

TRYING TO GROW UP: STEPHEN DEDALUS AND THE IMAGES
OF BOYHOOD IN JAMES JOYCE'S *DUBLINERS*, *A PORTRAIT
OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN*, AND *ULYSSES*

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Toward the end of James Joyce's *Ulysses*, Stephen Dedalus says, "*Jetez la gourme. Faut que jeunesse se passé* ["Sow the wild oats. Youth must pass."]" (*Ulysses* 15.2094). Throughout *Ulysses*, Stephen struggles to know himself and to find his purpose in the world as if he were a boy struggling to make the transition into manhood and maturity. Stephen is physically mature when he arrives in *Ulysses*, and he appears through most of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and *Ulysses* to be intellectually superior to those around him. Nevertheless, he remains emotionally immature, and images of him as "boyish" or "boy-like" abound in *Ulysses* and contradict the hopes that Stephen has for himself, and that Joyce's readers perhaps have for him, at the end of *Portrait*: that youth will pass and that he will become a man and artist capable enough to "forge in the smithy of [his] soul the uncreated conscience of [his] race" (276).

Determining which of Joyce's characters seem "immature" or "mature," childlike or adult, is an easier task than determining which characters he considers "manly." For "manliness" in Joyce is a conflicted, complicated trait. Many male characters—such as Ignatius Gallaher in *Dubliners*, Simon Dedalus in *Portrait*, or Buck Mulligan in *Ulysses*—exhibit social confidence and physical bravery (Buck saves a man from drowning), and they interact assuredly with both men and women. But often these same

“manly men” are also among the most cocky, immature, and irresponsible characters in Joyce’s fiction. Joyce certainly portrays Leopold Bloom, who is called “a finished example of the new womanly man” (*Ulysses* 15.1798-99) in a far better light than he does the mocking, arrogant, “manly” Buck Mulligan or the obnoxiously male Citizen. In Bloom, and elsewhere, Joyce seems to advance a contrary notion of what constitutes “manliness”: maturity, responsibility, and restraint rather than the bravado and machismo exhibited by Gallaher, Simon, Buck, Boylan, and many other characters. Stephen’s failure to become a proper man and artist does not necessarily connect him to the false “manliness” of these characters. But he does demonstrate an immaturity and lack of responsibility that makes him appear consistently boyish, and incapable of becoming a mature adult. That boyishness and its implications in Joyce’s fiction, especially for Stephen Dedalus, are the focus of this study. For Joyce, the boyish and immature qualities of his male characters constitute a damaging obstacle to artistic creativity; his fiction consistently suggests that the would-be artist must put behind childish things, must become a man, in order to fulfill his destiny. A second implication is that the boyish, immature traits that many of the men in Joyce’s fiction exhibit are a manifestation of their colonized condition, the debilitating state that results from centuries of subjugation at the hands of Great Britain. Thus, the Irish male with aspirations to become an artist (whether Joyce or his alter ego Stephen Dedalus) labors under a double burden of achieving personal maturity and of escaping the colonial condition.

Images of “boyish” and immature men in Joyce’s work are not limited to *Ulysses* or to Stephen, and neither are images of young men with intellects beyond their years,

who are filled with hopes of greatness. These motifs, which begin on the first pages of *Dubliners* and carry through to the final pages of *Ulysses*, serve a number of purposes. In *Ulysses* they help Joyce develop the central theme of a father in search of a son, and the son in need of a father. Additionally, the lack of growth on the part of Stephen Dedalus that causes him to de-evolve from the would-be creator of “the conscience of [his] race” in *Portrait* to an emotionally immature “boy” in *Ulysses* can be tied directly to his failure to find success as an artist, a central theme in the novel. This theme also runs through *Dubliners* and *Portrait*, and in developing it, Joyce may have been expressing his own fears about what he might have become, a failed Irish artist, like those portrayed in his fiction—Lenehan, Little Chandler, and, most importantly, Stephen Dedalus. The overarching theme in all three of Joyce’s works discussed below is failure of the men of Ireland to become independent or responsible or successful, a problem that seems to echo Ireland’s inability to gain independence from Britain, a theme highlighted by Joyce’s use of boyish images to depict male characters.

There are various images and structures at work that connect the narratives of boyhood and maturity in *Dubliners*, *Portrait*, and *Ulysses*, one of the most prominent being the pattern of human development. In *Dubliners*, Joyce takes the reader from childhood in the early stories to adulthood in the later ones, and in *Portrait*, the reader witnesses Stephen Dedalus grow from infancy into late adolescence/early adulthood. In *Ulysses*, however, the images of development begin even earlier, in the womb stage, and then continue as Stephen struggles to find his way into young adulthood until he again disappears on his own towards the end of the book.

Joyce creates a framework with these pervasive images of and allusions to overall human development, but he goes much further by creating images of Stephen and other characters caught at various moments in a particular stage of development: *childhood*. At some points in *Ulysses*, it appears, retrospectively, that Stephen peaked in his emotional maturity about half way through the final chapter of *Portrait*. Then, in *Ulysses* he appears not so much to be regressing, as to be trapped in a perpetual cycle of being on the verge of maturity and then having to start over again as a child. The question, of course, is why. Why, in all three of these books, are children of great promise and maturity—most notably, Steven—juxtaposed with images of adult failures or adults who are strikingly childlike or immature?

The answer seems to stem from Ireland's history as a subject nation, colonized, mistreated, and neglected by England. That history, in Joyce's fiction, affects not only the Irish people as a whole but also the lives of individual Irish men and women. Joyce's own experience, his exposure to failed men, such as his father and to countless other friends and acquaintances, is no doubt also a factor. But if we are looking only at the fictional world that Joyce has created, with that world being very much autobiographical, we can see the effect that living under the rule of England has had on the Irish. Their subservience goes hand in hand with a lack of personal and social maturity, and these effects are passed from Irish fathers to Irish sons. In *Ulysses*, Stephen is one of the sons of Ireland, and as such he represents the inadequacy, immaturity, and inaction of the Irish male. This inadequacy is what Joyce saw in his countrymen and what he feared in himself. He left Ireland in order to escape the "nets" that Stephen Dedalus describes in

Portrait. At the end of *Ulysses*, Stephen has not yet found a way to “fly by those nets” (*Portrait* 220).

The five chapters that follow move chronologically through Joyce’s fiction, beginning with *Dubliners* and ending with *Ulysses*, tracing images of boyhood, especially as they bear on Stephen Dedalus and his quest for maturity as a man and artist.

Chapter II discusses *Dubliners*, exploring the paradoxical images of boys wise beyond their years and of men of varying ages who appear immature and boyish—who seem to have failed as adults. The chapter considers the boy narrators of the first three stories of Joyce’s first book of fiction, then turns to selected adult characters from the rest of the book who are notably immature and boy-like.

Chapter III turns to *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, which resembles *Dubliners* structurally in its treatment of images of boyhood. The beginning of the novel juxtaposes the hyper-sensitive, hyper-intelligent Stephen Dedalus, who as a child appears wise and mature beyond his years, with contrasting images of Stephen’s father Simon and of the grown Stephen himself. Simon Dedalus is unable to provide properly for his family or to escape the memories of his youth, and Stephen, at the end of the novel, appears to be regressing into boyhood instead of transitioning into manhood.

The next three chapters (IV-VI) center on *Ulysses*, examining Stephen Dedalus’s appearance as boyish and immature and his struggle to move beyond this state in order to fulfill the destiny laid out for him in *Portrait*. Chapter IV focuses on the first three episodes of *Ulysses*—the Telemachiad—in which Stephen is the central character. The novel looks intensely at his actions and thoughts, establishing a portrait of the artist as a

boy adrift and uncertain. Chapter V, covers the middle episodes of *Ulysses*, exploring images of Stephen created through the perceptions of other characters. Finally, Chapter VI turns to the final episodes of the novel, focusing on Stephen as son and child to Leopold Bloom and Molly Bloom. This chapter concludes by suggesting that, at the end of *Ulysses*, Stephen's position seems no more certain than it does at the end of *Portrait*. He remains an image of the immature artist and Irishman, a young man of great promise, as yet unfulfilled.

CHAPTER II

STUNTED GROWTH IN THE MALES OF JOYCE'S *DUBLINERS*

Paralysis and Patterns

There is a progression in the first three stories of James Joyce's *Dubliners*, which all focus on childhood. While all three involve pre-adolescent boys, the first involves a boy who leaves his home accompanied by his aunt; the second is the story of a boy who breaks free and goes on an adventure with a friend; and the last is about a boy who sets out entirely on his own in order to visit a bizarre. Right away Joyce lets the reader know the importance of growth and development to *Dubliners* as a whole. We observe a progression from one story to the next. And there is also a larger pattern of progression. Joyce explains in a letter to Grant Richards that he presents the stories "to the indifferent public under four of its aspects: childhood, adolescence, maturity and public life" (*Letters*, Vol. 2 134). The middle stories are divided in two parts. Those from "Eveline" through "The Boarding House" are centered on adolescents and, with the exception of Eveline, the protagonists are male. The second group of middle stories, "A Little Cloud" through "A Painful Case," is concerned with mature life. Joyce does state that he intended the final group of stories before "The Dead" to be focused on "Public Life," but

they also seem to have characters, some the same age as those in the “mature” group, who at times have their lives slightly more together than do characters in previous stories. They seem to know what they want, or they have accepted the place they are in their lives. The central figures found in the stories “Ivy Day in the Committee Room,” “A Mother,” and “Grace” are for the most part in the middle years of their lives. The final story, appropriately titled “The Dead,” finishes this circle which began with a young boy’s first exposure to death. Joyce’s arrangement is important, since it makes clear at what stages of social and emotional development he intended the characters to be, and his arrangement allows readers to see at times just how out of synch with their appropriate development the characters actually are. Joyce establishes a clear motif, beginning in *Dubliners* and continuing throughout *Ulysses*, of boys who early on have great potential and of men who very often appear immature and boyish.

Joyce uses the contradictory images of growth and stagnation throughout *Dubliners*, *Portrait*, and *Ulysses*, which makes his images of intellectually mature young boys and childish men stand out greatly in contrast to one another. This pattern also makes the idea of growth just as important as the lack of growth, and paralysis, a trait that almost all characters seem to share throughout Joyce’s works regardless of age, goes hand in hand with the inability to grow up or mature or take responsibility. Joyce explains in a letter to Grant Richards that his intention with *Dubliners* was “to write a chapter of the moral history of Ireland,” and he chose “Dublin for the scene because that city seemed to [him] the centre of paralysis” (*Letters*, Vol. 2 134). Paralysis is an important concept for Joyce. It represents not only what seems to have happened to Stephen Dedalus by the time that he appears in *Ulysses* as an adult, but also the general

malaise in Ireland, and also what James Joyce feared could happen to himself. Just as with Stephen in *Ulysses*, many grown male characters have regressed into childhood, and Joyce presents images to enforce this throughout *Ulysses* and *Dubliners*. Florence L. Walzl explains that both “*Dubliners* and *Portrait* share the same general aim: an analysis of Dublin’s torpor, provinciality, narrow-mindedness, and moral-religious insensibility—in short, the social condition that Joyce summed up in his image of paralysis” and the effect this has on the “Dubliner growing to manhood in such an environment” (*Companion* 191-192). Important in all of Joyce’s works, but especially in *Dubliners*, is how these images of boyishness in individual characters mirror the country of Ireland as a whole. In *Dubliners*, Joyce is preparing readers for what awaits them in *Portrait* and *Ulysses*. He begins his first book with children who have much potential and then progresses towards portrayals of adults who seem unable to accomplish anything meaningful. This leaves the reader wondering why the characters have become little more than grown children from which all the potential has dissolved. The characters’ paralysis, coupled with the boyish images surrounding them and many of the other men in Joyce’s work, is what causes the reader to see these characters as childish, indecisive, idle, and irresponsible.

Hope and Failure in the Boys of Ireland

The first three stories in *Dubliners*, “The Sisters,” “An Encounter,” and “Araby,” center on young boys, and in these stories Joyce begins to foreshadow the creation of Stephen Dedalus, the wise-beyond-his-years young man who imagines that he will accomplish great things and who is introduced later in *Portrait*. However, we also see in

Portrait, Ulysses, and, according to Harry Levin, “in everyone of these fifteen case histories ... the annals of frustration—a boy is disappointed, a priest suffers disgrace, the elopement of ‘Eveline’ fails to materialize. Things almost happen. The characters are arrested in mid-air” (qtd. in Corrington 16). These images of failure, stagnation, and “paralysis” in the stories are a preview of what is to befall Stephen in *Ulysses*, the self-proclaimed forger of “the uncreated conscience of [his] race,” who, by the end of what the reader knows of his story, has forged very little. The contrast in *Dubliners* between boys who appear intelligent—even more intelligent than the adults around them—and the failed adults in later stories intensifies Joyce’s images of failure. Florence L Walzl states, “In childhood, a time of innocence when the world seems better than it is, destruction of a child’s illusion can be a psychologically traumatic blow” (“Pattern” 222). Loss of innocence is perhaps the fate of all young people, but this blow appears to do more damage to the young men of Dublin than it does to others. For the first three protagonists in *Dubliners*, this blow comes in the form of the loss of “the three vital emotions of faith, hope or ambition for experience, and love,” (224) which are all emotions that Stephen Dedalus is left wanting.

