



ULYSSES

IV

Calypso

Initial Notes

- Linati Schema:
 - 8-9 a.m.
 - Significance: the departing traveler
 - Organ: the kidneys
- Characters from *Dubliners*:
 - M'Coy
 - Gretta Conroy

Meet Leopold Bloom

- “Mr Leopold Bloom ate with relish the inner organs of beasts and fowls.” While this nicely transitions from Stephen in the previous episode contemplating to “devour a urinous offal from all dead”, it also sets Bloom apart from the average Dubliner. Throughout the entire novel, Bloom is trying to convince other Dubliners that he is an Irish Catholic man despite his family’s Jewish and immigrant background. This is also very Homeric in terms of diet, relating back to *The Odyssey*.
 - *Lipoti Virag (Bloom’s grandfather) – Hungarian immigrant, Jewish.*
 - *Rudolph Virag (changed to Bloom) – converted to Protestant.*
 - *Leopold Bloom – naturally-born Irishman, converted to Catholicism (twice)*

Meet Leopold Bloom

- “He turned from the tray, lifted the kettle off the hob and set it sideways on the fire. It sat there, **dull and squat**, its **spout stuck out**. Cup of tea soon. Good. Mouth dry. The cat walked stiffly round a leg of the table with tail on high.” In terms of symbolism here, **Bloom** is the kettle, but the cat is Melanthe, Penelope’s maidservant who betrays her in *The Odyssey*.
- “Cruel. Her nature. Curious mice never squeal. Seem to like it.” Bloom, the cuckolded husband.
- “She blinked up out of her avid shameclosing eyes...the dark eyeslits narrowing with greed...” For more information on the cat representing Melanthe from *The Odyssey*, see Mr. Emerick-Brown’s paper published in *Qorpus*’s June 2020 issue.
- “Wonder is it true if you clip them they can’t mouse after.” Bloom is symbolically castrated. He hasn’t had sex with Molly for around 10 years, since the death of their son, Rudy, who died 11 days after birth.

Meet Leopold Bloom

- “O” – Bloom’s first word/sound is “O”. Omega is the last letter in the Greek alphabet. There is the sense of beginning and end here along with an Homeric allusion.
- “Thursday: not a good day either for mutton kidney at Buckley’s. Fried with butter, a shake of pepper. Better a pork kidney at Dlugacz’s.” Tomorrow, Friday, Catholics don’t eat meat so he must buy his meat today and not from an Irishman (Buckley), but from an immigrant (Dlugacz). This reveals Bloom’s otherness.
- “On the doorstep he felt in his hip pocket for the latchkey. Not there. In the trousers I left off. Must get it. **Potato I have.**” Bloom, like Stephen, will be usurped and locked out of their own homes. The **potato** is a superstitious belief from his mother that if kept in his pocket, it would absorb disease from the air. This old eastern European belief, again highlighting his otherness, will follow him throughout the novel.

Meet Leopold Bloom

- “Be a warm day I fancy. Specially in these black clothes feel it more. Black conducts, reflects (refracts is it?)” Bloom will be heading later to the funeral of Patrick Dignam so he is wearing black. He also thinks logically and scientifically about things.
- “No use canvassing him for an ad.” Bloom’s occupation is an ad canvasser for the local newspaper.
- Humor: “Good puzzle would be cross Dublin without passing a pub.”
- “His eyes rested on her vigorous hips.” Throughout the day, whether it be women, statues, or the planing of a wooden bar in a pub, Bloom appreciates curves.
- “fingers, sausagepink...behind her moving hams...prime sausage...” Bloom is hungry so the descriptions in his mind are related to food.

Meet Leopold Bloom

- “A cloud began to cover the sun wholly slowly wholly. Grey. Far.”
 - “A cloud began to cover the sun slowly, shadowing the bay in deeper green.” (from episode 1) Example of parallax. The same thing viewed from two different perspectives. There are many examples of these throughout the novel between Stephen and Bloom.
 - “Stephen attributed to the reappearance of a matutinal cloud (perceived by both from two different points of observation, Sandycove and Dublin) at first no bigger than a woman’s hand.” (from episode 17). The entire novel is in the shadow of a woman’s hand – May (for Stephen) and Molly (for Bloom).
- “Be near her ample bedwarmed flesh. Yes, yes.” Despite the lack of physical intimacy, Bloom is still affirmative in his yearning for Molly.

Meet Molly Bloom

- Molly's first word/sound is "Mn", a groan from upstairs.
- "He heard then a warm heavy sigh, softer, as she turned over and the loose brass quoits of the bedstead jingled." Those sounds of the moving bed will haunt Bloom throughout the day as he thinks of her affair.
- "All the way from Gibraltar." Molly is from Gibraltar in Spain as her father, "old Tweedy", was stationed there.
- "Two letters and a card lay on the hallfloor. He stooped and gathered them. Mrs Marion Bloom. His quick heart slowed at once. Bold hand. Mrs Marion.
 - Poldy!" Bloom recognizes Boylan's casual use of his wife's first name. Poldy is Molly's nickname for Bloom. A painful scene for Bloom.
- "Letting the blind up by gentle tugs halfway his backward eye saw her glance at the letter and tuck it under her pillow." Molly is keeping Boylan's letter from him.
- "He peeped quickly inside the leather headband. White slip of paper. Quite safe." Meanwhile, Bloom has a note from his erotic pen pal, Martha Clifford, in his hat.

