? Boylan's jingly jaunt is significant because *of its psychological effect on Bloom, who is thinking about it in real time while it's happening. There's no question that Boylan will arrive, have sex with Molly, and symbolically usurp Bloom's place in the home. The description of the journey serves primarily to highlight Bloom's feeling of impending doom. So do his reflections on death and fate.*

Miss Lydia Douce and Miss Mina Kennedy ward off men's advances, and Bloom decides to start his letter to Martha on the spot, so he asks Pat for a pen and ink. He thinks about "musemathematics," or how music is essentially just based on the mathematical relationships among sounds. Listening to Father Cowley improvise, Bloom feels like he's being taken through an obstacle course. He reflects sympathetically on Milly's lack of musical talent.

"Musemathematics" is an apt description of how music really works (since it's reducible to mathematical intervals and sound waves), but it's also a kind of literary commentary on the way that listening to music feels *rhythmic and cyclical. It also arguably describes the way that Joyce has carefully structured this episode to read like music. Notably, Bloom's rational, mathematical view of music is the opposite of Stephen's artistic and philosophical approach to it.*

When Pat brings the pen and ink, Bloom starts writing his letter secretly, inside the Freeman newspaper, so that the other men don't see what he's doing. He mostly writes a boring and conventional letter, but he also encloses some money and claims to be excited to meet Martha. But he starts to question why he's writing to her in the first place. At the same moment, Blazes Boylan is **jingling** his way past Dlugacz's butcher shop.

Bloom treats responding to Martha as a kind of chore—he's going through the motions of seducing her, but his heart isn't in it. It's as though he were trying to compensate for Molly's adultery through an affair of his own. At the end of the day, though—whether romantically or tragically—Bloom truly seems to love Molly and nobody else.

Richie Goulding notices Bloom writing and asks if it's related to his advertising business. Bloom says yes, then finishes off the letter with a P.S. ("How will you […] punish me?") and a P.P.S ("I feel so sad today"). He questions whether the P.P.S. is "too poetical," just a result of the music, but he decides to send the letter anyway. He has to visit Barney Kiernan's, so he can drop the letter off on his way. He tries to call Pat the waiter, but Pat doesn't hear.

In this scene, as throughout this episode, Richie Goulding's blissful ignorance about absolutely everything serves as a foil for Bloom's tragic knowledge of Molly's affair. Although Bloom keeps up the playful sexual teasing with his "P.S.," the "P.P.S." reveals his underlying sense of alienation and despair about his relationship with Molly, which is his actual motive for seeking out other women. In other words, the "P.S." is based on the reason he claims to be contacting Martha (sex) and the "P.P.S." is actually based on the real reason (a lack of love from Molly—which Martha can't truly fix).

The clearly-intoxicated Bloom notices Lydia Douce telling the solicitor George Lidwell about her vacation and holding a seashell to his ear. Bloom thinks about Blazes Boylan's "seaside girls" song and Lydia's sunburn. Father Cowley plays a "light bright tinkling" song, and Bloom asks himself if there's really a difference between noise and music. He realizes that Cowley is playing a dance from *Don Giovanni*, and he thinks about women's voices and the way chamber music takes advantage of acoustics. Meanwhile, Blazes Boylan is finally reaching Bloom's house and knocking on the door.

Don Giovanni, *the story of Don Juan the seducer, is a blatant stand-in for Boylan. Meanwhile, Douce's seashell and beach vacation are slightly more subtle references to the Sirens from the* Odyssey. *Like his musings on "musemathematics," Bloom's question about the difference between noise and music reveals that he primarily views the world in a scientific, rational way—which means that music could just be a certain kind of noise, if they're both defined scientifically as a sequence of sound waves. But this question would likely never occur to Stephen Dedalus, for whom there's no comparison because music is defined by its artistry, not its physical sound waves..*

At Tom Kernan and Simon Dedalus's request, Ben Dollard sings "The Croppy Boy," an old Irish ballad about a young soldier betrayed by a British spy posing as a priest. Bloom knows he has to leave, so he calls out for Pat. A "Tap" sound breaks into the narrative every so often. Meanwhile, Ben Dollard reaches the part of the song where the croppy boy confesses to his sins—especially his failure to pray for his dead mother. After the sound of a cock crowing, Bloom thinks about all the effects music can have on people. He remembers going to the opera with Molly, talking to her about the philosopher Baruch Spinoza, and realizing that all the men were looking at her instead of the stage.

"The Croppy Boy" has very important resonances with several of the main plots in Ulysses. *Its central theme is betrayal, which clearly alludes to Molly's betrayal of Bloom. The soldier's sin is the same as Stephen Dedalus's—failing to pray for his mother—and his death at the hands of a British spy also foreshadows Stephen's fight with a British soldier during the climax of the novel in "Circe." The song also foreshadows the political themes and conflicts that come to the fore in the next episode. The crowing cock during the song represents Blazes Boylan having sex with Molly.*

As Dollard approaches the end of "The Croppy Boy," Bloom realizes that he—like the character in the song—is the "last of his name and race," because he doesn't have a son. He wonders if it would be possible to have another, but he feels that he's too old. He looks lustily at Lydia Douce and imagines playing her "three holes" like an instrument. He decides that Blazes Boylan's audacity is responsible for his success with women. He watches Lydia's beautiful eyes and "heaving bosom," and he notices that she moves her hand up and down on the beerpull, as though masturbating it. The cock crows again, and the tapping sound returns.

Bloom explicitly associates his own disrupted bloodline with the croppy boy. He more subtly ties his bloodline to Ireland, the disposed nation that the boy was defending. And careful readers will know that Bloom's quest to pass on his "name and race" and Ireland's quest for autonomy are also parallels with Stephen Dedalus's quest to create art. Meanwhile, all the sexual imagery in this section points to what Bloom has to do to rebuild his bloodline. The barmaids start to draw him in and distract him, just like the mythical sirens.

"The Croppy Boy" is about to end, and Bloom wants to get out of the bar before everyone else. He rushes his goodbyes and hears the closing verse from the hallway as he remembers his own loneliness. All the other men celebrate Dollard's singing and invite him for a drink. (Richie Goulding is the exception: he sits alone at his table.) Outside, Bloom starts feeling gassy from all the cider, and he reflects on how music serves as a form of self-expression for the people around him.

Bloom's thoughts return to the core feeling that haunts him throughout the entire day: alienation. (Ironically, he's the one who decided to leave the bar alone instead of socializing.) When everybody celebrates Dollard's singing, music starts to stand in for the sense of community and family that Bloom seeks—but he can't fully participate in the festivities because music is so closely connected to Molly in his mind.

Lydia realizes that the approaching "Tap. Tap. Tap. Tap." sound may be the blind piano tuner coming to retrieve his lost tuning fork. Bloom's thoughts start taking on the rhythmic quality of a drum, as he starts to think of everyone as a musician, working their own instruments on their own rhythm. As he lets out his gas, Bloom runs into "the whore of the lane," a woman he's met once before, who also previously knew Molly. He looks into an antiques shop window while she passes by. While the bar patrons continue to drink and celebrate, the lonely Bloom reads from the national hero Robert Emmet's final words and lets out his ample accumulated gas.

The tapping sound, which has been steadily building throughout the second half of this episode, is associated with the uncontrollable march of fate (kind of like Boylan's jingling car). Just as the blind piano tuner returns for something he has forgotten, Bloom refuses to look at a woman he had all but forgotten. (She appears to be Bridie Kelly, as the novel suggests in "Circe.") Bloom's commentary on everyone's ability to create music fits neatly with Joyce's attempt to find the deeper meanings and patterns hidden within everyday life. Surely enough, he ends this episode by making a musical contribution of his own.

EPISODE 12: CYCLOPS

The unnamed Dubliner who narrates this episode of the novel is busy chatting with a police officer on a street corner when a passing chimney sweep's brush nearly stabs him in the eye. The narrator furiously turns around, then sees his buddy Joe Hynes and strikes up a conversation. Hynes asks what the narrator is up to, and the narrator explains that he's come to collect a debt. The debtor is Geraghty, a plumber who stole tea and sugar from a merchant, then refused to pay his fine and started threatening to sue the merchant for operating without a license. For a paragraph, the narrative shifts into the formalistic voice of a legal contract.

In the Odyssey, *the stupid one-eyed brute Polyphemus traps Odysseus in a cave and eats several of his men. Knowing he's next, Odysseus blinds the cyclops with a wooden stake and escapes with his herd of sheep. This episode takes its parallels to the* Odyssey *more seriously than most of the others in the book. The first sign of this is when the chimney sweep nearly pokes out the narrator's eye (which references Odysseus blinding Polyphemus). The narrator and (to a greater extent) his friend "the citizen" represent the giant cyclops because they are extremely arrogant and view the world in a one-eyed way, from just a single perspective. Joyce contrasts this with Bloom's cognitive flexibility, or his ability to assess multiple points of view and accept disagreement. (The astronomical concept of* parallax *also represents how triangulating between different perspectives can provide the most information about something.) Clearly, Joyce thinks that it's important for people to see multiple sides of the same story—but as a writer, he also mocks that idea in this episode by introducing a series of grossly exaggerated voices that parody a wide variety of different literary styles and compete for attention. These voices are also "one-eyed" perspectives, and by using them, Joyce is partially engaging in self-parody. He is both trying to prove that* Ulysses *is a universal book and consciously poking fun at his own ego for his pretentious idea that any book could ever capture the entirety of the human experience. Meanwhile, the main narrator's anonymity is a subtle nod to the way Odysseus convinced Polyphemus that his name was "nobody" in order to prevent him from finding him later.*

Joe Hynes and the narrator agree to go to Barney Kiernan's for a drink. Joe explains that he wants to meet "the citizen" to tell him about a city meeting about cattle foot and mouth disease. The narrative abruptly breaks into the style of a classical Celtic legend with a flowery description of Dublin's central market, chock-full of goods from all across the country: fish, vegetables, meat, dairy, and more.

The characters' interest in local politics and the brief caricature of classical Irish legend both point to this episode's fixation on Irish politics and identity. Through the Celtic legend's exaggerated praise, Joyce seems to be pointing out how many Irish nationalists irrationally feel loyal to and proud of absolutely anything associated with their country (including something as common as a central market). Of course, throughout this episode, foot and mouth disease also obviously hints at "foot in mouth disease"—or the characters' tendency to say foolish things and awkwardly embarrass themselves.

In the corner of Barney Kiernan's pub, Joe Hynes and the narrator meet the citizen and his mangy, aggressive dog Garryowen. The citizen starts talking about politics, and the men order drinks. An interlude describes the heroic citizen sitting on a boulder in front of a tower, breathing majestically, dressed like a rugged Irish mountain man. He has rocks engraved with images of dozens of different heroes, both Irish (like Cuchulin, Soggarth Eoghan, and Red Jim McDermott) and international (like Shakespeare, Captain Nemo, and the Gautama Buddha). Back in the pub, Hynes pays for everyone's drinks and explains that a "prudent member" gave him a tip. (The epic voice says that "O'Bloom, the son of Rory" is "the prudent soul.")

Garryowen is the reader's first sign of the citizen's personality, and the interlude describing the citizen as a hero allows Joyce to parody the citizen's ridiculously inflated view of both himself and his country. Like many of the nationalists in this novel—as well as the British student Haines, who absurdly shares their view—true Irish people are rugged mountain men and milkmaids, and not the modern city-dwellers of Dublin. When Hynes refers to Bloom's tip, he's not talking about the Ascot Gold Cup race—he's talking about the cashier at the Freeman *office (although the similarity between these two "tips" set up a clear connection between them). Evidently, rather than paying his debts, Hynes just drew more money to go drinking.*

The citizen complains that *The Irish Independent* is publishing too many English names in its listing of births, deaths, and marriages. While the men drink, Bob Doran is passed out in the corner. Alf Bergan enters the bar and points to something outside the door. It's Denis Breen with his lawbooks and his wife, Alf explains, "traipsing all round Dublin" looking for a lawyer willing to take on his libel case. The novel breaks back into the ironic epic voice, as the barman Terry O'Ryan brings Alf a Guinness and Alf buys his buddies a round with a precious bronze coin embossed with the image of "Her Most Excellent Majesty" Queen Victoria.

Two figures from "Lestrygonians" return here: Bob Doran, who's on his yearly bender, and Denis Breen, who's trying to sue the unidentified sender of an incomprehensible postcard ("U.P."). Doran and Breen's commitment to totally pointless endeavors indirectly highlights the fact that the citizen is doing the exact same thing. The citizen's complaint about The Irish Independent *is characteristically superficial and intolerant: he conflates the fact that many English people live in Dublin with the British Empire's colonial domination and the newspaper's decision to report on these people with bias towards them. After Alf enters the bar, the description of his awe-inspiring coin parodies the citizen from the other side, by showing what an exaggerated and irrational* English *nationalism would sound like.*

Alf pulls out a stack of letters and declares that he just saw Willy Murray chatting with Paddy Dignam in the street. Joe Hynes clarifies that Paddy Dignam is dead, but Alf can scarcely believe it. Meanwhile, Bob Doran calls out from his corner, "Who are you laughing at? [...] Who's dead?" In a parody of the Sanskrit-obsessed theosophists, the novel describes Alf establishing a mystical connection with Paddy Dignam's departed spirit. Then, the businesslike voice from the beginning of the episode discusses Dignam's last will and testament, and the Celtic epic voice mourns for "O'Dignam."

Alf's claim to have seen Paddy Dignam calls his credibility into question and fits in with this episode's constant emphasis on fibbing and exaggeration. Joyce pokes even greater fun at him by parodying the theosophists and returning to two of the voices from the beginning of the episode. While these different voices are all meaningful because they represent different perspectives, each of them is so exaggerated and narrow (or "one-eyed") that it becomes impossible to synthesize them all into a coherent picture. Through the theosophist voice, he makes fun of spiritualists like George Russell but also comments on metempsychosis (or reincarnation); through the business voice he introduces the topic that will draw Bloom to the bar (Dignam's will) but also parodies businessmen like Bloom; and through the Celtic epic voice he both mocks Irish nationalists and laments the finality of death. Thus Joyce uses narrow ("one-eyed") perspectives to tell a series of more complex ("two-eyed") stories.

The citizen spots Leopold Bloom outside the bar. Meanwhile, Bob Doran curses Christ for letting Dignam die. Terry O'Ryan comes down to shut Bob up, and Bob breaks out into tears instead. Bloom comes inside the bar and asks Terry for Martin Cunningham. Meanwhile, Joe Hynes reads one of Alf's letters: a barber named Rumbold writes to the Dublin High Sheriff about a hangman job, citing his previous experience and his skill with nooses.

Bob Doran's shouting, sobbing, and blasphemy add to the sense of danger and casual aggression that is slowly building up in this episode. So do the letters from the hangman. Of course, it's no coincidence that Bloom and Cunningham—easily the novel's most sympathetic and kindhearted male characters—are about to get caught up in this foreboding atmosphere.

Joe greets Bloom and offers him a drink, but Bloom doesn't want anything. He eventually agrees to take a cigar. The men chat about capital punishment, and Bloom offers intelligent arguments about its practicality. Garryowen the dog sniffs at Bloom, which prompts the man narrating this episode to speculate that "those jewies does have a sort of queer odour." Alf talks about how hanged men get erections, and Bloom responds by scientifically explaining why this happens. The novel describes Bloom's theory in the anatomically precise style of a pretentious medical journal.

Bloom sets himself apart from the other men by refusing a drink at a pub, commenting intelligently on a boorish and opinionated conversation, and turning a joke about erections into an opportunity to teach others about science. While it's not surprising, the narrator's casual anti-Semitism makes it clear that the other men do not consider Bloom a true Irishman or equal. In addition to alienating himself by putting his foot in his mouth, then, Bloom was already excluded from the group by the other men's prejudice.

One thing leads to another, and Joe Hynes and the citizen start talking excitedly about Irish nationalist revolutionaries. Bob Doran starts rambling and playing with the dog Garryowen; Alf barely saves him from falling off his stool. Bob also starts eating the crumbs out of an old Jacobs' biscuit tin. Meanwhile, Bloom gets involved in the political argument, although the narrator thinks he's wrong and pretentious. The narrator remembers several rumors about Bloom, like how once got a young man drunk in order "to teach him the evils of alcohol," but his plot backfired and the young man was soon getting drunk five days a week. The citizen drinks to "the memory of the dead [Irish revolutionaries]" and shouts over Bloom when he attempts to clarify his point.

Bob Doran's antics serve as a metaphor to show that the bar scene is quickly falling into disarray. While the unproven rumors about Bloom actually testify to his well-intentioned (if naïve) attempts to help people, the narrator views them as suspicious because they go against his own personal loyalties. Similarly, by memorializing the dead instead of having a nuanced political discussion, the citizen shows that he's less interested in learning or understanding others than repeating or celebrating his own beliefs. Whether he's right or wrong about Irish independence, Joyce's point is that he turns politics into an emotional performance and a source of identity, which prevents him from recognizing the validity of other people's interests and points of view.

The novel parodies sensationalistic newspaper journalism with a long interlude describing the day of an Irish revolutionary's public execution in Dublin. This account dwells at length on the weather, the prominent people in attendance, the executioner Rumbold's "disembowelling appliances," and the revolutionary's girlfriend.

This parody mocks both the pro-Irish nationalists and the pro-English unionists for their ceremonious pretentiousness. In doing so, Joyce also mocks the journalists, pamphleteers, and novelists who exaggerate the importance of this kind of political theater.

Bloom, Joe Hynes, the citizen, and the narrator keep talking about politics. They discuss the Irish language and the politics of drinking—Bloom supports the antitreating league (a pro-sobriety group), but the narrator doesn't, since he remembers getting bored at one of their events. The dog Garryowen starts growling at the narrator. In a passage parodying a magazine advertisement, the novel imagines an upcoming poetry reading exhibition by the humanized, well-trained Garryowen (now named Owen Garry). The narrator has Terry bring the dog some water, and Joe Hynes orders more drinks. Bloom declines, as he's only intending to see Martin Cunningham about Dignam's insurance. The narrator disapproves of the complex way Bloom explains the relevant mortgage laws and repeatedly makes anti-Semitic remarks.

Once again, Bloom's opinions are based on reasoned political analysis, while the citizen and the narrator's are based entirely on their personal experiences and loyalties. But the greater issue is that, in addition to starting *with these personal loyalties, these men are simply incapable of* looking past *them. Garryowen's aggressive growling is Joyce's way of suggesting that the citizen is always on the prowl, looking for another target to attack. But on the other hand, Owen Garry's poetry reading also mocks Bloom's obsession with decorum and the idea that it's possible to change people's fundamental nature.*

Bob Doran stumbles over to Bloom and expresses his condolences to Mrs. Dignam about Paddy Dignam's death. The novel comments on this conversation with a parody of overly formal, elaborate upper-class politeness. Then, Bob stumbles out of the bar, even though it's only five o'clock. The man narrating this episode points out that Bob is impious when he's drunk, but he is a model Catholic when he isn't. Joe Hynes, the citizen, and the narrator drink their pints.

The novel emphasizes Doran's drunken recklessness by caricaturing its opposite. This is another example of how Joyce stays "two-eyed" while most of his characters (besides Bloom) remain "one-eyed." Namely, Joyce not only sees multiple sides (extreme informality and extreme formality, or strict piety and sloppy impiety), but he also ruthlessly mocks both these sides.

Joe and Alf chat about Nannetti running for mayor, and Joe remembers seeing him at the meeting about foot and mouth disease. Bloom used to work with cattle, so he explains the disease, which makes the narrator even angrier at him. The narrator makes a joke about hens, and the novel briefly breaks out into the style of a book for young children starring Black Liz, the hen.

Bloom's competence continues to frustrate the narrator and the citizen, because their convictions are based precisely on their willful incompetence. *To add insult to injury, Bloom's understanding of the problem doesn't lead him to lose his calm and collected approach to it. Of course, the men's annoyance is also somewhat rather justified, because Bloom stumbled into their conversation by accident and is now taking it over to explain things they don't care about.*

Joe explains that Nannetti is headed to London to speak in Parliament about the cattle issue and the legality of playing traditional Irish games in the park. Bloom is disappointed because he's supposed to talk to Nannetti about Keyes's ad. The novel transforms into a question-and-answer session in the British Parliament about "the slaughter of human animals who dare to play Irish games in the Phoenix park." Joe says that the citizen was once a great shot-putter, and the men start chatting about traditional Irish sports. The narrator complains that Bloom can talk about anything forever, even a piece of straw on the floor. The novel briefly becomes a parody of a newspaper column summarizing a public meeting about the Gaelic sports revival. The column notes that Bloom opposed the revival and lists all the clergy who attended.

Nannetti's departure represents a kind of betrayal for Bloom—it suggests that, all along, he really wasn't taking Bloom seriously. Meanwhile, Traditional Irish games become another proxy for nationalism, and Bloom's questioning gets transformed into outright opposition in the newspaper column, which suggests that the narrator and the citizen see him as an enemy even though he's just expressing slight skepticism. The scene set in Parliament mocks the nationalists' sanctimoniousness, but also returns to the analogy between Irish cattle and oppressed Irish people, thereby mocking British colonialism as well.

The men's conversation drifts to the boxing match that Blazes Boylan promoted. Bloom talks about lawn tennis, but the other men ignore him, and then the novel breaks into a detailed account of a boxing match. The men chat about Boylan's newest venture, Molly Bloom's concert tour, and Bloom awkwardly praises Boylan's management. A romantic literary voice praises Molly's "peerless beauty," then announces that J.J. O'Molloy and Lambert have entered the bar. The episode's primary narrator criticizes O'Molloy, who pretends to be successful but secretly pawns off his possessions under a false name.

Yet another conversation turns to Molly and Blazes Boylan. Every time the novel comments on Molly's beauty, it's pointing out the bittersweet fate of Bloom's marriage: everyone envies him, but another man is also sleeping with his wife. Boylan's boxing promotion fits in with his brash, irreverent character, and this implies that Molly has chosen someone with the citizen and the narrator's value system over the tame, decent, liberal Bloom. In other words, chaos and aggression seem to be the way of the world, and Bloom is lonely in rebelling against it on behalf of facts, reason, and tolerance. If O'Molloy's debts are common knowledge, then the reader ought to wonder if Molly and Boylan's affair is, too.

As they drink, the men chat about Denis Breen and laugh at his absurd lawsuit. Bloom sympathizes with Mrs. Breen, who has to deal with her husband's madness. The Breens pass by again on the street with Corny Kelleher. Joe Hynes asks about the case of the scammer who sold people false tickets to Canada. Ned Lambert complains that the Recorder who tried the case was sympathetic because of the scammer's poverty. In a passage that mocks both religious and legal prose, the novel describes the recorder Frederick Falkiner choosing to let the man off.

While everyone else ridicules the Breens, Bloom continues to be the only man at the bar who's capable of seeing someone else's perspective. In fact, Hynes and Lambert's commentary on the court case indicates that they view empathy, sympathy, and kindness as forms of weakness. Joyce's varied parodies allow him to keep mocking practically everything—Irish institutions, all the men in the bar scene, and their scornful and pointless conversations.

The citizen starts complaining about immigrants and foreigners, whom he blames for Ireland's problems and wants out. Bloom ignores him and, instead, asks Joe Hynes to help get Keyes's advertisement to Myles Crawford. (In exchange, Bloom will forget about the money Hynes owes him until next month.) The citizen concludes that Ireland's trouble is "a dishonoured wife," and in response, Alf brings over a magazine of "smutty yankee pictures" from the bar counter and shows the other men a picture of a Chicago woman caught up in an adultery scandal.

The citizen finally crosses the line from defensible pro-Irish hype to open hostility at foreigners. Of course, this is a thinly-veiled attack on Bloom, although it may or may not be intentional. Acting out his values of tolerance and respect, Bloom dignifiedly ignores the citizen's attack. The citizen's "dishonoured wife" comment and Alf's dirty pictures are another veiled reference to Molly—whose dishonor seems to be Bloom's trouble. That said, the tolerant and forward-looking Bloom can choose to reject the citizen's traditional analogy between country and family, or treason and adultery. In the next several episodes, Bloom is concerned with finding another way to think of his grace, honor, and success besides the tired metaphor of masculine competition over women and resources.

Lenehan and John Wyse Nolan come into the bar and the citizen asks them what happened at the city hall meeting about the Irish language. In the voice of an epic legend, the novel briefly depicts Nolan as a hero dedicating himself to the Irish people. "To hell with the bloody brutal [English]," the citizen proclaims. J.J. O'Molloy and Bloom try to talk the citizen down, but he just gets angrier: he claims that the English have never created any valuable art and aren't even real Europeans. Lenehan yells out, "*Perfide Albion* [Perfidious England]," and the novel briefly mocks him by comparing him to a brawny barbarian repeating his tribe's slogan.

The citizen's anger suggests that he's unable to separate people, government, and country—he views them as one and the same. Therefore, his main criterion for choosing what to support and reject is whether it's associated with the English or the Irish. Rather than considering nuances, like Bloom, he rejects everything English and praises everything Irish. The parody that describes Lenehan as a barbarian drives home this critique by making it absolutely clear that his opinions are based on blind loyalty and not independent thought.

Lenehan informs the other men that the horse Throwaway, a longshot and outsider, won the Ascot Gold Cup. Lenehan, Boylan, and Boylan's "lady friend" (possibly Molly Bloom) all lost money by betting on Sceptre.

Throwaway was the horse that Bantam Lyons bet on after misunderstanding Bloom (who said he was going to "throw away" a newspaper) in "Lotus Eaters." Thus, the underdog has won—which also foreshadows the outcome of the novel's other race (the masculine competition between Bloom and Boylan). It can also be seen as a metaphor for Ireland (the underdog) defeating England (the favorite) to win independence, or outsiders like Bloom finding success in Ireland.

The citizen continues to argue with O'Molloy and Bloom. He blames England for degrading Ireland, reducing its population, corrupting the fine products it used to export, and cutting down its forests. The novel breaks into a mock newspaper report about a fashionable wedding, where the guests are all named after trees, flowers, and forests. The citizen insists that God will help Ireland rebuild its strength and win independence from the British. But the narrator thinks the citizen is spewing nonsense. The men order more drinks. Alf Bergan points out violent stories in the newspaper, one about a headbutting match and another about the lynching of a Black man in the U.S. The narrator of this episode thinks that they should have crucified the man instead of burning him alive.

The citizen might be right about England's crimes in Ireland. But his absurd rhetoric about God-favored Ireland's bright future shows that, for him, politics is still an emotional fantasy rather than a civic reality. He wants his team to win, at any cost, no matter what they have to do to get there. In fact, this fantasy gives him a promise of fulfillment and happiness—much like the idea of having a son and estate does for Bloom, or the idea of becoming an influential artist does for Stephen. Indeed, by returning to the metaphorical link between family, country, and fertility, the mock wedding scene points out this analogy between the citizen and Bloom. The narrator's celebration of violence against minorities is a bad omen for Bloom, while the motif of crucifixion connects Bloom to the Messiah (which implies salvation, fulfillment, and sacrifice for the good of the many).

The citizen discusses how the English brutally punish misbehavior in the British Navy, and he declares that the English are hypocrites to sincerely believe that their empire is benevolent. In a brief parody of the Apostles' Creed, a basic statement of Christian faith, the novel compares an Irish Navy man to Jesus. Bloom challenges the citizen's indignation by suggesting that discipline is sometimes necessary in the Navy, and the citizen launches into a tirade about the potato famine of 1845-1852. The citizen, John Wyse Nolan, and Joe Hynes complain that the Irish fought for other nations (like France and Germany) in their wars, but didn't get others' loyalty in return. They even insult Queen Victoria and King Edward VII. Then, they order more drinks.

Again, Joyce is careful to offer both contrasting perspectives: with the novel's parody of the Apostles' Creed, he mocks the same Messianic analogies that he constantly makes between Bloom, Stephen, and Jesus. The citizen is fast spiraling out of control: anytime Bloom challenges anything he says, he coughs up another legitimate political grievance from the past. In contrast, while Bloom might recognize the validity of these grievances, he's much more interested in the future. Thus, the citizen mistakes Bloom's curiosity for disagreement.

Bloom complains that people have always persecuted each other in world history, and this causes nations to hate each other. The citizen asks Bloom what a nation is, and they're not satisfied with his response that it's "the same people living in the same place." They're also not happy when he says that Ireland is his nation. The citizen spits and then cleans himself with a handkerchief, which the novel describes as a "muchtreasured and intricately embroidered ancient Irish facecloth" in a paragraph mocking a news report.

The conservative, traditionalist citizen turns explicitly against the tolerant, modern Bloom for several reasons. Bloom views Ireland in historical context rather than considering it a special nation with a unique historical destiny. Bloom similarly views nationalist anger as the result of historical forces, and not as a divine and righteous force for justice. He thinks of a nation as a social and geographical community, rather than an ethnic and historical one. According to his definition, Bloom considers him an Irishman, while the other men think he will never be truly Irish because of his foreign roots.

Bloom points out that Jewish people continue to be persecuted, too. John Wyse Nolan proposes that Jewish people fight back, but Bloom says that this would be useless: the real solution is love. While Bloom leaves to go find Martin Cunningham, the citizen and John Wyse Nolan keep mocking him, and for a paragraph, the novel sappily lists different people who love each other.

This passage includes one of Joyce's rare moral and political appeals. (He usually preferred to avoid politics.) Bloom points out that scapegoating has a long history, and anti-Semitism in 20th century Europe is another iteration of that history. He sees how dominant groups justify committing ethnic violence through a combination of racism, nationalism, and historical grievance. And he sees how this is a cycle—the British oppressed the Irish, who are now turning against the Jews. This is why Bloom believes in love, forgiveness, and tolerance: they're the only way to break this cycle of grievance and violence. While the novel points out how Bloom's line about love is cliched and uninspiring, there are good reasons to think that Joyce really does believe in it. After all, Bloom's kindness, empathy, and capacity to forgive are his greatest moral strength in this novel.

The citizen starts railing against the British for using religion to profit. He reads an article from a satirical newspaper that imagines a Zulu chief visiting England and thanking Queen Victoria for giving him a copy of the Bible. J.J. O'Molloy compares this to the Belgian atrocities in the Congo.

The other men simply ignore Bloom's plea for love and continue to pointlessly rail against the British. Ironically, then, they're perfectly capable of understanding how the English have injured and scapegoated other groups, including the Irish, but they can't see how they're now doing the same to immigrants and Jews.

Lenehan falsely claims that Bloom has left to collect his horserace winnings from the Ascot Gold Cup—after all, Bantam Lyons told Lenehan that Bloom gave him a tip for Throwaway. The men agree that Bloom is "a bloody dark horse." The narrator goes to the bathroom, thinking about Bloom's alleged winnings. When he returns, John Wyse Nolan is suggesting that Bloom has actually been helping the Irish Nationalists, but the narrator decides Bloom's father must have been a fraudster who contributed to Ireland's downfall.

The Ascot Gold Cup becomes the basis for another prejudicial rumor about Bloom. This rumor is full of classic anti-Semitic tropes: secret conspiracies to make exorbitant profits. Meanwhile, the "bloody dark horse" comment clearly associates Bloom with the underdog horse, Throwaway, and solidifies his outsider status. John Wyse Nolan tries to deflate the situation by pointing out that Bloom actually does sympathize with the nationalists—which is true—but the other men can't see beyond their prejudice.

Martin Cunningham, Jack Power, and Crofton arrive at the bar. The novel briefly retells this arrival in a pseudo-medieval voice, and then Martin asks for Bloom. John Wyse Nolan asks Martin if Bloom really does support the nationalists, and Martin says he does. But Lenehan, Alf Bergan, J.J. O'Molloy, and the citizen don't believe this, and when Martin explains that Bloom's father was really a Hungarian Jew named Virag, the men get furious.

Martin Cunningham finally arrives to meet with Bloom about Dignam's insurance, and the medieval voice emphasizes Cunningham's virtue. (It's worth remembering that their motives are nothing but pure and benevolent: they want to help support Dignam's family.) Cunningham nobly tries to inform the other men about Bloom, but again, truth fails to overcome prejudice. The fact that Bloom is an Irish nationalist somehow doesn't matter as much as the fact that he's a foreigner. Thus, the other men are alienating an ally—and making their own political fight harder—because they are more attached to their feeling of righteousness than the actual fate of Ireland.

The citizen sarcastically compares Bloom to the Messiah and Ned Lambert remembers how excited Bloom was for his son Rudy's birth. Martin agrees to have a drink with the other men, and he, the citizen, and Joe Hynes say a toast to St. Patrick. In a lengthy interlude, the novel gives an overly formal description of a Catholic procession. It includes a long list of saints who bear a long list of sacred items. Several of these saints are conveniently named after the main characters in this episode. Led by Father O'Flynn, the procession goes to Barney Kiernan's and blesses it as a holy drinking-house.

Ironically enough, the citizen's comparison is a real allusion in the book: Joyce frequently compares Bloom to the Messiah, so he might be making fun of his own ambition here. The father and son again correspond to God and the Messiah, which neatly refers to the way Bloom views having a son as the key to fulfillment. The religious procession allows Joyce to mock this idea—and Ireland's religiosity and conservatism—in much more detail.

Bloom comes back to the bar, and he's glad to see Martin Cunningham (who he was looking for at the courthouse). Convinced that Bloom is lying, the narrator and the citizen accuse him of trying to keep a secret. Cunningham, Jack Power, and Crofton rush Bloom out of the bar and into their car. In a parody of a medieval legend, the novel compares this car to a mythical ship setting sail.

The religious iconography in the previous paragraphs makes it clear that Bloom's return to the bar is a kind of symbolic second coming, but the narrator and the citizen don't believe in him and symbolically crucify him by attacking him. The secret they're referring to is clearly the Ascot Gold Cup race—the prize of which suggests a chalice (traditionally associated with communion, femininity, and abundance).