The narrator in “The Sisters,” the first story of *Dubliners*, mirrors Stephen because he is perceived to have a vocation for the priesthood and is a child who, when his thoughts are revealed, is shown to be intelligent and self aware. The boy’s uncle explains to Mr. Cotter that the priest in the story who has just died “had a great wish for [the boy],” which sets the uncle and Mr. Cotter off on a brief rant about how the boy is wrapped up too much in his own world and is a “Rosicrucian,” or dreamer, in his uncle’s mind (2). Soon after, the boy is referred to as a child by Cotter, and the reader enters the

mind of the boy and discovers how angry this reference has made him: "I crammed my mouth with stirabout for fear I might give utterance to my anger. Tiresome old red-nosed imbecile" (3). It is the boy's awareness of what happens around him that also demonstrates his intellectual and emotional maturity. He is later distracted by "Nannie's" muttering in the priest's bedroom and notices the awkwardness of her dress, how "clumsily her skirt was hooked ... how the heels of her cloth boots were trodden down on one side," and he imagines "that the old priest was smiling as he lay there in his coffin" (6). The boy's lack of humility demonstrates that even if he is not smarter than those around him, he certainly thinks that he is, a character trait that he shares with Stephen Dedalus.

Also important is the matter of the boy's relationship to the church. He is drawn to the church not because he finds the mysterious knowledge fascinating, but because it serves as an escape from the boredom of his life with his aunt and uncle, and he "is diverted (though not deeply moved) by the old priest's stories and interest in him" (Corrington 25). The boy describes some of the things that he and the priest discussed; "the duties of the priest towards the Eucharist and towards the secrecy of the confessional seemed so grave to me that I wondered how anybody had ever found in himself the courage to undertake them" (*Dubliners* 5). Interest in religion, but an apparent lack of faith, foreshadows Stephen Dedalus who is, for a time, drawn in by the mysteries of the church and the power of absolving people of sin. John William Corrington also says that with the priest's death, the boy is free from "the illusion of escape through the church," but "it is a freedom of questionable value, since it leaves him still locked within the matrix of Dublin's dreary world" (25). Stephen too is able to fly by the net of religion,

but not those of nationality, and he eventually is trapped in the dreariness of Dublin as well.

The narrator in “An Encounter,” the second *Dubliners* story, is certainly not the same one that the reader hears in “The Sisters,” though he does share the same awareness and elevated level of intelligence compared to boys his own age. After the narrator and Mahony have ventured out on their journey, they run into an older man, a pederast, who takes an interest in both boys but particularly the narrator. This man mentions a number of books, and the narrator pretends “that [he] had read every book he mentioned” (*Dubliners* 17). The boy is worried about how intelligent he appears to be in front of this man. The man continues speaking on the subject of literature, but Mahony asks the man why there are “some of Lord Lytton’s works which boys couldn’t read” and the narrator says, “this pained me because I was afraid the man would think I was as stupid as Mahony” (17). This boy has the same air of superiority about him as the boy in “The Sisters” and, like him, also hates to be thought of as unintelligent or immature. The man leaves the boys for a moment and when he returns begins talking on the subject of spanking: “his mind, as if magnetized again by his speech, seemed to circle slowly round and round its new center” (19). Walzl claims that the man’s “psychological paralysis is imaged in his conversation ... [and] images the sterility of ambition in Irish society” (“Pattern” 224). The boys as well are trapped by paralysis, since they fail to reach their destination—the Pigeon House. Much like Stephen Dedalus, the boys “seek escape, hoping to find more meaningful experiences elsewhere[,] deciding that adventures ‘must be sought abroad’” (224).

In “Araby,” the third *Dubliners* story of childhood, the boy narrator shows even more maturity than do the previous two narrators. For instance, he stands talking with an older girl, Mangan’s sister, while the other boys his age, “her brother and two other boys [...] were fighting for their caps” (*Dubliners* 24). The reader also hears his thoughts on his schoolwork, “the serious work in life.” Once he has developed an overpowering infatuation with Mangan’s sister, he imagines that this work “stood between [him] and [his] desire, seemed to [him] child’s play, ugly monotonous child’s play” (24). This perception appears, though the boy is obviously intelligent, to foreshadow the images of men in Joyce’s work who are dreamers, too immature to function in important areas of life, such as work and family, and have “hardly any patience with the serious work of life.” The young man in “Araby” is left feeling disillusioned at the end of the story when he realizes that what he has felt has not been love but “puppy-love” (Walzl, “Pattern” 224). He realizes that he was not guided by love but “driven and deride by vanity,” and recognizing his childishness, “his eyes burned with anguish and anger” (*Dubliners* 28). Joseph Garrison says, “Having found that adventure does not necessarily lie abroad, and having realized that human experience can be unsettling, [the young man in ‘Araby’] is now in a position to look at his own life deeply and to face the hazards of his own encounters with paralysis” (229).

Like most of the characters in *Dubliners*, this young man is at risk of paralysis simply because he has nowhere to go but back into the paralyzing stew of Joyce’s Dublin, but his anger at the end of the story “suggests that the boy’s search for escape will not stop here, although years may have to pass before it can be successful” (Atherton 47). The reader cannot know what becomes of this boy when he reaches adulthood, but the

reader can imagine him as Stephen Dedalus, an adolescent version of the narrators in the first three *Dubliners* stories, especially in Stephen's failed attempt to escape Dublin.

The boys in "The Sisters," "An Encounter," and "Araby" all seem to have great potential and appear to experience nothing more traumatizing or paralyzing than most human beings experience: death, failure, and heartbreak. Indeed, the intelligent, sensitive boys in all three stories could represent the hope that Joyce had for Ireland. But they also represent the people of Dublin and Ireland's continued desire and frustration of desire, which many of the adults in the rest of the *Dubliners* stories embody. It was said earlier that the characters in *Dubliners* always appear on the brink but come up short of what they are striving to accomplish. This is surely not what Joyce wanted for his countrymen, but it is what he saw, and what he hoped to show them in the "nicely polished looking glass" of his book (*Letters*, Vol. 1 64).

Adolescent Adults

The eight middle stories in *Dubliners* are divided into two groups of four. The first group involves adolescents and young adults trying to survive, which many of them are barely able to do; they are "all unsettled in life, all facing the vital choices of mate and vocation, and all so paralyzed in emotion and will that they make wrong choices or none at all" (Walzl, "Pattern" 224). The second group represents what Joyce calls "maturity," but the characters are "mature" only because they have reached a relatively settled position in life. They "are already trapped in life, having made constraining choices earlier" (225). Joyce does not define maturity by age alone. For example, Little Chandler in "A Little Cloud," one of the stories of "maturity," is only thirty-two, which is

only a year older than Lenehan, who is about to turn thirty-one, in “Two Gallants,” which appears in the adolescent group of stories. The male characters within these eight stories include men who are leeches, drunks, unemployed, irresponsible, and unable for the most part to make anything of themselves on their own. The two characters discussed here, Lenehan and Little Chandler, are both immature, and still very much “boys.” Each mirrors the lack of emotional maturity that Stephen Dedalus displays in *Ulysses*.

In “Two Gallants,” Lenehan wants a better life, one in which he would not have to use his charm and stories and friends to barely scrape by, but he is unable to pull himself up and make something better of himself (*Dubliners* 44). He acts very much like an adolescent. When left behind by his friend Corley, he wanders around the city with nothing to do and with barely enough money to buy a plate of peas for his supper. Lenehan appears lost and, while he waits for Corley to return, ponders his future: “Would he never get a good job? Would he never have a home of his own?” (52). For a man approaching the age of thirty-one — as a matter of fact, “Corley and Lenehan are clearly past chronological adolescence” (Brunsdales 15) — “job” and “home” are appropriate items for an unemployed and homeless person to be thinking about, but it is outside the expectations of society and of Lenehan himself not to have secured them yet. However, he doesn’t seem to have any intention of doing anything for himself. Instead, he is hoping for a “good simple-minded girl with a little of the ready” (52). Lenehan is not yet mature enough to care for himself, and he may never be. He is a boy in search of a metaphorical mother to take care of him, at least financially. On this night the girl who plays this role is the poor “simple-minded” girl whom Corley has convinced to give him a stolen gold sovereign.

Lenehan also represents the failed artist and, like other characters in *Dubliners*, foreshadows Joyce's creation of Stephen Dedalus. Mitzi M. Brunsdale calls Lenehan "the incapacitated artist that Joyce might have become" (16). Lenehan is described as eloquent and adroit (*Dubliners* 44), but these seem to be the only qualities that he possesses that remotely resemble those of an artist. The interpretation Brunsdale puts forth is drawn from Lenehan's interaction with the harpist he and Corley see on the streets of Dublin. The harpist's "parasitic lifestyle depends on prostituting his artistic gifts, and because Lenehan's talent is for storytelling, his sad case of artistic development stunted in a seedy selfish adolescence represents one of Joyce's most chilling might-have-been lives in Dublin" (19). Perhaps this is what awaits Stephen Dedalus when he approaches thirty, for he appears the clearest manifestation of what Joyce feared he would become, "had he allowed Dublin's poverty, political oppression, and spiritual bankruptcy to trap him in the eternal egotism of adolescence," which is what Brunsdale believes has happened to Lenehan (16).

In the "mature" group of the middle stories, Little Chandler, though he has the job and home that Lenehan lacks, resembles Lenehan in his immaturity. He also resembles Stephen Dedalus a great deal. The story in which he appears, "A Little Cloud," contains imagery that paints Little Chandler as boyish—his name for one. In the second paragraph Chandler is described as "a little man ... slightly under the average stature ... his hands were white and small ... fragile, his voice was quiet ... [with] a row of childish white teeth" (65). It is interesting that he is described as boyish, because on the next pages he appears to have an above average intellect, and we learn that he is married and has a child. He, like Lenehan, could be the grown version of one of the narrators from

the first three stories in *Dubliners*. A series of statements makes him a kindred spirit of Stephen, and causes him to appear as though he feels superior to others: "He watched the scene and thought of life ... He felt how useless it was to struggle against fortune, this being the burden of wisdom which the ages had bequeathed to him" (66). Despite the great amount of wisdom that he has been given, he is unhappy with where he is in life and sees no way out because fortune has willed it so. Chandler differs from Stephen, because he is married and settled down, and he offers an alternative path to artistic failure from the one on which Stephen seems to be. He describes his temperament as "melancholy" and mentions his "sober inartistic life," which seem to be the characteristics of a *lost boy* in need of a sense of purpose and some success. Chandler, like Lenehan, has another connection to Stephen in that he, too, is a failed artist. At one point in the story he nostalgically thinks of the books of poetry he bought in his "bachelor days" and thinks that "he was not sure what idea he wished to express but the thought that a poetic moment had touched him took life within him like an infant hope" (66).

Perhaps it is unfair to call any of the three characters from the middle stories failures, since everyone is perhaps a "failure" until the moment he or she creates and is a success. But it is fair to say that all three have come up short of the expectations that they had for themselves and that others had for them. Both Chandler and Lenehan have thoughts and dreams of being poets, but for whatever reason have been unable to realize in their ambitions. Little Chandler, when leaving work, has a series of thoughts run through his mind: "Every step brought him nearer to London, farther from his own inartistic life ... He was not so old ... There were so many different moods and impressions that he wished to express in verse ... The English critics, perhaps, would

recognize him as one of the Celtic school" (*Dubliners* 68). Chandler is haunted by thoughts and fantasies of what might have been. He had always wanted to be a poet, but life got in the way. Robert Boyle, S.J. says that "Stephen's sardonic musings [in *Ulysses*] about his adolescent dreams concerning his epiphanies...echo Chandler's dreams for his poems. The great difference is that Stephen mocks his own immature activity, while Chandler takes his dreams seriously" ("A Little Cloud" 87). Little Chandler's appearance as immature is further enhanced by the Byron poem that he chooses to read, which is "a rotten poem, slimy with eighteenth-century clichés," and the only reason that Byron had the poem reprinted was to "indicate the difference between his first adolescent verse and the more adequate verse its author later wrote" (87). Though the difference between Stephen and Chandler may be great in some areas, the significance of that difference is not great, since even if Stephen is more intelligent and self-aware than Chandler, which he does seem to be, it only makes Stephen's lack of maturity and lack of artistic success even more surprising and pathetic. There are numerous examples of boyish or immature men in the middle stories of *Dubliners*, but none is developed or connected to Stephen as strongly as Lenehan or Chandler. Both of these *Dubliners* characters are not just grown men who at times display boyish and adolescent behavior; they are also would be artists, who, like Stephen, have failed to realize their dreams.

Other male characters in the middle stories, while in no sense "artists," are boyish. Jack Mooney, in "The Boarding House," takes after his father in his drinking and "was fond of using soldiers' obscenities; usually he came home in the wee hours" (57). Clearly this is the behavior of an adolescent committed by a grown man. In "Counterparts," Farrington searches for money and eventually pawns his watch so that he can go drink

with his friends (88-89). The image the reader has of his friends is of a group of bragging and fighting boys who end up engaged in and watching an arm wrestling match: "Their hands and arms trembled under the stress. After a long struggle Weathers again brought his opponent's hand slowly on to the table" (92). After reading the stories from the "adolescent" and "mature" stories of *Dubliners*, the reader is forced to conclude that Joyce saw Ireland as a nation of boys, with little ambition or opportunity for making something of themselves. Some of these men could be the boys, now grown up, from the first three stories, intelligent and skilled, but stepped on and beaten down by life.