Meet Molly Bloom

- “What are you singing?”
 - *Lá ci darem with J.C. Doyle, she said, and Love’s Old Sweet Song.* “There we shall join [hands] (Italian) is from the opening lines of Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*, in which a sexual predator begins seduction – reminiscent of Boylan and Molly.
 - Love’s
Old
Sweet
Song
- “*Voglio e non vorrei.* Wonder if she pronounces that right: *voglio*. Not in the bed. Must have slid down.” This means “I want to but I wouldn’t like to” in Italian and comes from *Don Giovanni*. Double meaning: “not in the bed” refers to the book Bloom is looking for. Bloom wonders if Molly pronounces “*voglio*” (I want to) correctly...“not in the bed” referring to Boylan.

Meet Molly Bloom

- “Met him what? he asked....Metempsychosis, he said, frowning. It’s Greek: from the Greek. That means the transmigration of souls.” This confusion over the pronunciation and meaning of metempsychosis is repeated throughout the novel.
- ”O, rocks! she said. Tell us in plain words.” This is a sentiment shared by many who read *Ulysses*.
- Molly reads smutty romance novels like *Ruby: the Pride of the Ring* and enjoys the names of authors such as Paul de Kock (“Nice name he has) whereas Bloom enjoys more historical and scientific books as revealed in episode 17.

The Children

- “There is a young student comes here some evenings named Bannon...” Milly’s letter to her father, Bloom, connects to episode 1 when a young man says to Mulligan, “I got a card from Bannon. Says he found a sweet young thing down there. Photo girl he calls her.” Bannon later encounters Bloom and realizes he is the father of the girl he is seeing.
- “He would be eleven now if he had lived.” Rudy, their son, died after 11 days and was the catalyst of Bloom associating sex with death in regards to Molly, hence ending their physical intimacy. Interestingly, Bloom uses words such as “eleven” whereas Molly uses numbers such as “11”, potentially highlighting an educational difference between the two.

Details to Wait For

- An incredible attention to detail has been paid by Joyce and minor trivialities such as Bloom “stubbing his toes against the broken commode” are revealed by the end of the novel such as with Molly’s inner monologue: “...a holy horror of its breaking under me after that old commode I wonder was I too heavy sitting on his knee...” So seemingly unimportant details, if read again closely, can reveal profound insight such as with Molly’s insecurity about her weight.

These will be covered from time to time as the novel progresses.

Intentional Error

- *“All dimpled cheeks and curls,
Your head it simply swirls.*

...Swurls, he says.” This intentional spelling error of “swurls” occurs next to the correct spelling which further contrasts the error. Take note of this as it occurs repeatedly throughout the novel in association with Boylan as it is the song he sings.

Bloom: the Troubled Father and Husband

- “A soft qualm regret, flowed down his backbone, increasing. Will happen, yes. Prevent. Useless: can’t move. Girl’s sweet light lips. Will happen too. He felt the flowing qualm spread over him. Useless to move now. Lips kissed, kissing kissed. Full gluey woman’s lips.” This shows the futility of Bloom interrupting the men in his women’s lives: Bannon for Milly and Boylan for Molly. He, like Odysseus, is the usurped head of the house.

Bloom, the Every Man, Enjoying a Very Human Moment

- “Quietly he read, restraining himself, the first column and, yielding but resisting, began the second. Midway, his last resistance yielding, he **allowed his bowels to ease themselves quietly** as he read, reading still patiently that slight constipation of yesterday quite gone. **Hope it’s not too big** bring on piles again. **No, just right. So. Ah!** Costive one tabloid of cascara sagrada. Life might be so. **It did not move or touch him but it was something quick and neat.** Print anything now. Silly season. He read on, **seated calm above his own rising smell...feeling his water flow quietly...**”

While many found Joyce’s writing vulgar and even obscene, which he mocks with “Print anything now”, as Judge Woolsey wrote in his decision to allow *Ulysses*’ publication in the United States: “I have not found anything that I consider to be dirt for dirt’s sake. Each word of the book contributes like a bit of mosaic to the detail of the picture which Joyce is seeking to construct for his readers.” And what reader would be unfamiliar with such a human experience?

Bloom, the Every Man, Enjoying a Very Human Moment

- “Begins and ends morally...He tore away half the prize story sharply and wiped himself with it.” Bloom, out of proper toilet paper, reveals what Joyce thought of a story that “begins and ends morally.”

