



ULYSSES

XI

Sirens

Initial Notes

- Linati Schema:
 - 4-5 p.m.
 - Significance: the sweet cheat
 - Organ: ear
- Characters from *Dubliners*:
 - Lenehan, Tom Kernan, O' Madden Burke
- Characters from *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*:
 - Simon Dedalus
- This episode is musical and Joyce utilized musical elements in his writing. He wrote to Harriet Shaw Weaver on July 20, 1919, "Since I wrote the Sirens I find it impossible to listen to music of any kind."

The Beginning / The End

- The beginning section is a chopped up line-by-line synopsis of the entire episode. A careful reader can match the lines in the beginning with their corresponding lines in the body of the episode. The last line of the synopsis is “Begin!” At the end of the episode the reader gets the parallax of the entire chapter from the perspective of the Viceregal cavalcade rolling through the streets of Dublin.

Sirens (Homeric) Allusions

- “Bronze by gold, Miss Douce’s head by Miss Kennedy’s head, over the crossblind of the Ormond bar heard the viceregal hoofs go by, ringing steel.” The body of the episode begins with the two barmaids of the Ormond hotel and bar and references to the color of their hair. The barmaids are like the Sirens of Homer’s *Odyssey*. The line ends with the mention of the Viceregal cavalcade that will roll by at the end of the episode, recapping its entirety through the parallax perspective of those in the carriage.
- “– It’s them has the fine times, sadly she said.
A man.” Like the Sirens noticing sailors off their shores.
- “**They cowered under their reef** of counter, waiting on footstools, crates upturned, waiting for their teas to draw. **They pawed** their blouses, both of black stain, two and nine a yard, waiting for their teas to draw, and two and seven.” While these lines are certainly also musical, one can notice the allusions to the beautifully monstrous Sirens.

Sirens (Homeric) Allusions

- “Sweet tea Miss Kennedy having poured with milk plugged both two ears with little fingers.” Odysseus’s crew plugged their ears with wax so as not to be lured by the Sirens’ songs.
- “Bluerobed, white under, come to me. God they believe she is: or goddess.” Even the Virgin Mary is, in a sense, a kind of Siren.
- “In a giggling peal young goldbronze voices blended, Douce with Kennedy your other eye. They threw young heads back, bronze gigglegold, to left freely their laughter, screaming, your other, signals to each other, high piercing notes.”
- “Tempting poor simple males.”
- “Yes. He fingered shreds of hair, her maidenhair, her mermaid’s, into the bowl. Chips. Shreds. Musing. Mute.” Mermaid was a brand of tobacco.
- “...a swaying mermaid smoking mid nice waves.”

Sirens (Homeric) Allusions

- “Shebronze, dealing from her jar thick syrupy liquor for his lips, looked as it flowed (flower in his coat: who gave him?), and syrugged with her voice...” She is jealous of the flower the shop girl gave Boylan when he was buying Molly her fruit basket.
- “...Miss Douce’s lips that all but hummed, not shut, the oceansong her lips had trilled.”
- “Aimless he chose with agitated aim...” Bloom, unlike Odysseus, has terrible aim.
- “Boylan, eyed, eyed. Tossed to fat lips his chalice, drankoff his tiny chalice, sucking the last fat violet syrupy drops. His spellbound eyes went after her gliding head as it went down the bar by mirrors, gilded arch for ginger ale, hock and claret glasses shimmering, a spiky shell, where it concerted, mirrored, bronze with sunnier bronze.” The bar is like the island of the Sirens.
- “I knew he was on the rocks, he said. The wife was playing the piano...”

Sirens (Homeric) Allusions

- “Braintipped, cheek touched with flame, they listened feeling that flow endearing flow over skin limbs human heart soul spine.” The effect of hearing the Sirens’ songs.
- “Through the hush of air a voice sang to them, low, not rain, not leaves in murmur, like no voice of strings of reeds or whatdoyoucallthem dulcimers, touching their still ears with words, still hearts of their each his remembered lives.”
- “Love that is singing: love’s **old sweet song.**” **LOSS**
- “To the end of the bar to him she bore lightly the spiked and winding seahorn that he, George Lidwell, solicitor, might hear.
– Listen! she bade him.”
- “The sea they think they hear. Singing. A roar. The blood is it. Sous in the ear sometimes. Well, it’s a sea. Corpuscle islands.” They listen to “the sea” in a shell.