Trying to Survive

It seems important to mention briefly Joyce's portrayal of older men in the stories of "public life" that make up the last grouping in *Dubliners*. Though it is difficult to find any images in these stories showing older men as boy-like, most male characters nevertheless seem to be a product of the ineptitude and irresponsibility that boys and younger men have succumbed to in earlier stories. The men in these stories have very little to show for their lives, and they all seem dependent on someone else for their existence: the bosses who oversee them in their insignificant jobs, their friends, and most often their wives who appear more like their mothers than mates and lovers. These men have never been successful adults, and for this reason, Joyce presents them as little more than older versions of the young "men" in the middle stories of *Dubliners*.

In "Ivy Day in the Committee Room," the men who meet after a day of canvassing votes resemble the boys and young men in the previous stories in a number of ways. They are for the most part failures. They are idle, and they talk more than they

act. Mr. O'Connor has ended his work early because "the weather was inclement and his boots let in the wet," and "he spent a great part of the day sitting by the Committee Room" (*Dubliners* 116). He is soon joined by others and is chastised by Mr. Lyons, who asks, "Is that the way you chaps canvass ... and Crofton and I out in the cold and rain looking for votes?" (127). The men sit together drinking and discussing a variety of topics, such as the rearing of children of Ireland and the fall and death of Parnell. For the ruin of one young boy they blame the mother who, they say, "cocks him up with this and that" (116). And, for the stagnation of Ireland they blame the death of Parnell, who according to Hynes' patriotic poem "would have wrought her destiny. / He would have had his Erin famed ... / Her statesmen, bards and warriors raised" (131). The men take no responsibility for the state in which they find either themselves or Ireland. Instead they waste time complaining and thinking about what might have been. They appear to be as much idle dreamers as the young men in previous stories, such as the boy in "Araby" and Little Chandler.

Some of the people most affected by the immaturity and childishness of the men in the "public life" stories of *Dubliners* are their wives. The first example of this is in "A Mother," where Mrs. Kearney tries to fight a battle on behalf of herself and her daughter, but the husband, while present, is unwilling to step up when she needs his support. Mr. Kearney is described as "sober, thrifty, and pious," and his is not therefore the same sort of irresponsibility seen in previous stories that undercuts his manhood, but a failure to act on behalf of his family when he needs to. After she realizes that her daughter may not be paid properly for serving as accompanist at a concert, Mrs. Kearney is gratified that her husband agrees to go with her to the event, for she "appreciated his abstract value as a

male” (139). Mrs. Kearney does not say that she appreciates that her husband is a man capable of taking charge and standing up for her, but his “abstract value” as if to say there is little to appreciate outside of his “maleness.” When he joins his wife and daughter at the concert, it is his wife who tries to resolve the payment issues, and he is left in charge of the daughter’s music and clothes. As the story ends, Mrs. Kearney is not paid the amount specified in her contract and the husband is ordered by the wife to get a cab. She fails in what would have traditionally been her husband’s task, and yet again a man falls short of what is expected of him.

The failure of the husband is a central theme in “Grace” as well. Here, though, the husband is the all too common Irishman who inhabits Joyce’s work. Mr. Kernan is an irresponsible alcoholic who stays out with his friends. His wife talks of “waiting for him to come home with the money. [But] he never seems to think he has a home at all” (154). Mrs. Kernan “healed him dutifully whenever he was sick and always tried to make him eat breakfast” (155). Joyce’s language here makes Mrs. Kernan sound like a mother rather than a wife to Mr. Kernan. Kernan has many of those qualities apparent in the “men” and boys in the other stories in *Dubliners*: he is a wanderer, he is careless with money, he lacks any hope of something better, and he must be taken care of.

Many of the men of *Dubliners* are failures due to the variety of boyish and adolescent traits they display: laziness and an adolescent desire for an easy way to get by. In “Two Gallants,” Lenahan exhibits an awkward shyness and insecurity that prevents action, and in “A Little Cloud,” Little Chandler is consumed with idleness, irresponsibility, and fear. All these traits do not suddenly vanish at the end of adolescence, of course, but most men strive to and ultimately overcome such qualities in

order to become successful adults. Many critics focus on what they call the “paralysis” of the characters in *Dubliners*. For example, Donald T. Torchiana says that “by the time we reach ‘The Dead’ the boy of the first story has dutifully grown into the nervous yet complacent Gabriel—reviewer, teacher of languages, Continental traveler, critic, but not imaginative poet,” which (like other stories in *Dubliners*, as well as *Portrait* and *Ulysses*) “shows the paralysis of the imagination in Ireland” (199). This paralysis of the Dubliner and the Irishman in moving towards a meaningful place in life seems to come as a result of the men being stunted emotionally and trapped in a boyish or adolescent mindset. The reader sees Stephen begin to succumb to this state at the end of *Portrait* and to enter it fully in *Ulysses*.

CHAPTER III

“IF I EVER WAS A CHILD?”: STEPHEN DEDALUS IN *A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN*

Stephen as Child Intellectual and Hope of a Nation

In *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, James Joyce moves Stephen Dedalus through the same stages of human development that he uses to organize *Dubliners*. Part I and a portion of Part II tell of Stephen's boyhood, which parallels the first three stories in *Dubliners*. From there until the end of Part IV, we see Stephen as an adolescent, which parallels the second three stories in *Dubliners*. The novel ends with Stephen at the university and as a young adult, paralleling the third group of stories in *Dubliners*. This progression is important to note because Stephen suffers many the same difficult life lessons that the characters in *Dubliners* face, such as disillusionment with the church, failed love, and the death of someone close, though this last one, the death of his mother, actually occurs between the last events in *Portrait* and the beginning of *Ulysses*. Just as the boys in the first three stories in *Dubliners* might be seen as embodying the hope of others, or to be hopeful themselves, so Stephen appears to represent the hopes of his family and his nation. But, as this chapter will explain, by the end of *Portrait*, that hope has begun to fade and foreshadow the failure that awaits him in *Ulysses*, as Stephen

begins to regress, showing signs of boyishness and immaturity as he moves into adulthood.

This chapter will begin by discussing how Stephen's appearance in the beginning of the novel arouses the reader's expectations for him because Joyce casts him as the hope for the future in the minds of several other characters in the novel. From there the chapter will begin to explore the link between fatherhood and the artist, a theme that reappears in *Ulysses*. Stephen's inability to connect emotionally with the women in the novel indicates that there is little chance that he will be a meaningful creator of life, and this is a side effect of his social immaturity. His failure to become the father or creator of life parallels his failure as an artist, which he sees as an act of creation, just as fatherhood is an act of creation. The next section will explore the imagery that causes Stephen and the Irish to appear as children to their mother, Ireland, and their father, England. This is yet another example of Joyce presenting the Irishman as childlike and immature. The end of the chapter focuses on the final portion of the novel in which Stephen, a young adult, is portrayed in several instances as boyish or immature. This final section will serve as a bridge into Chapter IV of the thesis, where these same types of images will be discussed as they appear in *Ulysses*.

Parents typically place the hopes and future of the family in the hands of their children. The same can be said of entire nations, who speak collectively of the next generation as the saviors of the nation, which, no matter what the circumstances, is always thought by someone to be on the brink of collapse. Stephen, remembering a line from an essay by Newman, thinks "of Virgil, *giving utterance, like the voice of Nature herself, to that pain and weariness yet hope of better things which has been the*

experience of her children in every time” (*Portrait* 177). Stephen Dedalus represents the “hope of better things.” Throughout *Portrait* he “is burdened with the great expectations of other characters” and his intellectual superiority serves as a symbol of hope for many individuals, his family, his church, and Ireland herself (Osteen 174). This high hope is in stark contrast to the failure that awaits him in *Ulysses* and to the unconcealed differences between himself and his father, himself and some of the “fathers” of the Church, and himself and his peers, all of whom, at times, appear less intelligent and more immature than Stephen. Stephen’s intelligence and maturity set him apart from people both at school and at home, but he seems to understand the social situations he is in even less than his family or classmates understand him. This is noteworthy because Stephen’s appearance as immature and his inability to make anything of himself in *Ulysses* (or at least anything close to his own expectations for himself or the expectations others have for him) leaves him isolated.

There are times throughout *Portrait* in which Stephen’s own thoughts allow the reader to see his lofty intellect. Early in the novel he is pained by the realization that he is lacking in knowledge and does “not know well what politics [means]” and doesn’t “know where the universe [ends]” (*Portrait* 14). Of course, no one would expect Stephen to know these things at such a young age, and of course no one knows the latter of the two, but such thoughts allow the reader to see Stephen’s inquisitiveness and his thirst for knowledge, as well as his high expectations for himself, even as a small boy. Stephen is also unusually perceptive and has a “vague” understanding of the financial trouble his father is in without being told about it, and he knows “why he himself had not been sent back to Clongowes” (66). It is revealed that he had “felt slight changes ... in what he had

deemed unchangeable” and these “were so many slight shocks to his boyish conception of the world” (67). An average child might ask his parents why things are changing or why he has to move to a new school, but Stephen grasps such things on his own. He understands quickly and this increases his perceived maturity, for unlike his peers at Clongowes, he has to grow up and understand at a young age that the world is not fair.

Stephen rarely has to have anything explained to him, except for those things that pertain to social or emotional aspects of life. What makes his exceptional intelligence so apparent is the way he notices and analyzes himself the world around him. His “difference” makes Stephen an outcast from the beginning of the novel; he stands out from the other boys at Clongowes, both because of his intelligence and his family situation. In Part II, just as he goes on stage to perform in a school play, Stephen feels “for one rare moment ... clothed in the real apparel of boyhood” (90), suggesting that he rarely feels like, or perceives himself as, a child. Even at the end of the novel, in one of his journal entries he writes, “if I was ever a child” (273). Susan Johnston Graf writes that “Stephen realizes, even as a young boy that he is somehow different from, [and] elevated beyond his fellows” (51). These examples appear to be more than just pretension or self indulgence, but rather genuine feelings or perceptions that Stephen has about himself. He has rarely felt like a child because of his precocious intellect and the overwhelming expectations that others have for him and that he has for himself.

The contrast between Stephen and his peers and Stephen and his father, expressed in Stephen’s thoughts as well as in the actions of others characters, leads the reader to believe that Stephen may be, and surely perceives himself to be, smarter and more mature than most everyone around him. An example of this perception occurs during his trip

with his father to Cork. While his father and his father's friends reminisce about the glories of the past, Stephen thinks that "his mind seem[s] older than theirs ...no life or youth stirred in him as it stirred in them" and "his childhood was dead or lost" (102). These men are lost in the past, whereas Stephen thinks only on the present and the future. His thoughts seem much more mature than those of middle aged men trying to recapture the days of their youth. Stephen becomes isolated in this setting, as he was at Clongowes. While in Cork, his father and his father's friend ask him if the girls from Cork or from Dublin are pretty. Simon jumps in before Stephen can respond; "He's not that way built, said Mr. Dedalus. Leave him alone. He's a levelheaded thinking boy who doesn't bother his head about that kind of non-sense" (100). Compared to his father, Stephen is not what is traditionally thought of as "manly": he is more sensitive and intellectually aware, similar in some respects to the boys in the first three stories of *Dubliners*. Even though he may not be the "man's man" that his father is, his father understands that Stephen is different or even special and "a level-headed thinking boy." Ultimately, it is not Stephen's apparent lack of traditional "manly" characteristics that causes him to fail at the "manly" act of creation; it is his natural and intentional isolation from other individuals in the world that leads to his failure. A friend of Simon's says, "Then he's not his father's son," and Simon responds by saying, "I don't know, I'm sure" (100).

Again Stephen is outcast for his intellect and "levelheaded thinking," this time by adults several times his age, but this is not necessarily a negative thing, since the "men" in Joyce's works are so often portrayed as unsavory, inadequate, or unaccomplished characters. Seamus Deane says of Stephen that if he "recognizes himself to be a member

of a community; it is in relation to the collective, the race that he formulates his individual aspiration” (vii). Stephen realizes he is human, but he also sees himself as separated from humanity. In the first chapters of the novel it does seem that he has no real desire to separate or isolate himself from those around him, but his separation occurs anyway because of his intelligence and his sensitive temperament. However, it is his intelligence that he uses later in his life to disconnect purposefully from his family, the church, and ultimately Ireland.

Stephen’s superior intellect is also apparent because of the perceptions others have of him, and he “is burdened with the great expectations of other characters” (Osteen 174). Stephen at one point in the novel is jokingly referred to as a “model youth” by a classmate (80), because he appears to be someone who never does wrong or steps outside of the lines. This is not far from the truth at this point in the novel. It is typical, though, of children from time to time to step out of line and go against the grain, but as a child Stephen rarely does this. In Part II he is a “model youth” but very soon changes and begins visiting prostitutes. He is not only intellectually precocious, but sexually precocious as well. Also, “his schoolmate Fleming writes, in a juvenile piece of poetic forgery, ‘*Stephen Dedalus is my name,/ Ireland my nation./ Clongowes is my dwellingplace/ And heaven my expectation*’ ” (Osteen 174). Early in the novel Stephen is what one might consider the perfect child. Just as the children in *Dubliners* are presented as innocent, intelligent, and symbols of hope, Stephens comes across in this way as well. It appears that he is reserving his childish rebellion for when he is an adolescent and adult.