The citizen runs to the door of the bar and yells out, "Three cheers for Israel!" The narrator criticizes this outburst, and a group of people congregates around the citizen, who goes on an anti-Semitic rant. Bloom replies that many great figures were Jewish, like the composer Mendelssohn, the philosopher Spinoza, and Jesus (which means God was Jewish, too). The furious citizen yells that he will "crucify" Bloom.

The citizen's rant makes the crucifixion metaphor even more explicit. In his response, Bloom briefly takes up the citizen's political worldview by naming a series of famous Jews and, essentially, cheering for his own team. By this team-based logic, God is on Bloom's side. He snidely suggests that, if the citizen isn't willing to be tolerant and accepting, then at the very least he ought to be Jewish.

In another intervening parody passage, the novel mockingly compares the crowd that gathers around Bloom and the citizen to a ceremony celebrating the departure of Hungarian royalty from Dublin. The citizen runs inside the bar and grabs the empty Jacob's Biscuits tin. The horse starts pulling Martin Cunningham's car along, and the citizen throws the biscuit tin at Bloom. But the sun gets in his eyes and he misses.

By juxtaposing an overly formal parody with the citizen's vulgar and unceremonious attack, Joyce suggests that fanfare and formalities are often established to cover up a much less civil, more vicious reality. The Jacob's tin is an important (if tongue-in-cheek) symbol of Irish nationalism because it was one of the only important factories that employed people in Dublin. When the citizen shot-puts the tin at Bloom but gets blinded by the sun, this is a clear reference to the blinded cyclops Polyphemus throwing a rock (and also missing) at Odysseus in the Odyssey.

A long paragraph describes the ensuing confrontation as a devastating earthquake, which caused a storm so strong that it blew people's possessions clear across Ireland. The narrator of this episode comments that the citizen was lucky to miss, so that he won't get in legal trouble. But the citizen shouts, "Did I kill him, […] or what?" and sends the dog Garryowen after Bloom. The episode ends with one final parody, in which a new voice compares Martin Cunningham's departing car to Elijah's chariot, ascending to heaven.

The end of this episode embodies Joyce's "two-eyed" strategy of simultaneously exaggerating events and making fun of his own exaggerations. The monumental storm and comparison between the car and the ascending chariot suggest that Bloom's escape is a divinely ordained miracle (kind of like Odysseus's numerous escapes from treacherous islands in the Odyssey*). But the actual circumstances of his escape are utterly mundane: he's running away from a drunken fool, not a mythical cyclops. The citizen's last line shows that he's still hopelessly in denial about his status and ability.*

EPISODE 13: NAUSICAA

At sunset, three teenaged girls play on the rocks at Sandymount Strand. They are Cissy Caffrey, Edy Boardman, and Gerty MacDowell. Cissy's younger twin brothers Tommy and Jacky are playing on the sand, and Edy Boardman's infant brother is in a stroller, laughing jollily and playing with the loving, joyful Cissy. Tommy and Jacky start fighting over a sand castle, and Cissy helps them reconcile.

This episode's tone is practically the opposite of the one in "Cyclops"—it's naïve, sensitive, and sentimental, rather than absurdly grandiose and violent. At the same time, its subject matter is arguably far more disturbing. In the Odyssey*, Nausicaa is the Phaeacian princess who finds the shipwrecked Odysseus on the shore of her island. He's dirty and naked, and he frightens Nausicaa's handmaidens, who run away from him. But Nausicaa nobly cleans and takes care of him instead. Here, the girls playing on Sandymount Strand signal that there's a clear correspondence between this episode and the story of Odysseus and Nausicaa.*

Meanwhile, Gerty MacDowell sits on the rocks, "lost in thought, gazing far away into the distance." In a cutesy stream of consciousness, she reflects on her beauty, her refined manners, and the makeup tips she learned from the *Princess Novelette* weekly magazine. Sad and pensive, she nearly says something, but she lets out a giggle instead. She is thinking about her "lovers' quarrel." The Wylie boy used to ride his bicycle past her window, but he has stopped ever since his father started making him stay home to study. Gerty feels hurt, but even though the Wylies are Protestant, she is still hopeful. She is proud of her neat, stylish dress, and especially her lucky blue underwear.

Gerty MacDowell is clearly the Nausicaa figure in this episode, and she's the first woman to get any significant space to speak in the novel. She´s in many ways a stereotypical teenage girl: she's daydreaming about boys, she's extremely self-conscious about her appearance, and she's obsessed with showing off her unique individual beauty. Despite her high hopes for her romance, in reality, her connection to Reggy Wylie is extremely tenuous: they have never really spent time together, and it's nearly impossible for Protestants and Catholics to intermarry in early 20th century Ireland.

Suddenly, Gerty feels a sense of "gnawing sorrow" and starts to wish that she could be home alone, to cry in peace. She imagines her marriage to Reggy Wylie, who once kissed her on the nose at a party, but she also imagines that she could find a manlier, more passionate husband. She imagines herself as a model housewife, cooking and caring for her tall, mature, mustachioed husband.

Gerty's voice is quickly taking precedence in this episode, and while she's clearly a caricature of a teenage girl, it's not clear that Joyce really means to be ridiculing her (like he probably was with the previous episode's narrator, for instance). Her daydreams about Reggy—a boy she's evidently only met once—suggest her interests are limited to the rather narrow concerns of men, family, and the home. But of course, Joyce is more likely criticizing the way his contemporary Irish culture forced women into this role, rather than judging Gerty for fitting into it. After all, Gerty's romantic fantasies are no less unrealistic than the fantasies of the novel's older male characters—and especially Bloom, who also associates fulfillment with a happy home and family.

Tommy wants to take his ball back from Edy's baby brother. Edy says no, but Cissy tosses Tommy the ball and starts to play with the baby to distract him. Cissy mentions the baby's bottom. This "unladylike" word offends Gerty, and Edy complains that a gentleman standing nearby probably heard it. (Although it's not yet obvious, this gentleman is Leopold Bloom.) But Cissy doesn't care. Gerty thinks about Cissy's famously boisterous, unselfconscious, brave personality.

Gerty demonstrates her strong commitment to traditional gender roles, in which femininity requires (among other things) delicacy, innocence, and shyness. She's uncomfortable when Edy challenges these roles, but this later proves deeply ironic, as the episode soon takes a distinctively "unladylike" turn. Similarly, Joyce doesn't reveal Bloom's identity at first, which means it only becomes possible to fully understand this scene in retrospect (once his identity is revealed). Of course, this is a technique he constantly uses throughout the novel, in part to explore the difference in the way people experience literature and their lives.

The church choir and organ sound in the background, where the church is organizing a "men's temperance retreat." This saddens Gerty, who thinks about her father's alcoholism and misbehavior—like hitting Gerty's mother. Still, Gerty loves her father despite his faults. After Dignam's death, Gerty's mother made a point of warning her husband about drinking. Gerty considers herself "a sterling good daughter" because she takes care of her mother and helps out in the house.

The novel's description of the church services suggest a symbolic link between Gerty and the Virgin Mary, and these church services also underline Gerty's preoccupation with questions about morality and propriety throughout this episode. Joyce is evidently pointing to the link between Gerty's traditional values about gender and the church's influence in Ireland. Moreover, the theme of temperance (abstention from alcohol) links her to Bloom, who advocated it in the last episode. Alcoholism was clearly a problem in Dublin in 1904—at least a dozen characters in this novel suffered from it and tore their families apart as a result. (They include Gerty's father, Dignam, Simon Dedalus, Myles Crawford, Mrs. Cunningham, Bob Doran, and several others.)

The twins, Tommy and Jacky, play with the ball until Jacky kicks it into the rocks. The gentleman sitting nearby (Bloom), who is wearing all black, catches the ball and tosses it to Cissy. It rolls over to Gerty, who tries to kick it away. At first, she misses, but then she gives "a jolly good kick" and sends the ball flying down the beach. She blushes and sees the gentleman's face, which is "the saddest she had ever seen." She smells incense and hears prayers from the nearby church.

Bloom is still dressed for Dignam's funeral, so Gerty assumes that he's still in mourning. Of course, she's grossly misinterpreting the situation—but so does everyone who projects their feelings onto others in this novel. Joyce is showing how people misinterpret situations to fit their own needs, desires, and fantasies. In fact, some critics (and Joyce himself) suggested that this misinterpretation goes further in this episode, and the cutesy voice narrating it isn't really Gerty's at all—rather, it's Bloom imagining what he thinks Gerty would be feeling. Gerty's "jolly good kick" is actually significant, because the reader will soon learn that her other leg is lame—thus, the kick is another example of misrepresentation.

The twins keep playing around. Cissy Caffrey plays peek-a-boo with the baby, then tells him to say "pa pa pa pa pa pa pa." She folds over his wet blanket and gives him his bottle to stop his tears. Frustrated with the baby and the twins, Gerty gazes at the sea and appreciates the church music.

Although she's constantly dreaming about finding a husband and starting a family, curiously enough, Gerty has no interest in the children. She prefers immersing herself in the faraway beauty of the sea and the church music, which reinforces the sense that her daydream is really a distant fantasy, rather than an immediate desire for marriage and children.

Gerty then notices that the nearby gentleman (Bloom) is looking at her, with his deep, "superbly expressive" eyes. She immediately thinks that he is foreign, and she again notes that he is sad and in mourning. She starts to think that he might be the husband she has been dreaming about. She doesn't care if he's a sinner or a Protestant: she will forgive him if he will only "embrace her gently, like a real man." Gerty thinks she will be this man's "refuge" and "comfortress," which reminds her of Father Conroy comforting her and talking about the Virgin Mary in church. She thinks about making Father Conroy a teacosy as a token of gratitude, then remembers the white and gold cuckoo clock in his home.

Gerty might be right about Bloom being an unusually emotional and sensitive man, but pretty much everything else she thinks about him is completely wrong. Her desire to be the "comfortress" for a mature "real man" again shows that her entire vision of herself and her life is basically derived from the social norms she's learned from other people and institutions like the church. Unlike Bloom and Stephen, then, she doesn't question received knowledge or think for herself. Of course, it's difficult to say what stance (if any) Joyce is taking about Gerty's absolutely conventional domestic aspirations. Perhaps he's showing how the church brainwashes young women into thinking they can never be anything more than housewives. Perhaps Gerty's monologue is really an element of Bloom's fantasy, and Joyce is therefore pointing out how Bloom is incapable of really imagining a woman's experience except through stereotypes and objectification.

The twins continue to fight over the ball, which frustrates Gerty. To stop them from running into the sea, Cissy chases after them. Gerty thinks that it would be indecent if Cissy tripped and upturned her skirt, and the nearby gentleman (Bloom) noticed. Prayers to the Virgin Mary continue inside the church. The gentleman stares at Gerty's stockings while Father Conroy looks at the Blessed Sacrament, and Gerty swings her foot back and forth to the church music.

This brief scene is structured around a tension between purity and indecency. Gerty clearly thinks of herself as a respectable and chaste virgin, but her sexual insinuations about Cissy suggest that her mind isn't as pure as she makes it out to be. Meanwhile, Gerty's fantasies about domestic bliss with Bloom contrast with his evidently sexual interest in her (because he's staring at her legs).

Cissy and Edy both notice the gentleman (Bloom) and Gerty looking at each other, and Edy asks Gerty what she's thinking. Gerty says she's wondering about the time, and Cissy decides to run over and ask the gentleman for the time. He nervously pulls his hand out of his pocket and puts on an expression of self-control and grace. He reports that his watch has stopped, but it's probably at least eight o'clock. While the churchgoers sing and Father O'Hanlon burns incense over the Sacrament, Gerty notices the man put his hand back in his pocket. She feels a warmth and irritation in her skin, which means that she's about to start her period. The man looks at her, "literally worshipping at her shrine."

It may not be obvious yet, but Bloom's hand is in his pocket because he's masturbating. And even though she doesn't say it directly, Gerty knows exactly what he's doing. Of course, there are two possible ways to interpret Bloom and Gerty's eye contact, Cissy's decision to talk to Bloom, and Bloom's awkward response to her. All these things can seem completely innocent or absolutely repulsive—depending on whether the reader knows that Bloom is masturbating. In turn, the church music can either seem like a sign of the ideal, chaste romance that Gerty yearns for, or else a totally inappropriate or even obscene backdrop for Bloom's public masturbation. (This was the scene that originally got Ulysses *banned for obscenity in every single English-speaking country.) Therefore, this scene is a notable example of how Joyce writes to give his readers multiple simultaneous perspectives that allow them to examine the same situation from multiple angles.*

The girls get ready to go home. Edy jokingly mentions Gerty's heartbreak, but Gerty is hurt, because she truly does feel heartbroken. She nearly cries, but she makes a joke instead. She suddenly feels better and decides that she has no need for Reggy. Gerty notices that Edy is clearly angry and jealous about something, but she feels no sympathy for her. Edy and Cissy play with their little brothers and get them ready to leave.

Gerty's heartbreak, friendly rivalry with Edy, and sudden burst of confidence are both completely sincere and totally cliched. Whether she's fantasizing about Bloom, devastated at Reggy Wylie's rejection, or proud of not needing him, her thoughts and feelings continue to revolve entirely around men.

Gerty starts to say something, but she coughs instead and pretends that the noise was really coming from the church. As the twilight fades, the church bells start to ring, and Gerty imagines painting the beautiful scene. She thinks about the sentimental books she likes to read and the poetry that she secretly writes in her journal. She reflects on the accident that led to her "one shortcoming," and she promises that she could "make the great sacrifice" and dedicate her whole life to making the gentleman (Bloom) happy. She wonders if he's married, and she realizes that she could not bear to become a loathsome mistress. But she could still serve him, as he could still be "the only man in all the world for her."

Gerty's interest in popular, emotional, but unoriginal art shows that she's the product of a modern society. In other words, she expresses her feelings and perceptions through other people's fiction, poetry, and paintings. Joyce is clearly criticizing this kind of mass-produced sentimental art, as he suggests that it encourages people to live unoriginal, interchangeable lives. Gerty essentially projects a mass-produced fantasy onto her own future—and onto Bloom. In the process, she avoids thinking or feeling for herself.

Just when the benediction ends in the church, fireworks start to go off. Cissy and Edy run over with their brothers to watch, but Gerty stays back because she is entranced by the passionate gaze of the gentleman (Bloom). Feeling a shudder of pleasure, Gerty leans back to look at the fireworks, exposing her legs. She knows what she's showing off, but she's not ashamed, since her feelings for the gentleman are romantic, not just sexual. As the fireworks continue to go off, Jacky Caffrey tells Gerty to look. A Roman candle shoots off and Gerty leans so far back that she exposes her blue knickers. Gerty lets out a moan and the rocket explodes, representing Bloom's ejaculation. Everyone cheers and then falls silent.

Two climaxes coincide: the churchgoers take the sacrament at the same time as the fireworks go off (which is an extended metaphor for Bloom orgasming). Both represent communion (between the worshipper and Christ, and between sperm and egg). Since Gerty represents the Virgin Mary, it would be possible to view Bloom as God, enabling the virgin birth of Jesus. If Gerty's monologue can be taken at face value, then she is happy to expose herself to Bloom because she sees serving him sexually as an expression of her romantic love. (But if this version of Gerty is really a projection of Bloom's imagination, then he's just inventing elaborate excuses for his creepy behavior.)

Gerty sits up and glances at the gentleman, whom the narrative confirms is Leopold Bloom. The novel briefly jumps into Bloom's mind: he feels guilty and brutish for indulging the young girl, but he also sees her sympathy and the forgiveness in her eyes, and they both know that she won't tell their secret. Cissy calls for Gerty to leave with them, and Gerty decides to send Bloom a message by waving around her scented handkerchief. Hoping that she and Bloom will reunite someday, she smiles at him and then starts walking down the beach. Actually, she starts limping, because she's lame.

Bloom's arguably inappropriate, embarrassing, and predatory thoughts about Gerty force the reader to evaluate him from a very different light than in "Cyclops" (where he looked like a noble, tolerant hero). So does Gerty's disability, which Joyce uses to challenge his readers' preconceptions (as well as Bloom's). Her lame leg gives important context to her fantasies of beauty, romance, and domestic bliss: tragically, it seems that she was fantasizing about a beauty that others will not see in her and a future that she might not be able to have because of others' prejudice.

The novel cuts to Bloom's thoughts. He's shocked to see Gerty limp off, but he decides that it doesn't make him any less attracted to her. He wonders if she's "near her monthlies" and remarks that women behave strangely when they're menstruating. Bloom is glad that he didn't masturbate over Martha's letter in the morning, but waited for Gerty instead. He also thinks that this makes up for missing the woman in front of the Grosvenor Hotel during his chat with M'Coy. He thinks about how women are keen to show off their bodies, both through their fashionable clothing and without it. He imagines Gerty and her friends chatting at school, dreaming of finding the perfect man, jealously comparing their appearances.

Bloom's monologue, which will take up the rest of this episode, stands in obvious contrast with Stephen's monologue from "Proteus" (which was also on Sandymount Strand). In the last two episodes, the reader has encountered Bloom through other characters' eyes (the nameless debt collector's, and then Gerty's). This provides a wildly different perspective on him than his interior monologue—and that's Joyce's point. He wants to show how the same person can seem sympathetic, pathetic, noble, or incredibly creepy, when viewed through different people's eyes or in different contexts. Of course, he also does this by melding so many different literary styles throughout the novel.

Bloom remarks that women are "devils" during their periods, and he wonders what Gerty saw in him, a somewhat unattractive older man. He notes that Gerty showed off her hair, and he starts thinking about Molly and Boylan. He wonders if Boylan pays Molly for sex (and, if so, how much). And he realizes that his watch stopped at four thirty, which was probably the exact time that Boylan and Molly had sex.

There's quite a bit of dramatic irony in the contrast between Gerty's fantasy about Bloom in the first half of this episode and Bloom's utter bafflement at what Gerty could have been thinking in the second half. Bloom essentially convinces himself that Gerty was asking for it, which disturbingly suggests that he doesn't feel much (or any) guilt about his behavior. But, according to the description of her in the first half of this episode, Gerty was fully aware of what Bloom was doing and did encourage him. This makes it all the more important to ask whether that first section represented Gerty's actual feelings or just the fantasy that Bloom projected onto her. Molly and Boylan's tryst now stands as an obvious parallel to Bloom's own voyeuristic evening with Gerty.

Bloom rearranges his shirt, which is wet from his ejaculation. His mind shifts constantly from one thing to another. He imagines Gerty going home to her normal, innocent life, and he wonders what it would have been like if he had chatted with Cissy when she came over to ask for the time. He remembers once mistaking a friend for a prostitute, and once visiting a prostitute. He imagines how difficult unpopular prostitutes' lives must be, and he speculates that women like being with married men. He thinks about how he might seduce a woman, or manipulate her into loving him.

Bloom's thoughts about Gerty could scarcely be more different than her thoughts about him: he became the subject of her lofty marital fantasies, while he's curious about her everyday life and doesn't even plan to really meet her. Molly is still the only person he ever thinks about at all romantically. In this passage, his feelings about other women involve a complex mix of sympathy and sexual objectification, as though he's being pulled back and forth by competing instincts.

Bloom looks ahead at Gerty and her friends, who are off in the distance watching fireworks. He dwells on Cissy, criticizing her appearance and noting how lovingly she treats the baby. And while he notes that Gerty didn't turn around to look back at him, he's confident that she knew what he was doing. He thinks that women are more perceptive and aware than men. Molly and Milly are both that way, he muses—and his thoughts return to Gerty, who he thinks wore transparent stockings because she knew what she was getting into.

Bloom's fixation on the baby is probably a reflection of his desire to father another child. Although his comments about women are favorable, they're also sweeping generalizations. And they're also self-serving, because they allow Bloom to convince himself that Gerty was genuinely interested in him. Of course, Gerty was extremely perceptive and self-conscious in the first half of this episode, but it's unclear if she just happened to fit Bloom's stereotype, or if the narration was actually imposing Bloom's stereotypes on her.

Another rocket goes off, and Gerty turns around. Bloom feels like she is looking for him. He's relieved to have let off steam by masturbating, after his stressful afternoon at the pub and Dignam's house. He remembers hearing Gerty's friends call her name. He also laments how girls get so few years to enjoy their youth, before they are forced to start having children. He remembers that he ought to check on Mrs. Purefoy at the hospital.

Again, Bloom feels sympathetic to women, but he still only views them in relation to himself and his own sexuality. For instance, he laments the way young women are forced to become housewives, but he's less interested in their freedom than in their sexual availability before marriage. Bloom's comments about visiting Dignam's house are a reminder that not everything he does on June 16 gets included in the novel. In fact, this episode is set several hours after "Sirens," and Bloom and Martin Cunningham's visit to the Dignam family has been totally left out.

Bloom's mind drifts to the question of whether good women like Mrs. Breen and Mrs. Dignam are unlucky to end up with lazy drunkards as husbands, or whether they're partially responsible for their husbands' misbehavior. His thoughts turn to Molly, and he ponders the bizarre coincidence that his watch stopped exactly when she was with Blazes Boylan. He sees a watch's magnetic needle as a metaphor for the magnetism that brings men and women together. He wonders how Molly feels.

Bloom's ideas about women and misfortune are obviously tied up with his own feelings of betrayal by Molly and guilt for failing to be a better husband. What he's really asking is if Molly's affair is his fault. The tenuous metaphor about watch needles implies that Bloom's watch stopped because Molly directed her magnetic attraction away from him and towards Boylan. Even though this metaphor doesn't make much sense, it does show how Bloom puts his faith in rational, scientific explanations of the world. (To give some contrasting examples, Gerty views the world in terms of outward beauty, love, and destiny, while Stephen views it in terms of transcendent artistic beauty, freedom, and truth.)

Bloom notices the rose-like smell of Gerty's cheap perfume. He imagines the tiny particles blowing from her to him, and he thinks about the way women's smells stick on their possessions. He asks where people's odor really comes from, and if men give off different smells to attract women. He sniffs inside his waistcoat, but smells the soap he's carried with him all day, which reminds him of the lotion he has to pick up for Molly, the money he owes the shop owner, and the three shillings that Joe Hynes owes him.

Bloom's scientific mind examines the mechanics of how he managed to smell Gerty's scent, rather than thinking about what message she was trying to send by waving around her perfume-covered handkerchief. His scientific, remarkably unromantic view of attraction is totally the opposite of Gerty's sentimental daydreaming. The soap represents Bloom's tendency to try to control emotions by sanitizing them—he explains his deepest feelings through science in order to cope with them.

Bloom notices a mysterious "nobleman" walking before him on the beach and wonders who he might be. This reminds him of the man in the brown macintosh. He notices a lighthouse flashing in the distance and thinks of other things that shine in the night, the wavelengths of different colors of light, and the sun setting over Ireland, his country. He thinks about the rock Gerty was sitting on and notes how attractive he finds girls of her age. His thoughts about Gerty mix with his memories of Molly, his desire for Martha, and his feeling of resentment towards Blazes Boylan.

Bloom's perceptions and memories repeatedly cut off his meandering train of thought. Notably, in this passage, Bloom fixates on the sights he sees, but when Stephen visited this same beach in "Proteus," he was entirely focused on sounds. This is an example of parallax perception: they see the same scene in entirely different ways. The sunset's colors mix together, just like Bloom's feelings. While Stephen walked on the beach in the morning to clarify his thoughts and plans, Bloom relaxes and lets his own contradictory thoughts coexist, without trying to necessarily resolve them. For instance, he even remembers one of the novel's significant but minor mysteries—the identity of the man in the macintosh—but he's only contemplating this mystery, not trying to solve it.

Bloom notices a bat flying around, realizes that the nearby church has finished its services, and starts thinking about the nature of colors again. He then starts thinking about birds flying across the ocean, sailors living unhappy lives away from their families, and the frightening fate of sailors who die at sea. A last firework goes off in the sky, and it's nine o'clock, when the evening postman makes his rounds and everyone settles down for the night. Bloom thinks of sailors again and remembers taking a pleasure cruise with Molly and Milly—all the men got sick, and all the women were frightened. He thinks about playing with Milly in her childhood, then he starts to imagine Molly's childhood in Gibraltar.

Bloom's thoughts about sailors at sea point to his own correspondence with Odysseus and foreshadow his encounter with the eccentric sailor Murphy in "Eumaeus." Just like Odysseus and the sailors he mentions, Bloom has journeyed away from home, and it's time for him to return. (Of course, his twelve hours away from Molly so far don't begin to compare to Odysseus's twenty years away from Penelope.) Bloom's memories of Molly and Milly again show that what he wants most in the world is a happy family.

Increasingly tired, Bloom asks where he should go next and reflects on his busy day. In particular, he thinks about the fight in Barney Kiernan's bar. He supposes that the citizen and his crew didn't have particularly bad intentions. He thinks of widows and widowers, and he marvels at the coincidence that Mrs. Breen is married to the lunatic Denis Breen, and not himself. He remembers Keyes's ad and his plan to buy Molly a petticoat.

Bloom's strikingly sympathetic analysis of the citizen's attack again shows that he errs on the side of decency, tolerance, and goodwill. (In this case, he even seems to explain away the hate in a hate crime.) Even though he's thinking about a homecoming, Bloom also isn't sure he wants to return to Molly after her afternoon with Boylan. Still, his thoughts return to her, and specifically to ways to win her affection (and presumably get her to pick him over Boylan).

Bloom sees a piece of paper on the beach, but he can't read it. He picks up a stick and decides to write a little message in the sand for Gerty. He writes, "I. […] AM. A." But he runs out of space, gives up, and starts erasing the letters with his boot and throws his stick into the sand. He feels sleepy and starts losing coherence. He thinks vaguely about Molly's tour around Ireland and remembers a scene from the novel *The Sweets of Sin*. When Bloom is falling asleep on the rocks, the cuckoo clock starts sounding in Father Conroy's house. Gerty MacDowell hears it and thinks that "the foreign gentleman that was sitting on the rocks looking was / *Cuckoo* / *Cuckoo* / *Cuckoo*."

Bloom's message references the end of "Proteus," when Stephen had an epiphany and scribbled out a poem on a piece of paper. But Bloom doesn't manage to write anything. This failure likely symbolizes his inability to fully articulate his own identity throughout the novel. More specifically, he doesn't want to assert his identity as an individual, like Stephen—rather, he's looking for belonging in a community (or family). But just like he doesn't actually want to meet Martha Clifford, it appears that he doesn't want to establish real contact with Gerty—he prefers for her to remain a fantasy. Presumably, this is because he doesn't want to threaten his relationship with Molly (even though she's cheating on him). Since the word "cuckold" is a reference to the cuckoo bird, Father Conroy's cuckoo clock is an overt symbol of Molly's infidelity. At the same time, the cuckoo clock also implies that "the foreign gentleman […] was cuckoo," or crazy, when he was watching Gerty.

EPISODE 14: OXEN OF THE SUN

This famously difficult episode of *Ulysses* moves through a series of different narrative voices that each represents a different period in the history of English writing. The episode opens with three mysterious Pagan Roman chants, each repeated three times. The first is "Deshil Holles Eamus" ("Let us go South to Holles Street"). The second is a fertility prayer to the Sun (and the obstetrician Dr. Horne), "Send us bright one, light one, Horhorn, quickening and wombfruit." The last, "Hoopsa boyaboy hoopsa!," is a reference to a midwife declaring that a baby is a boy.

In the Odyssey, *Odysseus learns that he must not interfere with the sun god Helios's sacred cattle, who are grazing on the island of Thrinacia. But his men slaughter and eat them anyway, causing Zeus to strike them with lightning and kill everyone except Odysseus. This episode of* Ulysses *echoes that myth by showing how the group of men at its center drunkenly disrupt and disrespect the sacred ritual of childbirth. (The exception is the sober and respectful Bloom.) However, this episode is far better known for its audacious style than for its content. Every few paragraphs, the authorial voice totally changes, which can make this episode nearly incomprehensible to the unprepared reader. These changes happen in chronological order, starting with these Pagan chants. Joyce uses the different voices to set up an enormous extended metaphor: the development of a human fetus is like the historical development of the English language. The episode is subtly divided into three sections (trimesters), nine subsections (months), and forty paragraphs (weeks). Each of the voices represents a particular stage in the formation of modern English style (usually a specific influential writer). By copying all of these great writers' styles in meticulous detail, Joyce puts himself on a pedestal alongside them—or, more precisely, above them. He suggests that he can do everything they have done and more. According to the gestation metaphor, this novel is the fully-formed human being who emerges from the womb after nine months of development (or several centuries, in the case of language). The episode's first lines establish its setting, the Irish National Maternity Hospital on Holles Street in Dublin. These chants introduce the theme of fertility and tie it to the sun god, who is Helios in the Greek myth and is Dr. Horne (the head of the hospital) in 20th century Dublin.*

The next three paragraphs are written in the excessively complex and confusing style of poorly-translated Latin prose. The first argues that respectable people understand that procreation is a necessary and important goal for the human race. The second and third paragraphs praise the Irish for making maternal care widely available, thereby honoring expectant mothers.

These paragraphs are practically unreadable because Joyce was careful to follow the precise syntax of Latin (which doesn't render very well into English). Their focus on the importance of fertility suggests a link to both Bloom and Stephen's obsession with their families—and especially the male bloodline. By making a point about fertility in this ancient idiom, Joyce suggests that reproduction is one of humankind's most primordial and unchanging needs.

The next several paragraphs imitate alliterative Old English prose. The novel describes midwives caring for mothers and newborns, and then notes a Jewish wayfarer (Bloom) wandering into the hospital. He knows the nurse who lets him inside (Nurse Callan) and asks her to forgive him for once failing to salute her "in townhithe" (at the docks). Nurse Callan reports that Dr. O'Hare died of "bellycrab" (a stomach problem) years ago.

Fortunately, the episode quickly becomes a little bit less challenging—and as Joyce's prose gradually moves through the ages, it will get far easier to understand what he's up to. However, since his stylistic shifts also become more subtle, contemporary readers might find it more difficult to separate out his various references. For now, his Old English section recounts Bloom walking into the maternity hospital to visit Mrs. Purefoy. It may sound unnatural (and often hilarious) to modern English speakers, because Joyce sticks to words that were available to the Anglo-Saxons and tries to explain medical concepts in the language available at that time.

The next several paragraphs are modeled on Middle English. The novel implores people to think of their own deaths, and then Bloom asks about the woman he has come to see (Mrs. Purefoy). Nurse Callan says that Purefoy has been in painful labor for three days, but will be giving birth soon. Bloom feels sorry for Callan, who does not have children. Dixon, a "young learningknight" (medical student) comes into the hospital and offers for Bloom to "make merry with" him and his friends in "a marvellous castle" within the hospital. "The traveller Leopold" agrees, and he joins Dixon and some other medical students at their table, where they are eating canned sardines and bread. They pour him a beer, but Bloom doesn't want any, so he secretly empties it into someone else's glass.

The hospital serves as a constant reference to birth and death, so it provides an excellent setting for Bloom to contemplate the purpose of his life and the state of his bloodline. After all, his pity for the childless Nurse Callan shows that he sees having children as an important accomplishment for any adult, and his son Rudy's death hangs over this entire episode. But in contrast to his noble intentions, he manages to join yet another group of vulgar, drunk revelers. (But he still insists on staying sober, just like at Barney Kiernan's.)

The next three long paragraphs imitate the 15th century knight and writer Sir Thomas Malory, who is best known for compiling Arthurian legends. Nurse Callan tells the drinking students to "leave their wassailing" (stop drinking) because a woman (Mrs. Purefoy) is giving birth. There's a cry upstairs, and Bloom wonders if it's Purefoy or her child. He tells Lenehan that he hopes she will be done soon, and they toast to Purefoy's health and drink. In attendance are the "scholars of medicine" Dixon, Lynch, and Madden, plus Lenehan, Crotthers, Stephen Dedalus, Punch Costello, and "the meek sir Leopold [Bloom]." They are still waiting for "young Malachi [Mulligan]."

At long last, the novel's two protagonists meet. Bloom and Stephen have both been wandering around Dublin all day, and they've nearly intersected several times. It's significant that they first meet in the maternity hospital, because Bloom has come to congratulate Mrs. Purefoy on her new child and reminisce about his own lost son Rudy. Instead of meeting Mrs. Purefoy, Bloom ends up walking out with Stephen, who becomes something of a surrogate son to him. The men's drunkenness is an insult to the sanctity of childbirth and medicine—not to mention that it's probably really annoying for Mrs. Purefoy to have to listen to them while she gives birth upstairs. This blasphemous disrespect links the men's behavior to Odysseus's ravenous men, who eat the oxen of the sun.

The "right witty scholars" are discussing whether doctors should save the mother or the baby, when they have to choose between them. They generally agree that it's better to save the mother, and "the world was now right evil governed" as doctors prefer to save the baby. Stephen jokes that Catholics prefer this because this sends the child to Limbo and the mother to Purgatory, and he quips that Catholics oppose birth control because they think people are just means to reproduction, and they oppose abortion because the fetus acquires a soul in the second month.

The men's conversation about maternal death and abortion raises questions about the church's role in setting medical policy in Ireland. Stephen's cynical jokes about the church center on the idea that it's interested in trafficking souls to the afterlife, and indifferent to actual human life as a result. Because they're discussing how childbirth can fail in a maternity hospital, however, it would be fair to suggest that they're blaspheming against science as much as against the church.

Bloom is busy thinking about Mrs. Purefoy, and when the younger men ask his opinion on the matter, he jokes that the church chooses to let the mother die because it makes money from both birth (baptism) and death (funerals). He remembers Rudy's birth and death, and the lambswool vest Molly knitted for his burial. The sonless Bloom feels sorry for Stephen, who is "living in wasteful debauchery."

Bloom's clever answer lets him avoid choosing a side between the baby and the mother. Like Stephen, Bloom is suspicious of the church and paints it as brutally self-interested—the only difference is that he thinks in terms of the church's material self-interest and Stephen thinks about its spiritual priorities. But ironically, Joyce also uses religious imagery here, as Rudy's lambswool vest associates him with Jesus (the sacrificial lamb or Lamb of God). Bloom starts to transfer his sympathy for his dead son over to Stephen, who needs a father figure.