Sirens (Homeric) Allusions

- “Ruin them. Wreck their lives. Then build them cubicles to end their days in. Hushaby. Lullaby. Die, dog. Little dog, die.”
- “What do they think when they hear music? Way to catch rattlesnakes.”

Musical Language

- “Miss Kennedy sauntered sadly from bright light, twining a loose hair behind an ear. Sauntering sadly, gold no more, she twisted twined a hair. Sadly she twined in sauntering gold hair behind a curing ear.”
- “She poured in a teacup tea, then back in the teapot tea.” Symmetrical syllables around the comma.
- “Yes, bronze from anear, by gold from afar, heard steel from anear, hoofs ring from afar, and heard steelhoofs ringhoof ringsteel.”
- “Lenehan round the sandwichbell would his round body round.”
- “No glance of Kennedy rewarding him he yet made overtures. To mind her stops. To read only the black ones: round o and crooked ess.” Like reading music.
- “He sighed, aside:
 - Ah me! Oh my!”

Musical Language

- “From the saloon a call came, long in dying. That was a tuningfork the tuner had that he forgot that he now struck. A call again. That he now poised that it now throbbed. You hear? It throbbed, pure, purer, softly and softer, its buzzing prongs. Longer in dying call.” It is like Joyce is tuning his musical lines.
- “Pat paid for diner’s popcorked bottle: and over tumbler tray and popcorked bottle ere he went he whispered, bald and bothered, with Miss Douce.”
- “*Sonnez la cloche!*” (Sound the bell! – French) This musical directive is repeated throughout the episode.
- “Bloom ate liv as said before. Clean here at least. That chap in the Burton, gummy with gristle. No-one here: Goulding and I. Clean tables, flowers, mitres of napkins. Pat to and fro, bald Pat. Nothing to do. Best value in Dub.”
- “Softly he sang to a dusty seascape there: *A Last Farewell*. A headland, a ship, a sail upon the billows. Farewell. A lovely girl, her veil awave upon the wind upon the headland, wind around her.”

Musical Language

- Joyce (and Bloom) describing the sound of the music: “It soared, a bird, it held its flight, a swift pure cry, soar silver orb it leaped serene, speeding, sustained, to come, don’t spin it out too long long breath he breath long life, soaring high, high resplendent, aflame, crowned, high in the effulgence symbolic, high, of the ethereal bosom, high, of the high vast irradiation everywhere all soaring all around about the all, the endlessnessness...”
- “Lionel Simon, singer, laughed. Father Bob Crowley played. Mina Kennedy served. Second gentleman paid.” Like lyrics.
- “The human voice, two tiny silky cords.” Vocal cords and musical chords.
- “He drew and plucked. It buzzed, it twanged.”
- “Miss Douce, Miss Lydia, did not believe: Miss Kennedy, Mina, did not believe: George Lidwell, no: Miss Dou did not: the first, the first: gent with the tank: believe, no, no: did not, Miss Kenn: Lidlydiawell: the tank.”

Musical Language

- “All music when you come to think.” The sentiment of this episode.
- “And you think you’re listening to the ethereal. But suppose you said it like: Martha, seven times nine minus x is thirty-five thousand. Fall quite flat. It’s on account of the sound it is.” This is like Joyce explaining the musical nature of language. “Still always nice to here.”
- “...clear from anear, a call from afar...”
- “Tap.” The word “tap” appears throughout as the barmaids pull on the beer tap, making this sound. It is musical in its consistency.
- “There’s music everywhere.”

Musical Language

- “Chamber music. Could make a kind of pun on that. It is a kind of music I often thought when she. Acoustics that is. Tinkling. Empty vessels make most noise. Because the acoustics, the resonance changes according as the weight of the water is equal to the law of falling water...Diddle idle addle addle oodle oodle. Hiss.” Bloom thinks that the sound of peeing in a chamber pot is also musical. Joyce is making fun of himself here as he had also published a collection of poems entitled “Chamber Music”.
- “The sighing voice of sorrow sang. His sins. Since easter he had cursed three times. You bitch’s bast. And onece at masstime he had gone to play. Once by the churchyard he had passed and for his mother’s rest he had not prayed. A boy. A croppy boy.”
- “Bronze gazed far sideways. Mirror there. Is that the best side of her face? They always know. Knock at the door. Last tip to titivate.”
- “Tootling. Brasses braying asses through uptrunks. Doublebasses, helpless, gashes in their sides.”

