

game was finely played, too finely for Budgen's taste; he was deeply hurt and for three years was estranged from Joyce.<sup>62</sup> But Joyce, thinking of Cosgrave and others, had too little faith to allow even Budgen to possess a compromising letter.\*

The dental operations scheduled for January 1923 filled Joyce with uneasiness, and he was not sorry to have to postpone them with Dr. Borsch's consent. An attack of conjunctivitis in March abated after about a week, and on April 4 six or seven decayed teeth were extracted, the rest a few days later.<sup>63</sup> Joyce stayed in a *maison de santé* for two weeks recovering. The loss of the teeth did not greatly bother him; he remarked to his son, 'They were no good anyway.'<sup>64</sup> But the extractions were painful. Then on April 28, with this source of infection removed, Borsch performed the sphincterectomy. A month later Joyce felt none of the improvement Borsch had predicted, but by June 10 he was able to read a little, and Borsch assured him that his eye would recover its health fully in a few months. Meanwhile the dentist had finished his new plates, and when these had been inserted on June 10,<sup>65</sup> Joyce and his family left for a holiday in England. In spite of the rigors of the last few months he was feeling better, and had no serious eye trouble for the rest of the year.

The materials for a new book had been forming slowly in his mind. The structure of it was still obscure to him, so that when the sculptor August Suter asked what he was writing, he could answer truthfully, 'It's hard to say.' 'Then what is the title of it?' asked Suter. This time Joyce was less candid: 'I don't know. It is like a mountain that I tunnel into from every direction, but I don't know what I will find.'<sup>66</sup> Actually he did know the title at least, and had told it to Nora in strictest secrecy. It was to be *Finnegans Wake*, the apostrophe omitted because it meant both the death of Finnegan and the resurgence of all Finnegans. The title came from the ballad about the hod-carrier who falls from a ladder to what is assumed to be his death, but is revived by the smell of the whisky at his wake.† But behind this

\* Joyce repaired the friendship by asking Budgen, who he had heard was in Paris, to call. After a pleasant evening Joyce said just before they parted, 'I hope you'll always believe that I'm a good friend, Budgen.'

†

*Finnegans Wake*

Tim Finnegan lived in Walkin Street,  
A gentleman Irish mighty odd.  
He had a tongue both rich and sweet,  
An' to rise in the world he carried a hod.  
Now Tim had a sort of a tipplin' way,  
With the love of the liquor he was born,  
An' to help him on with his work each day,  
He'd a drop of the craythur every morn.

Irish master builder was a more ancient Irish prototype, the legendary hero and wise man Finn MacCumhal. As Joyce informed a friend later, he conceived of his book as the dream of old Finn, lying in death beside the river Liffey and watching the history of Ireland and the world—past and future—flow through his mind like flotsam on the river of life. This was the 'universal history' of which Joyce had spoken to Miss Weaver; it would mix history and fable in a comic leveling. The characters would be the dreamlike shapes of the eternal, unholy

Chorus

Whack folthe dah, dance to your partner,  
Welt the flure, yer trotters shake,  
Wasn't it the truth I told you,  
Lots of fun at Finnegan's Wake.

One morning Tim was rather full,  
His head felt heavy which made him shake,  
He fell from the ladder and broke his skull,  
So they carried him home his corpse to wake,  
They rolled him up in a nice clean sheet,  
And laid him out upon the bed,  
With a gallon of whiskey at his feet,  
And a barrel of porter at his head.

His friends assembled at the wake,  
And Mrs. Finnegan called for lunch,  
First they brought in tay and cake,  
Then pipes, tobacco, and whiskey punch.  
Miss Biddy O'Brien began to cry,  
'Such a neat clean corpse, did you ever see,  
Arrah, Tim avourneen, why did you die?'  
'Ah, hould your gab,' said Paddy McGee.

Then Biddy O'Connor took up the job,  
'Biddy,' says she, 'you're wrong, I'm sure,'  
But Biddy gave her a belt in the gob,  
And left her sprawling on the floor;  
Oh, then the war did soon enrage;  
'Twas woman to woman and man to man,  
Shillelagh law did all engage,  
And a row and a ruction soon began.

Then Micky Maloney raised his head,  
When a noggin of whiskey flew at him,  
It missed and falling on the bed,  
The liquor scattered over Tim;  
Bedad he revives, see how he rises,  
And Timothy rising from the bed,  
Says, 'Whirl your liquor round like blazes,  
Thanam o'n dhoul, do ye think I'm dead?'