The style subtly shifts, beginning to resemble a 16th century chronicle. Stephen fills everyone's glasses and offers a satirical prayer to the Pope, shows off his little remaining money, and then gives a sermon about the meaning of history, birth, and creation. He jokingly states that people cycle from word to flesh through birth, and back from flesh to word through the Lord. He asks whether the Virgin Mary knew God (making her the son of her son) or whether she didn't (making her a blasphemer). Essentially, he asks whether Jesus is consubstantial or transubstantial to God. Punch Costello starts belting out a jolly drinking song, and Nurse Quigley opens the door again and asks the men to quiet down. The other drunk men try to stop Costello.

In his speech, Stephen explicitly connects the two forms of creation that are at the heart of his and Bloom's personal struggles: art and parenthood, respectively. This should make the parallel between them obvious for the reader. Both are trying to create something new despite having failed in the past, and both feel that their sense of identity and fulfillment depends on their ability to carry out this creation. Stephen's satirical vision of the cycle of life, in which people go from a mind (or idea) to a body and then back again, is a parody of the Gospel of John. It's also a reference to the concept of metempsychosis (reincarnation), which Joyce uses to explain how different ideas, symbols, and archetypes get recycled throughout myth and literature. Stephen's comments about the virgin birth recall the moral ambiguity in "Nausicaa," where Bloom was associated with God and Gerty MacDowell with the Virgin Mary. Finally, Stephen's thoughts about the relationship between the father and the son parallel his speculation about Shakespeare in "Scylla and Charybdis." In the context of this episode, these questions are also about Stephen and Bloom's relationship.

The narrative voice progresses to the turn of the seventeenth century in an imitation of writers like John Milton. Dixon and Lenehan start discussing how Stephen abandoned the priesthood and commits "nefarious deeds" with women. Stephen embarks on a long monologue, quoting bawdy jokes from 17th century plays. He jokes about men sharing their wives with their friends, which he uses as a metaphor for Ireland's betrayal to foreigners. He contrasts this with the "land of milk and money [sic]" that the Israelites were promised in the Bible. He discusses the cycle of life, in which people return to the beginning at the end, with a burning desire to understand the past that has brought him there.

Although Nurse Quigley's warning gets the men to quiet down slightly, they don't become any less blasphemous. Stephen again mocks the traditional religious promise to give people fulfillment once and for all in the "land of milk and money" (whether that's in Israel, Dublin, or heaven). Stephen again replaces this traditional promise with the alternative of reincarnation, or metempsychosis. Reincarnation does not promise any single vision of pure fulfillment—like the visions of creation, belonging, and bliss that both Bloom and Stephen chase through fatherhood and poetry. Instead, reincarnation replaces this linear notion of the human life as a race for fulfillment with a cyclical vision of people constantly striving for understanding and improvement.

Costello interrupts with another exuberant song, but a crack of thunder silences him. Lynch jokes that God is angry at Stephen for his blasphemy. Stephen is secretly desperate and afraid. To cover it up, he jokes that God is drunk and doesn't really care what he says. But Bloom understands Stephen's feelings and tries to comfort him.

The loud crack of thunder is a reference to Zeus's lightning bolt striking down Odysseus's men. Stephen's response to it suggests that he hasn't fully cast off religion (which explains his regret at failing to pray for his mother). Luckily for Stephen, Bloom is sober, empathetic, and looking for a son. Thus, Bloom is perceptive enough to see that Stephen is afraid and he's kind enough to try to help. This is essentially the first time that Stephen has received any sympathy from anyone in the entire novel.

The novel's tone shifts to resemble John Bunyan's allegorical novel *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Bloom's words of comfort fail to help Stephen. The narration comments that Stephen lacks the grace to believe in God—the thunder merely made him fear death. Instead, Stephen should strive to reach the delightful kingdom of "Believe-on-Me" (heaven). Unfortunately, Stephen and his friends have sold out their souls to "a certain whore of an eyepleasing exterior," named "Bird-in-the-Hand." This voice repeats that the thunder indeed represented God speaking out against the young men's debauchery.

The Pilgrim's Progress is a famous Puritan allegory that describes a man's long journey out of sin and into heaven by means of his faith. Thus, Joyce's Bunyan offers a characteristically religious critique of Stephen's character and intellectual skepticism. Namely, irresponsible behavior might help Stephen cope with his secular fear of a meaningless, permanent death, but it won't help him get to heaven.

For one long paragraph, the narrative shifts into the voice of 17th century English diarists like Samuel Pepys. After describing the thunderstorm over Dublin in depth, this paragraph shows Buck Mulligan meet Alec Bannon and chat about "a skittish heifer" he met (Milly Bloom). Mulligan and Bannon then make their way to the maternity hospital, which the narrative describes in colorful detail, with commentary on Mrs. Purefoy going into labor for the twelfth time.

The subplot about Alec Bannon dating Milly Bloom hasn't come up since the beginning of the novel, when it was briefly mentioned in "Telemachus" and "Calypso." But like so many other seemingly irrelevant details from the beginning of the book, it's back, and it's suddenly important. Here, by comparing Milly to a cow (or heifer), Buck and Alec drive home the "Oxen of the Sun" metaphor and imply that Alec is already somehow violating a sacred order by seeing Milly. Surely enough, he's about to meet Milly's father, so this feeling wouldn't be misplaced.

Lenehan mentions Mr. Deasy's letter in the paper on foot and mouth disease. In a new voice that recalls the dynamic political writings of Daniel Defoe, the narrative comments that Lenehan is a well-meaning gentleman who unfortunately spends his time "hanker[ing] about the coffeehouses and low taverns" looking for women. Frank Costello comments on the cows, and the narrative goes on a long tangent about his privileged life and his inability to keep a job, while his government administrator father supports him. Bloom comments on the cattle he saw getting shipped out to England, and the narrative describes his experience working with cattle at the stockyards. Stephen affirms that Dr. Rinderpest is coming to treat the cows.

As the conversation turns to foot and mouth disease and the export of Irish cattle, the allusion to the Odyssey *grows even stronger. In Ireland, like on the sun god's island, the health of cattle becomes an indicator of the nation's health and fertility as a whole. Thus, cattle exports and foot and mouth disease suggest that Ireland is spiritually struggling. The men at the maternity hospital embody Ireland's depravity. Lenehan is crude, vulgar, and always around whenever there's alcohol—but nobody in the novel likes him at all, except for possibly Blazes Boylan. Meanwhile, Costello's privilege represents how the colonial government profits from the Irish people's suffering.*

Lynch and Dixon launch into a long, satirical allegory about an Irish bull. In a slightly different voice, now modeled after satirist Jonathan Swift, Lynch and Dixon discuss the way this bull—which represents the Irish Church—gets flattered and pampered in Ireland. The farmer Nicholas and the lord Harry fight over it, but then Harry starts acting like a bull, too, and befriends the Irish bull. At the end of this story, Stephen Dedalus comments, Irishmen give up on their leaders and leave for America.

This allegory illustrates the way that Rome (the Catholic Church) and London (the Church of England) fought over control of Ireland. The theme of outside domination and lost autonomy isn't new—but the metaphor of the bull is, because it references both Mr. Deasy's letter and the sun-god's cattle in the Odyssey. *The bull is also a pun on a papal bull (an official declaration by the Pope).*

Buck Mulligan and Alec Bannon arrive in the hospital, and the narrative switches to the style of the eighteenth-century political essayists Addison and Steele. Buck offers everyone present business cards that list his occupation as "*Fertiliser and Incubator*." He jokes that he considers it tragic that so many men are sterile or unworthy of their beautiful wives, and he proposes establishing "a national fertilizing farm to be named Omphalos" and offering himself to any willing woman, no matter her social class. He sprinkles in a fake Latin quote about the inadequacy of modern erections. In jest, Buck asks Bloom if he needs any help, and Bloom explains that he's actually at the hospital for Mrs. Purefoy. Dixon asks the big-bellied Buck whether he's there to give birth, too.

The joke behind Buck's whimsical speech is that he portrays having sex with numerous women as a kind of lofty public service. This points to the contradictory role of sex in Ulysses*: it's both a guilty pleasure and a sacred fertility ritual. Like the men's other conversation topics, Buck's speech also violates the sacredness of fertility—in his case, by reducing it entirely to sex. (But Bloom refuses to participate in this sacrilege by answering Buck's question literally.) Of course, the reference to the* omphalos *implies that Buck's fertility farm will also be a kind of entry point into the world for new people and ideas (like the Martello tower for Stephen).*

In a paragraph influenced by the satirical novelist Laurence Sterne, Bannon pulls out a picture of his sweetheart—who is no other than Milly Bloom. He sings her praises and makes a joke out of pleading with God about why he forgot to bring his cloak, to prevent her from getting wet. The other men joke about how (and whether) to protect women from dancing in the rain, although it's clear that they're really talking about contraception.

Bannon is making a vulgar joke about not bringing a condom to have sex with Milly—but fortunately, Bloom doesn't yet know who he's talking about. As throughout the rest of this episode, Joyce manages to be obscene in yet another famous writer's voice—in a way, he's consciously blaspheming against the Western canon by appropriating these voices, just like the men in the hospital are blaspheming against the sacred rite of childbirth.

A section in the style of the Irish writer Goldsmith begins with a ringing bell, after which Nurse Callan enters and whispers something to Dixon. Costello and Lynch joke derisively about the nurse's looks and her relationship to Dixon, who then prepares to run out, because Mrs. Purefoy has just given birth to her baby boy. But first, he admonishes the others for talking ill of Nurse Callan.

It's telling that the drunkards don't listen to the nurses when they ask for peace and quiet, but they take Dixon far more seriously because he's a doctor and a man. At the same time, Dixon was just making vulgar jokes about Buck a couple paragraphs ago, so it's clear that his newfound seriousness is just a façade put on for Nurse Callan. In this way, Dixon is a bit of a foil for Bloom, who is also hoping that the medical students will calm down (but doesn't get taken seriously at all).

In a moralistic paragraph modeled after the conservative philosopher Edmund Burke, Bloom deplores the young men's distasteful jokes, but tolerates them since they're essentially just "overgrown children." But he thinks that Punch Costello is the worst of the lot, a truly deplorable bastard. Even though he's learned to control his emotions, he thinks men who denigrate women are the lowest of the low. He's also happy that Mrs. Purefoy has finally given birth.

By writing Bloom in Edmund Burke's sober, judgmental style, Joyce shows that he's using this episode's various writerly voices to shape its tone as well as its content. Like Odysseus watching his men devour Helios's sacred cattle, Bloom is the only one who remembers the greater values that are at stake in the hospital. This is understandable, since he yearns so much for a son himself. At the same time, Bloom's moral values don't necessarily match up with his actions—for instance, he says he hates men who degrade women, which is essentially what he did in the last episode by masturbating voyeuristically to Gerty MacDowell and calling all women "little devils."

In a shorter paragraph that takes after the style of Dublin playwright and political orator Richard Sheridan, Bloom remarks that he feels relieved that Mrs. Purefoy has given birth. But Crotthers starts to speculate about whether the elderly Mr. Purefoy is really the father. If he is, the other students comment, they're impressed by his virility. But Crotthers thinks the father is more likely a clerk or wandering salesman. Bloom is astonished that these vulgar boys will become esteemed doctors as soon as they get their degrees.

While Bloom is in part relieved because Mrs. Purefoy is no longer suffering, her baby boy also symbolically represents the boy that he *always dreamed about having. The students' speculation about the father's identity also echoes Stephen's theory about the "mystical estate" of fatherhood in "Scylla and Charybdis." In turn, Bloom is offended on behalf of Mr. Purefoy. But since the very nature of fatherhood has been called into question, Bloom is also* personally *offended. This is because his sense of identity is closely tied to being Milly's father and wanting another son.*

In a flowery passage imitating eighteenth century political satire, the narrative questions whether Bloom, an ungrateful immigrant, has a right to censor and criticize the students. He's morally unfit, the narrative suggests: he tried to sleep with a servant, he has left his wife's "seedfield [...] fallow for the want of the ploughshare," and he's a debaucherous masturbator.

By introducing yet another narrative voice, Joyce again forces the reader to consider the situation from an entirely different angle. The comment about immigration is likely Joyce's way of pointing fun at pompous nationalist writers. But there's some logic in the point about Bloom's own transgressions against the sanctity of sex and fertility. The joke about the un-ploughed field is a reference to the fact that Bloom and Molly haven't had sex for many years.

In the serious tone of historians like Edward Gibbon, the narrative ironically presents the joyful occasion of Mrs. Purefoy giving birth as though it were a serious political event. The medical students are described as delegates, and although Bloom tries to quiet them down, they end up prattling on about different medical procedures, birth defects, modes of insemination, and obstetrics research questions. They start discussing whether women can really have intercourse with mythical beasts, and Mulligan declares that "a nice clean old man" is the best thing to desire. Madden and Lynch start arguing about Siamese twins.

Because the narrative voice is constantly changing throughout this episode, the target of Joyce's satire is constantly changing, too. In the last few sections, for instance, the voices have gone from serious to satirical and back again, while Joyce's criticism has variously targeted the medical students, Bloom, and then the very authorial voice he's borrowing. The students' medical discussion is full of specific, anatomically-precise jokes about gestation and development. The debate about sex with mythical beasts and "clean old m[e]n" returns to Bloom's dilemma in the statues: is it better to love real women, who are exciting and alive, or sterile Greek statues, who are eternal and unchanging? Of course, this is also a metaphor for Stephen's dilemma about whether to search for truth and beauty in the world, or seek it through the metaphysical ideas of art and philosophy.

In a parody of gothic horror, Haines suddenly appears as a ghost, holding a book of Irish literature and a vial of poison. He confesses to the Childs murder and declares that he's being haunted by his victim's spirit, then vanishes (and briefly reappears to ask Buck to meet him at the train station).

This spooky scene foreshadows the coming "Circe" episode. It also shows that Joyce is moving past simply modeling his tone and style on historical authors: now he's letting them intervene in the plot, too. In reality, Haines is just visiting to ask Buck to meet him at the train station—which suggests that they are planning something that doesn't include Stephen.

In a nostalgic, thoughtful paragraph modeled after the essayist Charles Lamb, the novel shows Bloom reflecting on his younger self. He remembers going to high school with his bookbag and traveling to sell trinkets for the family business. Looking at the young men around him, he feels like a paternal figure. He remembers losing his virginity with Bridie Kelly, a prostitute, and laments the fact that he still doesn't have a son.

This passage is one of the only glimpses the reader ever gets of Bloom's childhood. He's trying to empathize with the young students, but he's also revealing how he wants to help his children avoid the challenges and frustrations that he faced when he was young. He seems to have finished transferring his feelings about Rudy to the other young men, which sets up the extended father-son metaphor that links him to Stephen in the remaining episodes of the novel.

In a section parodying the romantic writer Thomas De Quincey's accounts of drug-induced hallucinations, Bloom has a grand vision of infinite space and silence, and he sees his soul flying towards the Dead Sea, surrounded by a herd of moaning beasts in parallax. He sees a "wonder of metempsychosis," a radiant figure who is both Martha and Milly.

This comical hallucination about infinity, parallax, and metempsychosis provides a clear metaphor for Bloom's overarching quest in the novel. In this hallucination, Bloom is seeking out the promised land—Israel, the location of the Dead Sea. This represents his quest for meaning and fulfillment, which Joyce constantly compares to the more general human quest for salvation through religion. The moaning beasts who race to Israel alongside him include horses and cows. The reference to parallax suggests that these beasts offer alternative perspectives on Bloom's race to Israel—in other words, they're metaphors that can help the reader better understand the meaning of Bloom's journey. The horses reference the Ascot Gold Cup race, symbolizing Bloom's competition with Boylan over Molly. Cows symbolize fertility (through the association with the Odyssey) but also Irish dependence on England (because of the cows being exported to Liverpool). Finally, the "wonder of metempsychosis" involves two of the three women who are most important to Bloom (Martha and Milly), but not the most important (Molly). Of course, their similar names indicate that Bloom's feelings about Martha and Milly are really only indirect expressions of his deeper love for Molly (just as metempsychosis allows the soul to transfer from one body to the other).

The novel shifts radically in tone, becoming a friendly dialogue among Stephen Dedalus and his friends, in the style of Walter Savage Landor's *Imaginary Conversations* (which stages such dialogues between figures from classical Greece and Rome). Stephen and Punch Costello start reminiscing about school, and Stephen claims that he can bring "the past and its phantoms […] into life" through poetry. But Vincent Lynch says that Stephen hasn't "father[ed]" enough work yet to justify this boastfulness. Adding insult to injury, Lenehan brings up Stephen's mother's memory, leaving Stephen distraught.

Stephen and Punch Costello's conversation closely parallels Bloom's reminiscence about his childhood. The crucial difference is that Stephen's innate need to "father" artwork takes the place of Bloom's need to father literal children. By citing Imaginary Conversations, *Joyce also explicitly associates Stephen and Costello with the classical world. This is a reference to their literary aspirations, but also a cruel joke about their inability to fulfill those aspirations.*

Conversation suddenly turns to the Ascot Gold Cup: Madden complains that Sceptre was about to win, but Throwaway pulled ahead at the last minute. Then, Lynch starts talking about having a "mad romp" with his girlfriend in the bushes and nearly getting caught by Father Conmee, who said a blessing for them. Lenehan grabs for a bottle of wine, but Buck stops him because "the stranger" (Bloom) is staring at it, as though having a vision. In reality, the novel reports in a roundabout and opinionated style, Bloom is thinking about business. When he realizes that the others see him staring at the bottle, he has a drink. The narrative voice reports that the men get into a lively debate, then describes all nine of them in detail.

Joyce emphasizes the men's rowdy drunkenness through increasingly abrupt transitions between different events, conversations, and literary styles. The Ascot Gold Cup is still a metaphor for Bloom and Boylan. Father Conmee's futile attempt to stop Lynch and his girlfriend from sinning in the bushes represents the way that the church is losing its traditional authority (especially over medicine and sex). In an example of parallax storytelling, the reader first encountered this episode through Father Conmee's (religious) perspective during "Wandering Rocks," but now sees it from Lynch's (modern) perspective here. The comical mismatch between Buck and Bloom, who are staring at the same bottle, is another obvious example of parallax perspectives that gradually change the meaning of the novel's events.

A new narrative voice begins to explain why Stephen's transcendental philosophy "runs directly counter to accepted scientific methods." This voice asks several complicated questions about embryology and outlines the assembled students' different views on infant mortality. While Buck Mulligan blames poor hygiene, for instance, Crotthers blames abuse and neglect, and Lynch attributes it to some unknown natural law. This voice then speculates that nature promotes infant mortality if and when it's evolutionarily advantageous. It comments favorably on Stephen's notion of "an omnivorous being" eating babies and corpses.

This new voice outlines the contrast between philosophical and scientific views of the universe, which is no longer understandable strictly through religion. Later, the tension between these two views becomes a central theme in Stephen and Bloom's relationship during the "Ithaca" episode. In addition to making several obscure medical references to the later stages of gestation, Joyce is also mocking both sides (Stephen's lofty philosophy and scientists' overly rigid and fatalistic explanations, which wrongly attribute things that people actually can control to evolution).

In an imitation of Dickens, the novel narrates Mrs. Purefoy giving birth and enjoying her first moments with her baby boy. The only thing missing is her husband Doady, whom the narration praises as a noble old man who has "fought the good fight." After this voice bids Doady good night, another takes over, parodying the theologian Cardinal Newman. This voice speaks of the way people struggle to confront the "evil memories" that lurk in the backs of their minds.

Joyce's different authorial voices are now commenting on the relationship between religion, science, and philosophy in modern life. So it's only natural that he turns to Dickens, the most famous literary chronicler of the industrial revolution and moral critic of modern urban society. With Theodore Purefoy, the motif of the absent father repeats. This signals that the novel is transitioning back to Bloom and Stephen's family issues.

Another new voice depicts Bloom listening to Stephen's calm but resentful talk. Stephen's expression gives Bloom a kind of déjà vu: it reminds him of a game of lawn bowling several years before, when he saw a young lad with the same frown gazing up at his mother. An imitation of the art critic John Ruskin narrates how one word ends the brief period of calm and quiet in the hospital, much like swollen storm clouds suddenly yield thunder: "Burke's!"

The young lad from the bowling game was *Stephen: Bloom is remembering Stephen's childhood and marveling about how he's changed as he's grown up. Now that Mrs. Purefoy has already given birth, Bloom is clearly growing fond of the young man and starting to feel protective of him, like a father. Stephen is taking on the role of Bloom's dead son Rudy, and Bloom is hoping to stand in for Stephen's neglectful father Simon.*

In the style of conservative Scottish writer Thomas Carlyle, the men rush out the hospital door, following Stephen to Burke's pub. Bloom chats with Nurse Callan on his way out, sending his best to Mrs. Purefoy and asking her when it's her turn for a visit from "the storkbird." The narration describes the humid Dublin air and praises Theodore Purefoy in increasingly absurd terms for successfully getting his wife pregnant for the twelfth time.

In a classic bit of Joycean irony, Bloom never actually visits Mrs. Purefoy—he ends up feeling attached to Stephen instead and following him out to Burke's. His conversation with Nurse Callan and the novel's description of Theodore Purefoy return to the idea from the very beginning of this episode: conception, childbirth, and parenting are important rituals—or even holy ones.

The narration has clearly reached the 20th century, and a chaotic, slang-filled jumble of the revelers' voices takes over the remainder of this episode. The men stumble over to Burke's, order their drinks, chatter for ten minutes, and get kicked out at closing time. Although most of the dialogue is jumbled, it's possible to distinguish a few plot points. The men drink absinthe, Bannon appears to learn that Bloom is Milly's father, and the man in the macintosh seems to make an appearance. Someone starts vomiting and someone else declares their love for a woman named Mona. Stephen and Lynch look for a brothel and notice the Dowie pamphlet that Bloom threw into the River Liffey: "Elijah is coming! Washed in the blood of the Lamb." The episode ends with several vulgar jokes about religion.

"Oxen of the Sun" ends by juxtaposing another raucous drinking scene with more religious imagery. This foreshadows the novel's climax in the next episode, when Bloom and Stephen have an important epiphany in a brothel. While Joyce's different authorial voices have grown closer together in time over the course of the episode, their tones have diverged more and more. Now, the very end of the episode devolves into a cacophony of different voices that simply don't fit together, even though they're all written in the same local Dublin accent. It's just as difficult to understand as the Latin voices at the very beginning of the episode. For one, this stylistic choice reflects the men's increasing drunkenness and provides a natural transition into the wild fantasy that makes up the next episode. But Joyce also seems to be using this diversity of styles to comment on the diversity of people, literature, and perspectives in the modern world. In Ulysses, *he attempts to make a series of extremely different experiences and worldviews fit together into a single book. Rather than forcing them all into a unified, homogenous whole, he portrays a few of these in depth and gives a hint of the broader variety of "parallax" life that coexists in modern Dublin.*

EPISODE 15: CIRCE

Written in the form of a play script, this long episode of the novel mixes reality and fantasy into a kind of continuous nightmare. The stage directions explain that the scene opens in "nighttown," Dublin's red light district. The tram's "skeleton tracks" stretch past "stunted" people who cluster around, eating coal-colored ice cream under faint gas lights. Anonymous lovers call out for one another and children frighten "a deafmute idiot" by suddenly restraining him. A man sleeps by a dustbin, a stunted man (or "gnome") picks through the trash, and there are screaming, crashing, and murmuring sounds in the background.

In the Odyssey, *the sorceress Circe transforms Odysseus's men into pigs. Odysseus manages to rescue them with the help of a magic herb from the god Hermes, but in the process, he goes mad and falls in love with Circe. The parallels to this episode should be clear: Bloom goes into nighttown to rescue Stephen, who has been transformed by drunkenness and despair. Bloom has a close call with a prostitute, but narrowly manages to escape. "Circe" is without a doubt the central episode in* Ulysses. *It picks out every character, theme, and idea mentioned in the novel so far, then remixes them into a nightmare. It also builds up to the long-awaited moment in which Stephen and Bloom truly (if briefly) reunite in the new roles of father and son. Still, the plot of "Circe" really only takes up a small portion of the episode. The rest consists of a series of wild visions (which could also be considered fantasies, hallucinations, or nightmares). These visions dig up and explore Bloom's deepest fears and desires. In a way, then, "Circe" is like* Ulysses*'s unconscious. The novel's other episodes focus on introspection in order to expose characters' thoughts, feelings, and perceptions. But in "Circe," Bloom's repressed feelings and inner demons take human form and literally confront him. In order to get at this unconscious material, Joyce takes an entirely different approach to narrative and perspective: he writes "Circe" as a play. It's set in Manto ("nighttown"), an extremely poor Dublin neighborhood that also served as Europe's biggest red light district. According to the obscure, dystopian imagery in this opening scene, nighttown is more than just Dublin's seedy underbelly: it's a kind of horrific alternate reality full of death, despair, and cruelty. But it's often extremely difficult to identify the line that separates reality from fantasy in this episode. In short, how literally should readers take* Circe*? Does Bloom really see the hallucinations, or are they just metaphors for his inner turmoil? (It's worth remembering that at the end of the last episode Stephen drank absinthe, which causes hallucinations, but Bloom did not.) Most importantly, what is the relationship between "Circe" and the rest of the novel? Whose perspective does it take? The play-within-a-play has long been used as a plot device, but there's no window dressing in "Circe"— Joyce gives his readers no context or instructions for interpreting this lengthy script. While most plays are written to be acted out and viewed by an audience, this one clearly isn't. Is it a real view into Bloom's journey through nighttown, or is it a deliberately-inflated performance based on a loose interpretation of events? Joyce's novel has been full of unreliable narrators so far (like the debt collector in "Cyclops" and Gerty MacDowell in "Nausicaa"). So the reader has little reason to believe that the playwright behind "Circe" is more reliable just because they don't speak in their own voice. These important questions about voice and perspective don't get resolved, but they do add another layer of mystery to this complex episode.*

Cissy Caffrey's voice sings a lewd song, and two drunk British soldiers, Private Carr and Private Compton, laugh and insult her while they march through the lane. They point at "the parson," Stephen Dedalus, who is walking with Lynch and chanting the Latin mass. An elderly bawd calls them over, but they ignore her. Edy Boardman crouches in the street, narrating an argument with another woman. Stephen tells Lynch about his latest theory: gestures are a "universal language" that can reveal "the structural rhythm" of things.

It's unclear why Cissy Caffrey and Edy Boardman, Gerty MacDowell's friends from "Nausicaa," are hanging around in nighttown. This is just one of the numerous mysteries in "Circe" that blur the line between reality and fantasy: there's no reason for these young women to be around, but other characters who definitely are present seem to be interacting with them. There's a good historical reason for British soldiers to be wandering around nighttown: they were stationed nearby, so they were the neighborhood's main clientele. (In a pretty apt metaphor for the sins of British colonialism, English rule was basically responsible for building the brothel district.) Stephen and Lynch open the episode with a parody of the mass, just like Buck Mulligan did with the very beginning of the book. Meanwhile, Stephen's drunken theory gives the reader a clue for how to interpret this episode: language is only an indirect expression of the true nature of things (which is better comprehensible through actions). Of course, if true, this would pose a real challenge to Stephen's attempts to capture absolute truth and beauty through poetry.

Stephen asks Lynch to hold his **ashplant** and explains that they're looking for Georgina Johnson. Lynch refuses to hold Stephen's stick and passes it straight back to him. Meanwhile, the twins Tommy and Jacky Caffrey climb a nearby lamppost, and a navvy (laborer) leans against it, struggling to walk. Suddenly, the navvy uproots the lamp and walks away with it.

Georgina Johnson is Stephen's favorite prostitute: evidently, he plans on blowing the rest of his paycheck by visiting her. Stephen has had his ash-wood cane all day, but it only becomes significant in this episode. It's simultaneously a crutch, a weapon for self-defense, and (Stephen thinks) a source of magical powers. Of course, Stephen gives it credit for the navvy's unlikely recovery and sudden burst of strength.

In the distance, Bloom appears through the fog, hiding bread and chocolate in his pocket. He sees different versions of himself in different windows and mirrors. Panting and exhausted, he buys something in the pork butcher Olhausen's shop. Then, he notices a huge fire nearby. While crossing the street, he almost gets hit by a pair of cyclists and then a trolley. He reminds himself that he needs to start exercising and wonders if the tram driver responsible for this incident was the same one who once ran over his shoe, or who blocked his view of the woman in the carriage that morning.

As usual, Bloom's sympathy drives him to take on a new altruistic quest—and he's bringing snacks. The mirrors foreshadow the rest of this episode, in which Bloom will see innumerable different sides of himself and dark corners of his soul reflected back at him. Although the cyclists and trolley only present Bloom with a mild frustration, they signal the dangers ahead (and suggest that Bloom might not be fully prepared for them).

Overcome with "brainfogfag," Bloom chats in Spanish with "a sinister figure" wearing a sombrero, who turns out to be a spy for the nationalist Gaelic League sent by the citizen. A "sackshouldered ragman" blocks Bloom's path, and then Jacky and Tommy Caffrey barge into him. Bloom checks his pockets and warns himself to be prepared for these dangers. He passes a series of suspicious figures.

Other figures pop out of the fog to taunt and frustrate Bloom. They are expressions of different thoughts and moments from Bloom's day, which shows how this episode is based on the same kind of associative logic as dreams. For instance, the "sinister figure" merges the citizen's crusade with Molly's Spanish mother and a man who wore a Mexican sombrero in an execution scene during "Cyclops." Of course, there might be a man in the corner, and Bloom might really walk into someone holding a sack—but nighttown's sinister atmosphere leads Bloom to interpret this scene in a suspicious, paranoid way.

Bloom hears the voice of his father, who criticizes him for wasting money on drinks, then touches his face to identify him. A scene from the past replays: Bloom's father reprimanding him for running with his friends and falling in the mud, and then Bloom's mother suddenly materializes to express shock at her son's appearance.

Bloom's visions of his family members make up the first of the major fantasy sequences in "Circe." His memories primarily revolve around unresolved guilt—just like Stephen, Bloom still regrets his mistakes in the past and hasn't forgiven himself. In particular, he feels he can't make amends because both of his parents are now dead.

Next, Molly appears, wearing a Turkish costume. There's a gold coin on her forehead, and an obedient camel picks her a mango from a tree. When Bloom starts proclaiming how he can serve Molly, she calls him "a poor old stick in the mud." He deferentially promises that he will still get Molly's lotion tomorrow—his bar of soap rises in place of the sun, and the pharmacist shows up to collect a payment. Disdainful, Molly starts humming "Là ci darem" and walks away.

In Bloom's fantasy, Molly is associated with all the ornaments of the exotic East—which is both a reference to her Andalusian Spanish ancestry and a metaphor for Bloom's passionate attraction to her. She reduces Bloom to a bumbling fool, and his promises suggest that his generous favors to her are part of a strategy to win back her love. Clearly, she expects more: when she hums "Là ci darem," the seduction duet from Don Giovanni, *she's suggesting that she's going to choose Blazes Boylan over her husband.*

Before Bloom can run after Molly, the elderly bawd grabs him and offers him a tryst with Bridie Kelly for ten shillings. A man chases after Bridie, who runs off into the darkness. Gerty MacDowell shows up and tells Bloom that she hates him—but Bloom denies knowing her. The bawd sends Gerty off, but before she goes, Gerty tells Bloom that she loves him for what he did.

Bloom lost his virginity with Bridie Kelly, a prostitute, so in this passage he's clearly confronting his sense of regret about putting his sexual attraction to other women before his wife Molly. Meanwhile, Gerty MacDowell's appearance forces Bloom to confront his doubts about whether she really reciprocated his interest on the beach in "Nausicaa." He will never know, so his conscience will always go back and forth between the two Gertys (the one who loves him and the one who hates him).

Next, Mrs. Breen materializes and asks what Bloom is doing in nighttown. Bloom tries to greet her politely and chat about the weather, but Breen threatens to tell Molly where she's seen him. Bloom replies that Molly is also into "the exotic," like Black men, and then he sees two figures who embody the racist stereotype of singing Black banjo-players. They sing a song and then dance away into the fog. Bloom proposes "a mixed marriage mingling" arrangement to Mrs. Breen. They start flirting and reminiscing about their romance, which began during a party at Georgina Simpson's house, when Mrs. Breen was still the unmarried Josie Powell.

Mrs. Breen (or Josie Powell) is Bloom's ex-girlfriend. In this passage, her appearance represents Bloom's doubts about whether he made the right decision in marrying Molly, as well as his secret desire to have an affair. Of course, throughout the novel, he consistently chooses not to act on this desire—instead, he intentionally maintains a distance from the other women he fancies (like Martha Clifford and Gerty MacDowell). Over the course of their conversation, Bloom and Breen quickly reestablish their old rapport.

Bloom slips a ruby ring on Mrs. Breen's finger, but says that he was dismayed that she married Denis Breen instead of him. Suddenly, Denis shuffles past as one of the Hely's sandwichboard advertisers. Alf Bergan follows him, points, laughs, and says, "U. p: up." Breen offers Bloom a kiss and asks if he's brought her a present. Bloom says he's brought a Kosher snack and claims that he was busy at the play Leah all evening.

As Bloom and Breen briefly reunite and act out the marriage they never had, Bloom slips from guilt into exhilaration. But when Denis Breen walks by, this reminds Bloom that Breen ended up with a pathetic and crazy man instead of him. The Hely's advertisers make Breen look even more absurd, because Bloom also considers them pathetic (he thinks his ad proposals were far better).

Richie Goulding shows up with his heavy legal bag and starts selling the sausage, fish, and pills that are inside. The bald waiter Pat materializes with a plate of steak and kidneys. The lamp-carrying navvy runs by, and Richie yells out in pain, "Bright's! Light's!" Bloom warns that the navvy is a spy, and Mrs. Breen starts criticizing Bloom for his "humbugging and deluthering" (or deceptiveness).