Musical Language

- “Tank one believed: Miss Kenn when she: that doll he was: she doll: the tank.”
- “Bald deaf Pat brought quite flat pad ink. Pat set with ink pen quite flat pad. Pat took plate dish knife fork. Pat went.” Joyce threw in a “flat” line just to show the contrast of lyrical, musical language with blunt diction and syntax.
- “Tenors get women by the **score**.”

Bloom

- “Bloowho...Bloom...But Bloom? ... Bloowhose...” Bloom is repeatedly ignored and denied service by his mere lack of presence.
- “...bearing in his breast the sweets of sin...” The book Bloom bought Molly.
- “By went his eyes. The sweets of sin. Sweet are the sweets.
Of sin.”
- “Jingle.” The sound of the bell above the door reminds Bloom of the jingling bed quoits of his brass bed where the impending affair will occur. This sound is repeated throughout the episode.
- “Essex bridge. Yes, Mr Bloom crossed bridge of Yessex. To Martha I must write.” Essex makes Bloom think of “yes sex” and then writing back to Martha Clifford.
- “With patience Lenehan waited for **Boylan** with impatience, for **jingle** jaunty **blazes** boy.”

Bloom

- “For Raoul. He eyed and saw afar on Essex bridge a gay hat riding on a jauntingcar. It is. Third time. Coincidence.

Jingling on supple rubbers it jaunted from the bridge to Ormond quay. Follow. Risk it. Go quick. At four. Near now. Out.”

Bloom is being reminded of the affair as for the third time today he has come across Boylan in the streets of Dublin.

- “See the conquering hero comes.” Lenehan refers to Boylan as the conquering hero. He will conquer Molly later. This contrasts with the next paragraph: “Bloom, unconquered hero. See me he might. The seat he sat on: warm.”

Joyce wrote in his notes (N1[NL1.3]: The Subject Notebook) about Bloom: “angry with those who do not hunt Mollie”. It is interesting that Bloom does nothing to stop the impending affair so there is a sense of the tortured and excitable in the activity for him.

Bloom

- “What time is that? asked Blazes Boylan. Four? O’Clock.”

Boylan is about to leave to visit Molly. Joyce treats the time like an Irish name: Four O’Clock.

- “Jingle a tinkle jaunted.

Bloom heard a jing, a little sound. He’s off. Light sob of breath Bloom sighed on the silent bluehued flowers. Jingling. He’s gone. Jingle. Hear.” With the sound of the jingling bell of the door (reminding Bloom of his bed quoits), Boylan leaves for the affair.

- “Ben Howth, the rhododendrons.” After Boylan has left to meet Molly, Bloom thinks of his marriage proposal to Molly. Complicated relationship!
- “*M’appari tutt’amor:*

Il mio sguardo l’incontr...” These are Italian lyrics (All love appeared to me: My eyes encountered her...) from the German opera, *Martha*. This reminds Bloom of Clifford.

Bloom

- “– *All is lost now.*” This is the answer to Bloom’s question about the song being sung by Simon Dedalus who, like Joyce, was a beautiful tenor voice. This singing connects, of course, to the Sirens and the title of the song connects to Boylan’s affair with Molly.
- “Too late. She longed to go. That’s why. Woman. As easy stop the sea. Yes: all is lost.
– A beautiful air, said Bloom lost Leopold. I know it well.” See above.
- “Better write it here. Quills in the postoffice chewed and twisted.” Bloom will write his letter to Martha Clifford at the bar.
- “*Blumenlied*. I bought for her. The name.” *Blumenlied* is German for “flower song” which makes Bloom think of his penname: Henry Flower.

Bloom

- “Miss Martha Clifford

c/o P.O.

Dolphin’s barn lane

Dublin”

Bloom addresses his letter to Martha Clifford. Bloom has this address coded, so Molly can’t read it, in episode 17.

- “Blot over the other so he can’t read. Right. Idea prize titbit. Something detective read off blottingpad.” Bloom wants to make sure nobody can read a remnant of what he wrote like the detective in *Titbit*, the magazine he read in the outhouse earlier. He feels like a criminal.
- “Thinks he’ll win in *Answer poets’* picture puzzle...See blank tee what domestic animal? Tee dash ar most courageous mariner.” C_T (CAT). T_R (TAR).