The priests who teach Stephen see potential in him as well, and as the director of Belvedere College is asking Stephen about joining the Jesuit order, the priest explains that “such a boy is marked off from his companions by his piety” and the “good example he shows to others” (170). Stephen stands apart from his classmates and stands out to the priests early in the novel because of his intellect and maturity, which rise above those around him. At the end of Part III, Stephen goes to confession and is warned by the priest that his acts of masturbation and his encounters with prostitutes are “dishonorable and unmanly” (156). While Stephen has confessed and gone a period of time in which he was devout, the reader is left with an image of Stephen that will carry through *Portrait* and into *Ulysses* as someone capable of rising above those around him in maturity and intelligence, but also as one who can be led astray by things that are quite dangerous and negative, as in the “Circe” episode of *Ulysses*. Mark Osteen cites “more onerous ... expectations of priests such as the Dean of Studies [at the University], who challenges Stephen: ‘when may we expect to have something from you on the esthetic question?’” (174). Stephen and others have set standards and expectations for him that will be difficult to fulfill, and that he sees as holding him back. Osteen adds that “although Stephen does supply that ‘something,’ he does not do so for the Dean. Instead, he treats these fathers ... as authors of unwanted, imprisoning expectations that he must escape, as fashioners of ‘nets’ that he must ‘fly by’” (174). Stephen’s expectations and the hope he has for himself surpass those of anyone else, and he feels that he must remain “alone ... [and] unheeded, [to be] happy and near to the wild heart of life” (*Portrait* 185).

Stephen as Creator: The Link Between Fatherhood and the Artist

The search for the father, a central theme in *Ulysses*, is also important in *Portrait*. Seamus Deane suggests that Stephen is in a “struggle to create his own father, [and] to become, in effect, his own origin” (xxi). The reasons that Stephen may never become a father are similar to the reasons that he may never become an artist, mainly the way he has separated himself from the physical world and the society in which he lives. There is also Stephen’s apparent belief that his creation of art will come as a result of some immaculate creation, where “in the virgin womb of the imagination the word [will be] made flesh” (*Portrait* 236). This metaphor implies that Stephen’s creation of art will come without his having to engage or be close to the real and physical world, which of course includes women, but that instead he will create without a physical or emotional connection to reality. Stephen’s father, though an obvious failure in almost all respects, has still “created” more—several children—than Stephen has at this point in his life, and the imagery of Stephen as a non-creator, prevalent throughout *Ulysses*, begins in *Portrait*. This section explores the juxtaposing of images of the father as creator and as failure, and then makes a statement about Stephen’s connection to each. It will also explain how Stephen’s attempt and ultimate success at escaping any meaningful relationship with women, and his “inability to recognize the complexity and potentially positive creative power of the women he encounters contribute[s] greatly to his downfall” (Craig 69). The idea that Stephen has not created anything (art or children) starts to emerge in *Portrait* (it becomes a major concern in *Ulysses*). This idea adds to his appearance as boyish and immature, for he is failing at one of the most important aspects of manhood and maturity, creation.

According to Edmund L. Epstein the first image of the father in *Portrait* is “as a story teller ... [and] as a storyteller, he is creator, and the hairy face of the creative father is the first thing young Stephen remembers” (26). From the very first page, the father has assumed dual roles, and roles that resemble each other greatly: the creator of life and the creator of art. The latter is something that Stephen aspires to very early in his life, but the former is something that he seems destined to fail at early on. In his imagination, during an early moment in the novel, he sees himself as the hero destined to win over Dumas’s Mercedes, in an episode where his “weakness and timidity and inexperience would fall from him in that magic moment” (67). This is a far cry from what actually happens when Stephen is given the opportunity to live up to this fantasy. Instead of holding and kissing a girl who is about to get on a tram, “he [does] neither” and ends up “sitting in the deserted tram” disgusted with himself (73). This failure to act is something that began with his mother (10-11) but haunts Stephen throughout *Portrait*. It seems that his being teased by the boys at school about kissing his mother has caused him to hesitate with all women. Janet Grayson writes, “Stephen’s hesitation and timidity pursue him into adolescence and adult life to affect his choices” (122). Stephen is not able to progress in sexual and emotional maturity in his relationships with women, which is ironic since he is so mature in other ways. His lack of maturity is also symbolic of his failure to move from developing a theory on aesthetics to the actual act of creating art.

The fact that Stephen believes that he needs to escape and avoid the realities of his country and of life is also ironic in that his only artistic creation in *Portrait* comes as a result of his heartbreak over E—C—, the result of an attachment and not an escape. At the moment in which he is composing his villanelle on E—C—, he sees himself as the

“priest of eternal imagination, transmuting the daily bread of experience into the radiant body of everliving life” (240). Stephen again sees his creation of the poem/art as a result of both viewing and participating in life. In this instance he does become emotionally connected to a woman, and the result is inspiration. Robert Scholes explains,

In his esthetic discourse with Lynch, Stephen remarked, “When we come to the phenomena of artistic conception, artistic gestation and artistic reproduction, I require a new terminology and a new personal experience.” The episode of the villanelle provides him with both experience and terminology, locked in such a tight embrace that they produce not a theory but a poem. It is at this point that Stephen ceases to be an esthete and becomes a poet. (489)

Stephen does not need to escape or avoid getting emotionally involved with women in order to become a father or creator of art, but instead he must involve himself in the everyday events of life, such as falling in love and getting his heart broken. Though he is not “in love” with E—C— (it is more an infatuation like that of the boy in “Araby,” who has a crush on his friend’s older sister), his feelings are still an attempt on Stephen’s part to connect emotionally to a girl/woman. This connection to the realities of life will give him more of the “new terminology and personal experience” he requires to create and to become a mature adult. But at the end of both *Portrait* and *Ulysses* he breaks all ties in order to escape, which directly contributes to his lack of success at producing any further substantial artistic creations.

Stephen’s father, Simon, represents at times the creator that Stephen believes he is destined to become, but the majority of the time he also represents the stagnant failure

that Stephen is when he appears in *Ulysses*. Hugh Kenner writes, “*Portrait* is unified by Stephen’s twenty years’ effort to substitute one father for another,” and at the end of *Portrait* Stephen prays to “his name-saint, the pagan Dedalus, a father whose example represents liberty from the father who has gone down so far in the world” (10). It has already been mentioned that at times, Stephen sees his father as immature or not as mature as himself. These are moments that the father ceases to represent the creator, but instead begins to represent failure and de-evolution into immaturity. Simon Dedalus, while in Cork and catching up with old friends says, “By God, I don’t feel more than eighteen myself” (101). He doesn’t act more than eighteen either, as his family is facing a financial disaster that will become even worse in *Ulysses*, while he does little to deter the downfall. He talks and he drinks and he laughs, trying to recapture his adolescence, which he has perhaps never fully left behind.

Stephen’s witness to his father’s immaturity in *Portrait* makes him angry and feel as though he is somehow better than his father, for “No life or youth stirred in him as it had stirred in [his father and his father’s friends],” but he has missed out on so much, and has “Known neither the pleasure of companionship with others nor the vigor of rude male health” (102). There is a point, or there are several points, in the middle of *Portrait*—it is difficult to pinpoint—where Stephen reaches a crossroads. It is clear that he does not know how to be a proper man; his closest role model is an immature and irresponsible failure, but his success as an artist is directly tied to his becoming a man and creator. Stephen’s attempt to isolate himself is naïve and immature, and Alan Warren Friedman writes that his “flight is essentially negative: *from* his father and all that he embodies—familially, culturally, politically, historically, and performatively—rather than toward his

goal of artistic creation” (68). Stephen’ unknowingly imitating the father he has known in *Portrait*, the drunk and the failure, is what makes it difficult for him to be a father or creator in *Ulysses*. Stephen also brings up the “misrule and confusion of his father’s house and the stagnation of vegetable life” that is present there (*Portrait* 176). The stagnation of this family and house goes far beyond the rotting cabbages in the yard, and it could be said that the whole Dedalus clan is rotting and stagnant. In *Portrait*, he seems grateful for the differences between himself and his father, but in *Ulysses* the immaturity and failure, which almost seem hereditary, are something that he cannot overcome. It is a difficult line to walk for Stephen—trying not to get trapped in the stagnation that has surrounded him and his family, but not abandoning the personal experience he has already gained.

There is a battle within Stephen in *Portrait* and *Ulysses* as to which aspect of his father he will inherit and act on, the creator or the failure. It is clear that, according to Stephen and Joyce, there is a link between the artist and the father. This idea is introduced in *Portrait*, when Stephen compares the creation of art to the creation of life, saying, “In the virgin womb of the imagination the word was made flesh” (236). Stephen goes a step further at one point when he explains to Lynch that “The artist, like the God of the creation, remains within or behind or beyond or above his handiwork, invisible, refined out of existence, indifferent, paring his fingernails” (233). Again the idea of the artist as “removed” is introduced, as is Stephen’s belief that he can create his art without getting his hands dirty, so to speak. Stephen sees himself as more than a father in the earthly sense, but as the God of creation. The critic Sheldon Brivic writes that “Stephen never gets rid of the fundamental fantasy that his words and perceptions belong to a

higher power, but he now claims them by seeing them as aimed at the artist he will become ... allowing him to be the God who creates himself” (74). But Stephen is in a fantasy and believes that divine inspiration will simply pour into him, so he virtually ignores the reality in which he lives and gains little real life experience or creates any meaningful emotional connections. He adds later on in the novel that “When we come to the phenomena of artistic conception, artistic gestation and artistic reproduction I require a new terminology and a new personal experience,” which is something that he does not yet have and might never have (227).

For Joyce, the father is symbolic of the artist or creator and this symbolism applies not only to Simon Dedalus, but to the pagan Dedalus, who is called “old father, old artificer” in the final line of *Portrait* (276). And a man who is incapable of creating either art or children is immature because he must have failed to face and take on the reality of life. Friedman points out several moments in Part V of *Portrait* where Stephen’s isolation and separation are looked at negatively by his peers. Friedman also points out that in *Portrait* “McCann says, ‘—Dedalus, you’re an antisocial being wrapped up in yourself’” (191), and Davin adds, “‘You’re a terrible man, Stevie, ... Always alone’(218)’” (82). Joyce does not mean to say that the act of sex makes one mature or a man—after all Stephen has sex with a prostitute at age sixteen—but he suggests that a man ought to attempt to engage life and not isolate himself from the realities that exist. To accomplish both forms of creation calls for the man to interact with the world around him, “to encounter ... the reality of experience” (275-6).

Ireland as a Woman and Mother

Susan Johnston Graf says of Stephen that he is “the prototype of the artist-hero [and] should redeem and replenish his world; as the new type of the cultural hero of Ireland, he should succeed in forging the conscience of his race” (54). Yes he *should*; he has the ability to do so, but his emotional immaturity prevents him from making this leap. According to Layne Parish Craig, “Stephen explicitly identifies women with the Irish race at several points in *A Portrait*, referring to women—in particular, E.C., the woman in the Ballyhoura Hills, the girl selling flowers, and the daughters of Anglo-Irish patricians—as representatives of ‘her race,’ ‘her race and his own,’ and ‘their’ race” (71). Ireland and its history, and Ireland as symbolized by the women in Stephen’s life, help shed light on what leads to Stephen’s failure as an artist, and also creates more images of Stephen and other male characters as boys lacking the maturity to be successful.

The bondage of the people of Ireland plays a crucial part in *Portrait* and strongly affects Stephen’s emotional development. Seamus Deane believes that “Joyce was unforgiving in his analysis of the Irish version of degeneration ... and it was the adherence to deforming systems of belief and modes of behavior that kept the Irish in bondage” (ix). For the Irish, who had always lived under the thumb of England, it was difficult to break free. Even though they desired freedom and had every intention of becoming independent, for one reason or another, they failed to escape oppression. Stephen and even his father have the same problem. Simon Dedalus, during his heated Christmas dinner exchange with Dante Riordan about the downfall of Charles Parnell, says, “What? ... Were we to desert him at the bidding of the English people?” (31). Here, Simon perceives that the Irish have given in to the will of England. Stephen hears this as

a child and hears from Dante, "He'll [Stephen] remember all this when he grows up." And Mr. Casey adds, "Let him remember" (33). The way that England has imposed its will on Ireland and the way it tore his family and country apart is sure to be imbedded in Stephen's thinking. He will "remember," just as all those at the Christmas dinner cannot escape memories of English oppression. This section of the novel ends with Stephen's father grief stricken over "Poor Parnell ... [his] dead king," and Stephen sees "that his father's eyes [are] full of tears" (39). Stephen, from an early age, sees Ireland as subjected by England as master or controlling father, and it is no doubt difficult for him to escape that master.

