

GIACOMO JOYCE

BY

JAMES JOYCE



With an Introduction and Notes by

RICHARD ELLMANN

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failed to stand when the "Marcia Reale," anthem of the Kingdom of Italy, was played. Albini, who wrote for the Roman socialist newspaper *Avanti!* rather than, as Joyce says, for the Turin daily *Il Secolo*, was expelled on December 17, 1911, at a benefit concert for the Italian Red Cross and the families of soldiers killed or wounded in Libya, where Italy was fighting the Turks.

Other references, out of sequence as often as in, indicate that more time has elapsed. A description of Padua at night must derive from Joyce's two trips to that city late in April 1912, when he went to be examined in the hope of qualifying to teach English at an Italian high school. The rice field near Vercelli which he remarks upon would be visible from the train between Milan and Turin; he took this route on his way to Ireland in July 1912. There is also an allusion to his lectures on *Hamlet* "to docile Trieste," when his audience included his pretty pupil. These lectures, expanded from the announced ten to twelve, took place from November 4, 1912, to February 10, 1913.

Some references to Joyce's books extend the composition of *Giacomo Joyce* to a still later date. He could scarcely have had a dream about *Ulysses* before 1914, the year that, as he always said afterward, the book first took shape in his mind. And he shows his pupil at least some of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Her comment that it was not frank for frankness' sake would be appropriate particularly if she had read the third chapter, where Stephen details and regrets his sins. This chapter had existed in manuscript form since 1908, but only in June 1914 did Joyce have it typed so that he could send it to the *Egoist* in London, where the novel was being serialized. At that time he evidently had other copies made, for he lent one to his friend Italo Svevo, and he indicates here that he lent another to his pupil. He was then still working on the last two of the book's five chapters. It would appear that the events and moods collocated in *Giacomo Joyce* took place between late 1911 and the middle of 1914. While Joyce probably relied to some extent on earlier notes, he could not have written it down as a whole before the end of June 1914.

He cannot have deferred it for long after that, because Chapter V of *A Portrait*, which he completed by November 11, 1914, contains from start to finish direct borrowings from *Giacomo Joyce*. Some are verbatim; most are reworked, such as the passage, "My words in her mind: cold polished stones sinking through a quagmire," which becomes, in Chapter V, "The

Jewish race, offered little impediment; in *Ulysses* Joyce would demonstrate with all possible dexterity the interchangeability of the two races. Both girls are dark and virginal, though both (like Bertha in *Exiles*) have to submit to imaginary possession by their admirers' minds. In keeping with the sensory preferences of *A Portrait*, the Irish girl is accorded "a wild and languid smell," which is denied her Triestine sister.

Then Stephen, pondering a line from Thomas Nash, calls before his mind the age of Elizabeth:

Eyes, opening from the darkness of desire, eyes that dimmed the breaking east. What was their languid grace but the softness of chambering? And what was their shimmer but the shimmer of the scum that mantled the cesspool of the court of a slobbering Stuart. And he tasted in the language of memory ambered wines, dying fallings of sweet airs, the proud pavan: and saw with the eyes of memory kind gentlewomen in Covent Garden wooing from their balconies with sucking mouths and the poxfouled wenches of the taverns and young wives that, gaily yielding to their ravishers, clipped and clipped again.

The images he had summoned gave him no pleasure. They were secret and enflaming but her image was not entangled by them. That was not the way to think of her. It was not even the way in which he thought of her. Could his mind then not trust itself? Old phrases, sweet only with a disinterested sweetness like the figseeds Cranly rooted out of his gleaming teeth.

The first paragraph is only a little altered from *Giacomo Joyce*; the second repudiates the first, as do later sentences. Giacomo does not accomplish so explicit a repudiation; he need not debate his vocabularies, he merely shifts them as moods shift. In *Ulysses* Joyce follows Giacomo's rather than Stephen's method. The clashing of dictions like rival assaults becomes, in fact, the device to replace, in Joyce's later work, the elaborate and faintly precious interweavings of colored words. In the same way, the erratic, contorted introspection of *Giacomo Joyce* helps to deflect *A Portrait* from third-person narrative to Stephen's first-person diary at the end of that book, and prepares for the interior monologues of Bloom and Stephen.