In another flurry of dream-logic, one thing leads to another faster than the reader can quite make out—Bloom's not-very-Kosher snack calls up Richie Goulding, who calls up Pat. The navvy's lamp suggests that Breen is shining a light on Bloom's true motivations by interrogating him about his snack.

While the old bawd heckles them, Bloom offers to tell Mrs. Breen a secret. Once again pleasant and agreeable, Josie Breen agrees. Bloom reminisces about going to the races with Josie, Molly, and some other friends. Bloom and Josie started to flirt in the carriage, but as they remember the scene, Mrs. Breen starts repeating, "yes, yes, yes," then fades into nothingness.

The reader is left to speculate about what Bloom and Breen actually did in the carriage—perhaps even Bloom's guilty conscience isn't willing to go there. The first major fantasy ends with Breen's "yes, yes, yes," which foreshadows Molly's final lines at the end of the novel. (Joyce strongly associated "yes" with femininity and the human ability to circle around to the past through memory.)

Now alone, Bloom trudges ahead through nighttown. He sees a group of loiterers: two armless men are wrestling, and another man talks about the time Bloom accidentally used a bucket of beer as a toilet, while the rest laugh. (Bloom is still embarrassed by this mistake.) Bloom passes a chattering chorus of disheveled prostitutes and sees the navvy fighting with Privates Compton and Carr outside a brothel. Wondering whether he'll find Stephen at all, Bloom asks why he's even looking for the young man. A piece of graffiti reminds him of Molly drawing on a frosted windowpane, and the smell of cigarettes reminds him of *The Sweets of Sin*.

Bloom continues to see reflections of his own guilt, shame, and embarrassment in his environment. This is tied to his sense that his entire quest might be pointless—Stephen doesn't even know he's coming (and probably doesn't care). In a way, this scene suggests that Bloom is going after Stephen because *he wants to cope with his unresolved guilt. (Of course, this means his sense of guilt about failing his family and, especially, losing his son Rudy.)*

Bloom decides that his snacks were a waste of money and starts playing with a kind dog that has been following him. He reluctantly pulls out the pork he bought from the butcher and feeds it to the dog. Suddenly, two policemen approach Bloom, who insists that he's "doing good to others." Cake-munching seagulls fly past and drunk Bob Doran briefly materializes to pet the dog. Bloom explains that he's good to animals, and a gaudily-dressed lion tamer starts discussing the painful punishments he uses to control his lions.

Bloom feeds animals throughout the novel (like his cat in "Calypso" and the birds in "Lestrygonians"). This imagery returns once again to represent his kindness and decency. But when the police approach Bloom, he gets stuck in a common kind of nightmare: no matter how hard he tries to do right, he ends up doing wrong and feeling guilty about it. While the police officers might be glancing in his direction in nighttown, their interrogation is the beginning of Bloom's second extended fantasy.

When the policemen ask for Bloom's name and address, Bloom claims to be the dentist with the same name, and then pretends to belong to the Legion of Honor. The white card falls out of his hat, identifying Bloom as Henry Flower, and then he pulls a flower out of his pocket and tries to explain that his name is a joke. Martha shows up and asks Bloom to "clear [her] name," while Bloom tells the police that he's innocent and merely being mistaken for someone else. He says he's an innocent, respectable, but misunderstood man and notes that his father-in-law is the war hero Majorgeneral Tweedy. He claims to have fought for the British in the Boer War in South Africa.

Bloom lies compulsively, as though acting against his own will, and the world seems to be conspiring against him. Like when he fails to place Keyes's ad in "Aeolus" and gets in the fight in "Cyclops," Bloom's good intentions actually get him in trouble, because the world is corrupt. He doesn't belong because *he's a good person (not to mention a social and religious outsider). This is an important dimension of his personality throughout the book: tragically, his good intentions often lead him to make poor decisions and involve himself in sticky situations. He feels like he's fighting against fate and doesn't have control over his own destiny. But he's also not willing to sell out and compromise his fundamental goodness.*

The police ask for Bloom's occupation, and he says he's an "author-journalist." Suddenly, Myles Crawford turns up with copies of the "*Freeman's Urinal*" and the "*Weekly Arsewipe*." Next, the prize-winning storywriter Philip Beaufoy materializes on a witness stand and declares that Bloom is a petty plagiarist who copied his stories. Bloom meekly criticizes Beaufoy's story, while Beaufoy extravagantly mocks Bloom for never going to university and accuses him of "moral rottenness."

Bloom's lie about his job is almost automatic, or even inadvertent. He names the job he wants, *not the one he has. (He just places ads; he's really neither an author nor a journalist.) In fact, this refers back to this episode's major theme: the inability to distinguish fantasy from reality. Crawford's toilet humor is a reference to Bloom wiping himself with* Titbits *magazine during the outhouse scene in "Calypso," so it's no coincidence that Beaufoy materializes next. (He's the mediocre author of the* Titbits *story "Matcham's Masterstroke.") Clearly, Bloom is insecure about his lack of education. And ironically, Bloom's deep fear of "moral rottenness" is a pretty clear indication that he's actually a good person.*

The police call the servant girl Mary Driscoll in their case, "The King versus Bloom." While Bloom protests that he treated Driscoll well, giving her presents and defending her against accusations of pilfering, Driscoll explains that Bloom once approached her behind the house and tried to take advantage of her. The court announces that "the accused will now make a bogus statement," and surely enough, Bloom goes on "a long unintelligible speech" about his childhood and his desire to live a peaceful life with his loving family. Everyone laughs at Bloom, who then gets cross-examined about the mess he made in the bucket of beer on Beaver Street.

Bloom's courtroom fantasy turns from his lies about his identity and exaggerations about his social status to his misbehavior towards women. According to his former maid, he sexually harassed her on the job—and given the way he gawked at the neighbor's serving-girl in "Calypso," the reader can be pretty confident that he's guilty. His extremely cliched "bogus statement" suggests that there's no way he can truly make up for his behavior: the fact that he's a good person in general doesn't erase his specific criminal act. Of course, Stephen has repeatedly noted this same problem throughout the novel: no good action now can make up for his moral failures in the past (especially his failure to pray for his dying mother).

The lawyer J.J. O'Molloy defends Bloom, claiming that he's merely an "errant mortal" and "poor foreign immigrant" trying to "turn an honest penny." Bloom never wanted intimacy with Driscoll, O'Molloy claims, but rather was merely acting out the primitive desires hidden away in his foreign Mongol blood. Bloom starts babbling in an imitation of Chinese people struggling to speak English, and he gets laughed down again.

Even though he's supposed to be defending Bloom, J.J. O'Molloy's speech is full of exaggerated racist tropes about immigrants and Jewish people—evidently, he wants his Irish jury to feel pity for the racially inferior Bloom. In addition to letting Joyce mock Irish racists' illogical arguments, this speech reveals that Bloom really does feel like an alienated racial outsider in Dublin (even though, during the day, he avoids self-pity while staying open and unashamed about his identity).

O'Molloy continues his defense, arguing that the respectable Bloom treated Driscoll like "his very own daughter" and would never "do anything ungentlemanly" to degrade a virtuous girl. In fact, O'Molloy now identifies Bloom as "the whitest man I know" and explains that he's struggling financially, having mortgaged his Middle Eastern fruit fields. Moses Dlugacz mystically appears, holding oranges and pork kidneys. O'Molloy transforms into the sickly legal genius John F. Taylor and then the eloquent defender Seymour Bushe, who asks for Bloom to get "the sacred benefit of the doubt."

By comparing Mary Driscoll to Milly Bloom and commenting on her age, O'Molloy is inadvertently making an ironic point—Bloom does *degrade virtuous young women his daughter's age, like Gerty MacDowell. Gerty and Mary are just two of the numerous women in this novel who represent the Virgin Mary, so Bloom's sexual misdeeds are clearly tied with his apparently blasphemous rejection of Christianity. O'Molloy repeats the same pattern when he praises Bloom's whiteness—he appeals to Irish people's racism in order to defend a man from an ethnic minority group. Of course, he also directly contradicts everything he said earlier about Bloom's pitiful inferiority and foreignness. So Bloom clearly doesn't think he's an actual legal genius.*

Bloom presents a list of character references, but he accidentally starts lying about talking to the great astronomer Sir Robert Ball. In response, several respectable women stand to testify against Bloom. Mrs. Yelverton Barry reports that Bloom wrote her a letter praising her "peerless globes." Mrs. Bellingham says he also wrote to her, complimenting her furs and legs before proposing she "commit adultery at the earliest possible opportunity" with him. Dressed as an Amazon and carrying a hunting crop, The Honourable Mrs. Mervyn Talboys calls Bloom a "plebian Don Juan" and accuses him of sending her a nude photograph of Molly and a letter requesting that she chastise and whip him.

It's not apparent whether Bloom really committed the offenses that these women describe, or if he actually just thought about them. While the women's refined language suggests their upper-class status, it also might be a reference to Bloom's awkwardness and tendency to get tongue-tied when he talks to women (including his wife). And when Mrs. Talboys calls him a "plebian Don Juan," she's implicitly comparing him to the classier and more successful Blazes Boylan, who is busy singing a duet from Don Giovanni *(Italian for "Don Juan") with Molly Bloom.*

These three women (and several others) hold up letters from Bloom. Mrs. Talboys threatens to "flay [Bloom] alive," and Bloom squirms in delight and says he "love[s] the danger." He asks for a mere spanking, but she promises to unleash her "dormant tigress" on him. Mrs. Bellingham and Mrs. Barry cheer her on, while Bloom begs for forgiveness. Mrs. Talboys names Bloom a "wellknown cuckold" and threatens to lower his trousers. As evidence, the newsboy Davy Stephen brings in a newspaper listing "all the cuckolds in Dublin," Father O'Hanlon displays Father Conroy's marble cuckoo clock, and the brass rings on Bloom's bed start jingling.

Bloom evidently likes being punished and threatened by powerful women. This provides important context for an upcoming scene in the madame Bella Cohen's brothel. Contrary to all his worrying during the day, he actually seems to even get some perverse pleasure out of knowing that Molly has been with another man. The newspapers suggest that everyone in Dublin really does know about Molly and Boylan—or at least Bloom imagines that they do (or wants them to). In case the reader had any doubt that the cuckoo clock and jingling bed were symbols of cuckoldry, Joyce makes it exceedingly obvious here by putting them out on display.

A cloud of fog lifts to show the trial's jury, which comprises most of the men Bloom met throughout the day. The court crier officially lists Bloom's crimes (planting bombs, forgery, bigamy, prostitution, cuckoldry, and public nuisance). Recorder Frederick Falkiner sentences Bloom to death by hanging, and Long John Fanning asks, "Who'll hang Judas Iscariot?" The master barber H. Rumbold volunteers.

Numerous aspects of this courtroom scene foreshadow Stephen's metaphorical crucifixion at the end of this episode. Of course, in this case, Bloom seems to be getting crucified, and is also specifically associated with the traitor Judas. At other moments, he's also been associated with God, the prophet Elijah, and St. Paul. Rather than fixing one-to-one correspondences between characters and religious figures, the novel uses these figures as archetypes to illuminate the characters' changing instincts and goals.

In a desperate attempt to save himself, Bloom starts rambling and asks to talk to Hynes. The policemen accuse Bloom of planting a bomb, which was really the pig's foot he fed to the dog. The dog appears, expands to the size of a man, and reveals that it's Paddy Dignam. Dignam confirms that Bloom was at his funeral. He speaks the *Hamlet* ghost's words in Esau's voice and claims to be undergoing metempsychosis. Dignam summarizes the story of his death, then John O'Connell and Father Coffey show up to reenact his funeral. Dog-Dignam crawls into a hole, followed by a hungry rat. Tom Rochford shows up with his machine, then looks for Reuben J. Dodd in a manhole.

Bloom's sense of guilt transforms into utter terror at the idea of his own death. In this scene, he re-enacts a distorted version of Paddy Dignam's funeral in order to confront that fear. Dignam-Hamlet-Esau's comments about metempsychosis give Bloom an alternative to his scientific view of death: they suggest that it's possible to become reincarnated as someone else. In fact, Dignam's multiple voices suggest that people's identities are always multiple, anyway. This leads Bloom's fantasy to dissolve because it challenges the basis for his feelings of sinfulness: his sense that he is singular, guilty, and unable to change.

Bloom pushes through the fog and sees personified kisses flying around his head, with cutesy messages for him. He hears church music and meets Zoe Higgins, a young prostitute, who reports that Stephen and Lynch are inside Mrs. Cohen's brothel. Zoe asks if Bloom is Stephen's father—he says no—and then sticks her hand down his pants. She pulls out his lucky potato and decides to keep it. Charmed, Bloom hears "oriental music" and imagines an exoticized scene of the East, complete with gazelles, a white "womancity," roses, and wine. The garlic-breathed Zoe bites on Bloom's ear, and he sees kings' gold and bones in place of the roses.

The long second fantasy ends, and Bloom lurches back into reality. Zoe understandably interprets Bloom searching for Stephen as a father looking for his son. When Zoe pulls Bloom's lucky potato out of his pants, this is what makes him vulnerable to her charms. Like Odysseus's magic herb, the potato protected Bloom against the prostitutes' seductive magic. But without it, he immediately starts linking Zoe to the same Eastern imagery that he always associates with Molly. This is practically the first time in the novel that anyone actually wants Bloom around, so it's no wonder that he gets a little entranced.

Zoe asks for a cigarette, but Bloom explains that he doesn't smoke. She invites him to "make a stump speech," and he starts proudly talking about the dangers of tobacco. Another fantasy takes over. Church bells chime, and Bloom is declared the mayor of Dublin. He discusses building a tramline to bring cattle across the city, and the city's nobility appears to celebrate him. The former mayor proposes distributing his brilliant speech in the papers and naming a street after him.

Many of the novel's other characters aren't interested in Bloom's technical lectures or complicated political opinions. But Zoe welcomes them all—even if just because she wants him to pay for her services. Clearly, Zoe's interest and appreciation are what launch Bloom into this third major fantasy, which shows off his grandiose plans to fix all the world's problems. This is a natural response to the sense of political powerlessness and social alienation that he repeatedly feels throughout the day. Of course, Joyce is also poking fun at himself and his reader, since most people probably daydream occasionally about what they would do if they ruled the world.

Bloom starts talking about the dangers of industrial machinery, and suddenly all of Dublin starts to celebrate in his honor. John Howard Parnell leads a parade that also includes numerous other political, religious, and economic leaders. Sitting on a white horse under an arch, Bloom is proclaimed "emperor-president and king-chairman," and all of Dublin cries out, "God save Leopold the First!"

In this fantasy, Bloom suddenly resembles a traditional epic hero much more than the modernist everyman hero that he has embodied throughout Ulysses *so far. He's all powerful, which means the world can no longer prevent him from fulfilling his will. In short, fate no longer controls him: he controls fate. Joyce's satire has multiple targets here, including Bloom's grandiose fantasies, Irish nationalists' inflated sense of self-importance, and European monarchies' archaic customs.*

Bloom swears his oath and takes his throne, then immediately sends Molly away and marries "the princess Selene, the splendour of night." John Howard Parnell names Bloom as his brother Charles's rightful successor. Bloom receives the keys and charter to Dublin, then starts speaking of a great military victory and proclaiming the beginning of "a new era." He will build "the golden city which is to be, the new Bloomusalem." A group of workmen immediately start building the new Bloomusalem, a huge kidney-shaped building. In the process, the workmen tear down much of Dublin, and several of them die dramatic deaths.

In his hilarious, exaggerated fantasy coronation, Bloom chooses the Irish lineage of the Parnell brothers over the English lineage of the monarchy. "The new Bloomusalem" is a reference to "the new Jerusalem," the holy city that represents heaven on earth after the second coming. Therefore, Bloom isn't just fantasizing about political power: he's imagining himself as the Messiah, creating the world in his own image. In a way, then, this scene is similar to Stephen's daydreams about revolutionizing literature, politics, and religion all at once through his art.

Suddenly, the man in the brown macintosh emerges from a trapdoor and declares that Bloom is an impostor, and his real name is Higgins. Bloom orders the man shot, and he and most of Bloom's enemies are killed. Bloom's bodyguard gives out gifts and prizes, while a mob of women assembles to fight for Bloom's attention. Bloom generously greets the people of Dublin, tickling babies, playing with children, and performing tricks for his audience. Even the citizen praises Bloom.

It makes sense that the man in the macintosh is the one to dissent against Bloom's rule. His identity is unknown, so he represents the anonymous, faceless enemy who could be anybody or nobody at all. In this way, he's a foil for Bloom, whom the novel will later call "Everyman or Noman." Of course, if the man in the macintosh represents James Joyce himself, then this scene represents the author rebelling against his own work. The adoration that Bloom receives from the crowd expresses his underlying need for attention and affirmation. Interestingly, the man in the macintosh calls Bloom "Higgins" because that was his mother's maiden name. It's significant that he shares this name with the prostitute Zoe Higgins. Perhaps she represents a maternal figure because she gives him love and affection, or perhaps she represents Bloom's secret fear of incest because she's barely older than his daughter Milly.

Bloom dispenses perfect financial, medical, astronomical, gardening, and parenting advice to a series of needy Dubliners. He orders a series of exaggerated public reforms, including "free money, free rent, free love and a free lay church." He starts singing and telling jokes, and he's declared "the funniest man on earth." Attractive women start committing suicide because of their love for him.

At the same time as he wants power, affection, and respect, Bloom also genuinely fantasizes about helping people. Throughout the day, he thinks that his sense of moral good and his extensive knowledge about the world could be put to better use. He's probably right. In this part of his vision, Bloom marries his fantasy of infinite power with this desire to help people through education, secularism, and progressive policies. Of course, Bloom is also more than a little vain, as demonstrated by his desire to be a comedian and heartthrob. Joyce definitely also wants his readers to consider how their own fantasies express their deepest desires.

Suddenly, the preacher Alexander J. Dowie begins speaking out against Bloom, declaring him a debaucherous disgrace and hypocritical heretic. A lynch mob assembles and throws trash at him, and he responds by quoting Shakespeare and claiming that his brother, Henry, is guilty. The "sex specialist" Dr. Buck Mulligan appears and gives convoluted medical testimony about Bloom's sexual problems. Doctors Madden, Crotthers, and Punch Costello agree, and Dr. Dixon explains that Bloom is an "example of the new womanly man." Bloom then gives birth to eight boys, who instantly become respectable, well-educated gentlemen with prominent jobs.

Suddenly, the tables turn: Bloom switches back from grandiose pride to guilt and shame. These negative feelings center on sex, religion, and Bloom's femininity compared to other men in Dublin. Alexander J. Dowie is the American Baptist preacher from the pamphlet in "Lestrygonians." His objection represents religious tradition trying to stop modernization and change. Meanwhile, the doctors from "Oxen of the Sun" represent the opposite idea: Bloom is too modern, too rational and scientific. Therefore, he gives birth, violating the sacred tradition of women's fertility. Again, it's worth asking what Joyce is trying to do with the play in this scene. Bloom might actually be hallucinating or having these elaborate visions. However, "Circe" could also just represent Joyce's answer to a difficult literary challenge: how can a stream of consciousness be captured through the form of a play? Whereas Joyce represented the stream of consciousness more literally in the other episodes, by narrating the protagonists' thoughts and feelings, in this episode he has to turn those thoughts and feelings into characters and bring them to life.

A mysterious voice declares that Bloom is the Messiah. Bloom performs a series of acrobatic miracles, then twists his face into those of famous historical figures. A representative of the Vatican recounts Bloom's entire lineage, showing that he descends from Moses, and a hand appears to write "Bloom is a cod" on a wall.

The comparison between Bloom and the Messiah is now explicit, but it's totally lighthearted. Even Bloom's miracles are a wacky parody of Jesus's. The pun between "God" and "cod" (the fish) has shown up a few times in the novel, most notably at the beginning of "Lestrygonians," when Bloom compared a glowing crucifix to a glowing tin of codfish. Joyce is certainly mocking Bloom and the church, but he's also mocking his own ambition for imagining that Ulysses *will rise to the level of other great historical novels.*

A crab, a baby, and a hollybush accuse Bloom of doing something sinister in public. His head and arms are put in a pillory, and children dance in circles around him, singing degrading songs. Hornblower the porter announces that people will start throwing fake stones at Bloom and defiling him, and they do. Old friends mock him, and Reuben J. Dodd appears with his son's corpse. The Dublin fire department sets fire to Bloom, who tells the "daughters of Erin [Ireland]" not to cry for him. Then, a choir of Erin's daughters appears in black robes, with prayerbooks and candles, and asks for prayers from symbols representing the novel's different episodes (like "Kidney of Bloom" and "Wandering Soap"). A much larger choir follows them and sings a chorus from Handel's Messiah.

Bloom's sin is clearly public masturbation (like in "Nausicaa"). But his punishment is whimsical and lighthearted, just like his miracles in the last section. Apparently, Bloom is repeating the stages of his earlier fantasy, but now as a farce. (Perhaps he's realizing how exaggerated it is.) When Reuben J. Dodd shows up with his son's corpse, Bloom's fantasy appears to be mocking the fact that he's still mourning for his own son, a decade after his death. And the chorus of the "daughters of Erin" mocks Joyce's heavy-handed use of symbols throughout the novel. All in all, this punishment scene is very different from the earlier courtroom scene, because it shows Bloom recognizing that his problems may not be as serious as they seem.

Zoe reappears and tells Bloom to "talk away till [he's] black in the face." Bloom briefly assumes the role of an Irish peasant longing to go home, and he gives a dramatic speech asking to leave. Zoe makes fun of him and criticizes his insincerity. Bloom calls her "a necessary evil" and starts feeling her nipples. She asks for ten shillings and offers to take Bloom inside. Bloom complains about Molly getting jealous and then starts to babble like an infant. But Zoe tempts him to go inside. He has a vision of "all the male brutes" who have been with her, and he trips on his way up the front steps. Inside, a man walks by like an ape and Bloom sniffs around like a dog as he follows Zoe to the music room.

Bloom comes back to reality. It turns out that no time has passed at all, because Zoe is continuing the same line she started before Bloom's emperor fantasy ("Make a stump speech […] talk away till you're black in the face"). Thus, the entire fantasy actually took place in a split second of real time. This shows how much Joyce distorts the timeline throughout this episode (and the novel as a whole). Bloom's brief appearance as an Irish peasant (from one of the playwright Synge's works) is a joke about both Irish identity and Bloom's complicated relationship to it as the child of an immigrant. Specifically, Joyce is yet again mocking the nationalists who define rural peasants as the only "true" Irish people. Bloom's attitude towards Zoe changes rapidly: she seems to encompass all the novel's female characters. In one moment, he's sexually interested in her, and in the next she becomes a mother figure for him. Finally, the animal imagery inside the brothel again ties this episode to the Odyssey *(in which Circe turned Odysseus's men into pigs).*

In the music room, Lynch is on the rug, keeping time with a wand. The prostitute Kitty Ricketts sits on the table, and Stephen prods at the pianola, playing perfect fifths. Florry Talbot, another prostitute, is laying on the couch. Stephen rants incomprehensibly about music, and Lynch's hat mockingly challenges him to finish a coherent idea instead of just stringing together sophisticated-sounding nonsense. Stephen says that, because a perfect fifth is "the greatest possible interval," it represents the furthest point that something (like "God, the sun, Shakespeare, [or] a commercial traveller") can travel from its home before starting to make a homecoming.

When Bloom catches up with Stephen, half of "Circe" has already passed (although it has really just been a few minutes). As always, Stephen is busy philosophizing away. And like Bloom's unnecessary scientific explanations, Stephen's chatter annoys and alienates other people. (This parallel helps establish the father-son resemblance between them.) But actually, Stephen's comments are an important metaphor for the novel's plot, which is essentially a story of both Bloom and Stephen venturing out into the world and then returning home. Stephen lists some of the other versions this motif has taken throughout the novel. God voyaged to Earth in the form of Jesus and returned through the crucifixion. The sun travels to the highest point in the sky at noon, and then back down again. Shakespeare went to spend his career in London and then returned home to Stratford in old age. The "commercial traveller" is a clear allusion to Bloom, although it also foreshadows the sailor that Bloom and Stephen will meet in the next episode. Of course, Stephen is leaving out two essential voyagers: Odysseus going to the Trojan War and returning to Ithaca, and Stephen himself going to Paris and returning to Dublin. The "greatest possible interval," or the farthest distance the hero ventures from home, is essentially the climax of their journey. Of course, this metaphor allows Joyce to frame this brothel scene, which contains the climax of the novel.

Florry Talbot says that she read in the paper that the Antichrist is arriving soon, and newsboys run by, confirming the news. "Reuben J. Antichrist, wandering Jew" hobbles into view with his son's body, which is hanging from a boat pole. Punch Costello appears in the form of a hobgoblin and tumbles around, yelling in French. Florry Talbot repeats that the world is indeed ending.

In Bloom's last fantasy, he became the Messiah and acted out the Second Coming. Now, Florry Talbot proposes the opposite metaphor (even though she's just commenting on a sensationalist article she saw in the newspapers). Reuben J. Dodd and Punch Costello are two of the most despised characters in the novel. Dodd has been the target of many Dubliners' anti-Semitic scorn, and Bloom hated Costello for his vulgarity and disrespectfulness.

A rocket explodes in the sky, releasing a white star, and a two-headed octopus starts twirling around and talking in a Scottish accent. The prophet Elijah starts speaking about the end of the world in a slick American accent and yelling at God (or "Mr. President") about whether Florry, Zoe, and Kitty are devout enough. Each of the women reveals when they first had sex. Stephen's drinking buddies appear, representing Jesus's eight beatitudes from the Sermon on the Mount. Then, the librarians Lyster, Best, and Eglinton pass by, dressed absurdly and arguing about the value of beauty versus truth. Finally, the Celtic God of the Underworld, Mananaun MacLir, materializes and starts talking about Hinduism.

This scene juxtaposes a number of different religious traditions and philosophical worldviews. The Christian visions seem to be fighting with the theosophical, mythical, and artistic ones over who is right about the end of the world. Thus, this scene represents the conflict between these different worldviews in Stephen's mind and the modern world. The two-headed octopus is a complicated allusion to the poet George Russell, while the prophet Elijah represents the American preacher Alexander J. Dowie.

Lynch tosses Zoe a cigarette, then starts lifting up her skirt. She's not wearing any underwear, but he pretends that he's not looking. Bloom is, and then he launches into another fantasy: his grandfather, Lipoti Virag, shoots through the chimney into the room, wearing a brown macintosh. He comments in detail on the three prostitutes. Zoe isn't wearing any underwear and has an injection mark on her thigh. Kitty dresses carefully to hide her thin frame and is faking her sadness. Florry has impressive "protuberances" both at the chest and rear, but Bloom doesn't like her stye (a kind of eye bump due to bacterial infection). Bloom and Virag discuss medical remedies for the stye.

This fantasy represents what's happening in Bloom's head while he looks at the three prostitutes and thinks about whether he wants to sleep with one of them. While his association with the man in the brown macintosh is a mystery, Virag represents Bloom's obsession with sex and analytical scientific attitude. Although Virag is clearly interested in the women, he's also totally unemotional and detached. This is similar to how Bloom thought about Gerty MacDowell in "Nausicaa." Notably, it's not at all the same part of Bloom's mind that's responsible for his love and attraction for Molly.

Virag encourages Bloom to think harder. He mentions various medical procedures and Bloom's forgotten ambitions, then he starts talking about the sex lives of insects and refers Bloom to his book, *Fundamentals of Sexology*. They compare aphrodisiac oysters to women's bodies and think about animals drinking women's breastmilk. Virag talks to the moth circling the lamp, and the moth talks back with a childish poem. Henry Flower, Bloom's alter ego, appears as a handsome, well-dressed gentleman in a sombrero. Then all three versions of Bloom are together: "Virag truculent," "Grave Bloom," and "Henry gallant."

With the introduction of gallant Henry Flower, this fantasy presents Bloom as a man of three minds. Virag represents his analytic side, Flower represents his sentimental side, and "Grave Bloom" represents his serious and practical side. Of course, Joyce is also making fun of the Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Ghost). Bloom and Virag's conversation about animals is yet another reference to the sorceress Circe turning Odysseus's men into pigs in the Odyssey. *Meanwhile, the moth circling the lamp is a metaphor for the way Bloom obsessively circles around women, without daring to actually approach them.*

Stephen mutters to himself about returning home. Florry asks him to sing "Love's Old Sweet Song," but he refuses, since he's a "most finished artist." Stephen imagines an argument between two personalities: "Philip Sober," who tells him to settle his debts, and "Philip Drunk" who rants passionately about music and philosophy.

Stephen is still thinking about his homecoming, a motif that points to his two major conflicts at this point in the novel. First, where is he going to sleep tonight? And secondly, who is he and what is he going to do with his life? (His drunk personality encourages him to follow his passions, and his sober personality wants him to be practical.) "Love's Old Sweet Song" is the famous ballad that Molly Bloom is rehearsing to sing on her tour. It's about the enduring power of love, but Stephen's refusal to sing it suggests that he has serious doubts about whether love can really be so powerful and long-lasting. (He's probably thinking about his dead mother.) When he calls himself a "finished" artist, this is doublespeak. On the one hand, he is finished, or spent and burned out—he has no energy left to sing. On the other, he strives to be a finished artist in the sense of forming a complete and stable identity.

Zoe reports that a priest came to visit her, and Lipoti Virag responds that this is a logical expression of the Christian belief in humankind's original sin. He goes on to describe this original sin in colorful, vulgar detail. Zoe explains that the priest "couldn't get a connection," and Virag howls at the moon like a werewolf and declares that Jesus was a bastard and charlatan. Kitty mentions a colleague named Mary, whose child died of convulsions, and Lynch calls the three prostitutes "three wise virgins." Virag accuses the Virgin Mary of adultery.

The priest who visits prostitutes and the concept of original sin are both indirect comments on Stephen's dilemma. He's dressed like a priest, and he used to want to be one. His guilt about failing to pray for his dying mother hangs over him just like original sin hangs over humanity in the Christian tradition. Thus, Virag suggests that Stephen is continuing to fall into sin because he cannot cope with his sins of the past. Of course, he's also blasphemously rejecting the entire Christian tradition, which is understandable because he's a man of science. By turning him into a werewolf, however, the novel both references the sorceress Circe and satirizes anti-Semitic depictions of Jews as animals like werewolves. Meanwhile, the "wise virgins" comment connects a number of women in the novel: the prostitutes, the Virgin Mary, Gerty MacDowell, the nurses from the maternity hospital, and the old virgins from Stephen's Parable of the Plums.

Ben Dollard appears as a strapping, hairy brute and starts to sing, which prompts the virgin nurses Callan and Quigley to burst in the room and jump at him. Holding a woman's severed head, Henry Flower grooms himself and then leaves. Virag unscrews his own head and follows Flower out. As they chat about the clergy, Florry jokes that Stephen is "a spoiled priest," and Lynch says that his father is a cardinal. Stephen appears as a Catholic cardinal, wearing a tattered uniform. Cardinal Dedalus cites a solemn verse, then sings a merry limerick, gets attacked by flies, and walks off into the distance singing a solemn song.

Dollard is a foil for Stephen: whereas Stephen cannot sing and sleeps with prostitutes, Dollard sings beautifully and attracts virgins. So is Cardinal Dedalus, who represents the sense of duty and intellectual seriousness that Stephen also aspires to. So even though they're both total parodies, they represent the two futures that Stephen has to choose between. The woman's head that Flower holds is probably Martha's; it represents the way Bloom only gets to know her from a distance (through the mind, severed from the body).

A man opens a door, leaves the brothel, and lingers on the stairs outside. Bloom instinctively offers Zoe some chocolate and starts wondering whether the man was Boylan. Bloom imagines himself in a fancy fur overcoat and pleads for the man to leave, which he does. Bloom wonders if the chocolate is an aphrodisiac and tells himself that, unlike the priest, he has to finish when he sleeps with Zoe.

Like a good, protective father, Bloom starts giving out snacks. He's done this throughout the novel, mostly to animals. (His fancy fur coat references the Odyssey *and connects this moment to those earlier instances by suggesting that he's turning into an animal.) When he starts thinking about sex, he instinctively starts comparing himself to others (virile Boylan and the sterile priest). This shows that he's clearly anxious about his ability—which makes sense, as he hasn't actually had sex in years.*

The "massive whoremistress" Bella Cohen enters the room, wearing an elegant gown and holding a large handheld fan. She stares at Bloom, who imagines that her fan starts talking to him. The fan notes that Bloom is married, declares that they already know each other from his dreams, and promises that Bella will dominate him. Bloom enthusiastically asks to be dominated. The fan insists that Bloom tie Bella's bootlaces—an old fantasy of his—and he does it with relish. The hoof of Bella's boot taunts and threatens Bloom, whose face starts sagging like a dog's.

Bella Cohen is Joyce's Circe. She immediately stands in stark contrast to Kitty, Florry, and Zoe. The other prostitutes are young, poor, and slight, while Bella is old, rich, and enormous. Like Circe, she entrances Bloom and turns him into a (metaphorical) animal. And she gives Bloom a new place to project the domination fantasies that he first mentioned in his earlier visions, when the three noblewomen accused him of harassment.

Bella demands Bloom's praise, then forces him to walk on all fours like an animal. (For several pages, the novel refers to Bella as "Bello" and uses male pronouns for her, while using the conventionally female pronouns she/her/hers for Bloom.) Bella grinds her heel into Bloom's neck, then uses him as a footstool and demands his obedience. After promising to obey, Bloom hides under the sofa out of fear. Bella sweetly coaxes Bloom out, then drags him across the floor by his hair and starts promising to cruelly punish him. Bella twists Bloom's arm, slaps him in the face, and sits on top of him while smoking a cigar and talking about stock prices.