Referring to "Ivy Day in the Committee Room," Seamus Deane explains that "Parnell's death does not explain the pathological state" of the men in that room or, to extend the analysis, the bickering Dedalus family in Part I of *Portrait*, but "their pathological state ... explains why Parnell was destroyed" (xxxiii). Deane adds that it is the destiny of the Irish to be a subjected people and "to be confined to a bogus and eloquent lamentation about it" (xxxiv). The conversations in *Portrait* and "Ivy Day" are definitely not the same, but they are examples of how the Irish people are trapped in a fog of lamentation and rhetoric. There is little action, and one cannot become a man, let alone the forger of the conscience of an entire race/nation, without action. But Stephen wants to break free, and says, "This race and this country and this life produced me ... I shall express myself as I am" (*Portrait* 220). Throughout the novel Stephen appears to have what it would take to fulfill the destiny that he asserts for himself in the final lines of the book. Stephen elaborates on the oppression and slavery when he says, "When the soul of a man is born in this country there are nets flung at it to hold it back from flight.

You [Cranly] talk to me of nationality, language, religion. I shall try to fly by those nets” (220). Stephen will try to do these things, but what he fails to understand is that it is not breaking free of Ireland or religion or family that will make him an artist; rather, it is being a mature man and attacking the problems and accepting the realities of each that will move him to his goal. Janet Grayson writes, “Stephen may be the chosen one seeking strength and power in exile, but he will be no artist of Ireland until he learns to love the old girl, imperfect though she may be” (125). His rejection of Ireland and everything associated with it appears to contradict his previous statement about expressing himself as he is, which is Irish. But how can he truly express himself as he is if he is running away from where he came from? Stephen’s motives are pure—he wants something better for his country—but the way he goes about trying to get what he wants is flawed.

Joyce writes, “Do you know what Ireland is? Asked Stephen with cold violence. Ireland is the old sow that eats her farrow” (*Portrait* 220). This image says as much about Stephen’s perception of himself as it does about his perception of Ireland. A swine is an animal domesticated for someone’s use—in this case England’s. Stephen and the rest of the Irish are the piglets destroyed by their mother, Ireland. In addition to reinforcing the idea of the Irish people as captive, the image of Ireland as an “old sow” introduces the idea of Ireland as a woman and mother to its people. As was discussed in the previous section, Stephen has difficulty connecting emotionally with women from the very beginning of the novel when his peers mock him for kissing, or not for kissing, his mother (10-11). Stephen is never able to initiate a kiss, a notable detail, since it is traditionally the male who plays that role, perhaps the only exception being with the

mother. Janet Grayson explains that in the first two chapters, each kiss (the first between Stephen and his mother, the second between him and E—C— in a dream, and the third between him and the prostitute) is at first “withheld, but finally develops either because it is forced or is completed in a dream” (120-21). Stephen’s having to have kisses forced upon him, or only being able to kiss the girl he likes in a dream, emphasizes his emotional immaturity. He also views Ireland as a woman, and “whether he kisses his mother, E—C—, the prostitute, or the Virgin, they are all temptresses who wish to tie him to his country and to a life he must reject in order to fulfill his destiny as an artist” (Grayson 122). Grayson explains that Stephen sees all women as obstacles to his freedom. But it would seem that Stephen is wrong, which becomes apparent in *Ulysses*. His abandoning of his mother and of Ireland, and his failure to have an emotional connection with any woman, does not set him free and allow him to become an artist, and “he is mistaken to think that he can set out to create the conscience of his race without regard to the Woman” (Grayson 125). On the contrary, it is his lack of connection with a woman that causes him to fail to become a man, and “Joyce clearly represents Stephen’s immaturity and uncertain future through the character’s symbol-laden entry into exile” (Craig 79). It is the lack of connection that he has with Ireland and the rest of humanity that resides there in all its forms that causes him to fail as an artist.

The Signs of Stephen’s Immaturity

In addition to Stephen’s inability to connect with a woman, Joyce also includes a number of images that foreshadow the Stephen who will appear in *Ulysses*, a Stephen

even less mature and more boyish than the one in *Portrait*. At the end of *Portrait*, even though he is abandoning his country and home to find his own way, he is nevertheless moving forward, whereas when the reader is introduced to him in *Ulysses*, he is static. In the final pages of *Portrait*, Stephen demonstrates his selfishness, is placed in the role of child to Cranly, a father figure his own age, and is given some final advice by his mother (who packs his clothes for him), before heading out into the world. All these actions heighten the reader's sense of Stephen's immaturity.

Stephen talks with his friend Cranly near the end of the novel about life, beliefs, and what Stephen is planning to do with himself. The conversation centers on Stephen's refusal to make his Easter duty despite the crying insistence of his hyper-religious mother. Stephen has already told Cranly about his turning away from the church and priesthood, but Cranly talks to him about the suffering of Stephen's mother, who wishes him to return to the church. Cranly asks him, "Would you not try to save her from suffering more even if ... or would you?" Stephen responds with "If I could. That would cost me very little" (*Portrait* 262). Saving his mother from suffering would require him to go to confession and communion, something Stephen cannot do, because he no longer believes. In this scene Stephen begins his final separation of the most powerful connection that he has in his life, his connection with his mother. Stephen will do nothing to ease his mother's, or anyone else's, pain because he feels that his principles come before any obligation he may have to another person. His isolation is now complete and self-imposed, and it continues in *Ulysses*. Stephen has severed all social ties, which seems childish and naïve given the extent to which he is a product of his Irish Catholic upbringing. Joyce enforces this image of Stephen as a child when he puts

Cranly, who is Stephen's age, in the roll of his priestly father. Stephen says, "you made me confess to you," and Cranly responds, "Yes, my child" (269). Though Cranly is serving only as a "spiritual" father, Joyce nevertheless creates an image of Stephen as someone who is unsure and seeking guidance. This scene occurs only a short time before Stephen leaves his home, and it sets up the image of the lost and isolated Stephen that appears in *Ulysses*.

One of the first images of Stephen in Part V of *Portrait* is that of Mrs. Dedalus scrubbing his neck, and one of the last is of Stephen standing back as his mother takes care of him by packing his belonging and preparing him for his journey—both images of him as a child. As is made plain by his conversation with Cranly, Stephen does not think about his mother's desires and sorrow, at least not until later, after her death, which we learn of in *Ulysses*. In *Portrait* she is merely an obstacle that must be ignored or removed in order for him to reach his full potential. However, because he is so closed off to the world around him, he is unaware of the way others perceive him, and he hardly gives a thought to having his mother wash him or pack his clothes. In his own mind he is a man destined for greatness, just so long as he can break free of the restraints of women, mothers, family, country, friends, and church. But on the page, the reader sees a boy incapable of taking care of himself and destined to fail. On top of Stephen's treating his mother as little more than a maid, he has also "disparage[d] [her] (in the metaphorical sense of Mother Country and Church, as well as biological mother), yet does so in the name of an aesthetic philosophy that is indifferent to life" (Hickman 11). In one of Stephen's journal entries, he brings up a conversation with his mother about religion, in which she says that he "would come back to religion because [he] had a restless mind,"

but soon he asks her for money and leaves, both physically and mentally, for he has taken seriously little of what his mother has said, adding “this means leave church by backdoor of sin and reenter through skylight of repentance. Cannot repent” (*Portrait* 271). As his mother packs his things, Stephen writes, “She [his mother] prays now, she says, that I may learn in my own life and away from home and friends what the heart is and what it feels. Amen” (275). Mrs. Dedalus must know that such a possibility is highly remote; hence she must pray for it.

The idea that a person can understand humanity better by running away from it is absurd, and now, as Stephen leaves all he has ever known, seen, and touched, his stagnation begins. He is leaving as child and will return as one as well, for there is so much that Stephen, our Telemachus in *Ulysses*, does not know about the world, and so his search for inspiration and a father to show him the way continues.

CHAPTER IV

STEPHEN DEDALUS ON HIS OWN: THE "TELEMACHUS,"

"NESTOR," AND "PROTEUS" EPISODES OF *ULYSSES*

At the end of *Portrait* Stephen has separated and isolated himself from his family and Ireland both physically and mentally, and at the beginning of *Ulysses* he has returned, at least physically. The parallels between *Ulysses* and the *Odyssey* have been thoroughly explored by others, as has the father/son connection between Stephen Dedalus and Leopold Bloom. The connection between Stephen and Bloom is as important when they finally meet towards the end of the book as is the lack of connection that Stephen has to any father, or anything grounded in reality for that matter, during the opening chapters of the novel. The problem for Stephen is that he lives in his mind and does his best to keep the physical world at a distance.

In the first three episodes of *Ulysses*, Stephen is in the places that should be the most comfortable to him, his house, at work, and, in "Proteus," his own mind. But throughout these episodes he appears distracted, uncomfortable, and again begins planning his escape, as he decides to quit his job and not to return to the Martello Tower. With these images and scenes, the motif of Stephen as immature and childish begins. Richard Ellmann suggests that in *Ulysses*, "Joyce implies that art is not self isolation, that it depends upon recognition of other existences as well as one's own" ("Why Does

Stephen Pick His Nose” 592). But in the “Proteus” episode Stephen is almost completely closed off to the world, and he appears as a child trying to make sense of what he doesn’t understand. Ellmann is correct, however, in pointing out that by the end of the “Proteus” episode Stephen does recognize the existence of an external reality, and that his doing so is a necessary condition for being an artist. But what holds him back from becoming an artist is his failure to embrace and interact with that reality. It was mentioned in Chapter 2 that Joyce implies a link between fatherhood and the creation of art, and one of the reasons that Stephen has yet to father or create any substantive work of art is his self-isolation and lack of a meaningful interaction with or acceptance of women. The critic Ann Kimble Loux states that “Stephen Dedalus, as has been said often and well, is driven throughout *Ulysses*, to answer two questions: ‘Am I father? If I were?’” (281). She continues by suggesting that this translates for Stephen into, ‘Am I artist?’” (282). The suggestion that Stephen is not yet a father, not yet a prolific artist, and not a creator of life or of any significant art leads the reader to ask if he is mature enough to take on those responsibilities and challenges.

The fact is that Joyce does much in the early episodes of *Ulysses* to portray Stephen as childlike through the images, actions, and words of Stephen, his interaction and relationships with other characters, and the way those characters speak to him and think about him. The images of a childlike Stephen in the first three episodes serve to emphasize the idea that he has not yet emerged into maturity, and they place him in the role of child in relation to others. Clearly this makes Stephen symbolic of all Irishmen and of Ireland as a whole, which after centuries of English rule, seems more like a child-state of England than its own country.

Trouble Fitting In: The "Telemachus" Episode

In the first two episodes of *Ulysses*, Stephen appears as a child in relation to other characters both at home, in relation to Buck Mulligan, and at work, in relation to Mr. Deasy, and he appears symbolically as the child Ireland to Haines' and Deasy's adult England. Stephen is in his own mind fatherless; "like Telemachus, [he] leaves his parents on a dangerous journey feeling inadequate to the task of becoming an artist ... he projects many of his own failures upon them ... and carries forth no magnanimity from which the Horn of Plenty, art, is born (Loux 284)." Stephen is seen by some critics to be in the process of becoming his own father and his parents' fathers through his creation of art. But throughout *Ulysses* the reader is witness to only small acts of creation as Stephen encounters several inadequate and false fathers.

In the opening scene of the novel, the reader is confronted with several images of Stephen Dedalus as a boy in relation to Buck Mulligan, who is "father" to Stephen in both the parental and the religious sense. The first image of Stephen appears during Buck's mock mass: "Catching sight of Stephen Dedalus, [Buck] bent towards him and made rapid crosses in the air, gurgling in his throat and shaking his head" (*Ulysses* 1.11-13). At this moment Stephen is placed in the position of altar boy in this mock mass as he follows Buck to the top of the Tower (1.8-16). Later, as he holds Buck's shaving bowl, his chalice in this mass, he is transported in his mind back to his days as the boat bearer at Clongowes School (Boyle 41). Stephen thinks to himself, "So I carried the boat [of incense] at Clongowes. I am another now and yet the same" (1.310-312). In addition to the reader seeing Stephen in the position of altar boy to Buck as the priest, and Stephen even admits that he is in some way still the same as he was then, a boy.

The scene also offers two other images that make Stephen appear boy-like. He is not only assisting in the mock mass but also assisting and observing Buck shave: “Stephen stepped up, followed him wearily halfway and sat down on the edge of a gunrest watching him still” (*Ulysses* 1.36-37). At this moment Stephen very much resembles a tired young boy awakening in the morning and stumbling into the bathroom to watch his father shave, “as he propped up his mirror on the parapet, dipped the brush in bowl and lathered cheeks and neck” (1.36-39). As Stephen watches Buck shave, he also attempts to discuss with Buck the Englishman Haines with whom Stephen is unhappy. He asks, as if he has no control over the situation and as if Buck is the authority, “How long is Haines going to stay in this tower?” (1.49). Buck skirts the question and when Stephen makes a childish threat that “if he [Haines] stays on here I am off.” Buck responds strongly and simply, “Scutter!” (1.62-66). Three things are happening here. The first, as John Rickard explains, is that “Stephen fears that his position as author and potential authority in Ireland has been usurped by Buck Mulligan, who has managed to upstage him as an author (we find out later that Mulligan has been invited to a literary gathering at George Moore’s house, while Stephen has not” and as a hero (Buck has rescued men from drowning) (20). The second is that Joyce uses both the images of Stephen looking up to Buck the father/priest and the self-centered words and actions of Stephen to create an image in the reader’s mind of Stephen as childlike. Buck even calls him a “jejune Jesuit” (*Ulysses* 1.45), suggesting that Stephen is naïve and juvenile despite his sophisticated Jesuit education. The third is that Stephen, the symbol of the Irishman, has no control over his home and is being treated as a second class citizen by Haines, the Englishman, who pays no rent and mooches off Stephen.