As he came to *Ulysses*, Joyce took sentences from *Giacomo Joyce* and made them into whole paragraphs or longer units. Some slipped easily from work to work: morning in Trieste became morning in Paris, to be observed by Stephen more rancorously than was its correlative by Giacomo. A twilight image of mother and daughter, as a mare and her fillyfoal, is made entirely and beautifully equine for the *Oxen of the Sun*

episode. The confrontation of Irishman and Jew is primarily a matter of male friendship rather than of heterosexual amorousness, and instead of lamenting the ageing process with Giacomo, Joyce apportions middle age to Bloom and youth to Stephen. Some of the scenes—the classroom, the graveyard, the Paduan brothels—are imported from the Adriatic to the Liffey; a carriage ride of the pupil's family through a crowded market is exalted into a viceregal cavalcade; a blind man ceases to beg and tunes pianos instead. Oliver St. John Gogarty, eternal antagonist, who makes a brief dream-visit to Giacomo in Trieste, turns up again in Dublin as Mulligan. The fits and starts with which Giacomo's passion mounts are cognate with the discontinuous episodes and perspectives in *Ulysses*. Both books move, too, toward Circean images of the unconscious, where the double sense of misbehavior and compunction reaches a phantasmagoric climax.

Much later in the composition of *Ulysses*, at the end of 1918, Joyce approached a brunette on a Zurich street and expressed his astonishment at her resemblance to a girl he had seen in Dublin. In his subsequent correspondence with this Martha Fleischmann, he attached extraordinary consequence to the possibility that she might be Jewish. Apparently he was looking for a new, and of necessity Swiss, embodiment of that Judaeo-Celtic composite he had loved in Trieste. Martha Fleischmann in turn became a model for Gerty MacDowell in the *Nausicaa* episode, which parodies the possession by long distance about which Giacomo had bragged in Trieste, and Stephen brooded in Dublin. On a shabby genteel level, Bloom attempts psychic seduction of Martha Clifford as well, by writing letters to her, and so mimics ironically Joyce's own use of a literary medium to achieve a similar occult goal.

A good deal of Joyce's writing can be seen to allude, at least *sotto voce*, to his middle-aged romance. Yet he infuses *Giacomo Joyce* also with independent life, and it stands now in its own terms as a great achievement. To readers accustomed by Joyce to large formal structures, the size and informality of this most delicate of novels may be especially ingratiating. When, not long before his death, Joyce said he would write something very simple and very short, he was thinking perhaps of how he had solidified the small, fragile, transitory perfection of his Triestine pupil into the small, fragile, enduring perfection of *Giacomo Joyce*.

RICHARD ELLMANN

Who ? A pale face surrounded by heavy odorous furs. Her movements are shy and nervous. She uses quizzing-glasses.

Yes: a brief syllable. A brief laugh. A brief beat of the eyelids.

Cobweb handwriting, traced long and fine with quiet disdain and resignation: a young person of quality.

I launch forth on an easy wave of tepid speech: Swedenborg, the pseudo-Areopagite, Miguel de Molinos, Joachim Abbas.)
The wave is spent. Her classmate, retwisting her twisted body, purrs in boneless Viennese Italian: *Che coltura!*
The long eyelids beat and lift: a burning needleprick stings and quivers in the velvet iris.

High heels clack hollow on the resonant stone stairs. Wintry air in the castle, gibbeted coats of mail, rude iron sconces over the windings of the winding turret stairs. Tapping clacking heels, a high and hollow noise. There is one below would speak with your ladyship.

She never blows her nose. A form of speech : the lesser for the greater.