Bloom

- “I too, last of my race. Milly young student. Well, my fault perhaps. No son. Rudy. Too late now. Or if not? If not? If still?” Bloom ponders whether or not it is too late to have another child.
- “Ventriloquise. My lips closed. Think in my stom. What?
Will? You? I. Want. You. To.”

This inner monologue hints at Bloom’s own complicity in his cuckolding.

- “Up the quay went Lionelleopold, naughty Henry with letter for Mady, with sweets of sin with frillies for Raoul with met him pike hoses went Poldy on.” Bloom’s letter for Clifford begins to mold with Bloom’s book for Molly.
- “In Lionel Mark’s antique saleshiop window haughty Henry Lionel Leopold dear Henry Flower earnestly Mr Leopold Bloom envisaged...” In his reflection, Bloom sees himself morphing with his alter ego, Henry Flower.
- “Course everything is dear if you don’t want it. That’s what good salesman is.”
Bloom’s complicity in his own cuckolding?

Sexual Tension

- “Ah, panting, sighing. Sighing, ah, fordone their mirth died down.”
- “Douce gave full vent to a splendid yell, a full yell of full woman, delight, joy, indignation.”
- “All flushed (O!), panting, sweating (O!), all breathless.”
- “I fell all wet.”

- “Not yet. At four, she said. Time ever passing. Clockhands turning...For Raoul...The sweets of sin.” The sexual tension in the language reflects the impending affair of Molly and Boylan as Boylan and Bloom will cross paths in this episode before the former leaves for the latter’s home. There is even mention of the main character (Raoul) from the book Bloom bought for Molly (sweets of sin).
- “Tenderness it welled: slow, swelling. Full it throbbed. That’s the chat. Ha, give! Take! Throb, a throb, a pulsing proud erect.”

Sexual Tension

- “Bloom. Flood of warm jimjam lickitup secretness flowed to flow in music out, in desire, dark to lick flow, invading. Tipping her tepping her tapping her topping her. Tup. Pores to dilate dilating. Tup. The joy the feel the warm the. Tup. To pour o’er sluices pouring gushes. Flood, gush, flow, joygush, tupthrop. Now! Language of love.” To “tup” means for a man to have sex with a woman. Bloom is imagining, in a musical language, Boylan and Molly cuckolding him.
- “*Martha* it is. Coincidence.” The name of the opera and his pen pal affair. The lyrics “*Martha! Ah, Martha!*”, “*Co-me, thou lost one!*” are sexual in the context of Bloom’s imaginings.

The Blind Piano Tuner

- “The tuner was in today...And blind too...God’s curse on bitch’s bastard.” This is the blind young man Bloom helped cross the street earlier in the novel and the same curse he yelled at Cashel for nearly bumping into him. He is an interesting figure to appear in an episode devoted to sound.
- “He pressed (the same who pressed indulgently her hand), soft pedaling a triple of keys to sees the thicknesses of felt advancing to hear the muffled hammerfall in action.”
- “Tap blind walked tapping by the tap the curbstone tapping, tap by tap...Eyes shut. Head nodding in time.” The beerpull tap begins to blend with the tapping of the blind boy’s stick against the ground.

Bloom's Indigestion

- “Rrr.”
- “Rrrrrrsss.”
- “’Tis the last rose of summer dollard left Bloom felt wind wound round inside.
Gassy thing that cider: binding too.”
- “Far. Far. Far. Far.”
- “...then all of a soft sudden wee little wee little pippy wind.
Pwee! A wee little wind piped eeee. In Bloom's little wee.”
- “Rrrrrr.”
- “Fff.”
- “Must be the cider or perhaps the burgund.”
- “Tschink. Tschunk.”

Bloom's Indigestion

- “Prrpr.

Must be the bur.

Fff. Oo. Rrpr.”

- “*Nations of the earth*. No-one behind. She's passed. *Then and not till then*. Tram. Tram. Kran, kran, kran. Good oppor. Coming Krandlkrankran. I'm sure it's the burgund. Yes. One, two. *Let my epitaph be*. Karaaaaaaa. *I have*.

Pprrpffrrppfff

Done.”