The images of Stephen and Haines and their conversations do less to make Stephen himself seem childlike than to paint a symbolic picture of the relationship of Ireland to England. Melissa Fegan points to the play by W.B. Yeats, *Cathleen Ni Hoolihhan* (1902), in which

Cathleen, a traditional personification of Ireland, calls young Irish men to help her reclaim her four beautiful green fields (symbolizing the four provinces of Ireland); when asked “What was it put you astray,” she answers “Too many strangers in the house.” Stephen Dedalus ...aggravated by the Englishman Haines, who seems to be displacing him in his home and the affections of Buck Mulligan, echoes this: “Gaptoothed Kathleen, her four beautiful green fields, the stranger in the house [...]. We feel in England Penitent thief. Gone.” (38)

Haines has in a sense invaded Stephen’s home, and Stephen is apparently unable, or unwilling, to stand up to the Englishman while Buck is comfortable to sit back and say nothing. These relationships suggest the English oppression of Ireland; Buck’s and Stephen’s reactions towards Haines, respectively, seem to represent the way that Ireland was divided on the idea of home rule: some people wished to be independent, while others were content to be subservient to, or have a “partnership” with, England. Haines says to Stephen, “After all, I should think you are able to free yourself. You are your own master, it seems to me” (1.638-639). Someone English could think this about himself and find it true; however, Stephen responds, “I am a servant of two masters” (1.641). The masters he speaks of are England and the Catholic Church. A lack of independence, it seems, is to blame for Stephen’s—and, by extension, Ireland’s—

immaturity, for one cannot be a man when one is a servant. Haines admits, “An Irishman must think like that, I daresay. We feel in England that we have treated you rather unfairly. It seems history is to blame” (1.647-649). With this statement, Stephen is again relegated to the role of a poor child, someone pitied, one from whom little is expected, and who is certainly not the forger of his nation’s “uncreated conscience.”

Student or Teacher?: The “Nestor” Episode

In the “Nestor” episode, Stephen is at the school where for now he is employed as a teacher. Mark Morrisson comments that the scene involving Stephen and the young student Cyril Sargent is a “revealing passage [in which] Joyce gives insight into what seems to amount to an oedipal situation in Stephen’s life” (352). Early in the chapter Sargent comes to Stephen for help with arithmetic and “we again see Stephen in the schoolroom, afraid of his own authority, battling against the riot of his mind, a master enslaved” (Rickard 23). In this scene, Stephen’s thoughts do not give the reader the impression that Stephen is a confident instructor. Instead, this experience causes Stephen to identify with his student Sargent and to think back to his own boyhood and the care and protection of his mother. Stephen thinks, “*Amor matris*; subjective and objective genitive. With her weak blood and wheysour she [Sargent’s mother] had fed him and hid from sight of others his swaddlingbands. Like him was I, these sloping shoulders, this gracelessness. My childhood bends beside me” (*Ulysses* 2.165-169). Though Stephen may want to believe that his childhood is now his past, the weakness, lack of independence, and need of protection are still present with him. The result of this scene

is that Stephen appears much more like the boy that he is tutoring than the confident instructor that he is supposed to be.

Stephen also appears as boy-like later in episode 2 when Mr. Deasy, the school master, lectures him on financial responsibility. The scene begins with Stephen's being called into Deasy's office to receive his pay for teaching, but the meeting turns into a lecture that resembles, very much, a father lecturing a son of fiscal matters. "Don't carry [your money] like that, Mr. Deasy said, pointing his finger," as Stephen carelessly shoves his earnings into his pocket, "You'll pull it out somewhere and lose it" (2.229-231). This of course foreshadows the "Circe" episode in which Stephen does lose his money, but has it rescued by another father figure, Bloom (15.3527-3617). Deasy continues to lecture Stephen on the importance of saving money, adding that an important part of being a man is being able to say "*I paid my way. I never borrowed a shilling in my life. Can you feel that? I owe nothing. Can you?*" (2.253-254). Stephen, however, cannot "feel that," for he thinks of all the money he owes to various people, and this image underlines the fact that Stephen is irresponsible, in many ways like a child.

The idea of Deasy as father and Stephen as son can be seen as an extended metaphor in which Stephen represents Ireland and Deasy, England. Joyce apparently based the character of Mr. Deasy on a man who was "an Ulster Scot, [and] very pro-British, named Francis Irwin, a Trinity College graduate" (Ellmann, *James Joyce* 153). Harry Blamires as well points out the "symbols of the Establishment, civil and ecclesiastical, Mr. Deasy so convincingly represents," which Stephen observes in the "collection of Stuart coins ('base treasure' of England won from the Irish bog) and the twelve Apostolic spoons snugly encased in purple plush" (12). The reasons for Ireland's

quest for independence and resentment of England are many and not the focus of this paper, but it is worth remembering that the

Quest for Irish Home Rule is steeped in the lengthy, exploitative relationship between Great Britain and Ireland that dates from the Tudor and Stuart eras. Beginning in the 16th century, in an effort to impose Protestantism on the island, England's Queen Elizabeth I, King James I, and Oliver Cromwell successively encouraged English Protestants to buy Irish land and rent it to Irish Catholics. Irish resentment led to the Irish Rebellion of 1641, and a later conflict, the Battle of the Boyne (1690) resulted in victory for Protestant forces. The Catholic defeat paved the way for a century and a half of British domination. (Irish Home Rule)

Mr. Deasy, based on his words, appears to care for Stephen and wish him success, but he also speaks to Stephen in a way that places him in a subordinate role. The money Stephen makes teaching is insufficient to begin pulling him out of debt, and of course Mr. Deasy is in charge of the money that Stephen makes. Ireland too had long been at the mercy of England, as Jonathan Swift points out with regard to trade ("*A PROPOSAL FOR THE UNIVERSAL USE OF IRISH MANUFACTURE*") and the minting of money ("*The Drapier's Letters*"). For years Ireland was forced to get by with whatever England allowed it to have, which was never enough. Likewise, Mr. Deasy, the Englishman, fiscally controls the fate of Stephen Dedalus, the Irishman, so long as Stephen teaches at his school. When Stephen decides that he is going to quit his job, it is an immature and rash decision, but it is perhaps not as negative a rejection of reality and responsibility as he has made in

the past, since in this case he is symbolically not rejecting his family or Ireland, but the oppression of England.

Peek-a-Boo: The “Proteus” Episode

In episode 3, “Proteus,” images of boyishness and immaturity can be divided into three groups: Stephen’s actions, comparisons between him and others, and the images of the womb and mother. The irony here is that we see Stephen at his most serious, dark, and cerebral, but the images of him that appear throughout this episode are the most infantile in the entire novel. This seems to point to the problem he has of being too wrapped up in his own thoughts and self to actively engage with the physical and social world around him. Mark Morrison points out that the poem Stephen writes in the “Proteus” episode—the only one he produces in the novel—“is but a version of an already written poem, ‘My Grief on the Sea,’ in Douglas Hyde’s *Love Songs of Connacht*. Stephen seems incapable of using the avenue of sublimation: he can only theorize about Shakespeare’s art and life, rather than engaging with his own” (346). The episode begins with Stephen in a sense, playing peek-a-boo with the world as he closes his eyes and thinks to himself, “Open your eyes now. I will. One moment. Has all vanished since. If I open and am forever in the black adiaphane. *Basta!* I will see if I can see” (3.25-26).

Here again, in a self-centered and child-like way, he is pondering whether the world exists if he is unable to see it. He of course, concludes it must since he can still hear the world, and his temporary fear fades, alleviated by his thinking, “I am getting along nicely in the dark. My ash sword hangs at my side” (3.15-16). Stephen knows that

the real and physical world exists, but he at times has difficulty engaging it. He often seems more at home in his own head. Richard Ellmann observes, “In one of his schemes for *Ulysses* Joyce noted that in the first three episodes Stephen did not yet have a body. He meant that Stephen is still engaged in ‘lordly study’ and remains abstract” (“Why Does Stephen Pick his Nose?” 592). Stephen is more comfortable in this world of the abstract, but in this scene he seems to be attempting to move out of the abstract world of his own mind and into the real and physical world. It is his thought of the ash plant, his “sword,” that brings him out of the childish game he is playing with himself, but the ashplant also creates yet another image of him as boy-like. The fact that he carries a stick, which he calls his sword, evokes the image of a boy playing “pretend” with a stick or toy sword, and creating imaginary worlds in order to “play” or, more appropriately, begin to understand the world around him, something that Stephen is still trying to do.

In the “Proteus” episode, Stephen compares himself to Buck Mulligan, and his doing so reveals much about how even he perceives himself as boy-like. When the barking dog in the “Proteus” episode approaches Stephen, he stops, and “just simply [stands] pale, silent, bayed about” (3.311). These actions are followed by a comparison of Stephen and Buck. Stephen thinks, “[Buck] saved men from drowning and you shake at a cur’s yelping” (3.317-318). Stephen’s fear is telling: he is possessed by childish terror of dogs, and, as we learn in the following lines, water (3.323-330). And he is also in his own mind less of a “man” than Buck Mulligan and Simon Dedalus, his father. Stephen’s vision of himself as less “manly” than Buck seems to connect also to the lines that precede his thought about Buck in which he compares himself to kings’ sons. Ann Kimble Loux writes, “As he wanders on Sandymount strand [Stephen] ... thinks of

kings' sons—Thomas Fitzgerald, Perkin Warbeck, Lambert Simnel—who were all less than their fathers, 'All kings' sons. Paradise of Pretenders'(3.311-317)" (285). This comparison, which Loux regards as "hidden in Stephen's musings," places Stephen in the role of the "Pretender" and his father Simon Dedalus in role of king, and hidden in the comparison is "Stephen's envy of Simon's mirth, his happy song, his ease with women, and life in general. Stephen, the pretender, has none of the attractive, manly qualities (which Mulligan possesses in trumps)" (285). Stephen realizes that he is like the sons he has mentioned and, like them, does not have the same valued qualities that their fathers had, which suggests Stephen's own feelings about himself not being sufficiently "manly." This imagery, however, is odd in that it contradicts Stephen's feelings about his father and his peers in *Portrait*. As discussed in Chapter 2 of this paper, Stephen, at moments in *Portrait*, feels that he is more mature than his peers or his father, despite the fact that he is lacking all of the "manly" qualities that his father and many of his schoolmates admire and possess. At times it appears that Stephen makes the comparisons and distinctions simply to stand out and appear different. However, Stephen's ability throughout *Portrait* to appear more intellectually mature apart, than those around him is what distinguishes him, but in *Ulysses*, it is those qualities along with his disconnection from the physical world that makes him appear as a boy among men.

The "allwombing tomb" (3.402) is another powerful image in the "Proteus" episode that suggests several meanings related to the idea of Stephen as boy-like. The first is that the womb and mother, by obvious association, are something destructive for the male child. And the second is that for Stephen, his mind is an "allwombing tomb" because it is supposed to be a place where art is created and from which it is born, but for

Stephen it is a realm in which he is trapped and cut off from the physical world around him. In episode 2, the imagery that Stephen “used for Cyril Sargent’s mother (and by extension Mrs. Dedalus) also indicates sinister overtones by suggesting that she is somehow responsible for the child’s weakness or dullness: ‘with her weak blood and wheysour milk she had fed him’(2.166)” (Hill 355). Stephen’s thoughts about motherhood imply that the mother’s influence begins before birth, and that “the child feeds off of the mother and is poisoned by her; she is responsible for unmanning him and making him a ‘knock-kneed mother’s darling’ (2.315)” (355). These are harsh words suggesting again that Stephen views himself as less than a man, but also that he blames his mother for making him this way. As emasculating as he feels his mother was, he still longs for that connection with her that he does not have: “he yearns for a love that is at once maternal and erotic with its emphasis on soothing and comforting hands and eyes: ‘Touch me. Soft eyes. Soft soft soft hand. I am lonely here. O, touch me soon, now. What is that word known to all men? I am quiet here alone. Sad too. Touch, touch me’ (3.434-46)” (Hill 336). This emotional release by Stephen shows how fragile and childlike he still is. Throughout “Proteus” he is consumed by childish fears and he longs for the soothing look and touch of his mother. This emotional release reveals another thing as well; Stephen has yet to move beyond the Oedipal Phase of development and is still intertwining images of the mother into sexual fantasies. This goes to the root of Stephen’s problem, which began very early in *Portrait*. That is, he has yet to have a meaningful relationship or sexual encounter with a woman, and this separation is what helps to keep both him and his art trapped in the “allwombing tomb” of his mind.