Rounded and ripened : rounded by the lathe of intermarriage and ripened in the forcing-house of the seclusion of her race.

A ricefield near Vercelli under creamy summer haze. The wings of her drooping hat shadow her false smile. Shadows streak her falsely smiling face, smitten by the hot creamy light, grey wheyhued shadows under the jawbones, streaks of eggyolk yellow on the moistened brow, rancid yellow humour lurking within the softened pulp of the eyes.

A flower given by her to my daughter. Frail gift, frail giver,
frail blue-veined child.

Padua far beyond the sea. The silent middle age, night, darkness of
history sleep in the *Piazza delle Erbe* under the moon. The city
sleeps. Under the arches in the dark streets near the river the
whores' eyes spy out for fornicators. *Cinque servizi per cinque
franchi*. A dark wave of sense, again and again and again.

Mine eyes fail in darkness, mine eyes fail,

Mine eyes fail in darkness, love.

- where?

Again. No more. Dark love, dark longing. No more. Darkness.

Twilight. Crossing the *piazza*. Grey eve lowering on wide sagegreen
pasturelands, shedding silently dusk and dew. She follows
her mother with ungainly grace, the mare leading
her filly foal. Grey twilight moulds softly the slim
and shapely haunches, the meek supple tendonous
neck, the fine-boned skull. Eve, peace, the dusk
of wonder Hillo! Ostler! Hilloho!

She thinks the Italian gentlemen were right to haul Ettore Albini, the critic of the *Secolo*, from the stalls because he did not stand up when the band played the Royal March. She heard that at supper. Ay. They love their country when they are quite sure which country it is.

She listens : virgin most prudent.

A skirt caught back by her sudden moving knee ; a white lace edging of an underskirt lifted unduly ; a leg-stretched web of stocking. *Si pol?*

I play lightly, softly singing, John Dowland's languid song.
Loth to depart : I too am loth to go. That age is here and now. Here, opening from the darkness of desire, are eyes that dim the breaking East, their shimmer the shimmer of the scum that mantles the cesspool of the court of slobbering James. Here are wines all ambered, dying fallings of sweet airs, the proud pavan, kind gentlewomen wooing from their balconies with sucking mouths, the pox-fouled wenches and young wives that, gaily yielding to their ravishers, clip and clip again.

Sand history

In the raw veiled spring morning faint odours float of morning Paris :
aniseed, damp sawdust, hot dough of bread : and as I cross the
Pont Saint Michel the steelblue waking waters chill my heart.
They creep and lap about the island whereon men have lived
since the stone age Tawny gloom in the vast gargoyled
church. It is cold as on that morning : *quia frigus erat*. Upon
the steps of the far high altar, naked as the body of the
Lord, the ministers lie prostrate in weak prayer. The voice
of an unseen reader rises, intoning the lesson from Hosea.
Haec dicit Dominus : in tribulatione sua mane consurgens
ad me. Venite et revertamur ad Dominum . . . She stands
beside me, pale and chill, clothed with the shadows of the
sindark nave, her thin elbow at my arm. Her flesh recalls
the thrill of that raw mist-veiled morning, hurrying
torches, cruel eyes. Her soul is sorrowful, trembles and
would weep. Weep not for me, O daughter of Jerusalem!

I expound Shakespeare to docile Trieste : Hamlet, quoth I, who is
most courteous to gentle and simple is rude only to Polonius.
Perhaps, an embittered idealist, he can see in the parents
of his beloved only grotesque attempts on the part of nature
to produce her image Marked you that ?

She walks before me along the corridor and as she walks a dark coil of her hair slowly uncoils and falls. Slowly uncoiling, falling hair. She does not know and walks before me, simple and proud. So did she walk by Dante in simple pride and so, stainless of blood and violation, the daughter of Cenci, Beatrice, to her death:

..... Tie
*My girdle for me and bind up this hair
In any simple knot.*

The housemaid tells me that they had to take her away at once to the hospital, *poveretta*, that she suffered so much, so much, *poveretta*, that it is very grave I walk away from her empty house. I feel that I am about to cry. Ah, no! It will not be like that, in a moment, without a word, without a look. No, no! Surely hell's luck will not fail me!