The Irish phrase in the last line means, 'Your souls from the devil!'

family, Everyman, his wife, their children, and their followers, bobbing up and down on the river. In the twentieth century Everyman's avatar was to be Humphrey Chimpden Earwicker, keeper of a public house in Chapelizod, whose wife was Anna Livia, whose children were the twins Shem and Shaun and their sister with the split personality, Isabel. Behind and within Earwicker, that compound of bounce and bluster, were all men of enterprise, strong or weak; his twin sons were every possible pair of brothers or opponents, his wife was all homekeepers, his daughter every heart's desire from Iseult of Ireland to Swift's Vanessa. Beyond these manifestations, Earwicker was a primordial giant, a mountain, a god, with a double aspect suggested by the sons, and Anna a river, a principle of nature, her daughter a cloud. It was a wholly new book based upon the premise that there is nothing new under the sun.

In many ways the book was to be a sequel to *Ulysses*; for example, the last page of *Ulysses* showed Molly and Leopold eating the same seedcake like Eve and Adam eating the 'seedfruit' (as Joyce called it) <sup>67</sup> when man fell, and *Finnegans Wake* also began with the fall of man. It is possible, too, that a plan Joyce discarded in 1920, <sup>68</sup> of beginning *Ulysses* with a *matutine*, ending it with a *nocturne*, and inserting an *entr'acte* in the middle, had envisaged a theme of riverlike flow. *Finnegans Wake*, which begins and ends with the river and centers in the *Anna Livia Plurabelle* section, was perhaps the legatee of this unused idea. Some long mulled-over stories, such as the meeting of his father with a thief in the Phoenix Park, the story of the Norwegian captain and the tailor (alluded to in *Ulysses*), and the story of Buckley and the Russian general, were rehabilitated for new uses. Myron Nutting was surprised to see Joyce sorting out old notes for *Ulysses* in February 1923, especially when Joyce announced proudly that the unused notes weighed twelve kilos. <sup>69</sup>

In his correspondence there are occasional hints of the new book. Joyce sent Miss Weaver Sir Edward O'Sullivan's *The Book of Kells* (a facsimile of some pages, with commentary) in December 1922 as a Christmas present, and this book was not only to be mentioned prominently in *Finnegans Wake*, but also stood as a kind of model for him.\* When Arthur Power confessed to Joyce he would like to write but did not know how to proceed, Joyce urged him to study *The Book of Kells*, saying, 'In all the places I have been to, Rome, Zurich, Trieste, I have taken it about with me, and have pored over its workmanship for hours. It is the most purely Irish thing we have, and some of the big initial letters which swing right across a page

\* In *Finnegans Wake* (122), Joyce makes the *Book of Kells* derive from the *Wake*.

have the essential quality of a chapter of *Ulysses*. Indeed, you can compare much of my work to the intricate illuminations. I would like it to be possible to pick up any page of my book and know at once what book it is.' <sup>70</sup> There are casual allusions in his letters to Miss Weaver to Tristram and Napoleon, two heroes with whom Earwicker and his sons are associated, but, as if to insure that Everyman should not be too cosmopolitan, he wrote also to Mrs. Murray in Dublin on December 21, 1922, asking her to set down in a notebook all she remembered of some 'curious types' he had known as a child. <sup>71</sup>

That *Finnegans Wake* should be a night book as *Ulysses* was a day book was also already decided. The night required and justified a special language. '*Je suis au bout de l'anglais.*' \* <sup>72</sup> Joyce said to August Suter, and he remarked to another friend, 'I have put the language to sleep.' <sup>73</sup> As he explained to Max Eastman in a later effort, valiant but unsuccessful, to win a convert to his method, 'In writing of the night, I really could not, I felt I could not, use words in their ordinary connections. Used that way they do not express how things are in the night, in the different stages—conscious, then semi-conscious, then unconscious. I found that it could not be done with words in their ordinary relations and connections. When morning comes of course everything will be clear again. . . . I'll give them back their English language. I'm not destroying it for good.' <sup>74</sup> Joyce set out upon this radical technique, of making many of the words in his book multi-lingual puns, with his usual conviction. After all, he said to Frank Budgen, 'The Holy Roman Catholic Apostolic Church was built on a pun. It ought to be good enough for me.' To the objection of triviality, he replied, 'Yes. Some of the means I use are trivial—and some are quadrivial.' † <sup>75</sup>

Joyce wished also to invade the world of dreams. From his youth in Dublin, in spite of his distaste for Freud, he had taken a great interest in dreams, his own and other people's, and in their interpretation. In Zurich he often talked about dreams with Budgen, and in Paris with other friends. He said to Edmond Jaloux that his novel would be written 'to suit the esthetic of the dream, where the forms prolong and multiply themselves, where the visions pass from the trivial to the apocalyptic, where the brain uses the roots of vocables to make others from them which will be capable of naming its phantasms, its allegories, its allusions.' <sup>76</sup> He astonished his friends by the

\* 'I'm at the end of English.'