CHAPTER V

STEPHEN THROUGH THE EYES OF OTHERS:

THE MIDDLE EPISODES OF *ULYSSES*

After the first three episodes of *Ulysses*, the focus more or less shifts away from Stephen and onto Leopold Bloom. Stephen, however, still plays a major role in the “Scylla and Charybdis” episode, and there are several boy-like images of him spread throughout the middle episodes of the novel, from “Hades” through “Oxen of the Sun.” Throughout these portions of the novel, the boy-like images shift away, with a few exceptions, from those created by Stephen’s actions or childlike way of viewing himself and the world. Instead, as *Ulysses* progresses, Stephen appears boy-like largely because of the way other characters think of him, talk about him, and speak to him. These images once again emphasize the idleness and immaturity of Stephen, the would-be artist, and also guide our minds towards the image of Stephen as the lost and orphaned Telemachus searching for his father Odysseus, played by Bloom, before the two are finally united, and Stephen is rescued by Bloom in the “Circe” episode. These images of Stephen as boyish and immature are in stark contrast to the images presented to the reader through the perceptions of the characters in *Portrait*, where Stephen stands apart from his classmates and stands out to the priests early in the novel because of his maturity and intellect, which place him above those around him. In these middle episodes of *Ulysses*,

Stephen is introduced to the reality of his life and the fact that he has not accomplished anything that he expected of himself or that others expected of him in *Portrait*. Stephen is assaulted in these episodes by a series of hurtful but honest remarks about his youth and lack of accomplishment. The motif of boyhood images first continues in the most appropriate way, in the mind of the symbolic father, Leopold Bloom.

Is That You, Son?

Richard Ellmann explains that “the theme of *Ulysses*, Joyce intimates, is reconciliation with the father” (*James Joyce* 299), a theme that also adds to the images of Stephen Dedalus as immature and boyish. While Bloom is traveling in the carriage to Paddy Dignam’s funeral in the “Hades” episode, he spots Stephen walking, and the words of Stephen’s actual father regarding his son are then juxtaposed with Bloom’s thoughts about his dead son Rudy. Simon Dedalus talks disparagingly about his in-laws, whom he assumes Stephen has been to see, and also gives his harsh opinion on Stephen’s friend Buck Mulligan, ending with, “I won’t have her [Buck’s Aunt’s] bastard of a nephew ruin my son” (4.41-70). Embedded in these words are Simon’s opinion of his son as someone unable to take care of himself, one who needs the help of his father and mother to stay out of trouble and be successful. The father that Joyce portrays in Bloom is much different from Stephen’s biological father or Joyce’s own father, and according to Ellmann has many of the characteristics of Joyce himself (299). Bloom’s thoughts about the type of father he would have been to Rudy, his dead son, contrast sharply with Simon’s assessment of Stephen. While Bloom understands that a child needs help from his parent, thinking, “I could have helped [Rudy] on in life,” Bloom adds something that

Simon leaves out, which is that he would “Make him independent too” (4.83).

Unwittingly, Bloom has now begun to associate Stephen with his lost son Rudy. Joyce makes this clear by juxtaposing the opinions of the two fathers and the images of the two sons. The appearance of Stephen jars Bloom’s memory of Rudy, and through the words and thoughts of Stephen’s physical and symbolic father, he is portrayed as an immature boy in need of help and guidance.

Bloom sees Stephen again in the “Aeolus” episode and takes time to worry about him in the midst of a discussion over advertisements with Myles Crawford. When Bloom looks at Stephen, he notices that he has a better pair of shoes on his feet (which are not his, but Buck’s) than he did the last time he saw him, when Stephen was wearing shoes with holes. Even his current shoes are dirty, which leads Bloom to think of Stephen as a “careless chap” and to wonder what he was doing in Irishtown earlier that morning (7.981-984), where Bloom had caught a glimpse of him. Bloom sees that Stephen is someone who needs to be taken care of, and the reader may assume, based on his thoughts in the previous episode, that he feels this is the result of his not being properly raised. Richard Ellmann, in an essay titled “Joyce and Homer,” espouses a theory that Joyce had more in mind than just Homer’s *Odyssey* when he was creating Bloom, that he also had in mind the final voyage of Ulysses, which was foretold by Tiresias and of which several versions were created. Joyce had a copy of a study of the lost *Telegony* in his library, and in one version by the writer Eugammon, Odysseus has two sons besides Telemachus, one called Callidike, and another called Telegonus, who, not recognizing his father, kills Odysseus and marries Penelope. In addition to providing a number of motifs and images that appear in *Ulysses*, such as Stephen’s attempt to destroy his father and

become the father of his own creation, and the “quasi-incestuous” union of Molly and Stephen, “the presence in the *Telegony* of three sons of Ulysses encouraged Joyce to give Bloom two” (574). The knowledge of Joyce’s intentions and the thoughts that Bloom has of Stephen reinforce the idea of Bloom as the lost father of Stephen. Bloom has now taken a caring interest in Stephen and this will drive his actions in part throughout the rest of the novel.

Stephen the Schoolboy

During the “Scylla and Charybdis” episode, which takes place in the National Library, Stephen engages in debate with and is thus engaged by the scholarly gentlemen A.E. (George Russell), John Eglinton, and Lyster. The topics discussed include the Platonic (represented by the scholars) versus Aristotelian (represented by Stephen) philosophies of aesthetics, which leads into an argument about the autobiographical aspects of Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*. John Eglinton, though, first makes a rather personal attack on Stephen by asking, “Have you found those six brave medicals ... to write *Paradise Lost* at your dictation? *The Sorrows of Satan* he calls it” (*Ulysses* 9.17-19). Stephen only smiles at what appears to be an attack on both his laziness and his presumptuousness in thinking that he might create a literary work of high merit to rival Milton’s. Stephen makes no response, but Eglinton fires again, indirectly, when he remarks, “Our young Irish bards ... have yet to create a figure the world will set beside Saxon Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*” (9.43-44). This is an attack on Stephen, a “young Irish bard” who has failed to be the forger of his nation’s “uncreated conscience,” or even to produce a single significant piece of writing. It is also another reminder of Ireland’s

failure to live up to England's greatness. Ireland cannot look to itself for examples of literary greatness, and neither can Stephen look to himself. With this notion, one is reminded of what Stephen said in *Portrait* during his conversation with the dean of studies at University of College: "For my purpose I can work on at present by the light of one or two ideas of Aristotle and Aquinas," conceding, "I need them only for my own use and guidance until I have done something for myself by their light" (202). Stephen still has not "done something for [himself]." In the "Scylla and Charybdis" episode, he is still working in the present light of one or two ideas and has yet to come up with his own. In the pages of the episode he must even defend his beloved Aristotle in the face of the Platonists' criticisms.

According to Joseph Valente, in Stephen's biographical theory of *Hamlet*—in which Hamlet's father is Shakespeare, Hamlet is Shakespeare's dead son, and the Queen is Ann Hathaway—"he represents Shakespeare, his idealized aesthetic father, as undergoing a crisis of masculinity" and traces its sexual origins, while leaving out "rumors and historical evidence of Shakespeare's homosexual affections," which nevertheless bubble to the surface, along with Stephen's homophobia (113). Through Stephen's analysis of Shakespeare, the man and his art, he perhaps unintentionally links himself to Shakespeare, and thus appears to be having the same crises of masculinity as his aesthetic father. The "Scylla and Charybdis" episode suggests that Stephen needs a woman, and he thinks, "And my turn? When? Come," after describing Shakespeare's seduction by Ann Hathaway (9.261-262). At the same time, "in Stephen's model, women obstruct male genius," but it is "only to enable it, and so [women] always turn out to be 'errors...volitional' in the end (9.229)" (Valente 118). Up to this point, Stephen

has been unable to accept women in a meaningful way, and we are led to suspect he may never be able to have a meaningful relationship. And so the best he may be able to hope for is the same relationship that Shakespeare had, one in which he is seduced by the woman: "He was chosen...If others have their will Ann hath a way. By cock she was to blame. She put the comether on him, sweet and twentysix. The greyeyed goddess who bends over the boy Adonis, stooping to conquer" (9.256-259). Valente points out that Stephen suggests that the "separatist alternative...results in mental masturbation: 'Unwed, unfancied, ware of wiles, they fingerponder nightly watch of his variorum edition of *The Taming of the Shrew*'" (118). Stephen adds that when Shakespeare leaves Hathaway to go to London he "gained the world of men" (9.254), and finding a gateway into the world of manhood seems to be a necessary step for Stephen as well, regardless of whether he can enter into a mature relationship with a woman.

Stephen continues his battle of wits with the librarians who see him as a "schoolboy" because of his acceptance of Aristotle's view of art (9.53). The librarians espouse Plato's aesthetic theories and believe that "Art has to reveal to us ideas, formless spiritual essences. The supreme question about a work of art is out of how deep a life does it spring" (9.48-50). This comment must sting Stephen as he ponders how "deep a life" he has had, living in his mind and resisting a connection with the real world and with humanity at almost every turn. For Eglington, what is important are the ideas expressed in the art, but Stephen cannot separate the life from the art or ideas, which is apparent in "Stephen's bio-historical view of Shakespeare," which Russell sees as feminizing Shakespeare, who according to Stephen was symbolically seduced and castrated by Hathaway instead of Shakespeare playing the role of seducer (Valente 116).

In addition, Joseph Valente believes that when A.E. dismisses the importance of a historical inscription on Shakespeare's work, he "not only aligns art with the dominant values of the patriarchal code—separation, stratification, mastery—he treats the person of the artist, the presumptively male artist, as their virtual incarnation, a 'deep' yet uncircumstanced 'life' bearing the 'wisdom' of 'Plato's world of ideas'" (116). In addition to regarding Stephen's philosophy as un-masculine, the librarians see his Aristotlean analysis as "speculation of schoolboys for schoolboys" (9.53). Because Stephen takes a stance that the librarians see as juvenile, in their minds he becomes the "schoolboy," and the reader is confronted with an image of Stephen attempting to find his place among men instead of as a man already. Stephen remains in a position in which he must prove himself.

During the "Scylla and Charybdis" episode, Leopold Bloom also makes a brief appearance in the library where he is doing research for the Keyes advertisement. There is little evidence that Stephen notices Bloom's appearance, but Bloom notices Stephen, and, as the "'wise' father, observes Stephen with such marked interest as to elicit a lewd jest from the irrepressible Buck" (Gilbert 212). Stuart Gilbert explains that at no time do Stephen's thoughts, words, or actions give the reader the idea that Stephen is aware of the connection that he and Bloom have, "but it is, rather, Bloom, nearer to the earth mother, to the instinctive, who grasps, dimly albeit, the creator's purpose regarding their complementary interrelation" (214). Bloom's awareness, however dim, serves to place him clearly in the fatherly and more mature role in the relationship which is coming to fruition between Bloom and Stephen. It is the traditional role of the father to worry about the son and not vice versa, except in unusual circumstances. Stephen in this scene, as in

the majority of scenes, is consumed with his own thoughts and the conversation in which he is engaged. While Buck was paying homage earlier in the day to a statue of Aphrodite, he saw Bloom, and tells Stephen that “he [Bloom] knows you. He knows your old fellow. O, I fear me, he is Grecker than the Greeks ...*The god pursuing the maiden hid*” (9.614-617). Joseph Valente suggests that “Mulligan here invokes twin racial stereotypes, the ‘Greek[s]’ long-standing reputation for pederasty...and the ‘galilean[s]’ modern racial classification as feminine,...at the same time, mak[ing] Stephen both a surrogate son to Bloom...and a quasi-daughter or ‘maiden’” (133). The discussion of the homosexual overtones of this scene are beyond the scope of this paper. What is important here is the reinforcement in this scene of the father-son theme and the adolescent mockery that Stephen must endure at the hands of Buck: “Did you see his [Bloom’s] eye? He looked upon you to lust after you...O, Kinch [Stephen], thou art in peril. Get thee a breechpad” (9.1209-1211). With these last words the two “boys” follow the “father” out of the library. And as Stephen thinks of Buck, “Offend me still. Speak on” (9.1217), the reader is left with the image reminiscent of an older brother torturing a resentful younger brother behind the parent’s back, as the “boys” follow the “father” out of the library.

Stephen is Born...Again.

There is much going on in the “Oxen of the Sun” episode. Stephen and Bloom are in a maternity hospital among a crowd of very loud medical students, who are having a conversation that is “ribald and fertile in obstetric allusion” (Gilbert 294). As he weaves metaphorical images of human development and transformation into the episode,

Joyce also brings Bloom and Stephen nearer to their uniting. He highlights this coming together by having Bloom's pitying thoughts of Stephen now intermingle with memories of Stephen as a boy and with images of his own dead son. In this episode Stephen appears particularly infantile because of the images of embryonic development that recur throughout the episode. He is also seen as boyish in the mind of Bloom, childish in the similarities between himself and the company that he is keeping, and immature or insignificant in relation to the literary giants and styles that are mirrored in Joyce's prose throughout the episode.