Operated. The surgeon's knife has probed in her entrails and withdrawn, leaving the raw jagged gash of its passage on her belly. I see her full dark suffering eyes, beautiful as the eyes of an antelope. O cruel wound! Libidinous God!

Once more in her chair by the window, happy words on her tongue, happy laughter. A bird twittering after storm, happy that its little foolish life has fluttered out of reach of the clutching fingers of an epileptic lord and giver of life, twittering happily, twittering and chirping happily.

She says that, had *The Portrait of the Artist* been frank only for frankness' sake, she would have asked why I had given it to her to read. O you would, would you? A lady of letters.

She stands black-robed at the telephone. Little timid laughs, little cries, timid runs of speech suddenly broken *Parlerò colla mamma* Come! chook, chook! come! The black pullet is frightened: little runs suddenly broken, little timid cries: it is crying for its mamma, the portly hen.

Loggione. The sodden walls ooze a steamy damp. A symphony of smells fuses the mass of huddled human forms: sour reek of armpits, nozzled oranges, melting breast ointments, mastick water, the breath of suppers of sulphurous garlic, foul phosphorescent farts, opoanax, the frank sweat of marriageable and married womankind, the soapy stink of men All night I have watched her, all night I shall see her: braided and pinnacled hair and olive oval face and calm soft eyes. A green fillet upon her hair and about her body a green-broidered gown: the hue of the illusion of the vegetable glass of nature and of lush grass, the hair of graves.

Whirling wreaths of grey vapour upon the heath. Her face, how grey and grave! Dank matted hair. Her lips press softly, her sighing breath comes through. Kissed.

My voice, dying in the echoes of its words, dies like the wisdom-wearied voice of the Eternal calling on Abraham through echoing hills. She leans back against the pillowed wall: odalisque-featured in the luxurious obscurity. Her eyes have drunk my thoughts: and into the moist warm yielding welcoming darkness of her womanhood my soul, itself dissolving, has streamed and poured and flooded a liquid and abundant seed Take her now who will!

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|-------|------|---|
| 9 | 1 | <i>Ettore Albini</i> : Albini (1869–1954) was repeatedly jailed or deported for his indomitable opposition to the monarchy, to fascism, and to nationalism. For other details see Introduction. |
| 4,5 | | <i>They love . . . country it is</i> : The same remark is attributed to J. J. O'Molloy in <i>Ulysses</i> , p. 337 (438). |
| 9 | | <i>Si pol</i> : In good Triestine, " <i>Se pol?</i> " and in Italian, " <i>Si può?</i> " ("Is it permitted?" "May I?") The expression, suitable for a servant asking to enter a room, is used by the buffoon Tonio as he begins his Prologue to Leoncavallo's <i>I Pagliacci</i> . |
| 10,11 | | <i>I play lightly . . . Dowland's languid song. Loth to depart</i> : Robert Herrick, rather than Dowland, wrote "Loth to depart." Joyce may have in mind Dowland's "Now, O now, I needs must part." He had noticed his error by the time he wrote the passage in <i>A Portrait</i> , p. 219 (223), where Stephen is asked by the dark girl "to sing one of his curious songs. Then he saw himself sitting at the old piano, striking chords softly from its speckled keys and singing, amid the talk which had risen again in the room, to her who leaned beside the mantelpiece a dainty song of the Elizabethans, a sad and sweet loth to depart . . ." |
| 12–20 | | <i>Here, opening from . . . and clip again</i> : <i>A Portrait</i> , p. 233 (237). |
| 10 | 6 | <i>quia frigus erat</i> : "And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals; for it was cold . . ." John 18:18. |
| 6–11 | | <i>Upon the steps . . . ad Dominum</i> : The prostration of the ministers, and the reading from Hosea 6:1–6, begin the Good Friday mass. ✕ |
| 12–14 | | <i>She stands . . . sindark nave</i> : Some of this imagery is used, with a different implication, in Joyce's poem "Nightpiece," dated "Trieste, 1915." |
| 18–20 | | <i>Perhaps, an . . . produce her image</i> : In discoursing on Shakespeare, Stephen declares, "The images of other males of his blood will repel him. He will see in them grotesque attempts of nature to foretell or repeat himself." <i>Ulysses</i> , pp. 195–96 (250–51). |
| 11 | 7–9 | <i>Tie . . . simple knot</i> : Beatrice's death speech at the end of Shelley's <i>The Cenci</i> . |
| 12 | 3 | <i>A lady of letters</i> : "She lives in Leeson park, with a grief and kick-shaws, a lady of letters." <i>Ulysses</i> , p. 48 (61). |