† He said more defiantly to John Eglinton at a later meeting, 'I write in that way simply because it comes naturally to me to do so, and I don't care if the whole thing crumbles when I have done with it.' <sup>77</sup>

minuteness of his interest in dream phenomena. 'Tell me, Bird,' he said to William Bird, a frequent companion in these days, 'do you ever dream you are reading?' 'Very often,' said Bird. 'Ah. Now at what speed do you read in your dreams?' Bird said that he seemed to read slowly and with difficulty, because of bad light or poor print. Joyce leaped at this. 'Do you know that when we dream we are reading, I think it's really that we are talking in our sleep. But we cannot talk as fast as we read, so our dream invents a reason for the slowness.' Or he speculated about noises in dreams: 'In sleep our senses are dormant, except the sense of hearing, which is always awake, since you can't close your ears. So any sound that comes to our ears during sleep is turned into a dream.'<sup>78</sup> Another companion, Myron Nutting, then very interested in psychoanalysis, used to tell his dreams to Joyce and was amazed at the shrewdness of the interpretations Joyce suggested. Mrs. Nutting preserved one of Joyce's own dreams and the interpretation he put upon it:

I had a curious dream after the Russian ballet. I dreamed that there was a Persian pavilion with sixteen rooms, four on each floor. Someone had committed a crime, and he entered the lowest floor. The door opened on a flower garden. He hoped to get through but when he arrived at the threshold a drop of blood fell on it. I could know how desperate he felt, for he went from the first floor all the way up to the fourth, his hope being that at each threshold his wound was not capable of letting fall another drop. But always it came, an official discovered it, and punctually at the sixteen rooms the drop fell. There were two officials in brocaded silk robes, and a man with a scimitar, who watched him.

Can you psychoanalyze it? I will. The rooms represented the twelve signs of the zodiac. Three doors are the Trinity. The man who had committed the crime is evidently myself. The drop of blood left on each threshold were five franc notes which I borrowed from Wyndham Lewis [with whom Joyce had spent the previous evening]. The man with the scimitar represents my wife next morning. The pavilion with light blue lattices was like a box.<sup>79</sup>

The interpretation is a heady mixture of Freud and the Arabian Nights. Another dream, which Joyce wrote out for Gorman, was more indigenous:

I saw Molly Bloom on a hillock under a sky full of moonlit clouds rushing overhead. She had just picked up from the grass a child's black coffin and flung it after the figure of a man passing down a side road by the field she was in. It struck his shoulders, and she said, 'I've done with you.' The man was Bloom seen from behind. There was a shout of laughter from some American journalists in the road opposite, led by Ezra Pound. I was very indignant and vaulted over a gate into the field and strode up to her and

delivered the one speech of my life. It was very long, eloquent and full of passion, explaining all the last episode of *Ulysses* to her. She wore a black opera cloak, or *sortie de bal*, had become slightly grey and looked like *la Duse*. She smiled when I ended on an astronomical climax, and then, bending, picked up a tiny snuffbox, in the form of a little black coffin, and tossed it towards me, saying, 'And I have done with you, too, Mr. Joyce.' I had a snuffbox like the one she tossed to me when I was at Clongowes Wood College. It was given to me by my godfather, Philip McCann, together with a larger one to fill it from.\*<sup>80</sup>

This dream resulted in a parody which suggests how Molly was fusing into the character of Anna Livia Plurabelle, heroine of *Finnegans Wake*:

(To the tune of 'Molly Brannigan')

Man dear, did you never hear of buxom Molly Bloom at all  
As plump an Irish beauty, sir, as Annie Levy Blumenthal,  
If she sat in the vice-regal box Tim Healy'd have no room at all,  
But curl up in a corner at a glance from her eye.  
The tale of her ups and downs would aisy fill a handybook  
That would cover the whole world across from Gib right on to Sandy Hook,  
But now that tale is told, ahone, I've lost my daring dandy look  
Since Molly Bloom has gone and left me here for to die.

Man dear, I remember when my roving time was troubling me  
We picnicked fine in storm or shine in France and Spain and Hungary,  
And she said I'd be her first and last while the wine I poured went  
bubbling free.

Now every male she meets with has a finger in her pie.  
Man dear, I remember how with all the heart and brain of me  
I arrayed her for the bridal, but, oh, she proved the bane of me,  
With more puppies sniffing round her than the wooers of Penelope  
She's left me on the doorstep like a dog for to die.