By switching Bella and Bloom's pronouns, the novel suggests that Bloom's desire to be dominated makes him less of a man. Although he's using this technique for comic and rhetorical effect, Joyce clearly associates power with the male role and weakness with the female one. But despite this notable pronoun shift, Bloom resembles a pathetic dog more than anything else during this section of his fantasy. More than anything else, this fantasy is an expression of Bloom's shame at his sexual perversions, his failure to father a son, and his inability to give Molly everything she needs.

Bella rides Bloom like a horse, and he mutters, "not man [...] woman." She comments that he's getting what he always wanted, and she orders him to change into women's silk clothing. Bella promises to treat Bloom like any other prostitute, making him wear makeup, perfume, and a tight corset. Bella reminds Bloom of when he tried on Molly's clothes and posed in Miriam Dandrade's underwear, and a chorus of voices called "the sins of the past" appears to reveal Bloom's most egregious fantasies. Bella asks Bloom to reveal his worst fantasy of all, but he can't get the words out. Bella tells Bloom he will have to clean up after the other ladies at the brothel, in addition to working as a prostitute. She auctions off Bloom's virginity, and an unknown buyer offers one hundred pounds.

In Bloom's vision, he turns from a dog into a woman, and then he gets sexually objectified as one of Bella's prostitutes. He obviously enjoys the whole process, which apparently isn't even his most extreme sexual fantasy. In fact, Bloom simultaneously acts out his fantasy and confronts his guilt about the same fantasy (as well as his "sins of the past"). Arguably, this vision's purpose is to help him separate his desire from his guilt and shame.

Bella starts taunting Bloom by reminding him that "a man of brawn" (Blazes Boylan) has taken his place as Molly's lover. Bloom pleads for forgiveness from Molly, but Bella says it's too late. Bloom has a vision of Molly as a young girl, but he soon realizes that it's really Milly, his daughter. Bella points out that Bloom chased other women while ignoring his wife, so it's no surprise that other men are now taking his place in his bed. She tells him to die and leave her everything he owns in his will. Bloom weeps while a crowd of Jewish men prays for him.

Bella forces Bloom to confront more and more of his inner demons. Evidently, he blames himself for Boylan's affair with Molly, and he yearns for a youth that he and Molly can never recover. He feels like he's forfeited his right to preside over his home because of these misdeeds. In short, he blames himself for his own exclusion and alienation. But his distress in this section shows that he genuinely yearns to repair his relationship with Molly and become the better husband that she demands.

A nymph appears out of a funeral pyre and tells Bloom to stop crying. She says that he found her "in evil company" and reveals that she comes from a photo in a pornographic magazine, which Bloom tore out and framed on his and Molly's bedroom wall. Bloom kisses the nymph and praises her body, but she reminds him about all the vile things that she has seen in his bedroom, like the soiled clothes and the broken commode.

In his fantasy, Bloom seems to have died and become some kind of immortal spirit being through metempsychosis. (Or maybe he's just hallucinating within his hallucination.) The pornographic photo with the nymph was briefly mentioned in "Calypso." Bloom's desire for the nymph represents his sexual straying and his failure to put Molly first. Meanwhile, the nymph has seen his intimate life up close—including his perversions, filth, and failure to provide enough for Molly. The nymph knows how Bloom has defiled his own home, so it's unsurprising that Blazes Boylan has usurped it.

Bloom hears the sound of the Poulaphouca Waterfall, which he visited on a field trip in high school. Adolescent Bloom appears and the yew trees accuse him of doing something profane underneath them. Bloom struggles to justify his behavior, remembering his crush on Lotty Clarke and insisting that nobody saw him. Besides, all the girls found him too ugly. Bloom remembers a goat bleating on Howth Hill and imagines a dummy of himself rolling off a cliff.

This field trip seems to be an important early sexual experience for Bloom. Specifically, it appears to have been the first time he masturbated in public. Therefore, it represents the moment when his sexual perversions began. Meanwhile, Howth Hill is the place where he proposed to Molly—this scene is significant becuase it recurs in her soliloquy at the end of the novel.

Arching her body seductively, the nymph proclaims that immortals are "stonecold and pure," and Bloom confesses more sins. Meanwhile, Kitty, Florry, Lynch, and Zoe comment that one of the cushions is hot, after someone sat on it. Bloom finds this warmth exciting, but the nymph—now dressed as a nun—insists that desire is wrong. Bloom's pants button flies off, and he tells the nymph and the yew trees that he has won. Sure enough, the trees get wet and a huge stain appears on the nymph's robe. The nymph curses and attacks Bloom, who grows more confident, then cracks open and lets out "a cloud of stench." Next, Bloom turns to Bella and insults her viciously. (Among other things, he points out her double chin and suggests that she hasn't cleaned up from her last client yet.)

Bloom returns to the opposition between real and ideal beauty from "Lestrygonians." The nymph promises "stoneocld and pure" eternal beauty, while the warm seat cushions represent the exciting (but changing and temporary) beauty of living, breathing people. Bloom defeats this binary by proving that the nymph isn't actually eternal—she's made of liquids and stenches like any other living being. Bloom's victory builds up his sense of masculinity and power, which he then asserts against Bella to free himself from this nightmare.

Bloom takes his potato back from Zoe, who has been hiding it in her stocking. Bella approaches Stephen at the pianola, and with excessive deference and politeness, he repeatedly pays her the wrong amount, leaving enough for the men to see all three of the women. Bloom insists on paying for himself and returning Stephen his extra money. A matchbox tumbles out of the neglectful Stephen's pocket, and Bloom offers to watch Stephen's cash so that he doesn't lose it all. Stephen nonchalantly hands over his money, then he struggles to light a cigarette as he muses about Georgina Johnson getting "dead and married." Zoe and Florry explain that her husband is a Londoner named Mr. Lambe. Stephen drops his cigarette and tells himself that he has to fix his glasses, which he broke yesterday. Bloom tosses Stephen's cigarette away and proposes that he stop smoking and eat something instead.

Bloom's extended sexual fantasy ends when he gets back his potato (which is a defensive talisman against Bella's magic). Stephen's bumbling incompetence with money is ironic, given that he's essentially a genius at everything else. It's probably due to a combination of his drunkenness, his depression, and his inability to see through his broken glasses. Luckily, responsible Leopold Bloom saves the day. Stephen's match is also extremely significant—as he explained in "Aeolus," the match is a metaphor for irreversible decisions (probably because it can't be un-burned). His broken glasses are also a metaphor, and they explain why he hasn't been able to see very much throughout the day. Finally, Stephen's comments about Georgina Johnson help explain his despair: she's married (which, to him, is practically like being dead). He's lost the only other woman who truly matters to him, besides his mother. Mr. Lambe's name is yet another reference to Jesus, the Lamb of God, who has saved Georgina from her sins (prostitution). Stephen is still waiting for salvation—which will come from Leopold Bloom, whether he realizes it or not.

Zoe reads Stephen's palm and concludes that he's courageous, but Lynch thinks that Zoe clearly isn't any good at reading palms. Suddenly, Father Conmee and Stephen's old schoolmaster Father Dolan spring out of the pianola and briefly reenact a scene from Stephen's childhood: Dolan accuses Stephen of pretending to break his glasses, but Conmee believes that it was really an accident. Zoe tells Stephen that he has a woman's hand, and that he'll meet "influential friends" because he was born on a Thursday. She also sees some bad omens in his palm, but she doesn't tell him what they are.

Zoe's palm-reading adds to the important symbolism of Stephen's broken glasses. In a nutshell, Zoe promises to provide the vision that Stephen lacks. While her predictions are vague, it's fair to think that Stephen's "influential friend" might be Bloom. The scene when Stephen broke his glasses at school was significant in Joyce's earlier novel about Stephen, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. *In this scene, Stephen got caught in an unjust situation that he could not control, and he had to appeal to the powers that be (Conmee) for justice. In* Ulysses, *with nowhere to sleep and nobody to love, he feels like he's in a similar situation—but he has nobody to ask for help.*

Next, Zoe reads the skeptical Bloom's palm. At first, she says that he'll travel and marry rich, but he says that's wrong. Then, she sees his little finger and concludes that he's a "henpicked husband." A giant hen pops up from the void and cluck-cluck-clucks, and then Bloom admits that he cut his hand twenty-two years before, at age sixteen. Stephen points out that he is twenty-two, and he also had an accident sixteen years ago.

The hen (who originally appeared in a children's story in "Cyclops") further associates Bella Cohen's brothel with Circe's palace from the Odyssey. *The correspondence between Bloom and Stephen's ages and accidents implies that their life histories are somehow synchronized. Again, fate seems to be bringing them together.*

While Zoe and Florry whisper in secret, Bloom imagines Lenehan and Blazes Boylan passing by in a carriage while the Ormond Hotel barmaids Lydia Douce and Mina Kennedy watch them from a distance. Boylan declares that he was "plucking a turkey" and has Lenehan sniff his finger (which smells of "lobster and mayonnaise"). Boylan jumps out of the carriage, uses Bloom's "antlered head" as a hat-stand, and tosses Bloom some change so that he can buy himself a drink. Bloom obediently lets Boylan go upstairs for his "private business" with Molly, who invites him to visit her in the bath. Molly and Boylan agree to let Bloom watch them have sex through the bathroom keyhole. Mina Kennedy and Lydia Douce comment on Molly and Boylan's technique while the couple yells out in pleasure and Bloom cheers them on.

Bloom's exclusion from Zoe and Florry's conversation leads him to think about Lenehan and Boylan chattering privately. This leads him to Boylan and Molly's private afternoon together, which also excluded him. While his thoughts have frequently drifted back to Molly and Boylan throughout the day, Bloom hasn't yet fully acknowledged their adultery. Therefore, this scene allows Bloom to confront his feelings of exclusion, betrayal, and humiliation. This is similar to how he confronted his feelings of mediocrity and powerlessness through his domination fantasy with Bella Cohen.

Lynch randomly comments, "the mirror up to nature," quoting *Hamlet*. Stephen and Bloom look into the mirror and see William Shakespeare looking back at them and talking incoherently. Bloom asks the three prostitutes what they're privately giggling about, but they don't want to tell. Then, Bloom has a vision of Mrs. Dignam running by with her children, wearing her late husband's trousers and carrying his insurance policy. Shakespeare's face transforms into Martin Cunningham's. Cunningham's wife appears next to him and starts singing and twirling around, drunk. Stephen starts talking about Noah getting drunk on the ark, and Bella tells him to stop. Lynch clarifies that he has just come back from Paris. Impressed, Zoe asks Stephen for "some parleyvoo." Stephen starts ranting about Parisian sexual adventures, imagining a series of absurd fetishes. The women find this hilarious.

Hamlet's comment about holding "the mirror up to nature" is a reference to the purpose of theater, which he argued has to be revealing the truth about the world. This is partially a reference to Bloom's explicit fantasy. But it's also a reference to Joyce's stylistic experiments with theater in "Circe." The analogy between Stephen, Bloom, and Shakespeare is based on the fact that all of them were cuckolded. Then, Bloom imagines other unhappy couples, as though to remind himself that things could be far worse with Molly. Meanwhile, Stephen's blasphemous comments transform into hilarious jokes when they're associated with the French. This illustrates how conservative Ireland's moral and sexual norms still were—even in a brothel!

Stephen recalls his dream from the night before, in which an unfamiliar man offered him melons and led him through a "street of harlots" covered with red carpet. Bloom tells Stephen to look around, but Stephen ignores him and, instead, cries out "Pater! [Father!] Free!" His father Simon Dedalus flies around above him like a buzzard, yelling that he must preserve the bloodline. A group of men with hounds hunts down the fox that has just finished burying its grandmother. A crowd yells out betting odds during a horserace, where a dark horse without a jockey pulls out way in front. Meanwhile, the ridiculously-dressed Mr. Deasy rides Cock of the North, the horse that was supposed to be the favorite.

When Stephen narrates his dream, Bloom points out that he's already living it out. He's in a "street of harlots" with an unfamiliar man (Bloom), who, as the reader will later learn, loves "melons" (his wife's bottom). Again, by presenting their meeting as the fulfillment of a mystical dream, the novel suggests that fate has drawn Stephen and Bloom together. Although Stephen isn't referring to Bloom as his father, his cry still shows how he and Bloom become a symbolic son and father in this passage. After this cry, several of the metaphors that usually only apply to Bloom or Stephen merge and apply to them both. This shows that their identities and concerns are mixing together. For instance, Stephen's vision of his actual father focuses on the bloodline, which Bloom is usually worried about (not Stephen). Similarly, the horserace metaphor usually refers to the underdog Bloom's competition with the favorite Blazes Boylan over Molly. But now, it also refers to Stephen and Mr. Deasy.

Private Carr, Private Compton, and Cissy Caffrey pass in the street, singing the song "My Girl's a Yorkshire Girl." The Yorkshire-born Zoe sticks two pennies in the pianola, which starts playing the same tune. The elderly Professor Goodwin staggers over to the piano, and Stephen and Zoe start to waltz. Dressed in pastel colors, Denis Maginni dances in and starts talking fancifully about his own talent. He choreographs a dance involving the different hours of the day, then yells the names of dance steps at Stephen in French. Stephen changes Zoe for Florry, then Florry for Kitty, and finally pairs Kitty with Lynch so that he can dance all alone with his **ashplant**.

The passing singers are actually a kind of divine symbol to Stephen, who defined God as "a shout in the street" during the "Nestor" episode. Stephen's solo dance with his ashplant adds to the religious imagery in this scene, because Stephen believes that it has magical powers. Therefore, the dance seems to be a kind of religious trance or ecstasy for Stephen. Moreover, the dance of the hours is a reference to the various events of Bloom and Stephen's day. This dance appears to be the culmination of that day—and therefore the novel as a whole.

Suddenly, Simon Dedalus's voice calls out and tells Stephen to "think of your mother's people!" Stephen responds, "dance of death," and he keeps whirling around the center of the room with his eyes closed, thinking of a number of images from his childhood. Suddenly, he stops, and Stephen's mother's decaying corpse rises up into the room from the floor. She points her empty eye-sockets at him and mouths something to him. Buck Mulligan pops up and says that "she's beastly dead." Stephen's mother announces that she is dead and Stephen will be one day, too. Horrified, Stephen admits that some people are holding him responsible for her death.

Stephen's "dance of death" builds up to the last and most important hallucination in "Circe." This is the same vision of his mother's corpse that he repeatedly saw in the first few episodes of the novel. When he confronts her, he simultaneously confronts several inner demons. These include his grief for her, his guilt at failing to pray for her, the inevitability of his own death, and his doubt about whether her death has some deeper meaning or is just a "beastly" physical fact.

Stephen's mother remembers a line that Stephen sang to her from "Who goes with Fergus?" Stephen asks his mother to tell him "the word known to all men," and she reminds him of acts of love and sacrifice she performed for his good. She asks him to repent for his sins, but he refuses, growing increasingly distraught. She shouts out that he must beware God, and Stephen angrily yells out, "Shite!" and "*Non serviam*!" ("I will not serve!"). His mother prays to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and begs God to "have mercy on Stephen," as she fades back into the void. Stephen attacks the chandelier with his **ashplant**, shattering it and occasioning the end of all space and time.

"The word known to all men" is love. Stephen has felt unloved since his mother's death, but he's also felt that he does not deserve to love or be loved because of his guilt. He views failing to pray for her as a failure to reciprocate her lifelong love for him. But during this vision, Stephen finally owns up to his decision not to pray for his mother. In other words, by refusing her pleas, he decides that he wouldn't change his decision even if he could go back in time. Joyce implies that this is the path towards healing his guilt and regret—the emotions that were tempting him to return to religion. "Non serviam!" is famously supposed to be Satan's declaration that he will not serve God. Stephen's rebellion is therefore linked to his need to define his own identity and take a final stand against religion. The chandelier likely represents the divine light that Stephen rejects when he chooses truth (atheism). In turn, when he metaphorically destroys space and time, it appears that he's destroying the universe in order to create his own alternative world as an artist. Thus, God's creation and artistic creation become one and the same.

Lynch tries to contain Stephen, while Bella calls for the police. Stephen runs out the door, and Bella demands that Bloom pay ten shillings for the broken lamp. Bloom tries to negotiate the price. He points out that students like Stephen are regular customers and he implies that Stephen has connections to powerful people. He tosses Bella a shilling and runs out.

Evidently, Stephen's assertion of total artistic independence requires him to violently break his bonds with other people. Fortunately, Bloom is still sober and practical. Even though he doesn't come to an agreement with Bella, he does manage to do some damage control.

On the street, Bloom sees Corny Kelleher get out of a carriage, then runs off in the direction that Stephen went. Bloom passes through the nighttown crowd like Haroun Al Raschid, carrying Stephen's **ashplant**. He feels like dozens of the Dubliners he met during the day are pursuing him, and he hears them calling out his name.

Bloom finally fulfills Stephen's prophetic dream in this passage. The comparison between Bloom and the great Islamic leader Haroun al Raschid is probably a reference to the fantasy in which Bloom became the emperor of Ireland.

Bloom finds Stephen arguing with Private Carr and Private Compton about his advances toward Cissy Caffrey. Too drunk for his own good, Stephen mocks the soldiers as they threaten to bash in his face. Bloom calls Stephen "professor" to win him sympathy and tries to calm him down. When Stephen insults the King of England, Edward VII himself appears with a bucket and promises to fairly adjudicate Stephen's fight with the soldiers.

As though Stephen's misbehavior in the brothel weren't enough, now he's getting himself involved in a fistfight. His argument with the soldiers is a straightforward metaphor for Ireland's struggle against its English occupiers. Importantly, Stephen only taunts the soldiers, who physically threaten him back. This reflects the imbalance in power between England and Ireland, and it also echoes Professor MacHugh's idea in "Aeolus" that the English are a practical civilization obsessed with power, while the Irish are a cultural civilization obsessed with ideas and art.

Bloom apologizes to the soldiers on Stephen's behalf, explaining that "he's a gentleman, a poet," who just drank too much of the "greeneyed monster" (absinthe). Stephen makes a joke about John Bull (a figure who represents England) attacking a green rag like an angry bull. Then, he imagines Kevin Egan as a matador. Hearing Stephen's joke, the old bawd angrily proclaims that red (England) is as good as green (Ireland). The citizen materializes to voice his opposition to the English, and the croppy boy pops up, only for the "demon barber" H. Rumbold to hang and disembowel him.

Bloom goes out of his way to try to save Stephen from his own foolishness. But Stephen seems to think that calling out the English occupiers is more important than his own safety. Cattle are a metaphor for fertility (as in "Oxen of the Sun"), while the green in the absinthe and the rag represents Ireland (the "emerald isle"). Therefore, Stephen is joking that England is chasing fruitlessly after Ireland (the green rag) in an attempt to fertilize (colonize) it. In turn, he's also poking fun at the lusty English soldiers who are chasing fruitlessly after Irish women. Meanwhile, the old bawd supports the English, but only because she's a sell-out: she prostitutes the young women of Ireland to English soldiers. The reader already knows that the citizen is virulently pro-Irish nationalist. Meanwhile, the croppy boy fought for his country under noble ideals, but he got betrayed and killed by the English. As the reader might remember from "Cyclops," Rumbold is also a sellout: he's happy to hang anyone for a few shillings.

Private Carr is offended by Stephen's comment, but Stephen announces that he doesn't care and doesn't have any more money to give away to the English. An Old Gummy Granny appears and starts wailing about Ireland's ills, which makes Stephen realize that he can't stand either side of the political debate. Pulling off his belt, Private Carr threatens to kill Stephen, and Bloom tries to make peace by pointing out that the English and Irish fought together in the Boer War. Major Tweedy and the citizen face off, shouting nationalist slogans at each other and comparing their war medals.

The Old Gummy Granny is a stereotypical figure of rural Ireland based on the milkmaid in "Telemachus." Therefore, she's the loyal counterpart to the treasonous old bawd. Bloom's comment about the Boer War is slightly misplaced, because lots of Irishmen opposed *the English in that war, too. During this political debate, Molly's father (Major Tweedy) suddenly becomes relevant. He fought for the English, which helps explain Bloom's tolerance and understanding for both sides of the conflict. Stephen ends up in a similar position: he's indifferent between the two sides because he* hates *both of them.*

Bloom desperately shakes Cissy Caffrey and pleads with her to make peace between Stephen and the soldiers. But she clings to Private Carr and says that she's on his side, then starts calling for the police. Stephen hears screams and sees an apocalyptic scene of fire, brimstone, and unspeakable violence take over Dublin. Cannons fire, birds of prey circle, and the sun gets blacked out. Tom Rochford jumps into a giant chasm that opens in the earth. Witches fly past and knights duel. Stephen imagines Buck Mulligan as a priest and Haines as Reverend Love, leading worship services while a naked Mina Purefoy serves as the Virgin Mary. Damned souls say backwards prayers to "Doooooooooooog!" (instead of God).

While Bloom tries to de-escalate the conflict, everyone else seems to be enjoying the drama. In particular, like the matador's cloth that Stephen described, Cissy purposefully intensifies the situation. In the apocalypse scene, everything is turned around backwards, like in a satanic black mass. In reality, Tom Rochford helped someone escape from a sewer, and Buck and Haines are usurpers and nonbelievers. Meanwhile, Mrs. Purefoy is too respectable to be naked, but she has far too many children to be a virgin.

Bloom tries to enlist Lynch's help in getting Stephen away from Private Carr, but Lynch runs off with Kitty Ricketts instead, and Stephen compares him to Judas. The Old Gummy Granny tells Stephen to fight, while Cissy Caffrey tells Private Carr that she forgives Stephen for insulting her. Carr attacks Stephen anyway, punching him in the face and knocking him down in front of the heckling crowd. Two policemen appear and start to question the soldiers. Bloom explains that the soldiers attacked Stephen, while Compton tries to restrain Carr.

Having tempted fate, Cissy Caffrey can no longer stop Carr. And like Buck, Haines, and the rest of Stephen's friends, Lynch abandons Stephen at his time of greatest need. By comparing Lynch to Judas, Stephen implicitly compares himself to Christ awaiting the crucifixion (Private Carr's punch). Again, the English stand in for the Romans, drawing out the similarities between the two occupying empires. Bloom is much more assertive with the police officers in real life than he was in the fantasy sequence where they accused him of outlandish crimes.

The undertaker Corny Kelleher joins the crowd while Bloom identifies Stephen to the police. Corny comments that Bloom won money on Throwaway at the races, and he convinces the police to go away by telling them that "boys will be boys." Bloom politely bids the policemen goodbye. Corny pretends that he's not really visiting nighttown, only driving a friend over, and Bloom promises that he's just on his way home. Corny offers to give Stephen a ride to his home in Sandycove, but Stephen is still passed out on the ground, so Corny decides to get on with his night. He and Bloom say goodbye. While Corny **jingles** off in his carriage, the men communicate their pity for Stephen from a distance with hand gestures.

Corny Kelleher's arrival suggests that Carr may have killed Stephen—at least symbolically, if not literally. Just as Christ's death is a moment of salvation and redemption in the Christian tradition, Stephen's attack marks a significant transition towards the more peaceful, reconciliatory tone of the last section of the novel. Corny Kelleher's comments about the horse Throwaway and his jingly carriage clearly link him to Bloom's detractors and suggests that he might have sinister motives. Corny and Bloom's awkward conversation implies that they're both in nighttown to visit prostitutes, but ironically enough, they both really do have other motives. Specifically, Corny Kelleher is a police informant (as revealed in "Wandering Rocks"), so he's probably conducting some undercover business. Finally, his and Bloom's hand gestures are a tongue-in-cheek reference to Stephen's theory from the beginning of the episode: that true communication relies on gestures, not words.

Bloom tries to shake Stephen awake, but doesn't succeed until his fourth try. Confused and half-asleep, Stephen asks if Bloom is a black panther or a vampire, and he quotes incoherently from "Who goes with Fergus?" Bloom helps Stephen clean himself up, then notices that Stephen looks like his mother. As he stands protectively over Stephen with the **ashplant**, Bloom imagines his dead son Rudy as a handsome schoolboy.

These closing lines offer a rare moment of beauty, peace, and fulfillment in an otherwise chaotic and satirical episode of the novel. Through his mumbling, Stephen mixes together three symbols of this kind of vulnerability. The first is Haines's nightmare about the black panther (which led him to lash out and shoot his gun in the middle of the night). The second is Stephen's poem about a vampire, which he wrote on Sandymount Strand. And the last is the song "Who Goes With Fergus?" which he sang to his mother on her deathbed. Thus, while the reader doesn't have a direct window into Stephen's thoughts, it's clear that he's in a tender mood, too, and he needs the help. When Bloom lends Stephen a hand, he's finally achieving his longtime fantasy of caring for a son. This is why he has a vision of his dead son Rudy: even if he'll never get Rudy back, at least Stephen can serve as a kind of substitute. Finally, this moment is full of even more religious symbolism, as Bloom carries Stephen's ashplant (the cross) and helps him rise (like Jesus's resurrection).

EPISODE 16: EUMAEUS

This episode is written in the complicated and imprecise style of someone who is trying too hard to sound sophisticated. It opens with Bloom helping Stephen stand up. Stephen asks for something to drink, and Bloom suggests that "they might hit upon some drinkables" at the cabman's shelter near Butt Bridge. They fail to hire a taxi and decide to walk, although Bloom is uncomfortable with his missing trouser button.

In the Odyssey, *when Odysseus returns home to Ithaca, he visits the swineherd Eumaeus in disguise as a beggar. He invents an elaborate lie to explain who he is, and he waits at Eumaeus's hut to reunite with his son Telemachus. This episode marks the beginning of the final section of the novel, which is focused on Bloom's homecoming. The cabman Skin-the-Goat represents Eumaeus, and the episode is full of mistaken identities and tall tales that represent Odysseus's disguise and invented backstory. Bloom's meeting with Stephen also corresponds to Odysseus's meeting with Telemachus. The episode is written in a version of Leopold Bloom's voice. Its dreary, leisurely style reflects the fact that Bloom and Stephen are extremely tired. And its numerous clichés and clumsy turns of phrase indicate how Bloom might write if he finally got around to composing some short stories for the newspaper, like he's always wanted to.*

As they walk through Dublin, Bloom notes the passing scenery—the railway station, morgue, police station, and bakery—while Stephen thinks about Ibsen, the Norwegian playwright. Stephen is still very drunk, but Bloom is "in fact disgustingly sober." Bloom lectures Stephen on the dangers of nighttown, drinking, and trusting the police. He points out that all but one of Stephen's friends abandoned him, and Stephen comments that his one loyal friend, Lynch, ended up being "Judas."

Because of their different priorities and worldviews, Bloom and Stephen think about totally different things while they walk through Dublin. It's almost as if they were in two different worlds. Bloom is giving Stephen well-intentioned fatherly advice, which he hopes will both help the young man and fulfill his own need to feel important and helpful to others. But Stephen doesn't seem to even understand that Bloom is going out of his way to help care for him.

Stephen passes Gumley, a watchman who knows his father, and hides to avoid having to greet him. Then, Stephen runs into his friend Corley, who is broke and unemployed. Stephen suggests that Corley take over his job at Mr. Deasy's school, but Corley explains that he was a terrible student. Stephen admits that he doesn't have a place to sleep, and Corley recommends a boarding-house.

Corley's situation clearly resembles Stephen's, but without all the poetic and philosophical baggage. Stephen is a starving artist, but Corley is just starving. He clearly doesn't see that Stephen's situation is similar, and he's just as shameless as Stephen about asking for money and favors.

Corley asks Stephen for money, and Stephen sticks his hand in his pocket and realizes that his money is missing. He finds some coins in his other pocket and lends one to Corley, thinking it's a penny. (It's actually two and a half shillings.) Corley vaguely promises to pay Stephen back, comments that he's seen Bloom before, and asks if Stephen can put a word in with Bloom about an advertising job with Boylan for the Hely's sandwichboards.

Corley thinks that Stephen is much better off than he really is, and his promise to pay Stephen back is obviously unreliable. Like when he paid Bella Cohen the wrong amount at the brothel, Stephen is careless and absurdly generous. His kindness resembles Bloom's, but unlike Bloom, he's not prudent or intelligent about what he gives away—so he lets others take advantage of him. It's no wonder that all his friends (especially Buck Mulligan) mooch off of him and usurp his house.

Bloom watches Corley and Stephen's conversation from a distance, glancing critically at Corley's poor attire. After Corley leaves, Stephen walks over to Bloom and mentions the advertising job, but Bloom avoids the topic. Instead, he asks how much Stephen lent Corley and where Stephen plans to sleep, since the Martello tower in Sandycove is too far. Bloom asks why Stephen moved out of his father Simon Dedalus's house, and Stephen says it was "to seek misfortune." Bloom praises Simon and suggests that he would be happy to have Stephen return.

Bloom connects the dots between Stephen's imprudence with Corley, his relationship with Buck Mulligan and Haines, and his loss of the Martello tower. He's clearly aware of Stephen's dilemma and looking for a serious solution to it, as Stephen still doesn't have any sort of plan. But Stephen just responds to Bloom with sarcastic comments. Bloom doesn't understand Stephen's difficult relationship with his father, and Stephen isn't interested in Bloom's advice. In a way, Bloom is trying to help Stephen find a new home, and Stephen is refusing to cooperate.

Bloom remembers how Buck Mulligan and Haines left Stephen behind at the train station. Meanwhile Stephen remembers having breakfast at home with his siblings. Bloom comments that Stephen shouldn't trust Buck Mulligan, who is clearly taking advantage of him. Bloom doesn't know what to make of Stephen's "morose expression."

The novel repeatedly hints that Bloom watched Stephen get into a fight with Buck and Haines in the train station between the end of "Oxen of the Sun" and the beginning of "Circe." Again, fully understanding what's going on in this novel requires filling in a lot of blanks. Bloom and Stephen continue to talk past each other. Stephen has a "morose expression" because he's thinking about his family and confronting his conflicting feelings about home. But Bloom has already moved onto the topic of Buck and Haines, and he has no idea what Stephen is thinking.

Bloom and Stephen pass a group of Italian men arguing by an ice cream cart, then they reach the modest wooden cabman's shelter, which is supposedly run by the famous Invincible Skin-the-Goat Fitzharris. Bloom and Stephen order food while the other patrons stare at them. Bloom comments on the beauty of the Italian language, but Stephen points out that the Italians outside were arguing about money. The shelter-keeper brings their coffee and bun, and Stephen declares that sounds and names are meaningless.

The Cabman's shelter represents Eumaeus's hut, where Odysseus first rested and hid out upon his return home to Ithaca. Joyce plays a bit of a trick on the reader by making Bloom and Stephen's conversation totally boring and anticlimactic. In other words, the book has been structured to make the reader eagerly await Bloom and Stephen's meeting, which brings the novel's main storylines together and symbolically gives both men the family figures they secretly desire (son and father). The coffee and bun clearly represent the eucharist—or the communion between father and son. But Stephen and Bloom are totally oblivious to the profound importance of this meeting, and their conversation is almost comically inharmonious. Bloom tries to show off his intelligence, but Stephen easily upstages him. Meanwhile, Stephen is still thinking about art and existential questions, and he just doesn't care what Bloom has to say. Perhaps Joyce is suggesting that people often don't even understand the deeper significance of their lives, which are often far more meaningful than they realize.

A drunken red-haired sailor asks for Stephen's name, and when Stephen says "Dedalus," he asks if Stephen knows Simon Dedalus. Stephen says he's "heard of him." The sailor declares that Simon Dedalus is a true Irishman and acts out a story about him shooting eggs off bottles while performing for the circus in Stockholm. The man introduces himself as Murphy and says that he lives by the harbor. He reports that his wife is there, but he hasn't seen her in seven years because he's been sailing. Bloom imagines Murphy returning to find her with a new husband and family.

Red-haired Murphy is an obvious Odysseus figure: he's a sailor, he's been gone for several years, and he's full of wild stories that seem like elaborate lies. Just like Odysseus returns to his home in Ithaca long before visiting Penelope, Murphy has inexplicably decided to come hang out at the cabman's shelter rather than seeing his wife. Of course, Bloom (the other Odysseus) imagines Murphy's wife meeting the same fate as Molly. (This scene is based on the Tennyson poem Enoch Arden.*) Unlike Odysseus's wife Penelope, Molly and Murphy's wife (in Bloom's imagination)* do *let the suitors into their beds. And like most of the other adults in the novel, Murphy immediately views Stephen as Simon Dedalus's son, which shows that Stephen still has a long way to go if he truly wants to forge an independent identity as an artist.*

Murphy explains that he came in on the three-mast ship *Rosevan* with bricks that morning. He talks about sailing all over the world and shows a picture of native people he met in Bolivia. Bloom sees that this picture is really a postcard from Chile. Bloom starts fantasizing about his plan to take a trip to London, perhaps in combination with a future concert tour of Molly's. He also muses that opening more travel routes between England and Ireland would be a great business opportunity, and that it's a shame that common people can't afford to travel. He thinks of the great tourist spots in Ireland and wonders if tourist traffic leads to new travel routes, or new routes create tourist traffic.

Murphy's ship seems to be the same one that Stephen saw on the horizon at the very end of "Proteus." Bloom is both immediately suspicious of Murphy's elaborate stories and also clearly inspired by them. Characteristically, Bloom sees travel as an opportunity to both build a business and impress Molly—but the reader should be used to these two main obsessions by now. Of course, by having his hero fantasize about visiting London after hearing Murphy's tall tales, Joyce is also playing a joke on the reader: Bloom has already been on an epic odyssey of his own during the day.

Murphy continues telling his stories, recounting a stabbing he witnessed in Italy and pulling out a knife to re-enact it. He comments on the Invincibles' Phoenix Park murders, and Bloom and Stephen are glad to see that Skin-the-Goat doesn't notice what Murphy is saying. Bloom asks Murphy if he's "seen the rock of Gibraltar," but he can't figure out what Murphy's grimacing expression means. He asks what year, but Murphy says he's "tired of all them rocks in the sea" and stops talking. Meanwhile, Bloom ponders the vastness of the ocean, wonders why people seek it out, decides there probably isn't any good reason, and concludes that sailors and harbor-masters perform a great public service.