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| 12 | 9 | <i>Loggione</i> : the top gallery in the opera house. |
| 13 | 1,2 | <i>My words . . . a quagmire</i> : The similar sentence in <i>A Portrait</i> is on p. 195 (199). |
| | 7,8 | <i>dark langour-flooded eyes</i> : Joyce corrects the spelling and takes over the phrase in <i>A Portrait</i> , p. 223 (227): "Her eyes, dark and with a look of languor, were opening to his eyes." |
| 14 | 8-12 | <p><i>Her eyes . . . abundant seed</i>: The same imaginary possession occurs in <i>A Portrait</i>, p. 223 (227):</p> <p>"Her nakedness yielded to him, radiant, warm, odorous and lavishlimbed, enfolded him like a shining cloud, enfolded him like water with a liquid life: and like a cloud of vapour or like waters circumfluent in space the liquid letters of speech, symbols of the element of mystery, flowed forth over his brain."</p> <p>Compare the dialogue in the last act of <i>Exiles</i>, p. 106 (144):</p> <p>"ROBERT, <i>catching her hands</i>: Bertha! What happened last night? What is the truth that I am to tell? <i>He gazes earnestly into her eyes</i>. Were you mine in that sacred night of love? Or have I dreamed it?</p> <p>BERTHA, <i>smiles faintly</i>: Remember your dream of me. You dreamed that I was yours last night.</p> <p>ROBERT: And that is the truth—a dream? That is what I am to tell?</p> <p>BERTHA: Yes.</p> <p>ROBERT, <i>kisses both her hands</i>: Bertha! <i>In a softer voice</i>. In all my life only that dream is real. I forget the rest."</p> |
| 15 | 1 | <i>Ralli's house</i> : Baron Ambrogio Ralli (1878-1938), a prominent Triestine, had a palazzo in Piazza Scorsola. |
| | 4-6 | <p><i>basilisk eyes . . . messer Brunetto</i>: quoted from Brunetto Latini, <i>Il Tesoro</i>, translated by Bono Giamboni from Latini's French text, ed. P. Chabaille (Bologna, 1887, 4 vols.), II, pp. 137-38. Latini says of the basilisk that it poisons any man it sees. Compare "a jet of liquorish venom" in line 14 below.</p> <p>In <i>Ulysses</i>, p. 194 (248-49), Joyce makes the Italian more colloquial:</p> <p>"Stephen withstood the bane of miscreant eyes, glinting stern under wrinkled brows. A basilisk. <i>E quando vede l'uomo l'attosca</i>. Messer Brunetto, I thank thee for the word."</p> |
| 16 | 1-3 | <i>Jan Pieters Sweelink . . . an end</i> : Stephen talks with Bloom about this song in <i>Ulysses</i> , p. 663 (772-73): "Exquisite variations he was now describing on an air <i>Youth here has End</i> by Jans Pieter Sweelinck, a Dutchman of Amsterdam where the frows come from." |