My left eye is awash and his neighbour full of water, man,  
I cannot see the lass I limned for Ireland's gamest daughter, man,  
When I hear her lovers tumbling in their thousands for to court her, man,  
If I were sure I'd not be seen I'd sit down and cry.  
May you live, may you love like this gaily spinning earth of ours,  
And every morn a gallous son awake you to fresh wealth of gold,  
But if I cling like a child to the clouds that are your petticoats,  
O Molly, handsome Molly, sure you won't let me die?<sup>81</sup>

So the Biblical crime in the Garden became the crime in the garden in Joyce's dream and finally the crime in Phoenix Park which Ear-

\* In a different version he told to John Sullivan, Joyce said, 'Molly Bloom came calling on me and said, "What are you meddling with my old business for?" She had a coffin in her hand and said, "If you don't change this is for you."' <sup>82</sup>

wicker is alleged to have committed. Molly Bloom, once Marie Tallon, Amalia Popper, and Nora Joyce, became the river Liffey. In all his books Joyce makes his characters out of both real and mythical prototypes, but in *Finnegans Wake* he does this much more explicitly than elsewhere. So Earwicker's two sons, Shem and Shaun, were based in part upon two feeble-minded hangers-on, James and John Ford, who lived in Dublin on the North Strand. They were known as 'Shem and Shaun,' and were famous for their incomprehensible speech and their shuffling gait. Their only occupations were bringing the hurley sticks on to the field for the hurley teams, and carrying two of Hely's sandwich-signs. Of course, Joyce had for models also himself and his brother, John Stanislaus Joyce Jr. But as Adaline Glasheen indicates,<sup>83</sup> he had in mind also *Jim the Penman*, a play about a forger by Sir Charles Young, and Sean the Post, a character in Boucicault's *Arrah-na-Pogue*. From these Shem and Shaun easily are dilated into old Nick and Saint Mick (Michael), and into other forms of the miscreant and the censor, the artist and his often hypocritical critic. The accumulation of identities is intended. For Joyce no individual is so unusual and no situation so distinct as not to echo other individuals and situations. Stephen Dedalus goes out to encounter reality for the *millionth* time. Ulysses, as Victor Bérard confirmed for Joyce, followed established trade routes in his legendary wanderings. Joyce not only binds fable to fact, but also fact to fable. He was forever trying to charm his life; his superstitions were attempts to impose sacramental importance upon naturalistic details. So too, his books were not to be taken as mere books, but as acts of prophecy. Joyce was capable of mocking his own claims of prophetic power—he does so in one section of *Finnegans Wake*<sup>84</sup>—but he still made the claims. For Joyce life *was* charmed; nature was both stolid and magical, its ordinary details suffused with wonder, its wonderful manifestations permeated by the ordinary.

Joyce's fictional method does not presume that the artist has any supernatural power, but that he has an insight into the methods and motivations of the universe. Samuel Beckett has remarked that to Joyce reality was a paradigm, an illustration of a possibly unstatable rule.<sup>85</sup> Yet perhaps the rule can be surmised. It is not a perception of order or of love; more humble than either of these, it is the perception of coincidence. According to this rule, reality, no matter how much we try to manipulate it, can only assume certain forms; the roulette wheel brings up the same numbers again and again; everyone and everything shift about in continual movement, yet movement limited in its possibilities. Joyce was interested in variation and same-

ness in time: Bloom consoles himself with the thought that every betrayal is only one of an infinite series;<sup>86</sup> if someone mentioned a new atrocity to Joyce, he at once pointed out some equally horrible old atrocity, such as an act of the Inquisition in Holland.<sup>87</sup> He was interested also in variation and sameness in space, in the cubist method of establishing differing relations among aspects of a single thing, and he asked a friend to do some research for him in the possible permutations of an object. That the picture of Cork in his Paris flat should have, as he emphasized to Frank O'Connor, a cork frame,<sup>88</sup> was a deliberate, if half-humorous, indication of this notion of the world, where unexpected simultaneities are the rule. The characters pass through sequences of situations and thoughts bound by coincidence with the situations and thoughts of other living and dead men and of fictional, mythical men. Do Bloom and Stephen coincidentally think the same thoughts at the same times? Do they wander and fly like Ulysses and Daedalus? They are examples of a universal process.

In all his books up to *Finnegans Wake* Joyce sought to reveal the coincidence of the present with the past. Only in *Finnegans Wake* was he to carry his conviction to its furthest reaches, by implying that there is no present and no past, that there are no dates, that time—and language which is time's expression—is a series of coincidences which are general all over humanity. Words move into words, people into people, incidents into incidents like the ambiguities of a pun, or a dream. We walk through darkness on familiar roads.

Joyce began to weave *Finnegans Wake* like a new integument.\* On March 11, 1923, he announced to Miss Weaver, 'Yesterday I wrote two pages—the first I have written since the final *Yes* of *Ulysses*. Having found a pen, with some difficulty I copied them out in a large handwriting on a double sheet of foolscap so that I could read them. *Il lupo perde il pelo ma non il vizio*, the Italians say. The wolf may lose his skin but not his vice or the leopard cannot change his spots.'<sup>89</sup> So he undertook the work that was to occupy the next sixteen years of his life.

\* For a table of composition of the book during the first ten years, see note 89, pp. 801-3.