The Phoenix Park murders are a tactless conversation topic because Skin-the-Goat was (allegedly) involved in them. Bloom's reference to Gibraltar is another indirect comment about Molly. (She grew up in Gibraltar.) Bloom's mind always seems to wander back to her, no matter what—which is arguably the most sincere possible expression of his love. Murphy's response is bizarre. The Strait of Gibraltar is one of the world's busiest shipping routes, so if Murphy has never heard of Gibraltar, it's unlikely that he's really sailed around the world. Like his monologue at the end of "Nausicaa," Bloom's tired thoughts blur into one another and don't reach any clear conclusion. Instead, they remind the reader of his major interests and concerns in life: science, the public good, and the strangeness of people's behavior when viewed from a distance.

Murphy comments that one of his colleagues gave up sailing to be a valet, while his teenaged son Danny just left a stable job to become a sailor. The sailor scratches at the tattoo of an anchor on his chest and complains of lice. He shows off his other tattoos: the number sixteen and the profile of a Greek man named Antonio. He pulls on his skin to make Antonio smile, which the other men find amusing, then reports that Antonio got eaten by sharks.

Murphy points out that the grass is always greener on the other side: sailors dream of moving back home, while young men like his son dream of the open seas. This indirectly comments on Bloom and Stephen's situation: they dream of both home and travel. Bloom dreams of building a happy home with Molly and taking her to England, while Stephen urgently needs to find a place to stay and would do anything to return to Paris. It's unclear what (if anything) Murphy's tattoos mean. But nothing about the man is certain, anyways. When it comes to Murphy, everything is up for interpretation.

A raggedy prostitute passes the cabman's shelter, and Bloom anxiously hides his face behind a newspaper because he realizes that he knows her. (She's the woman he saw outside the Ormond Hotel, after the concert in the "Sirens" episode.) Bloom tells Stephen that he can't believe how any reasonable man would sleep with "a wretched creature like that," but Stephen comments that people also do far worse in Ireland by buying and selling souls. Bloom comments that the government should license and regulate prostitutes.

Seeing the prostitute launches Bloom into the past. She reminds him of his shameful actions in the past and the shame he felt after leaving the Ormond Hotel (when Molly was with Boylan). Of course, she is also clearly a reference to Bloom and Stephen's visit to the brothel in nighttown just a few minutes ago. Bloom's comment suggests that he's ashamed of having gone to nighttown, and he's still repressing all the demons he confronted during "Circe." Stephen also brings up one of the key metaphors in "Circe"—that the church and government in Ireland prostitute its people and resources to the British

Bloom asks Stephen what he believes about the soul. Bloom himself believes in the physical "brainpower" that scientists have discovered, while Stephen recites the Church's official definition of the soul as an immortal, incorruptible simple substance. Bloom protests that people aren't "simple" and says that there's an obvious difference between humans' great material achievements and the work of an immaterial, supernatural God. Stephen nonchalantly claims that the Bible has proven God's existence, while Bloom proclaims that the Bible was probably put together by a bunch different people, perhaps like the so-called works of Shakespeare.

This conversation is full of dramatic irony, because the reader already knows that Stephen doesn't believe any of what he's telling Bloom. Stephen has abandoned religion and started to form his own ideas about the soul, the universe, and the meaning of life. So when he recites the church's formal definitions, he's just being polite. Likely, he learned these definitions as a child by studying catechisms in school. Of course, this exchange also foreshadows the novel's next episode, which is written in the form of a secular catechism. Throughout this conversation, Bloom also dramatically misunderstands Stephen's arguments, which reveals his superficial understanding of religion. For instance, when Stephen says that the soul is a "simple" substance, he's referring to the idea that the soul can't be broken down into anything smaller or more elemental. But Bloom mistakenly thinks that Stephen is arguing that people are simple (in the sense of uncomplicated or straightforward). On the flipside, Bloom's faith in science is so great that it's practically religious: for instance, he believes in the nonsense idea that "brainpower," the physical version of the soul, is a real and measurable substance.

Stirring the horrible coffee, Bloom muses that the cabman's shelter does a great social service by providing working-class Dubliners with sober entertainment. But he also resents how little they once paid Molly to play the piano there, and he decides that the shelter needs a sanitation inspection. Bloom gives Stephen the coffee and urges him to eat better, and Stephen tells Bloom to put away a knife that "reminds [him] of Roman history."

In his sleepy stream of consciousness, Bloom returns to some of his typical eclectic concerns: social responsibility, sanitation, and Molly. This episode's narrator is so closely attached to Bloom's perspective that the reader has no idea what Stephen is thinking or doing. For the first time, then, the reader sees Stephen as his friends and acquaintances might. When he mentions Roman history, for instance, this seems totally random and obscure. It's not clear what he's thinking about or referring to. Of course, it would be possible to narrate this whole scene from Stephen's perspective, too—and that would make Bloom's advice and declarations look just as strange and pointless as Stephen's do here. Through this technique, Joyce is again reminding his readers that everyone's perspective is totally filtered through their own rich interior life, and a story can entirely change depending on the perspective of the person who tells it.

Bloom asks whether Stephen thinks Murphy's stories are true, and he points out that the man could just as well be a convict or a liar as a sailor. At the same time, Bloom comments, he's seen enough in his time to know that the stories certainly *could* be true. He points out that Italians and Spaniards are especially passionate, and he starts talking about Molly (who, he argues, is basically Spanish). Stephen starts rambling about Italian artists, and Bloom argues that the Mediterranean sun is responsible for Italian and Spanish people's remarkable temperament—and their women's figures, he adds, remembering the statues at the Kildare Street museum.

The problem with Murphy's stories isn't that they're lies: it's that nobody can tell if they're true or not. Kind of like Ulysses, *Murphy's tales are entirely up to interpretation. Their meaning depends on the questions and perspectives that each listener (or reader) brings to them. Bloom's comment about passionate Italians is a reference to Murphy's story about a stabbing in Italy. Of course, it also recalls the Italian men at the ice cream cart earlier in this episode—Bloom thought they were chattering passionately, but Stephen speaks Italian, and he pointed out that they were actually arguing about money. These opposite conclusions illustrate Joyce's point about the way perspective affects interpretation. In this section, something similar happens: Bloom starts fantasizing about Mediterranean women (namely Molly, who's always on his mind) while Stephen thinks about Mediterranean artists.*

The other men in the shelter chat about shipwrecks, and then the sailor Murphy walks out to the street, drinks from one of the bottles he's concealing in his back pocket, and starts urinating. This disturbs the sentry Gumley—a hopeless alcoholic who falls right back asleep. Meanwhile, the men discuss Ireland's struggling shipping industry, and Skin-the-Goat suggests that a certain shipwreck in Galway was really an English plot to stop a development project in Galway Bay. Murphy returns inside and sings a vulgar limerick.

Murphy's drinking is pretty ironic, because Bloom was just thinking about how the cabman's shelter does a great public service by giving Dubliners an alcohol-free hangout. But even the sober cabbies pass their time listening to the one drunk man among them. Gumley accentuates this irony by falling asleep drunk on the job—he's just as guilty of endangering the public as Murphy. Perhaps this is a metaphor for the British soiling the streets of Ireland, while the Irish are too distracted to protect themselves. Similarly, while Skin-the-Goat spins serious conspiracy theories about the English sabotaging Irish ships, the actual Irish sailor in their midst, Murphy, is too drunk to get the point.

Skin-the-Goat praises Ireland's rich natural resources and fertile soil, then warns that England's "day of reckoning" is coming soon. He proclaims that Ireland will bring England down and tells his compatriots to stay in their country and work for its common benefit. Murphy proclaims that Ireland's sailors and soldiers are the British Empire's "backbone," but Skin-the-Goat argues that no Irishman should serve the British.

Skin-the-Goat's rhetoric is similar to the citizen's ideas about Ireland in Barney Kiernan's. Murphy's point about Irish sailors in the British Empire might be the best praise that he can offer his country when he's overseas. But in Skin-the-Goat's shelter, this kind of talk doesn't fly. After the citizen's fight with Bloom and the English soldiers' fight with Stephen, readers might expect a similar brawl to break out between Murphy and Skin-the-Goat. But luckily, it's late and everyone's really tired, so they just move on.

Meanwhile, Bloom thinks that the British are much stronger than they let on. But he doesn't want to get involved in the conversation. Bloom remembers that Skin-the-Goat is a known criminal—although, Bloom admits, his political courage is admirable. That said, Skin-the-Goat only drove the getaway car, and he's long past his prime. Bloom tells Stephen about his fight with the citizen and repeats his punchline: that Christ was Jewish. Stephen expresses his agreement in Latin. Bloom argues that countries should cooperate on the basis of equality and proclaims that he "resent[s] violence and intolerance in any shape or form," which are always counterproductive. All these disputes over honor and power are really about money, he continues.

Bloom's train of thought reveals the central differences between the citizen and Skin-the-Goat: the citizen's politics are all talk, but Skin-the-Goat actually takes action. As Bloom again lays out his political views, readers should ask which side he falls on. He's certainly happy to talk, but is he willing to act on behalf of his values? These values are tolerance, equality, and peaceful deliberation. He imagines a modern, liberal, capitalist society, in which everyone is equal and contributes to the common good. While this view became normal in the 20th century, it certainly wasn't in the 19th. So when Bloom repeats his point that Christ was Jewish, he is also indirectly referring to his own political vision.

Bloom tells Stephen that Jews have enriched Europe, not corrupted it, because of their practical spirit. He thinks that Catholicism makes people weak by telling them to focus on going to heaven, rather than living better lives on Earth. He believes that the truly important goal is for everyone to have a decent income, regardless of their identities or beliefs, as long as they're willing to work. "Count me out," Stephen replies when Bloom mentions working. Bloom clarifies that "literary labour" counts too, and he says that Stephen should be able to make a good salary with all his education. Stephen jokes that he doesn't belong to Ireland: Ireland belongs to him. Bloom doesn't understand, and Stephen proposes changing the subject.

Bloom's political vision is also specifically secular: he thinks people's lives should revolve around money. Of course, this is incomprehensible to Stephen, who thinks life should revolve around creativity and art. So when Stephen comments "count me out," he isn't just opting out of work: he's also rejecting Bloom's entire worldview. He doesn't want his art to be a job like anyone else's. This is why he says that Ireland belongs to him: he thinks that he should assert his power over the world through his art. He wants to conquer, not just make a good salary and contribute to his community.

Bloom is confused at Stephen's response, and he starts to wonder what's responsible for the young man's bad mood: the night's revelries or a poor upbringing. He thinks about other brilliant young people who let themselves fall into "premature decay," like the eccentric O'Callaghan, who started walking around in a paper suit and then got in trouble with the law. Even royals and other nobility behave scandalously and immorally from time to time—perhaps, Bloom hypothesizes, this could be because society forces people to dress differently depending on gender.

Throughout most of the novel, Joyce heavily implied that what Bloom and Stephen most needed was, basically, each other. But in this episode, as Bloom tries and fails to save Stephen, it becomes clear that they're like oil and water. Stephen doesn't want to be helped, and the men's worldviews are opposite. Stephen is stubborn and egotistical, while Bloom is sympathetic and tolerant (even during his assessment of Stephen in this passage). Bloom views Stephen's hierarchical, self-centered value system as a personality flaw, because it will cause him to fall out of line with society. But Stephen basically thinks that it's not his problem if society doesn't accept him.

Regardless, Bloom concludes that befriending Stephen was a good investment: the boy might get rich on his wits, the intellectual stimulation was enjoyable, and the men shared an interesting adventure. Bloom considers trying to write about what he saw and hopes he can make money for it. He scans the *Telegraph* headlines and reads Hynes's obituary of Dignam. He points out that, in the list of mourners, his name was misspelled "Boom," while "Stephen Dedalus B.A." was erroneously listed as present. Stephen asks if Deasy's letter is in the paper, but he turns it into an elaborate Biblical joke. Bloom gives Stephen the corresponding section and then skims through the horserace results.

Bloom justifies his relationship with Stephen in the practical terms that are most familiar to him: money and curiosity. The novel hints that the story Bloom considers writing is actually this episode, which is written in his voice. This creates some satisfying irony. Stephen repeatedly tried to get his ideas, poems, and conversations published during the day. But instead, the only things he really got published were Deasy's letter and this poorly-written episode by Bloom. This implies that his individualistic mindset isn't well suited to get him an audience. Similarly, the horserace results seem to support Bloom's view of the world, because they show the underdog Throwaway (who represents Bloom) winning in a last-minute surprise. On the other hand, Hynes's obituarymakes Stephen, the individualist, stand out because of his degree—even though he didn't actually go to the funeral. Meanwhile, Hynes misspelled "Bloom," even though Bloom attended the funeral and gave Hynes a list of names as a service to the community.

The cabmen chat about whether Parnell will return to Ireland. Bloom thinks that this rumor is bogus: Parnell is dead and people aren't willing to accept it. He remembers once helping Parnell pick up his hat. Then, he starts thinking about a famous case when an impostor falsely claimed to be a lost nobleman.

The Irish nationalist political leader Charles Stewart Parnell died in 1891, thirteen years before the events of Ulysses. *The cabmen's wishful conspiracy theory shows that they're hoping to free Ireland from English rule through a kind of divine intervention: they want a second coming for the messiah Parnell. This connects to Bloom and Stephen's central quests in the novel. Like the Irish nationalists, Bloom wants to achieve "Home Rule" (he wants to win Molly back and become the patriarch of his family). Stephen also wants to become independent, but in the sense of breaking from his family and the past. They have two options: they can act, or they can wait for divine intervention (like the cabmen waiting for Parnell to rise from the dead, like Christ).*

The cabmen chat derisively about Kitty O'Shea, the woman who ruined Parnell's political career, then break out into laughter. Meanwhile, Bloom thinks about Parnell and O'Shea's love letters and the bombastic trial that took them down. He thinks that O'Shea's husband was simply inadequate, leading her to fall for the "real man," Parnell, who forgot his own wife in the process. Bloom asks if married couples can truly love each other, and he laments the way Parnell's allies turned against him. He reflects on how Dublin has changed with the times, and he says that O'Shea was half-Spanish, just like Molly.

Parnell fell into public disgrace when his years-long affair with the noblewoman Kitty O'Shea went public. Many Irish people blamed this affair for delaying Ireland's independence by several decades. This brings the novel back to one of its central metaphors: adultery is like betraying one's country. This association was all too literal in the Odyssey, Hamlet, *and Parnell's career. Political power and intimate life were completely intertwined. Of course, Bloom views Parnell's affair with Kitty O'Shea through the lens of Molly's affair with Boylan. Thus, he puts himself in the position of O'Shea's husband and Boylan in the place of Parnell, the "real man."*

Bloom tells Stephen about the resemblance between Molly and Kitty O'Shea. Stephen responds with a typically incomprehensible rant about the Spanish. Bloom shows Stephen a picture of Molly standing at a piano and asks if she looks Spanish. Stephen stares at Molly's chest, and Bloom thinks about how a different outfit could have better accentuated her curves. Bloom considers letting Stephen keep looking at the photo for a few minutes, because he feels an urge to go into the street to "satisfy a possible need." But he decides against it. Bloom feels a sense of appreciation for Stephen's presence, then starts thinking about affairs and love triangles.

As always, Bloom finds a way to bring the conversation back to Molly. (He's kind of like the moth who constantly circles the light in Bella Cohen's brothel during "Circe.") He obviously loves showing off his beautiful wife to other people. He even appears to imagine that Stephen would enjoy Molly's company. When he references love triangles, it becomes absolutely clear that he's thinking about replacing Boylan with another "real man"—Stephen. In other words, not only is Stephen a symbolic son figure for Bloom, but Bloom is also thinking about how to set Stephen up with Molly. Unfortunately, there's no indication of what Stephen thinks about Molly, or whether he understands Bloom's preposterous idea.

Bloom's mind returns to Parnell, "Erin's uncrowned king," and the way he shaped his public image after his affair became public. Again, Bloom returns to his memory of helping Parnell pick up his hat. Bloom feels offended when the cabmen laugh about Parnell, acting as if they knew the whole story. In reality, Bloom thinks adultery is a private matter—except when the husband is alright with it. For instance, sometimes they approve when their wives get tired of marriage and engage in "polite debauchery" with younger men.

Bloom's thoughts about Parnell help explain his motives for imagining a love triangle with Molly and Stephen. He seems to think Molly could have an affair with Stephen without threatening Bloom's role as the "uncrowned king" of their home. In other words, Stephen would sexually satisfy Molly, thereby fixing the problem in their home, without usurping Bloom's power over that home like Boylan. Now, Bloom's memory of helping Parnell with his hat resembles his fantasy of serving as a hat-rack for Blazes Boylan during "Circe." Bloom thinks that he can't be the masculine hero who saves his family (or Ireland). But he can *be the obliging husband who facilitates the hero's journey by inviting him into his home. Ironically, of course, Joyce has written this novel the other way around:* Bloom *is its hero, and in these final episodes* Stephen *is merely a device to help Bloom get home and reconnect with Molly.*

Bloom regrets the fact that Stephen prefers to sleep with prostitutes, rather than looking for "Miss Right." Feeling protective, Bloom asks when Stephen last had a meal, and he's "literally astounded" when Stephen says that he hasn't eaten since yesterday. Bloom sympathizes with Stephen, who reminds him of his own idealistic flirtation with politics as a young man.

Despite Bloom's fantasies about bringing Stephen into his home, the differences between the men keep multiplying. (Bloom believes in love and Stephen doesn't; Bloom is obsessed with food and Stephen doesn't eat.) Bloom keeps offering his fatherly advice and concern, but Stephen keeps turning him down. So Bloom continues looking for another angle that he can use to get through to Stephen.

It's nearly one o'clock, and Bloom thinks it's time to head home. He worries that Molly will react badly if he takes Stephen with him (like the time he brought a dog home). But Stephen also clearly can't make it home to Sandycove on his own. Bloom wonders if he can invite Stephen over and help him out financially without offending him. Meanwhile, Bloom thinks that the sailor Murphy is more likely headed to the brothel than to his wife at home. Bloom laughs to himself about his great realization that God is Jewish. Pocketing the photo of Molly, he asks if Stephen wants to come "talk things over" at his home and have some cocoa. Stephen doesn't respond.

Although the reader doesn't have access to Stephen's inner monologue during this episode of the novel, it's still clear that he has nowhere to spend the night. Unsurprisingly, practical Bloom is better suited to solve this problem. He offers to have Stephen over out of fatherly concern, although careful readers will remember that he and Molly are also trying to rent out a room. (The hint is the "Unfinished Apartments" flyer in "Wandering Rocks.") Stephen's lack of response seems to be an improvement: at least he isn't pushing Bloom away.

Bloom imagines "all kinds of Utopian plans" for what Stephen can achieve as a writer and singer. The cabdriver reads out news about the cabdrivers' association, then passes the newspaper over to Murphy the sailor, who puts on thick green goggles and reads articles about sports. Bloom gets up, pays the bill, and leads Stephen out to the street.

Bloom is trying to develop a vision for Stephen's life, but he also probably wants to profit off of Stephen. Although he wants to be a father figure, he may be going too far and imposing these ideas on Stephen, when Stephen's greatest wish is to be independent and autonomous, an artist beholden to nothing but the truth.

On the way out of the cabbies' shelter, Stephen asks Bloom why cafes leave the chairs on top of the tables at night. Bloom explains that it's for cleaning in the mornings. Bloom holds Stephen's arm to help him walk, and the men pass Gumley's shelter.

When Stephen asks Bloom this question and they walk arm-in-arm, this shows that Stephen is finally opening up to Bloom and might even be taking his advice seriously. The men are starting to enter each other's worlds, even if only a tiny bit. The answer to Stephen's question about the tables and chairs is banal and obvious to Bloom—Stephen just doesn't know much about everyday matters like cleaning a café. But this works the other way around, too: Bloom's thoughts and questions about religion seemed just as ridiculous to Stephen.

Stephen and Bloom start talking about music. Bloom finds Wagner "too heavy" but likes the composers Mercadante, Meyerbeer, and Mozart. He also prefers Catholic sacred music to Protestant hymns. He praises Molly's talent singing Rossini and *Don Giovanni*, and he comments on Simon Dedalus's excellent rendition of "M'appari" earlier that night. Stephen, on the other hand, talks about older composers who were contemporaries with Shakespeare.

Having opened up to one another, Stephen and Bloom naturally touch on the one interest they genuinely do share in common: music. Still, their specific tastes differ. Bloom likes digestible, lighthearted music, and to Stephen he probably looks unsophisticated. Meanwhile, Stephen's tastes reflect his seriousness and intellectualism—he apparently listens to music to be impressed by artistic genius, not to enjoy himself. Bloom's repetition of composers whose names start with "M" is a nod to the person he's always really thinking about when he talks about music: Molly.

Bloom and Stephen pass a brutish old horse, which is dragging a street-sweeping brush behind it. Bloom pities the animal. He comments that Molly will be glad to meet Stephen, as they're both passionate about music, and Stephen starts singing a German song about sirens calling out to men from across the sea. Bloom compliments Stephen's voice and points out that he could build a successful career as a singer and still dedicate his spare time to literature. But Bloom suggests that Stephen distance himself from his nasty friend (Buck Mulligan). Just then, the horse raises its tail and drops three round turds on the street. Then, Stephen finishes his song. The horse driver watches him and Bloom from a distance.

The old horse is a reference to Argos, Odysseus's dog. When Odysseus returns from the Trojan War, he finds Argos on top of a pile of cow manure, looking old and sick. Thus, Odysseus's meeting with Argos shows how his duty to fight in the war has tragically prevented him from taking care of the people most loyal to him. Arguably, this is similar to the relationship between Bloom (who loyally takes care of Stephen) and Stephen (who ignores Bloom because he's focused on his artistic calling). Of course, this horse is also a reference to the Ascot Gold Cup horserace, which Bloom's alter ego Throwaway managed to win at the last moment. Besides referring to the "Sirens" episode, Stephen's song is also a metaphor for Bloom's distance from Molly, the lure of the exotic, and the temptation of selling out to become a commercial artist. The defecating horse is typical Joyce. Ironically, it's cleaning and dirtying the streets at the same time. Its three turds might represent the triad of Stephen, Molly, and Bloom, or the unholy trinity of Buck Mulligan, Haines, and Stephen. This may also be a metaphor for Stephen's feelings about Bloom's proposal that he should sing commercially.

EPISODE 17: ITHACA

This episode consists of a series of questions and answers, a format resembling a catechism (a theological manual explaining the church's official beliefs). It asks about Bloom and Stephen's "parallel courses" through Dublin, from the cabman's shelter to Bloom's home. It describes their conversation topics, which ranged from music and literature to women and the church. They both enjoy music, continental Europe, sex, and challenging political and religious orthodoxy. But Stephen rejects Bloom's self-help advice, while Bloom rejects Stephen's belief in "the eternal affirmation of the spirit of man in literature." Bloom attributes Stephen's collapse to alcohol and hunger, while Stephen blames the passing cloud that they both saw in the sky that morning.

At the end of the Odyssey, *Odysseus and his son Telemachus unite to slaughter the numerous suitors who have assembled in the hopes of marrying Odysseus's wife Penelope. In this episode, the novel's symbolic father and son, Bloom and Stephen, also go to the father's palace (Bloom's house). But they don't kill anyone. In fact, they also don't really get along or accomplish anything. Instead, they travel in "parallel courses"—they go together, without intersecting. As this opening passage makes clear, their worldviews are based on opposite principles. Bloom's life is rooted in the rationality of modern science and business, while Stephen's life is rooted in faith—no longer faith in God, but now in art. By presenting their journey home as a catechism, Joyce suggests that this episode will introduce his readers to some unified doctrine or worldview. But it doesn't. However, it* does *show how Stephen's visit allows Bloom to find a new sense of clarity and security in his home. It also shows how Bloom's analytic, scientific mindset can be the basis for a new kind of literature that satisfies Stephen's need to affirm the human spirit. In other words, this episode does give the reader the materials they need to integrate Bloom and Stephen into something unified, even if the men don't manage to do it themselves. In particular, this episode also gives numerous relevant details that shed light on earlier events in the novel. It's full of extremely precise information about Bloom's evening, home, and life. At the same time, it also mostly ignores his and Stephen's feelings, hopes, and fears because of its seemingly objective perspective. Even if their individual voices are missing, however, it's usually possible to figure out what they're thinking by interpretation.*

Bloom and Stephen also discuss whether the street lights harm tree growth, something Bloom also mentioned on late-night walks with other men between 1884 and 1893. Bloom reflects that people lose friends as they age—while they're born as "one" among "many" and live "as any with any," they become "none" when they die.

Although these questions and answers just give the reader a hyper-specific list of details about Bloom's past and thoughts, their point is to show that Bloom is deeply lonely. He hasn't had a late-night walk with a friend in over a decade, and he feels his individual identity disappearing over the years, as he gradually fades away into the crowd. This age difference may explain the contrast between Bloom's collectivism and Stephen's individualism.

When they arrive at Bloom's house, Bloom realizes that he doesn't have his **keys**. Rather than waking up Molly, he climbs over the railing, endures a fall, and enters the house through the basement. In the kitchen, he lights the gas and a candle, and then he lets Stephen in from the inside. He sets up chairs in the kitchen, strikes a "lucifer match," and lights a fire on the hearth, which leads Stephen to reflect on other people who have lit fires for him—like his father, his aunt Sara, his mother, and various people at his school and college. He also sees laundry drying on the wall.

Bloom and Stephen have both lost their keys, which represents the way their houses have been usurped (by Boylan and Buck Mulligan). So whereas Boylan entered Bloom's house through the front door, Bloom has to break in during his attempt to reclaim his rightful ownership. Stephen reflects about his past during the lighting of the "lucifer match" (which refers to his own atheistic rebellion against God). Notably, he did the same thing when matches were lit in "Aeolus" and "Circe." By comparing Bloom to other guardians who have lit fires for him, Stephen briefly accepts the metaphor that Bloom keeps repeating: Stephen as son and Bloom as father. So even though he doesn't say it out loud, Stephen does *feel quite well cared for in the Bloom household, and he does briefly see Bloom as a father figure.*

Bloom fills the kettle with water. The novel describes in detail how this water flows down from Roundwood Reservoir through Dublin's water system. Similarly, it explains Bloom's wonder at water's "universality" and remarkable chemical and geographical properties. He sets the kettle on the flame and washes his hands with the soap he bought earlier that day. Stephen, who is afraid of water and hasn't bathed in almost a year, refuses to wash his hands. Instead of advising Stephen on his hygiene and diet, Bloom chalks it up to his "erratic originality of genius" and marvels at his self-confidence. The novel explains in detail how water boils in a kettle.

The catechism form often turns the text into a list of intricate but mostly irrelevant details, like this lengthy explanation of Dublin's water infrastructure. Still, this water is symbolically important. It's at once particular (because it comes from a specific spot) and universal (because of its chemical properties and importance around the world, as Bloom points out). Similarly, the catechism's story is both extremely particular, because it's full of specific details, and extremely general, because it's told from a God-like, all-seeing perspective. This illustrates how the catechism actually tries to integrate opposites (like particular and universal, personal and objective, and Stephen and Bloom). Stephen likely fears water because it represents baptism, but Bloom is kind enough to give him the benefit of the doubt and chalk it up to his genius. Essentially, Bloom decides that Stephen's filth is part of his art. This well-intentioned interpretation shows how, even while the catechism is integrating their perspectives in this episode, Bloom and Stephen actually don't understand each other.

Bloom is planning to shave, and the novel explains his various reasons for preferring to shave at night and notes that, with his steady hand, the lack of light is no issue. The novel provides an exhaustive catalogue of the tableware and provisions in Bloom's kitchen cabinet. Bloom sees two old betting tickets on the dresser, remembers the day's unusual Ascot Gold Cup, and thinks about how he threw away the pamphlet about Elijah in the morning just before Bantam Lyons asked him for a tip about the races. While this seems like a kind of prophetic prediction, Bloom notes that such events really start to look significant in retrospect, like thunder following lightning. More importantly, he didn't lose any money.

Bloom's thoughts about saving recall Buck Mulligan's shaving scene from the beginning of the novel. (In both cases, Stephen watches the ritual from the sidelines, as a nonparticipant and nonbeliever in the other man's worldview.) Meanwhile, the race tickets are probably Boylan's. When Bloom remembers throwing away the newspaper, he seems to suddenly understand how he accidentally picked the winner against Boylan. His comments about the retrospective importance of such events are a clear sign to the reader: Throwaway's victory in the race represents Bloom's victory in life. (It's just not yet clear what he won, or how he won it.)

Bloom makes cocoa for himself and Stephen, generously giving Stephen some of the cream he usually reserves for Molly's breakfast. Stephen drinks in silence, and Bloom thinks about helping him out by repairing a hole in his jacket and offering him a handkerchief. Wrongly imagining that Stephen is writing poetry in his head, Bloom remembers trying to solve his life problems by reading Shakespeare. (It didn't work.) Bloom considers his own unsuccessful attempts to write poems, anagrams, and songs.

Bloom's generosity is obvious and admirable. But his attitude toward literature isn't—he doesn't understand Shakespeare, no matter how much he wants to. He seems to think that exposure to brilliant ideas will make him smarter, and this will solve all of his problems. Stephen's misery proves that this isn't true. And this comment is another reminder of how superficially Bloom understands Stephen's life and interests.

The novel calculates the ratios between the past and future ages of the 38-year-old Bloom and the 22-year-old Stephen. It notes that Bloom and Stephen met twice during Stephen's childhood. They also both know the elderly Mrs. Riordan, who lived with Stephen's family for three years, and then moved to the City Arms Hotel, where Bloom and Molly were living. Bloom considers whether he could rejuvenate his body and mind by taking up exercise again.

Bloom and Stephen's age ratios and tenuous connections in the past might seem like important details to the catechism, which is supposedly trying to give a complete and objective picture of Stephen and Bloom's meeting. However, these topics don't bring the men closer or add much to the reader's understanding of them. Actually, the fact that they resort to such small talk suggests that they haven't connected on much of anything yet.

Bloom and Stephen both know about their different national and religious backgrounds, but they don't bring up the topic in conversation. The novel traces back their ancestry, their baptisms (Bloom's three, Stephen's one), and their schooling. Bloom didn't go to university and often claims that he attended "the university of life," but he avoids this comment because he thinks he might have already said it to Stephen. The novel declares that Bloom represents a "scientific" temperament and Stephen an "artistic" one. Specifically, Bloom prefers applied science: he imagines inventing educational toys for children, and he's always looking to make a respectable profit.

The distinction between scientific and artistic temperaments neatly captures the divide between Bloom and Stephen. They cannot bridge this gap (but it's possible that the novel and the reader can, by integrating their worldviews). Bloom's personal and educational history doesn't make for a particularly interesting conversation, but it does add lots of important context to the rest of the novel for attentive readers. Joyce is playing a bit of a joke by saving these details until so late in the novel: he's forcing the reader to go back, re-read, and re-evaluate earlier sections in light of this new information. As Bloom pointed out when considering the horserace results, this is exactly what people do when remembering the past and making sense of their own lives.

Bloom thinks about advertising's "infinite possibilities" to attract attention and convince people to buy products. He remembers examples of effective and ineffective ads. But to show Stephen that originality isn't always the key to success, he discusses his own failed plan to advertise Hely's stationery shop by hiring a show-cart with attractive girls. When he hears this, Stephen thinks of a young man and woman meeting in a gloomy mountain hotel. The young woman would write "Queen's Hotel" on a piece of paper. This reminds Bloom of the Queen's Hotel, where his father committed suicide, but he doesn't tell Stephen. Stephen tells Bloom about his story, "*A Pisgah Sight of Palestine* or *The Parable of the Plums*," and Bloom muses that Stephen's gifts could bring them both "financial, social, personal and sexual success."

Stephen and Bloom finally start to open up a bit. Advertising is Bloom's true area of expertise, and it appears that his show-cart idea finally does impress Stephen. The "Queen's Hotel" connection is mysterious. Bloom's decision not to mention his father's suicide shows that this is still a source of shame for the family. His father's death also represents his tragically broken paternal bloodline, which is what his relationship with Stephen is supposed to symbolically restore. It's difficult to say what Stephen's parable means without having access to his thoughts. And although the reader could likely understand many of the references in "The Parable of the Plums" *in "Aeolus," it's just as incomprehensible to Bloom as the "Queen's Hotel" story now. In response to Stephen's parable, Bloom just comments on his intelligence—which suggests that he doesn't understand the story. Plus, he's more interested in Stephen as a financial opportunity than as a thinker.*

Bloom wonders what society should have housewives do all day, and he offers a number of proposals like parlor games, music, secretarial work, regulated male brothels, and education. He considers Molly undereducated, as she can't tell Greek from Hebrew, knows very little about politics, and is bad at mental math. Bloom has tried to educate her by leaving books around the house or ridiculing other people around her. When he tried to teach her directly, she simply feigned interest and later repeated the same mistakes. He's made progress through "indirect suggestion," like by buying her a hat she liked so that she would use an umbrella.

While he is interested in social issues and women's lives, he seems to think that their main problem is idleness—and not, as Joyce hints throughout the novel, a society that forces them to stay at home all day. Bloom's absurd, sexist solutions to this problem show how he struggles to break out of his own completely practical mindset. For instance, he thinks that the best part about buying Molly her hat is that she will now agree to use an umbrella to save it from the rain—but he thinks nothing of the fact that she may enjoy the hat because it's beautiful. (This may also be an allusion to the scene in "Oxen of the Sun" when an umbrella is a metaphor for a condom.) His inability to recognize the value in beauty is also the central sticking point in his relationship with Stephen. Furthermore, he imagines himself as Molly's rightful educator, even though his conversation with Stephen should make it clear that he is far from well-educated. In fact, these thoughts may be a response to his insecurity about how he compares to the better-educated Stephen.

In response to Stephen's parable, Bloom discusses a series of great Jewish thinkers. He praises Moses, Moses Maimonides, and Moses Mendelssohn, then starts talking about Aristotle (who, Stephen points out, is not Jewish). He and Stephen compare ancient Hebrew with ancient Irish, although they don't know much of either, and Bloom starts chanting in Hebrew, but quickly forgets the words.

Bloom keeps trying to show off his knowledge to Stephen, but his flimsy knowledge of Jewish traditions makes him look like a fool. In particular, the people he names are leaders who fit Stephen's value system: they sought the truth above all else. Clearly, Bloom is starting to understand Stephen's perspective and trying to empathize with it. Joyce also uses this passage to make fun of people who base their identities on dead languages and ancient traditions from the past, like the Irish nationalists. Of course, he might also be making fun of himself for doing this, because the novel is full of lines in Latin and references to the Odyssey.

Stephen sees "the accumulation of the past" in Bloom, who looks to him like Jesus, according to important theologians like St. John of Damascus. Bloom sees "the predestination of a future" in Stephen, who seems to represent "the ecstasy of catastrophe." Bloom reflects on his old dreams of success working in the church, law, or on stage.

On its surface, Stephen is just calling Bloom old and Bloom is just calling Stephen young. But the theological imagery in this passage clearly depicts both of them as messianic figures. Moreover, St. John of Damascus famously argued that the members of the Trinity are all co-present in one another. This means that Stephen and Bloom (the son and the father) are two aspects of one being. After failing to get along for a episode and a half, they are finally starting to merge into the holy family that they have been fantasizing about during the entire book. (Unfortunately, this is just a fleeting moment: their symbolic merger won't last.)

Stephen sings an anti-Semitic song about a little Jewish girl killing a boy who visits her house. The novel prints the song in full musical notation. Bloom enjoys the tune but also thinks of his own daughter Milly dressed in green. Stephen interprets this song as a metaphor for his own situation, symbolically sacrificing himself at an unknown Jewish man's house. Bloom thinks about the anti-Semitic trope of ritual murder, and then about the unusual psychological states that can cause people to commit murder, like hypnosis and sleepwalking (each of which he's suffered once).

It takes a while for Bloom to realize that Stephen's song is vile and anti-Semitic. This song is Stephen's way of telling Bloom that he's being overbearing and asking for unreasonable sacrifices. So just as soon as Bloom and Stephen symbolically merge, Stephen forces them apart. In short, if Bloom becomes a father figure to Stephen, like he wants, then Stephen will lose his independence. And the last thing he wants is to go back to being a child. But Bloom doesn't fully get the message—instead, he starts thinking about his daughter Milly.

Bloom remembers Milly's childhood nightmares, then thinks about other moments from her childhood, like when she cried and shook her money-box. Milly's blond hair made Bloom question his paternity, but she shared his nose, which reassured him. He thinks about her teenage years and boyfriends, and he reflects that he misses her "less than he had imagined, more than he had hoped." Bloom remembers how the cat left around the same time as Milly, then considers the similarities between his cat and daughter. (For instance, Milly lets Bloom ribbon her hair, like the cat lets him pet it.) He remembers gifting Milly an owl and a clock to help her learn about science. In turn, Milly once gifted Bloom a mug with a moustache design. She also tends to think of her father's needs and admire his knowledge.

Stephen's song and Bloom's sense of fatherly affection for Stephen lead Bloom to his memories of Milly. Bloom echoes Stephen's comments from "Scylla and Charybdis" about the difficulty of knowing if one is truly the father—but while Stephen saw this as a promising way to sever his connections with his father, Bloom worries about losing his connection with his daughter. Otherwise, Bloom and Milly's relationship is like Bloom and the cat's: affectionate and relatively uncomplicated. Bloom feels nostalgic for Milly's youth, when the family was happy and harmonious. But now, with Milly out of the house and Bloom and Molly increasingly distant, everyone in the family is isolated and lonely. Of course, Rudy's death is the other major factor that has torn the Bloom family apart. By yearning for Milly's childhood, Bloom is also hoping he can return to the time when Rudy's death was not constantly weighing on his conscience.

Bloom offers Stephen his guest room, hoping Stephen will be able to get some rest but also enlighten Bloom and help improve Molly's Italian pronunciation. He imagines that Stephen and Milly could make a good couple, and he asks Stephen if he knew Mrs. Sinico, who died last year. (Stephen says no.) Bloom explains why he didn't attend Stephen's mother's funeral, which fell on the anniversary of his young son Rudy's death. Stephen declines the guest room, and Bloom returns Stephen's money, which he was safekeeping.

Bloom's offer has the potential to solve both his and Stephen's greatest problem: it will give him companionship and a son to look after, and it will give Stephen stability and a place to stay. Bloom's references to all the people he and Stephen know in common are just ways of suggesting that their families are close enough in Dublin society that it wouldn't be socially unacceptable for Stephen to move in. Of course, Stephen doesn't care about their families or social status—but he also doesn't want to stay with Bloom. He turns down the generous offer. The reader never learns exactly why he makes this decision, but Stephen's need for independence and autonomy as an artist is clearly an important part. This moment could have provided a broad resolution in the novel by dissolving both protagonists' problems and merging them into one family. But it doesn't happen: Joyce doesn't resolve the conflicts. Instead, he will show that Bloom and Stephen's meeting actually helps them achieve their goals independently.

Bloom proposes other ways for the two men to meet: Stephen could give Molly Italian lessons, Molly could give Stephen voice lessons, or Stephen and Bloom could meet around Dublin for philosophical conversations. But Bloom has little hope for these plans to work. He reflects on how a circus clown once jokingly called him "papa" and how he once marked a coin in the vain hope of seeing it again in the future.

Bloom sees that Stephen is rejecting him, like so many of the other people he knows in Dublin. The clown saying "papa" references Bloom realizing that his symbolic relationship with Stephen is just a short-lived joke. In turn, the coin that never returns is an obvious metaphor for Bloom concluding that fate will not bring Stephen back to him.

Bloom thinks about the frustrating conflicts and social inequalities in the world, and he contemplates all the natural imperfections that make it impossible for humans to overcome these problems (like death, pain, and natural disasters). Meanwhile, Stephen argues that people are significant because they are "conscious rational animal[s]" who can gradually explore and come to understand the unknown.

In addition to explaining which feelings drive their major life decisions, Bloom and Stephen's thoughts reflect their reactions to Stephen's decision not to stay the night. Bloom thinks of this decision as a fateful imperfection that he cannot change, so must accept. But Stephen views it as an expression of his autonomy and rationality, even if it does make his life more difficult. Therefore, Bloom ends up protesting the limits of the human will against fate, while Stephen ends up celebrating the achievements of the human will in an uncertain world.

In what the novel describes as a ritualistic "exodus from the house of bondage to the wilderness," Stephen takes his **ashplant** and says the 113th psalm under his breath while Bloom lets him out of the house by candlelight. Outside in the garden, they look up to see "the heaventree of stars hung with humid nightblue fruit."

The religious imagery in this passage unmistakably associates Stephen's departure from Bloom's house with the Exodus (the Israelites' liberation from Egypt). The Exodus explains the foundation of Judaism, and in Christianity, it predicted humankind's salvation by Jesus. Therefore, Stephen's departure with his ashplant suggests that he is gaining his freedom and going on to redeem the world (presumably through his art).

Bloom contemplates the distance to nearby stars and the incredible size of the galaxy, then starts thinking about Earth's long geological history and the amazing variety of molecules and cells that make up all living beings. He marvels at mathematicians' ability to calculate a number so large that it would fill thousands of pages, and he speculates about whether there might be life on other planets. He remembers the properties of different constellations and thinks about the stars that shone during his, Stephen's, his son Rudy's, and Shakespeare's births.

By contemplating the endlessness of the universe and the complexity of the world, Bloom recognizes his own insignificance. He zooms in and out to gain a sense of perspective. Later in the episode, this perspective will help him cope with fear and anxiety. Of course, this is totally the opposite of what Stephen sees: Stephen views the stars as evidence of his own greatness, or even proof that he's the Messiah.

Bloom concludes that heaven is just a utopian idea invented by dreamers and poets, since there is no way to get from "the known to the unknown." He isn't sure whether he believes that the stars really affect events on Earth, but he certainly sees how women are like the moon in many ways (they pass through phases, they are beautiful, and so on). In fact, he notes that the lamp is on in his bedroom, meaning that Molly is probably awake. Bloom and Stephen gaze at each other in recognition, then start to pee together in the garden while looking ahead at Molly's windowshade. Bloom thinks about the physiology of men's genitals while Stephen thinks about the theological importance of Jesus's circumcision.

As usual, Bloom is skeptical of any explanation that doesn't seem scientific enough—unless it's about women. In that case, he's perfectly happy to accept pseudoscientific ideas like astrology. Thus, even while he claims to be a rational man of science, he has his limits (which are the realm of emotions: love and sex). Meanwhile, Stephen views "the unknown" in much the same way as Bloom views women: as a guiding star to seek after. Therefore, in this scene, Bloom gets a peek at Stephen's perspective and Stephen gets a peek at Bloom's. When they pee side-by-side and look towards Molly's window, this is the closest they get to fulfilling the love triangle that Bloom was fantasizing about. In other words, for Bloom, it's their brief moment of fulfilment as a symbolic family.

Leopold Bloom and Stephen Dedalus note a star shooting towards the Leo constellation, and then Bloom sticks his "male **key** in the hole of an unstable female lock" and opens the gate for Stephen to take his leave. While the men say goodbye and shake hands, the bells chime at St. George's church. Stephen thinks about the Latin prayer for the dead, while Bloom starts to think about Dignam's funeral. Stephen walks away, and Bloom thinks about the freezing temperatures of outer space, the coming morning, and his friends who have died. He considers staying up for the sunrise, which he has only done once, after a party in 1887.

"Leo" implies "Leopold," so the star shooting towards Leo seems to be a hint that the universe is acting in Bloom's favor. After all, Bloom has taken back the key that represents his power over his house and sense of belonging in his family. And Joyce's sexualized description of the key entering the lock suggests that Bloom is finally going to resume his sex life with Molly. When Bloom and Stephen part, the church bells ring, and they both think of death. In other words, Stephen's departure is a symbolic death. He is gone and does not appear in the novel again. In contrast, the rising sun represents rebirth and creation. Bloom's decision to go to bed rather than wait for the sunrise could mean that he has accepted his own death, or the death of his relationship with Stephen (who won't be returning for a visit).

Instead of staying up for the sunrise, Bloom goes back inside his house and promptly bumps his head into a sideboard. (Molly moved the furniture around during the day.) The novel describes Bloom's furniture and piano, which has Molly's gloves and an ashtray on top. The sheet music for "Love's Old Sweet Song" is on the music stand. Bloom flinches at the pain from bumping his head and then lights an incense cone. He looks at the wedding gifts next to it on the mantelpiece: a stopped clock, a stunted tree, and a taxidermied owl.

Molly moved her furniture during her afternoon with Boylan, without consulting Bloom. This hints that he's losing his role as the family patriarch. But the "Love's Old Sweet Song" sheet music implies the opposite: that true love and the lasting commitment of marriage ultimately win out over time. The Blooms' wedding gifts have all been unnaturally frozen in time, which could support either theory. This could mean that the Blooms' marriage is holding them back and preventing them from growing, or it could mean that they've held onto their love as it was in the past.

Bloom looks at himself in the mirror and contemplates his family: he has no siblings, and as a boy he looked like his mother, but he now looks like his father. He notices the reflection of his books in the mirror. The novel lists them all: they are works of nonfiction on subjects ranging from philosophy and religion to Irish history and astronomy. Molly has left many of them upside-down, so Bloom reorganizes them while reflecting on the importance of order and women's "deficient appreciation of literature." He also remembers how Major Tweedy's name appears in his longest book, *History of the Russo-Turkish War*.

It's no surprise that Bloom looks in the mirror right before contemplating the books on his shelves, because Joyce consistently associates mirrors with literature. Specifically, he uses mirrors to represent the relationship between art and life. Examples include Buck's cracked mirror in the novel's opening scene and the moment when Bloom and Stephen see Shakespeare in the mirror during the brothel scene in "Circe." When Bloom looks in the mirror and sees his books, then, the novel is showing what role literature plays in his life and identity. It seems that he mostly collects books to satisfy his eclectic curiosity, seem intelligent, and impress others. The upside-down books are even more evidence that Molly's relationship with Boylan is disrupting Bloom's place in his home. And Bloom's sexist comments about women's literature are contradictory and ironic for a few reasons. First, Molly is constantly reading novels, while Bloom can scarcely get through a newspaper article. Secondly, Bloom is the one who chooses Molly's novels, and he also enjoys them. And finally, it's obvious to anyone reading Ulysses *that Stephen Dedalus is the only character with truly good taste in literature. So by claiming that he can appreciate literature, but women can't, Bloom actually just shows off his pretentiousness and vanity.*

Bloom sits at the table and admires the statue of Narcissus that stands on it. He takes off his collar and tie, unbuttons all his clothes, and scratches the scar from a bee sting he suffered two weeks ago. He runs through his budget for the day. He removes his tight boots and wet socks, then pulls off a hanging piece of toenail and smells it. He enjoys this because it reminds him of his childhood.

The statue of Narcissus is an obvious symbol of Bloom's vanity. It foreshadows him immediately examining his body and clothes. While Bloom thinks of his budget as a comprehensive summary of his day, it's actually incomplete—he leaves out his payments to Bella Cohen. Whether Bloom (and Joyce) intended this or not, this omission ironically undermines the whole purpose of this episode. He isn't just giving the reader a seemingly comprehensive list of objective facts about Bloom's life: he's also showing that it's dangerous to think of one's ideas as comprehensive or objective. This suggests that trying to be perfectly accurate and meticulously detailed can actually be more dangerous than recognizing and acknowledging one's biases. In turn, this supports Joyce's overarching strategy of offering numerous different ("parallax") perspectives on the same event.

Bloom starts thinking about his dream house, a two-story bungalow on a few acres of pasture in the Dublin suburbs (but close enough for an easy commute by tram). He has all the details planned, from the color of the front door to the appliances, wall art, and cook's salary. He wants to build a vibrant garden at his estate (to be called "Bloom Cottage," "Saint Leopold's," or "Flowerville"). And he wants to reserve ample time for intellectual, artistic, and athletic hobbies like photography, stargazing, cycling, hiking, and home repairs.

The extended fantasy scene about Bloom's dream house also reflects how literary form shapes the reader's perception. In Bloom's mind, it probably feels exactly like the fantasies in "Circe." But in the reader's mind, it looks completely different, because it's narrated in an opposite way. In "Circe," characters popped out of the fog to act out Bloom's fantasies in exaggerated, grotesque ways. But in "Ithaca," the catechistic narration presents Bloom's fantasy in a totally dry, matter of fact way. But Joyce's extreme attention to detail in "Ithaca" reveals just as much about Bloom's personality as the caricatures in "Circe." The dream house is a manifestation of Bloom's deep desire for a happy life and family—it's his conventional, middle-class equivalent to Stephen's artistic fantasy of publishing a poem that changes history by capturing the beauty of the human spirit.

Bloom decides that, once he's living in his dream house, he should take up farming or try to become a judge. He thinks that this would finally let him fight social inequalities and animosities while continuing to promote truth and justice, as he has always done since his boyhood. For instance, he honestly told his schoolmaster that he didn't believe in Christianity, and throughout his life he has publicly supported progressive policies and leaders.

Bloom's fantasy expands out from himself to the community. This reinforces the idea that Bloom represents the 20th century's forward-looking liberalism: he thinks that living a great life means being responsible, working hard, telling the truth, and serving one's community. But it's worth asking whether Bloom really believes in his progressive political views or is only sticking to them because it's fashionable to be tolerant and modern in early 20th century Dublin. In other words, Bloom's interest in politics might actually be self-promotion disguised as selflessness.

Bloom calculates the mortgage on his dream home, then imagines schemes that would allow him to instantly buy the whole property in cash. He could set up a telegraph to receive horserace results from London before betting closes in Dublin, or he could discover a forgotten treasure. He could reclaim waste soil, invest in hydroelectric power plants, build a resort town on an island near Dublin, create a network of riverboats for tourists, or build new tramlines to help transport livestock from the Dublin Cattle Market. To fund these plans, he would need lots of funding—or, better yet, he could find an enormous seam of gold.

Bloom's clever but improbable get-rich-quick schemes show that he really does see money as the basic principle behind the functioning of the whole world. Similarly, when he realizes that he needs funding, this shows that he doesn't think ideas are enough to change the world (unlike Stephen, who only cares about ideas). Like his politics, all of his schemes are forward-looking: they're based on technology and innovation. This shows that he's is modern and plugged into the times.

The novel asks why Bloom focuses on such long-shot schemes and, in response, explains that he views it as a relaxation technique before bed. In fact, he's incredibly afraid of accidentally committing murder or suicide while asleep. Before falling asleep, Bloom generally imagines an innovative advertisement, which persuades through simplicity and boldness.

Bloom finds another practical justification for his fantasies. Clearly, he needs such a justification in order to feel like daydreaming isn't a waste of his time. But to the reader, these fantasies reveal Bloom's values. Despite his suspicion of religion, he's still quite superstitious, and his fear of hurting someone else is further evidence of his sympathy and care for others.

The novel starts giving an extensive list of everything in Bloom's drawers. The first drawer contains numerous books, cards, and letters, as well as random possessions like his mother's brooch and his father's scarfpin. Particularly noteworthy are three letters from Martha Clifford, two pornographic postcards, and a pamphlet advertising rectal suppositories. Bloom adds his newest Martha Clifford letter to the drawer and reflects on how lucky he was to meet Josie Breen, Nurse Callan, and Gerty MacDowell today. He imagines himself as a powerful, respectable man entertaining a beautiful courtesan.

Bloom's souvenirs and letters are the physical evidence of his emotional life. Whereas the whole novel has focused on his feelings and relationships on the day of June 16, this passage again zooms out to show the broader arc of his life. Besides his letters to Martha Clifford, he doesn't seem to have sought out other women since he married Molly. And since his relationship with Molly is pretty stale, it's clear that Bloom really is profoundly lonely. His sex life happens mostly in his head, but his interactions with Breen, Callan, and Gerty are his way of reminding himself that he could really attract a woman if he wanted to.

Bloom's second drawer is filled with important documents and keepsakes that remind him of his father. It contains Bloom's birth certificate, life insurance policy, and bank statements. There's also the official announcement Bloom's father made in the newspaper when he changed his last name from "Virag" to "Bloom." Bloom's father's photographs, his Haggadah (a Jewish religious book), and his glasses are also inside. Finally, Bloom notices his father's postcard from the Queen's Hotel, where he died, and a letter he wrote to his son just before committing suicide.

Bloom keeps his father's things in his drawer for serious documents, not his drawer for keepsakes and letters. He feels like he never truly got closure after his father's sudden death and regrets not making an effort to be closer to him. This is connected to his desire to be a better husband and father to his own family. Notably, "Virag" is Hungarian for "flower," a loose translation of "Bloom." Bloom's father's name change implies that he wanted to integrate into Dublin life, which is no surprise given the amount of anti-Semitism that Bloom faced during the day.

Bloom remembers his elderly father in bed, in pain from the nerve disorder neuralgia. Bloom regrets disrespecting his father's religious beliefs, as he now thinks that Judaism is just as irrational as other religions. Bloom considers his earliest memory of his father, an account of a long series of "migrations and settlements" all throughout Europe. However, his father lost this memory due to the drugs he was taking for his nerve condition. He also developed unusual idiosyncrasies, like eating with his hat on and miscounting coins.

Bloom's feelings about his father's death are remarkably similar to Stephen's feelings about his mother's (only much less intense). It appears that Bloom also rebelled against religion in his youth and refused to take his family's traditional beliefs seriously. But now, he views Judaism more as a cultural identity and family tradition than a set of religious beliefs. Stephen never successfully makes this shift: even after his vision in Bella Cohen's brothel during "Circe," Stephen continues to reject Christianity specifically because of its theological doctrines.

On the other hand, Bloom's father also left him a sizable inheritance, which protected him from ever having to risk the dangers that so many other Dubliners have to face: poverty, bankruptcy, and dishonor. In these conditions, the best solution is for people to simply leave town. But Bloom couldn't just leave if he encountered financial problems: he has a family tying him down in Dublin.

Bloom is clearly aware of how he's benefited from his family's support. It appears that he inherited not only his father's money, but also his prudent attitude towards it. This also distinguishes him from Stephen, whose family refuses to provide for him and who has no idea how to manage money. Perhaps Joyce is suggesting that people decide to be individualistic or collectivistic in part based on whether they have gained or lost from their relationships with other people.

Bloom fantasizes about all the places he would go if he could, ranging from the Cliffs of Moher in Ireland to the Dead Sea. He imagines running away and navigating by the stars, while people back in Dublin take out newspaper ads announcing his disappearance. He would become "Everyman or Noman," wandering through the farthest reaches of the galaxy, only to return "after incalculable eons" and with incalculable wealth. Then again, Bloom remembers that time can't be reversed (unlike space), and he notices that it's already quite late, so he decides he ought to go to bed. He remembers that he enjoys sleeping next to Molly, who warms the bed and gives him human contact.

Bloom's taste for the exotic and exciting brings him back to travel fantasies. Like his dream house, these fantasies promise total freedom and perfect fulfillment. They're also a reference to his wandering throughout the novel and the trope of the "Wandering Jew," a mythical immortal who roams around the world, waiting for the Messiah. "Everyman or Noman" is an insightful description of Bloom as a character. He's the 20th century everyman—a middle-class liberal businessman. But because he's such a normal guy, he's a nobody when viewed in terms of the broader perspective of society as a whole, or the vast, empty universe. Where other epic heroes like Odysseus are exceptional because they are special and superior to other people, Bloom is an exceptional hero simply because he is an ordinary man described in extraordinary detail. Similarly, Bloom makes a remarkably insightful point about the nature of regret: people regret things only because time only flows in one direction and we can't turn back the clock. But it doesn't have to be this way. Space, unlike time, is *reversible: someone can always turn around and go back to where they came from. In fact, the spatial equivalent of turning back the clock is returning to one's origins, or* homecoming*—which is the central theme of the* Odyssey*, this episode, and arguably the novel as a whole. Rather than being unable to travel or being forced to abandon home in order to wander forever, Bloom gets both: he has gone on an exciting voyage during the novel, without losing the comforts of home. (If, that is, he can prevent Blazes Boylan from usurping it.)*

Bloom surveys the events of his day, which have led him up to his present exhaustion. He thinks of them in terms of different Jewish rituals. Then, the table makes a loud cracking noise, and he realizes he never figured out who the man in the brown macintosh was. He thinks about the day's other failures and "imperfections"—he didn't sell Keyes's ad, he didn't buy tea from Tom Kernan, he didn't figure out if the statues of Greek goddesses have genitals, and he didn't get a ticket to Leah.

Bloom's analysis of his day is also an opportunity for the reader to look back on the events of the novel, armed with the new information they've gained from Bloom's meeting with Stephen and the detailed, realistic descriptions in this episode. Joyce pokes fun at the reader by mentioning the man in the macintosh, a mystery which he deliberately designed to be unsolvable. He also reminds the reader that, even though his day was particularly rich and interesting, Bloom didn't accomplish many of his goals. Joyce indicates that it's possible for people to have perfectly meaningful lives—or even be epic heroes—despite failing at the goals they set for themselves.

Bloom sees Molly's face and is reminded of her father, Major Tweedy, departing from the train station. He notices Molly's underclothes piled on a trunk bearing her father's initials and her hat sitting on the dresser. He undresses, changes into a white nightshirt, and lays on the bed carefully, so as not to disturb her.

The story jumps to the bedroom: Molly is sleeping and Bloom is watching her while he gets ready for bed. Her piled-up underwear suggests that she hasn't cleaned up after Blazes Boylan's visit.

Bloom appreciates the clean sheets but notices another man's "imprint" and some flakes of **Plumtree's Potted Meat** on the bed. He thinks about how men like to imagine that they are the only person a woman has ever slept with, when in reality they are "neither first nor last nor only nor alone." He lists the more than twenty men who have had some kind of relationship with Molly in the past—including Lieutenant Mulvey, Professor Goodwin, John Henry Menton, Lenehan, Simon Dedalus, multiple priests and politicians, and of course Blazes Boylan.

The "imprint" and potted meat (which is a reference to sex) are more clear evidence of Boylan's visit. But Bloom doesn't seem to be too bothered: he clearly knows how to separate his love for Molly from other people having sex with her. This list of men is a subtle reference to the suitors in the Odyssey. *It also gives the reader important context for understanding other characters' rumors and feelings about Molly throughout the novel.*

Bloom contemplates Blazes Boylan's energy, attractiveness, business success, and self-aggrandizement. Although Bloom envies Boylan's famous sexual ability and youthful spirit, he tolerates these feelings because Boylan is a respectable acquaintance and will be helping Molly with her lucrative music tour. Plus, Bloom thinks, adultery is relatively natural and normal—he lists many crimes that would be far worse. He has no intention of retaliating against Boylan or divorcing Molly, but he thinks he could try to sue or publicly expose them in the future. He thinks of plenty of good reasons to simply let Molly and Boylan continue their affair, ranging from the difficulty of stopping them to "the apathy of the stars."

Although he was a nervous wreck all day while thinking about Molly's affair, now, Bloom manages to control his jealousy and frustration. He lists the practical reasons not to get angry and reminds himself that, all in all, his life is stable and comfortable. He knows that society looks down on cuckolded husbands, but the universe's "apathy" means that Moly's affair is really only a problem if Bloom lets it become one. In short, Bloom focuses on the bigger picture and puts reason before emotion. Of course, this is similar to the way this episode functions within the novel as a whole: it gives the reader a broader, zoomed-out, more holistic picture of Bloom's life than the stream of consciousness method.

As he starts to fall asleep, Bloom thinks about the vastness of the world's two hemispheres. He compares the world to the "female hemispheres," the breasts and buttocks, which he considers full of warmth and abundance. He becomes aroused and then kisses "the plump mellow yellow smellow melons of [Molly's] rump." Molly starts to stir, and then begins a "catechetical interrogation" about her husband's day. Bloom skips over his letters to Martha Clifford, his fight at Barney Kiernan's bar, and his voyeuristic encounter with Gerty MacDowell. He mentions the current production of Leah and the novel *Sweets of Sin*. He especially focuses on how the "professor and author" Stephen Dedalus fell while doing gymnastics after dinner.

Bloom returns to an idea that gets repeated over and over again throughout the novel: the link between land, women, fruit, and fertility. All of these create and sustain human life. Arguably, Bloom only truly completes his homecoming in the moment when he kisses Molly's rump, which is a symbolic affirmation of life and creation. Molly's "catechetical interrogation" is a clever joke on the structure of this episode. But like Odysseus, Murphy the sailor, and the novel itself, Bloom carefully omits some of the most significant parts of his day. He also embellishes Stephen Dedalus's credentials (which makes his admiration clear).

The novel points out that both Molly and Bloom are fully aware that they haven't had sex in more than ten years, since December of 1893. They also haven't had "complete mental intercourse" since Milly started puberty nine months and one day ago. During these nine months, Molly and Milly have constantly annoyed Bloom by asking him about his whereabouts and plans. The novel notes that Bloom and Molly lie opposite each other, because Bloom's head is at the foot of the bed. They are both being carried forward by the earth's constant rotation. Bloom is in the fetal position, weary after a long day's travels. The novel clarifies that he was traveling with the fictional epic voyager Sinbad the Sailor, then finishes by asking, "Where?," but there is no answer.

Joyce waits until the last possible moment to give the reader some of the most important details about Bloom and Molly's marital problems. In light of these events, Bloom's constant concern for Molly during the day suggests that he loves her much more than he shows. It's unclear what exactly their opposite positions on the bed symbolize. This could suggest that they are irreconcilably different, or that they are complementary and balance one another out. Bloom's fetal position implies vulnerability and suggests that Molly is a mother figure to him, as well as a wife. And the reference to Sinbad the Sailor at the very end of the episode points to the overarching motif of homecoming after Bloom's journey in the novel (and Odysseus's in the Odyssey*). It also evokes Murphy the sailor from "Eumaeus," who also told exaggerated stories about his past, just like Bloom did to Molly. Notably, different versions of* Ulysses *end this episode differently: while some leave the question "Where?" unanswered, others insist that Joyce really meant to have an enormous period at the end of the episode, which would mark the answer to "Where?"*

EPISODE 18: PENELOPE

The final episode of *Ulysses* is a long, unpunctuated, eight-sentence soliloquy that represents Molly Bloom's stream of consciousness as she falls asleep on the night of June 16. She begins by noting that her husband has asked for breakfast in bed, which he hasn't done for years. When they lived at the City Arms hotel, Bloom pretended to be sick, trying to manipulate Mrs. Riordan into leaving him some money in her will—but she didn't. Molly hates Riordan, who was an ugly, sanctimonious old miser. Molly appreciates that Bloom is nice to old ladies like Riordan, but she also criticizes him for exaggerating his illnesses. She despises someone named Miss Stack for trying to seduce him with flowers.

In the Odyssey, *Penelope is Odysseus's wife. She spends twenty years waiting for Odysseus to return from the Trojan War and inventing strategies to delay the hundred suitors who have been trying to marry her in his absence. While Penelope and Molly are supposed to represent one another, this link is a little bit ironic, because Molly isn't faithful to her husband. This episode is Joyce's most radical attempt to capture the human stream of consciousness in* Ulysses. *After the impersonal, objective style of "Ithaca," Molly Bloom's complicated, passionate soliloquy can be shocking and difficult to follow. So far, Molly has only appeared in the novel through Leopold Bloom's eyes. While she is absolutely central to his life and world, she hasn't been able to speak for herself until now. In "Penelope," the tables are turned, and the reader gets to see Bloom through Molly's eyes. This episode is framed around a dilemma: should Molly bring Bloom breakfast in bed? (It's worth recalling that he served her breakfast in bed during "Calypso.") Her decision will indicate the state of her relationship with Bloom, kind of like Bloom's decision to accept her affair with Blazes Boylan and put aside his interest in other women reflected the state of his commitment to her. While Molly ultimately answers this dilemma, her soliloquy also leaves many of the novel's central mysteries unsolved and raises plenty of its own questions. For instance, does Molly's openness about sex make her a feminist figure or an obscene caricature? Is Joyce trying to use Molly to represent all women, and why hasn't she spoken sooner?*

Molly thinks Leopold probably had sex today, judging by his appetite. It was probably a prostitute, she thinks, and he was probably lying about meeting Hynes and Menton. Or maybe Leopold met the woman to whom he was secretly writing a letter a few days ago. That woman is probably just trying to squeeze money out of him. He probably kissed Molly's bottom at night just to hide what he's been up to. Molly remembers how her husband and their maid Mary tried to start an affair—she had to fire Mary for stealing oysters.

Despite her own affair with Boylan, Molly is extremely suspicious of Bloom and jealous of his possible mistresses. Of course, the reader already knows that he didn't sleep with anyone else, although he get close: he sent another love letter to Martha, masturbated in public to Gerty MacDowell, and visited Bella Cohen's brothel. Needless to say, after the dream sequences in "Circe," the reader is also well aware of Bloom's sexual perversions—maybe even more than Molly is. But the last two episodes showed that, even though he chases other women, Bloom's thoughts and feelings are constantly focused on Molly. While they both think the other is falling out of love, then, Bloom and Molly are actually more in love than they realize.

Molly remembers that Leopold "came on [her] bottom" on the same night when she and Boylan held hands, sang, and walked by the Tolka river together. She knows that Leopold knows about her affair: "hes not such a fool [sic]." She imagines seducing "some nicelooking boy" and remembers how dreadful it is to pretend to enjoy sex with men. "Anyhow its done now once and for all [sic]," she thinks. She says that sex is only good "the first time," but she also yearns for a man to embrace and kiss her. She remembers having to give detailed descriptions of her sexual sins to Father Corrigan at confession, and she starts thinking about what it's like to sleep with a priest.

Molly doesn't shy away from providing unfiltered details about sex, which was one of the reasons Ulysses *got widely banned for obscenity. Of course, Joyce didn't care about the public's prejudices. He was far more committed to realistically depicting human life, consciousness, and sexuality. Even though other characters constantly portray Molly as a hyper-sexual person, in this passage, she actually comments that she doesn't enjoy sex with most men—she prefers other kinds of intimacy. Her comments suggest that she's actually seeking love and belonging, not sex. So while she doesn't have very much shame about her sex life, she's also not that attached to it. Notably, while the novel claims that Bloom and Molly haven't had sex in years, Molly does remember one night when Bloom "came on [her] bottom." It seems that what they* haven't *done is specifically try to get pregnant.*

Molly circles back to Blazes Boylan. She wonders if he enjoyed having sex with her, remarks that she didn't like it when he slapped her on the behind, and wonders if he is thinking or dreaming about her. They drank port and ate **potted meat** together, and then she fell asleep, until a loud clap of thunder woke her up and she "thought the heavens were coming down about us to punish us." She remembers how she said a prayer after the thunder, then thinks about how her husband doesn't believe in the soul. Then, she remembers Blazes Boylan's enormous genitals and energetic sexual performance in vivid detail.

Bloom was right when he predicted that Boylan would be good in bed: Molly depicts him as brutish and hypermasculine. But their connection was mainly (if not entirely) sexual. The thunderclap that Molly mentions is probably the same one that frightened Stephen in "Oxen of the Sun." Curiously, she interpreted it in the same way: she thought that God was condemning her sin (adultery). In this way, while she's not particularly religious, Molly's worldview seems closer to Stephen's than Bloom's. This leads to an important question about Molly: where does she fit into the opposition between Bloom's scientific temperament and Stephen's artistic one? There are many possible answers, but one reasonable place to start is with her instinctiveness, sensuality, and constant association with nature.

Molly comments on the difficulty of childbirth and laments how frequently Mina Purefoy has to go through it. She considers having another child and decides that she'd have better chances with her husband than with Blazes Boylan. Molly wonders if Leopold's affair is with Josie Powell (Breen), and she remembers that Leopold and Josie were together at Georgina Simpson's party, where Molly and Leopold first met (and got into an argument about politics). Molly thinks of several ways she could tell if Leopold has been with Josie, but then she starts to remember how handsome he was as a young man. She also remembers how she told Josie about Leopold to make her jealous.

It might seem surprising that Molly would rather have a child with her bumbling husband than with the virile, passionate Blazes Boylan. Apparently, her affair doesn't mean that she wants out of the marriage—although she worries that Bloom might. So ironically, even though Molly is having an affair and Bloom is not, she is much more worried about him giving up on the relationship than he is about her. When Molly reminisces about her attraction to Bloom, it's clear that she doesn't regret marrying him in the first place. The question is how her love has changed over time.

Molly feels bad for Josie now: she's stuck living with her lunatic husband Denis, who even wears his muddy boots to bed. Molly appreciates that Leopold is clean and careful, and she declares that she would rather die than marry another man. She also thinks no other woman would put up with Leopold, and he is lucky to have her. She thinks about Mrs. Maybrick, who fell in love with another man and poisoned her husband.

Although Molly has plenty of complaints about her husband, at the end of the first section of her soliloquy, it becomes clear that she genuinely does appreciate him (and knows that things could be far worse). Whereas her descriptions of Boylan center on his body, her descriptions of Leopold focus on his heart.

After a paragraph break, Molly begins her long second sentence. She thinks about how men are "all so different" and remembers when she first saw Boylan at tea. She left her suede gloves in the bathroom that day, and she remembers how Boylan stared at her feet. Leopold also likes Molly's feet. She remembers kissing the singer Bartell d'Arcy in the choir room and imagines showing her husband where it happened, just to shock and surprise him. She drifts through memories of her early relationship with Leopold and starts to remember his obsession with women's underwear. When the rain caught them in the street one day, he took her gloves and insisted on looking up her skirt. She remembers how he made up an excuse so that they could stay out late, wrote her letters full of complicated words, and made love to her passionately.

Molly starts to think about other romantic experiences from the past. This passage heavily implies that her relationship with Boylan isn't the first time she's strayed from Bloom. Meanwhile, Bloom's fetishes and perversions stand out in her memory, but it appears that his other eccentricities made up for it at first. It's worth asking if Bloom still looks as selfless and sympathetic in this passage, through Molly's eyes, as he did earlier in the novel, from his own perspective.

Molly thinks about other lovers, including a man named Gardner and the old Professor Goodwin, who used to show up at her house unannounced. She almost thought that Boylan wasn't coming today because of the gift he sent her, but he just ended up being a few minutes late. In a week, Molly and Boylan are going to Belfast for the concert tour, and Molly is glad that her husband won't be there, because it would be awkward to have Boylan hear her and Leopold through the hotel room wall. She's also glad not to have to deal with Leopold's stubbornness (she remembers how he once held up a train because his soup was late). She looks forward to the comfortable train ride to Belfast with Boylan.

Molly is clearly used to annoying and unreliable men, and it appears that there are few (if any) consequences for their misbehavior and irresponsibility. It's also telling that she interpreted Boylan's gift as a sign that he wasn't coming and expects him to be jealous of her marriage. This suggests that he's not the most trustworthy or morally upstanding person. But that should be no surprise, given that he's depicted as a superficial brute in other parts of the novel (especially "Sirens"). But this raises the question: why is Molly with him at all? What does she see in him? Is he even a threat to her marriage with Leopold, or does he provide her with something else entirely?

Molly starts thinking about rival singers and Leopold's other schemes. He once got her a singing gig by lying to a group of priests, and she doesn't understand why he associates with the freemasons and Sinn Fein nationalists. She remembers how Lieutenant Gardner, her old lover, died in the Boer War, and this reminds her of how Blazes Boylan's father got rich selling horses for that war. She hopes Boylan will buy her a "nice present" in Belfast and decides that she'll take off her wedding ring to avoid attracting attention. She briefly wonders about the best sex position, then remembers how Boylan was frustrated to lose twenty pounds on Lenehan's Ascot Gold Cup tip.

Molly heavily implies that she's with Boylan to have fun and enjoy his money, not because she's in love or views him as an alternative to her husband. She doesn't see any contradiction in openly carrying on both relationships. At the same time, Molly also makes it clear that Leopold isn't necessarily more honest or morally upstanding than other men. But one big difference is that he lied for her*—even if he's not as selfless as he lets on, he's much better than Boylan.*

Molly remembers eating a luxurious dinner with the lord mayor and laments the fact that she can't afford such a lifestyle on Leopold's salary. She decides not to pack any underwear for Belfast and thinks about buying new clothes and finding a corset to help her lose weight. She wonders if Leopold picked up her lotion.

Again, Molly's complaints are based on the fact that Bloom is ordinary, weird, and unimpressive. He's not necessarily mistreating her—she just wishes he were wealthier and more impressive. (In fact, Molly and Leopold are comfortably middle-class, which was very rare in Dublin in 1904.) In a sense, Molly's thoughts about her mediocre husband are a filter for the reader's feelings about Joyce's deliberately mediocre protagonist. Joyce hopes that Molly and the reader will find Bloom lovable despite—or even because of—his mediocrity.

Molly Bloom laments the fact that she's aging and hopes that she'll end up like some of the respectable old women she sees around Dublin, including Parnell and Edward VII's mistresses, Kitty O'Shea and Mrs. Langtry. She recalls a "funny story" about Edward VII and an oyster knife, but decides that it's probably an exaggeration (kind of like scenes from her erotic novels, or the enormous baby Jesuses that some churches display). She starts thinking about her husband's failure to find a consistent job and poor taste in women's fashion. Molly nearly got him his job back at Mr. Cuffe's cattle market—in part because Cuffe enjoyed staring at her chest. But Leopold was too "pigheaded" to follow through with it.

Molly links her feelings about aging and her ambivalence about her husband because she wants to know if she's made the right decision. She doesn't necessarily regret marrying Bloom, but clearly some part of her wonders if it was the wrong decision. So she contrasts the romantic stories of women who keep their dignity in old age—even if only as powerful men's mistresses—with her own fear that she will end up as the mediocre wife of a mediocre husband. Joyce also pokes fun at himself and his readers here: Molly can't make sense of her "funny story" because she struggles to separate truths from myths and exaggerations. Of course, Joyce has designed this novel to give readers the same experience: there are so many different, often contradictory perspectives that it can be difficult to know where the truth lies.

In the third sentence of her soliloquy, Molly Bloom thinks about her breasts and compares their beauty to the ugliness of men's genitals. She thinks of all the times that men have tried to expose themselves to her and remembers one cold night when she decided to use the men's restroom. Reflecting on female beauty, she recalls how, after losing his job, Leopold once suggested she try nude modeling. She also recalls her husband's other shortcomings (like his complicated explanations and his tendency to burn kidneys in the pan). Molly's breast hurts, and she remembers nursing Milly. Outrageously, Leopold once asked to put her milk in his tea. Molly remembers her tryst with Boylan again and starts to wish he were in bed with her; she can't wait to see him again on Monday.

Molly focuses on men's ugliness and ungainliness (especially Leopold's). She connects this to many men's vulgar, mechanistic view of sex, which reduces it entirely to male pleasure. With men's harassment and Bloom's fetishes, sex becomes transactional rather than mutual. So just like Stephen avoids singing commercially because he doesn't want to sell out his art, Molly refuses to nude model because she doesn't want to commercialize her beauty. This differentiates her from other women, like Gerty MacDowell, who want others to appreciate and advertise their beauty. (Of course, Molly is a commercial singer, but Joyce emphasizes that her singing isn't what makes her beautiful—her personality, body, and spirit do.)

Molly's fourth sentence begins when a passing train interrupts the course of her thoughts. She starts to think about steam engines and the men who have to work them, then considers the newspapers she burns for warmth and the scorching summers back in Gibraltar. She remembers Mrs. Stanhope, who gifted her a frock, and whose daughter Hester was like her best friend. They went to bullfights together, had sleepovers, and exchanged books. Molly uncomfortably shifts around in bed and relives her memory of the Stanhopes leaving Gibraltar forever, on short notice. They quickly fell out of touch. Bored of repetitive military ceremonies and her father's soldier friends, Molly dreamed of fleeing Gibraltar.

Fittingly enough, Joyce ensures that the only thing to interrupt Molly's train of thought is an actual train. Throughout the novel, Bloom has repeatedly mentioned Gibraltar, the British military base at the southern limit of Spain where Molly grew up. But he's never actually been there—it's more of a fantasy place for him, like the East or the English seashore. This is the first time that the reader hears about it directly, and while Molly has some fond memories of the place, it's clearly not as exciting as Bloom imagines it. Rather, Molly felt bored and confined—which is remarkably similar to how she, Bloom, and Stephen feel in Dublin throughout the novel.


Molly admits that she's still terribly bored. Before, when she lived on Holles Street, at least she could try to flirt with the fellow who lived across the street. She has basically no mail and nothing to do. Besides the letter from Milly that morning, she has only gotten one interesting piece of mail recently: a braggadocious letter from Floey Dillon reporting that "she was married to a very rich architect." She thinks of Dillon's deceased old father, and then Nancy Blake, who recently died of pneumonia. Writing condolence letters is difficult, Molly concludes, but love letters are thrilling—she hopes she gets one from Blazes Boylan.

As a woman in turn-of-the-century Dublin, Molly is basically condemned to spend her days idle at home. And compared to other women, she's relatively free and liberated, because at least she has a job and can occasionally leave the house to sing. This context might help explain why the only other woman who speaks in this book, Gerty MacDowell, constantly fantasizes about a perfect home and marriage. It's all she can aspire to. Floey Dillon's letter shows the same thing: women's aspirations are limited to marriage and family. These letters can also help the reader imagine what Bloom's letters look like from Martha Clifford's perspective; while they're idle fun for him, they might be Martha's only lifeline to the outside world.





In her fifth sentence, Molly focuses on Lieutenant Mulvey, who appears to have been her first love. She remembers when she first received his letter by way of her elderly, devout, nationalistic Spanish housekeeper Mrs. Rubio. Molly passed Mulvey in the street that day, and they later shared their first kiss. Just to scare him, Molly told Mulvey that she was engaged to the Spanish nobleman Don Miguel de la Flora, and he believed her.

Mulvey represents the pure, innocent romance of Molly's youth. This is no longer available to her in middle age (which is probably part of why she's jealous of her daughter Milly). The name "Don Miguel de la Flora" is significant because "Flor" means "Flower" (and is therefore associated with "Bloom" and "Virag"). Molly seems to have accidentally fulfilled her childhood promise by marrying Bloom.


Mulvey also had to leave Gibraltar on short notice. Before he went, he and Molly spent a day on the rock together, watching the boats passing in the sea. Molly wouldn't let Mulvey touch her, since she was terrified of getting pregnant, but she did help him finish into a handkerchief. They made plans to have sex when they reunited, but they never did. Molly wonders where Mulvey is now and what has become of his life.

"The rock" is a huge mountain that makes up most of Gibraltar. Molly's early sexual experience there with Mulvey provides an important parallel to her experience with Leopold on Howth Head outside Dublin (which becomes significant at the end of this episode). The unfulfilled promise of sex with Mulvey shows how love tragically strives and inevitably fails to overcome fate. It resembles the unfulfilled promises that hang over Leopold and Molly's relationship (most notably the promise of a son).

Molly sifts through other "wild" memories of Gibraltar, like the time she scared away birds by popping open a bag of biscuits, or the time she asked to fire Mulvey's pistol and adjusted his "H M S Calypso" hat. She remembers a bishop who lectured about the dangers of liberated women who ride bicycles and wear bloomers. This reminds her of Bloom, her husband and her name, which could be much worse. Still, she could also be Mrs. Boylan, and she appreciates her mother's beautiful name, Lunita Laredo. Molly remembers running through the trees with Mulvey and watching him sail away for India. He gave her a ring, which she later gave to Gardner before he died in the Boer War.

Joyce closely associates Gibraltar's nature scenes and general "wildness" with Molly's free, passionate, unrestrained personality. She is the opposite of Bloom and the bishop, who represent the sterility and restraint of society. "H M S Calypso" is another significant name. It refers to the nymph who entranced Odysseus and urged him to delay his homecoming at the beginning of the Odyssey. *This novel's fourth episode was called "Calypso," which likely referred to Molly keeping Bloom at home. So Molly's memory of Mulvey's hat suggests that she recognizes the power she has over men.*

The train passes by again, and its sound interrupts Molly's soliloquy and reminds her of "Love's Old Sweet Song." Molly thinks about other singers, like Kathleen Kearney, who represent the kind of conservative, homegrown Irish womanhood she intensely dislikes. Molly is proud to have grown up as an expatriate and military daughter—she believes she is far more knowledgeable "about men and life" than those other women will ever be. She has no doubts about her ability to charm men (like Gardner and Boylan). She debates what to sing after "Love's Old Sweet Song" during her concert tour, and she decides to wear a low-cut dress. She feels some vaginal itchiness and carefully lets out a fart as the train sounds again in the distance.

"Love's Old Sweet Song" emphasizes the enduring power of true love and long-term commitment. When Molly remembers the song here, it's unclear if she's thinking about her earlier loves who got away (Mulvey and Gardner), or about her less dashing and mysterious husband Leopold Bloom. Again, Molly's freedom, confidence, and tenacity don't fit into the conservative Irish society that surrounds her. But these traits do match her perfectly with Leopold Bloom, who values these aspects of her personality and is happy to watch her exercise her freedom. Finally, in just one of the many curious, subtle correspondences between Molly's soliloquy and the rest of the novel, the end of this section reenacts the end of "Sirens." (Bloom left the Ormond Hotel bar and its music, then walked past an old prostitute he had once visited, and finally let out a huge fart. Similarly, Molly starts with music, then thinks uncomfortably about sex, and then farts.) Clearly, Molly and Leopold are on the same wavelength. Perhaps this is Joyce's way of indicating that they're deeply and uniquely compatible.

Molly Bloom's sixth sentence begins with a series of worries about everyday life and the house. She fears that she might have eaten an expired pork-chop, that smoke is coming out of the lamp, and that it's dangerous for Leopold to leave the gas on at night for heat. She remembers dressing up her doll during the winter in Gibraltar and starts to worry that she won't get any sleep at all tonight. She hopes that her husband doesn't keep drinking all night with medical students, but she wonders why they're drinking in the first place. Plus, now he's ordering her to make him breakfast—although she loves it when he brings her breakfast in bed, too.

While Molly's anxiety is keeping her up, it's clear that many of her worries are really rooted in her marital troubles. Ironically, she assumes that Bloom was out drinking and acting irresponsibly, when he was actually doing the opposite. He followed Stephen in order to provide responsible adult supervision. When Molly realizes that her husband brings her breakfast in bed all the time, she warms up to the idea of doing the same to him. But she still isn't convinced.

Molly decides to make cod tomorrow, instead of meat. She imagines throwing a picnic with Boylan, her husband, and her housekeeper Mrs. Fleming. She remembers how Leopold got himself stung by a bee and once nearly capsized their boat after pretending he knew how to row. She imagines punishing him, then thinks about *Sweets of Sin*, the book that he has brought her. This reminds her of sailing in Gibraltar.

Molly's plans have oddly religious undertones and suggest that she's seeking a more conventional life and marriage. In Ulysses, *"cod" is always a pun on "God." Moreover, June 16, 1904 is a Thursday, so by cooking cod, Molly is choosing to avoid eating meat on Friday (like a good Catholic). The rowboat incident shows that Bloom pretends to be competent when he really isn't. Needless to say, Molly finds this unattractive. But unbeknownst to her, Bloom would probably be perfectly happy for her to punish and dominate him (at least according to his fantasy from "Circe").*

Molly admits that she can't stand being home alone at night. She remembers how Leopold wanted to turn their new house into a music academy or hotel, and then she reflects on all the plans he never carries out (like the Italian honeymoon he promised her). She worries that a beggar could attack her while she's home alone, and she remembers a recent news article about a criminal who murdered an old woman. Then, she wonders how the criminal's family must feel and imagines how it would be to go to prison. She remembers when Leopold heard something downstairs one night, so he took a fire poker and investigated, but was "frightened out of his wits."

Molly's loneliness shows how Dublin's strict gender norms confine and depress women like her by cutting them off from the outside world. Meanwhile, despite being a feminine and evidently cowardly man, Bloom gets to spend his days out and about in Dublin. Given this inequity, it's logical that Molly dreams about a busier house or a vacation. Of course, little does she know that Bloom has also been dreaming about this trip all day and trying to figure out how to afford it. Again, Joyce's novel shows how their desires converge because he depicts their lives from multiple perspectives. But Bloom and Molly don't actually know how much each other yearns for that vacation.

Molly Bloom also wonders why Leopold sent Milly to photography school—she thinks it may have been a plot to avoid her seeing Boylan. But Molly is also glad that Milly is out of the house, because she did annoying things like break a statue. Moreover, Molly finds it strange that Leopold and Milly were spending so much time together, doing things like reading the newspaper. She assumes that Milly was just "pretending to understand." Still, Molly is both proud and jealous that Milly is coming of age. Milly can have her pick of the boys, for instance, and she's starting to smoke cigarettes. Milly is careful to protect her skirt so that it doesn't wrinkle when she sits in the theater, and this reminds Molly of the men who rubbed up against her in the theater line.

Molly's feelings about Milly are just as conflicted as her feelings about Bloom. She enjoys the peace and quiet but misses Milly's company and is jealous of Milly's youth and close relationship with Leopold. (It's worth remembering that Milly specifically addressed her morning letter to her father.) It would be easy to mistake Molly's jealousy for anger or hostility, but she doesn't blame Milly for the things she takes issue with—she is mostly just wishing that she could be young again, too.

Molly thinks about Milly getting sick and concludes that she isn't yet old enough to feel "deep" sexual pleasure, even though she's meeting handsome boys. Molly wonders if "real love" still exists—while it's noble for men to sacrifice everything for a woman, only "foolish" people would actually do that (like Leopold Bloom's father, who committed suicide after his wife's death). Molly recognizes Milly's beauty, and then she remembers when she once slapped her for misbehavior. Molly concludes that the real problem is that the family needs a "proper servant," not just the useless old Mrs. Fleming. She also criticizes her husband for bringing Stephen Dedalus over to their house and climbing over the railing to get inside. Again, Molly remarks that the house is a disaster because of Mrs. Fleming.

Molly distinguishes between "deep" sex and teenage sex, as well as between "real love" and casual romance. Therefore, even though she envies Milly's youth, she promises herself that her own experiences with men are deeper and more meaningful. Still, she clearly has something against "real love" so strong that it drives grieving widows to suicide. This raises the question of whether she really wants an intimate and loving relationship with Bloom, or if she has given up on love and just wants a warm but transactional marriage. When she admits that her husband's behavior annoys her, she ironically misses the fact that Bloom actually left his keys at home and brought Stephen Dedalus over in part out of concern for her. Thus, in her failure to believe in love, it seems that she also fails to recognize it from her husband.

Molly suddenly realizes that "that thing has come"—it's her period. She speculates that Blazes Boylan caused it through "all the poking and rooting and ploughing." She realizes that her period won't be over by Monday, and she wonders if Boylan will mind. Once, she remembers, her period came on unexpectedly in the theater, the only time she and Leopold ever got box seats. To avoid staining the sheets, she gets out of bed, but it makes a loud **jingling** sound that annoys her. In fact, in the afternoon, the bed was so loud that Molly and Boylan ended up having sex on the floor. Molly considers cutting her pubic hair and wonders how Boylan felt about her weight and her breath when she sat on top of him. She sits on the chamber pot and remarks that she "wouldnt mind being a man and get up on a lovely woman [sic]."

Molly's period can be interpreted in a number of different ways. Most directly, it represents her fertility and the way that nature organizes change into cycles. It may also symbolize the end of a particular cycle in her and Bloom's marriage. Her flow into the chamber pot might also represent the blood of Jesus in the eucharist chalice, and therefore signal the possibility of redemption for her and Bloom. Alternatively, her period could be divine intervention on Bloom's behalf in his competition against Boylan, because it means that Molly isn't pregnant and won't be able to see Boylan for several days longer than she had planned. Regardless, it marks an important change in the tone of Molly's soliloquy: from this point onward, she becomes increasingly sentimental and forgiving to her husband.

In the seventh sentence of her soliloquy, Molly Bloom notes that she had her last period just three weeks ago and starts to wonder if she has a medical issue. She remembers visiting Dr. Collins for an infection years ago. The doctor kept using the word "vagina," which made her uncomfortable. This was before she got married, and her problem was that she masturbated too much to the "mad crazy letters" that Leopold wrote her.

Molly has more frank, unfiltered, and totally ordinary thoughts about her body. Joyce might be subtly making fun of his readers' discomfort by depicting Molly as uncomfortable hearing the word "vagina" at the doctor's office. Bloom's "mad crazy letters" sound much more passionate and interesting than the relatively boring letters he writes to Martha during the novel. This is another solid reason to think that Bloom's interest in other women doesn't threaten his love for Molly.

Molly then remembers the first time she met Leopold in person: they stared at each other for minutes, for no obvious reason. She found his idealistic political talk charming, and her friends even convinced him that he'd join Parliament one day. He gave her a fancy French song to sing, but then immediately tried to enter her bedroom (with the excuse that he needed to use her sink to wash ink off his hands).

When Leopold and Molly Bloom met, apparently it was love at first sight. Despite all his creative symbolism and radical innovations, Joyce doesn't shy away from using this cliché. Of course, Molly also realizes how idealistic she was when she fell in love —needless to say, Bloom didn't quite live up to her hopes (or get elected to Parliament). Molly's memories of Bloom are also a stand-in for the reader's, as they reflect back on the rest of the novel from the perspective of its closing scene.

Noting that she's uncomfortable sitting on the chamber pot, Molly looks over at Leopold's uncomfortable, upside-down sleeping position at the foot of the bed, which reminds her of a statue of an Indian god they once saw in a museum. She cleans herself with napkins and remarks that Leopold is fast asleep, probably because he visited a prostitute. She complains about the **jingly** bed and proclaims that she and Leopold haven't really improved their living conditions in their sixteen years of marriage—they're constantly moving houses, Leopold is constantly losing jobs. She worries that he'll lose his current one because of his involvement in politics.

By comparing Bloom to a statue in a museum, Molly inadvertently refers to the statues of Greek goddesses that Bloom saw at in the museum. These statues represented a pure, unchanging concept of immaterial beauty. This contrasts with the messiness and uncertainty involved in loving real, living and breathing people. In this scene, Bloom looks like a statue, while Molly is cleaning herself on the chamber pot. They clearly represent this binary opposition between sterile, inanimate statues (the cold, analytical Bloom) and mortal, evolving people (the vibrant, fertile Molly). Thus, Molly again represents the flux and vitality of nature, which is a kind of middle ground between Bloom and Stephen's detached and alienated perspectives on the world. Meanwhile, Molly also offers more interesting context about her family's socioeconomic situation. Bloom's income is stagnant, he hasn't been able to move up at work, and he hasn't been able to give his family a consistent home. This sheds new light on his constant search for business opportunities and his dreams of retiring to the suburbs. These goals represent personal and professional fulfillment—but he still hasn't managed to take the first steps toward achieving them.

The church bells ring. Molly wonders why Leopold came home so late, and she angrily decides that she'll look for his secret love letters in the morning. She resents his request for breakfast in bed, too. She decides that he can't be having an affair with Josie Breen, because he isn't courageous enough to sleep with a married woman. Molly remembers how Leopold gawks at women's skirts, then starts thinking about Paddy Dignam's death and running through list of mourners that Joe Hynes published in the newspaper. She has critical things to say about most of the mourners, who have a tendency to mistreat her husband, and she seriously pities Dignam's family.

Just like Bloom can start out thinking about absolutely any topic and end up thinking about Molly, Molly's train of thought continually returns back to Bloom. Her resentment towards him mixes with her jealousy of other women and her anger at the men who mistreat him. In short, her doubts ultimately stem from her love for him and her sense that he is putting a distance between them. Yet again, church bells and death go hand in hand—similarly, when Stephen left Bloom's house perhaps an hour earlier, the church bells rang, and both Bloom and Stephen started thinking about death.

Molly remembers that Paddy Dignam attended dinner on the night that Ben Dollard had to borrow tight pants for his concert. She reminisces about doing a duet with Simon Dedalus, which leads her to the topic of May Goulding Dedalus's death and finally the Dedaluses' "author" and "professor" son, Stephen Dedalus. Aware that Leopold showed Stephen her photo, Molly comments that she should have worn a different outfit for the shoot. She remembers meeting Stephen when he was about eleven, after her infant son Rudy's death. Before that, she also saw him at Mat Dillon's house, when he was a little boy.

Curiously, when Bloom remembered lending Dollard tight pants, he never mentioned Paddy Dignam. Perhaps Dignam's death means that people are already starting to forget him. On the other hand, in "Ithaca," Bloom listed Simon Dedalus as one of the men who had history with Molly. She seems to be omitting that here. Again, Joyce's parallax narration—or differing perspectives on the same topic—give the reader a more complete picture than any one perspective ever can. Molly seems impressed by Bloom's description of Stephen. And like her husband, she quickly associates Stephen with Rudy, which raises the possibility that Stephen could also fill the role of a son for her.

Molly realizes that her morning tarot cards predicted a "union with a young stranger," and that she had a dream about poetry the night before. She concludes that these omens make Stephen's appearance in her life significant. Calculating his age, Molly asks how he can already be a professor. She wonders if he needs a female muse to write about, and she decides that she's willing to volunteer. Molly imagines Stephen to be brilliant, sensitive, and a good listener—as she thinks all men should be. Since he's young, she imagines that he must be attractive, sexually eager, and "clean." She fantasizes about having sex with Stephen and proving her intelligence to him, but then realizes that this might threaten her relationship with Boylan.

The novel implies that Stephen and Molly are fated to meet, because Molly's omens are similar to Zoe Higgins's palm-reading (which predicted that Stephen would meet "influential friends"). However, the reader already knows that Stephen is unlikely to return to Bloom's house (although it's impossible to say for sure). Molly quickly transitions from picturing Stephen as a son to imagining him as a lover. Bloom thought the same thing: his fantasies of moving Stephen into Milly's empty room and giving him fatherly advice quickly transformed into dreams of a love triangle with Stephen and Molly. (But Molly sees it as Bloom's plan to undermine her current affair with Boylan.)

In the eighth and final section of her soliloquy, Molly Bloom starts to look down on the crass, unsophisticated, and impulsive Blazes Boylan, especially compared to the fantasy version of Stephen Dedalus that she has constructed in her mind's eye. She asks if Boylan was eager to get in bed with her because he is immature, or because she is irresistible. Then, she starts to wonder what sex is like for men—she wishes she could try it from their perspective, just once. She envies how men can chase women without guilt, and she wishes that it were socially acceptable for women to seek pleasure in the same way.

After building up a fantasy version of Stephen Dedalus in her mind, Molly re-evaluates her relationship with Blazes Boylan and realizes that she can do far better. Of course, Bloom also idealizes Stephen during their meeting, and both Bloom and Molly imagine that Stephen will fix all the problems in their home. (This is one reason that Stephen is frequently associated with the Messiah.) However, Molly's thought process here suggests that Stephen isn't going to fix the Blooms' problems by moving in with them—rather, his visit has enabled Bloom and Molly to reevaluate and rekindle their own relationship. Molly is fully aware of the sexual double standards that plague early 20th century Ireland. Clearly, the chance to address this double standard is part of whatmotivated Joyce to write so openly about sex in this novel.

Molly admits that she's dissatisfied with Leopold, who almost never hugs her or shows her affection—except by sometimes kissing her bottom, which doesn't really count. She fantasizes about picking up a mysterious sailor down at the piers, just like men pick up prostitutes there. She resents her husband for sleeping next to her like a "carcass" or "mummy," but still demanding that she serve him breakfast in bed in the morning, like a servant. Men "treat you like dirt," she declares, and the world would be far better off if women ran it. There would be no war or senseless gambling.

In the closing pages of her soliloquy, Molly identifies the core of her problem with her husband: his lack of affection and attention. This may be surprising, because throughout the entire book, Bloom has yearned to be closer to Molly (and fantasized about her curvaceous body). But it turns out that both of them want more from the other. In turn, Molly doesn't want to give Bloom the satisfaction of breakfast in bed if he's not willing to attend to her needs sometimes, too. Molly's vision of a world run by women closely resembles her husband's fantasy of a just, equitable society without vices. This suggests that, despite all their resentment, the Blooms share many of their fundamental values.

Molly's mind returns to Stephen Dedalus, who she assumes is "running wild" because his mother is no longer around to care for him. She laments the fact that Stephen's parents don't appreciate their "fine son," while she and Leopold had to bury their son Rudy when he was still an infant. Trying not to fall into "the glooms," Molly asks herself why Stephen wouldn't stay the night and wonders where he's wandering now. She remembers enjoying late nights with friends and wonders what Stephen is seeking—her mind drifts from this to Stephen's last name, the unusual names in Gibraltar, and the little Spanish she still remembers.

Molly's theory about Stephen is much more accurate than Leopold's (even though he spent several hours with Stephen). Molly identifies the inverted tragedies of the Bloom and Dedalus families: the Blooms tragically lost a son and the Dedaluses tragically lost a mother. And she sees the same obvious solution as Leopold: the two broken families should unite to form a single, complete family. She wonders why Stephen would turn down this possibility of a complete family, which she and Bloom have wanted for so long. (The answer is that Stephen cares more about his freedom and autonomy—even if he has to sleep in the street.) Curiously, unlike Molly, Bloom never asked or wondered where Stephen was going after he left 7 Eccles Street. He just let Stephen wander off into the night.

Molly fantasizes about teaching Stephen Spanish, or even bringing him breakfast in bed. She thinks that he could move into the Bloom household, sleeping in Milly's old room. He could read in bed in the mornings with Molly, while Leopold brings them *both* breakfast. Molly even imagines the ideal outfit for this occasion.

Molly's thoughts return to the love triangle fantasy. In this fantasy, Stephen gives her all the sexual, romantic, and intellectual excitement she wants in a man, while Bloom continues to materially provide for her. She realizes that she needs both: novelty and stability, or sex and breakfast.

Suddenly, Molly decides that she will "just give him [Leopold] one more chance." She'll get up early, make him breakfast, put on her best underwear for him, and have sex with him. If he won't, she'll make him watch her have sex with someone else. If he just wants to kiss her bottom, she will make him pay for the privilege. She remembers that she is on her period, but she fantasizes about another "good enough" way to satisfy Leopold. She hears the clock go off, imagines people around the world getting up to start the day, and she decides to try to sleep.

Molly has an epiphany: it's still possible to save her marriage, family, and home. After the rest of this soliloquy, it's not surprising that her solution is sex. It promises to bring them everything they lack: pleasure, emotional intimacy, and children. Indeed, for Joyce, sex is practically holy because it represents the intersection of these important needs. Still, Molly quickly realizes that her scheme might not work. She thinks about how she can redirect her creative energy and her impulse to action. The people starting their day echo her desire to turn over a new leaf.

Molly plans how she will clean and prepare the house in the morning, and she decides to buy flowers and "have the whole place swimming in roses." She describes the incredible beauty of nature and declares that it's useless to simply say that God doesn't exist: instead, people should "go and create something." Neither Christians nor atheists know who the first person in the universe was, but everyone does know that the sun will rise tomorrow.

Molly's flood of roses in the house is a metaphor for the domestic bliss that she and Bloom have sought throughout the novel. This use of flowers also gives a new significance to the family name "Bloom," which represents the act of flourishing. Again, Molly is associated with natural beauty and change. She gives her own peculiar answer to the philosophical, scientific, and theological questions that torment Stephen and Bloom. While Bloom and Stephen obsessively try to understand and control their lives and worlds, she chooses to affirm life and embrace the world. Stephen looks for meaning through God, philosophy, and literature, but he still despairs and feels lost. Bloom seeks meaning through science, business, and politics, but always feels powerless and meaningless. Both of them feel unable to create (art for Stephen and children for Bloom) because they lack the understanding that they want. Instead of following them down the same path, Molly chooses action. She doesn't wait for conditions to be right, the world to make sense, or fate to reveal itself. Instead, she uses the resources available to her to create something beautiful out of the world.

Molly remembers lying in the flowers on the Howth Head peninsula near Dublin with Leopold. It was sixteen years ago, on the day he proposed. They kissed passionately and he compared her to a mountain flower. He said that the sun shone for her, which she considers the "one true thing he said in his life." This is what made her fall in love with him. Rather than answering his proposal, she first "gave him all the pleasure [she] could." She gazed at the sea and thought about the beauty of her past life and loves Gibraltar, then looked back at him. He asked her again to marry him, and she embraced him and said: "yes I said yes I will Yes."

The novel's famous closing lines represent Molly Bloom's ultimate affirmation of life, love, and forgiveness. While her first word in the novel was "Mn" (a mumbled "no"), she ends with "Yes." This transformation represents her evolving attitude towards her husband over the course of her soliloquy. She rediscovers her love for Leopold in the novel's final pages. In fact, the scene she describes seems to merge her memories of Lieutenant Mulvey into her memories of Bloom, suggesting that Bloom is her one true love. Her final "Yes" is both the answer she gave to his marriage proposal and an expression of the fact that she's decided to give him breakfast in bed. This closing scene calls up a wide range of Joyce's important motifs and symbols (like flowers, the sea, and metempsychosis). It also links Molly's memories of her past loves to her relationship with Bloom, which suggests that she is ready to channel all of her passion and energy into the future they both want to share. The novel ends with a sense of wonder at the beauty of love and nature.

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