The clearest image of Stephen as immature, and even infantile, is explained by James Joyce himself in a letter to Frank Budgen. Joyce writes that in this episode "Bloom is the spermatozoon, the hospital the womb, the nurse the ovum, Stephen the embryo" (*Letters*, Vol. 1 139). Earlier, in "Scylla and Charybdis," Stephen tried to argue that Shakespeare needed to be seduced by a woman and needed the connection to woman so that he could break free and enter the world of men (*Ulysses* 9.254-259). The Critic James H. Maddox explains that in "'Oxen of the Sun' [Stephen] tries like the fetus struggling to be born, to establish independence of his mother: the artist usurps the power of the woman to gestate and give birth" (177). However, Stephen does not yet have this power for he is still haunted by the memory of his mother and has not yet encountered his Ann Hathaway, giving him no woman to break free from. The imagery of Stephen's birth begins when he yells, near the end of the lengthy episode, "'Burke's,'" a name of a pub he encourages his companions to repair to (14.1391). In one of the many parodic styles used in the episode, Joyce then writes, "Outflings my lord Stephen, giving the cry" as he leaves the womb, the maternity hospital (14.1391). But, Stephen does not enter the world

as a new man, but as a new child with a new father in Leopold Bloom, who follows Stephen and the others out of the hospital to Burke's. Throughout this episode images that clarify the connection between Bloom and Stephen are prevalent, and the link between the father and new son will become closer and physical in the next three episodes. Bloom, Stephen's new father, will attempt to ground Stephen in reality so that he may one day become the artist he is meant to become.

While at the maternity hospital, "Mr. Bloom plays ... a ripley paternal role as he sits, humdrum, among these harum-scarums, genuinely shocked by their callousness" (Gilbert 295). There are many images of the medical students gathered at the hospital behaving childishly as Bloom wonders how with only the "acquisition of titles" these frivolous students, "these votaries of levity[.]" can be transformed into doctors, a profession that many consider to be the most noble (14.898-902). Stephen is right in the middle of the boisterousness and, "thanks to his command of words and dialectic, able to outpace even these experts in the obstetric and the obscene on their own terrain of pseudo-medical bawdry" (Gilbert 295). Stephen's actively participates in this adolescent scene in which "the young sparks ... were as full of extravagancies as over grown children: the words of their tumultuary discussions were difficultly understood and not often nice: their testiness and outrageous *mots* were such that his intellects resiled from" (*Ulysses* 14.848-51). This scene serves not only to amplify the image of Stephen as boyish, but to place Bloom further into the role of the father. In this episode Stephen becomes even more intertwined in Bloom's mind with the memory of his dead son Rudy.

Despite Bloom's having no son—or perhaps it is better to say because Bloom has lost his son—he feels sorry for Stephen. It is said of Bloom, "As sad as he was that him

failed a son of such gentle courage ... so grieved him also in no less measure for young Stephen for that he lived riotously with those wastrels and murdered his goods with whores" (14.273-6). It seems quite obvious that Bloom wants (needs) a son as much as Stephen needs a proper father. If Rudy had lived, it is likely that Bloom's marriage would be less troubled, and Bloom also would have been able to give his guidance and support to someone, something he hopes to do with Stephen. Towards the end of the episode, Bloom looks at Stephen, and Joyce provides a telling image. Bloom has just been remembering seeing Stephen with his mother when Stephen was four or five and then thinks, "He [Stephen as a small boy] frowns a little just as this young man does now with a perhaps too conscious enjoyment of the danger but must needs glance at whiles towards where his mother watches" (14.1371-1376). Stephen's present appearance takes Bloom back in memory, reminding him and the reader of Stephen's lack of independence and his need for approval. In Bloom's memory, Stephen looks to his mother for approval or disapproval, and it is important to note that throughout *Ulysses*, he is still struggling with the disapproving ghost of his mother. According to Enda Duffy, one of the focuses of the "Oxen of the Sun" episode is the relationship between the mother's act of giving birth to a child and the national and communal significance of this event" (211). Duffy points out that this episode was written "when the Irish state was, with great difficulty, itself being born" (211).

The mother imagery is important for two reasons. First it represents what Stephen must accept and move past, the reality of the mother's role and the connection to the reality of life, in order to become a creator. Second, it creates a parallel between Stephen becoming an artist and Ireland becoming an independent state, but in "Oxen of the Sun"

generally and in Stephen's mind in particular, there is "an apparent determination all the while to avoid the physical reality constituting that motherhood" (Duffy 211). The result is that Stephen appears not to be an adult who has tried to accept the loss of his mother and move on in a mature and healthy way; rather, he appears as a child still listening to the "ghost" of his mother, dependent on the imagined voice that he hears, and not accepting that the mother is in reality gone. Twisted into this scene are images of Stephen needing a real connection to a parent figure and Bloom needing a son, and these images will drive the characters to their first physical meeting in the next episode of the novel, "Circe."

In the midst of Bloom's overlapping memories of Rudy and Stephen in the "Oxen" episode, Stephen has an interchange with his friend Vincent Lynch that places Stephen in the role of a failed father/creator. In recalling his time at school with friends, Stephen says, "I, Bous Stephanoumenos, bullockbefriending bard, am lord and giver of their life" (14.1115-1116). Blamires explains that this is Stephen boasting of his ability to bring back the inhabitants of the past (his friends) through his art (154), but Lynch says that Stephen perhaps should hold back on those claims until more "than a capful of light odes can call your genius father" (*Ulysses* 14.1119). Stephen is left in a dark mood after this statement and the previous reminders of his mother's recent death: "all could see how hard it was for him to be reminded of his promise [as an artist]" (14.1124-1125). This interchange serves to take the reader back to *Portrait* where Stephen and Joyce put so much emphasis on how the poet was father, creator, and even god. James H. Druff, Jr. explains how Stephen's failure to fulfill his "promise" is highlighted further "by a crushing stylistic irony, for when we contrast Stephen's achievement with that of the

various narrators [in the “Oxen” episode], we will most likely note the distance between his fecundity of theory and their fecundity of art” (311). It is becoming more apparent that it is not so much Stephen’s failure as an artist, for the majority of his acquaintances are no more successful, but his unabashed arrogance that makes him appear childish. At the conclusion of the “Oxen of the Sun” episode, Stephen seems to be spiraling out of control. Bloom notices this and follows him when he leaves the hospital for Burke’s.

The middle episodes of *Ulysses* begin to bring into the light the theme of the father searching for a son, but they also reinforce the motifs of childbirth and of Stephen as boyish and in some instances infantile and reckless. Stephen has not shown much, if any, growth throughout these episodes and according to some critics, and even Joyce, he has just been born at the end of the “Oxen of the Sun” episode. He is born into a new life and leaves the maternity hospital in the episode as a child accompanied in this new life by a more capable and mature father in Bloom. In the episodes that follow “Oxen,” the father will be there to rescue the child and offer guidance, perhaps allowing Stephen the opportunity to break from his unproductive past and move into a future in which he does not ignore the world around him, but takes part in it, allowing him to become once and for all the creator and artist that he is expected to be.

CHAPTER VI

FATHER, MOTHER AND SON: STEPHEN ON THE VERGE OF MATURITY

In the later episodes of *Ulysses*, Stephen Dedalus is inebriated and in a helpless state, and Bloom takes it upon himself to care for him as they move from the maternity hospital of “Oxen of the Sun,” through the brothel of “Circe” and the cabman’s shelter and street of “Eumaeus,” to Bloom’s home in “Ithaca.” In these episodes, we see Bloom’s efforts to rescue and care for Stephen, as Bloom follows him, and, like a father, tries to protect and save the child from himself. As we move through the final episodes of the novel, the “father searching for a son” theme is fulfilled. The Odyssean father figure of Leopold Bloom has arrived to save the Telemachian figure of Stephen Dedalus, the son who thus far has been unable to handle life very well on his own. Over the next three episodes Bloom does his best to offer Stephen advice and help, for he recognizes the potential that exists in Stephen, just as so many others have. What so many, including Simon Dedalus, Buck Mulligan, and Vincent Lynch, have viewed as a joke or failure, Bloom sees as a young man full of potential. At least on a symbolic level, Bloom alone recognizes Stephen’s capacity to become an artist capable of forging his race’s conscience (*Portrait* 276). Additionally, in the final episode there are images from Molly’s soliloquy that portray Stephen as both boyish and on the verge of manhood.

Molly imagines being for Stephen what Ann Hathaway was for Shakespeare: his connection to a woman and his bridge to the world of men. Many of the final images of Stephen are for the most part not boyish or un-manly but those of a young man who is lost and in need of guidance, and Joyce places him in the presence of “parents” who have both taken an interest in his success, but it is still up to Stephen to accept or reject this guidance and to make himself an artist. In the end it is not clear whether Stephen will be able to accomplish this, and it is also unclear whether or not the path Bloom offers will make the journey any easier for Stephen, for Bloom offers him security, but not freedom.

Stephen Out of Control: The “Circe” Episode

In “Circe,” Bloom follows Stephen into Nighttown and then into a brothel where he must take care of and protect Stephen. Bloom is frustrated as he follows Stephen, thinking, “Wildgoose chase this. Disorderly houses. Lord knows where they are gone. Drunks cover distance double quick. Nice mixup” (*Ulysses* 15.635-636). Despite several obstacles, and the fact that he is exhausted, Bloom continues to follow Stephen, but wonders why, thinking “Still, he’s the best of that lot” (15.640). Stephen is still not consciously aware of the connection between himself and Bloom and is perhaps too drunk to become aware. Bloom, on the other hand, understands that he needs and wants a fatherly connection to Stephen and that at the present moment Stephen is in need of his help. During the “Circe” episode, Stephen acts little more mature than an out-of-control teenager, who, without the help and guidance of this new parental figure, could be lying robbed and beaten in a ditch somewhere in Nighttown. Nevertheless these images of bad behavior are juxtaposed with attempts to move into maturity and adulthood.

After Bloom experiences a series of hallucinations, he notices the drunk Stephen paying for prostitutes for himself and his friend, Lynch, giving far too much money, to Bella Cohen, the owner of the brothel. Bloom rushes in and corrects Stephen's mistake. At first he thinks of returning the money to Stephen, but reconsiders when he sees the state Stephen is in. He says to Stephen, "You had better hand over that cash to me to take care of. Why pay more?" (*Ulysses* 15.3601-3602). Stephen, drunk and distracted, allows Bloom to hold his money while he "plays." The reader is reminded of Mr. Deasy's words of fiscal advice in the "Nestor" episode and of Stephen's chronic irresponsibility with his money. Stephen even thinks mockingly of Mr. Deasy: "must visit old Deasy or telegraph. Our interview of this morning has left on me a deep impression" (*U* 15.2497-2498). This incident involving Stephen's money is the first of several in which Bloom appears to be stepping into his role of father in order to try to help Stephen.

According to James H. Maddox, Jr., the few times that Stephen speaks in this episode,

He is consciously repeating himself—as consciously, anyhow as his drunkenness will allow...[and] in spite of his drunkenness, he is seldom in the book so intent as he is here upon transcending the limits of his own ego and, at least intellectually, grasping that condition of maturity which he has longed for through the day. (133)

One such example may be his thought, mentioned above, about his conversation earlier in the day with Mr. Deasy. Even if he is mocking "old Deasy" and the "deep impression" he made, Stephen nevertheless returns to the incident; it has wormed its way into his consciousness. Also, Stephen says, "*Jetez la gourme. Faut que jeunesse se passé*" ["Sow

the wild oats. Youth must pass”] (*Ulysses* 15.2094). Now is the time for Stephen to pass from youth into maturity, and through his words and actions, he is at least tentatively acknowledging his immaturity and his need for help. As Maddox puts it, “here in the street of harlots, Stephen reaches out toward the Semitic man he dreamed of the night before” (133). Handing over his money willingly is this first step, for it establishes a physical, and more than merely a momentary, connection between Stephen and Bloom.

This image is soon followed by a string of events in which Bloom tries to protect Stephen from trouble or injury. Stephen, disoriented after dancing wildly, is suddenly troubled by images of his dead mother, and in an act of frustration he destroys a chandelier with his “sword” (15.474-475). The fact that Stephen carries the ashplant, which he refers to as his “sword,” creates a boyish image, and his waving it drunkenly creates an adolescent one. However, Stephen’s use of the ashplant to smash the chandelier at last suggests an acceptance of reality, for it vanquishes his mother’s ghost, ending his hallucination. When May Dedalus rises through the floor she is more than just Stephen’s mother. “[S]he is Stephen’s vision of the archetypal woman,” “the woman who represents the cycle of ‘Bridebed, childbed, bed of death, ghostcandeled’”; she is “not May Dedalus, but The Mother” (Maddox 137). Stephen is still imprisoned by his attempt to detach himself from his past experience and to achieve the acceptance of woman that he needs in order to ground himself in reality. It is Bloom who helps him accomplish an acceptance of death and woman, and in doing so, allows Stephen to move forward. Joyce’s young characters seem to “need the sheer experience of living long enough for their past to fall back into recognizable and intelligible pattern. This is not a flight from the past; it is an approximation of Proust’s assertion that one must lose the

past in order to regain it” (Maddox 136). Stephen’s destruction of the chandelier represents his acceptance of his mother’s death and his connection to reality; this is a step forward to a more mature Stephen than the one we have seen earlier in the novel, the Stephen who was trying to escape the reality of his past by fleeing to Paris at the end of *Portrait*.

After Stephen smashes the chandelier, Bloom quickly comes to his aid by defending him against Bella Cohen, who has threatened to call the police. Bloom steps in and raises Stephen’s ashplant threateningly towards Bella and says “(*urgently*) And if it were your own son in Oxford? (*Warningly*) I know” (*Ulysses* 15.4306). With his defense of Stephen, “Bloom has begun, finally, to act the role of the protective father” (Maddox 141). Bloom’s protective role continues when he follows Stephen into the street outside the brothel. Stephen has initiated a conversation with two drunk British soldiers who have seen him talking to Cissy Caffrey, which eventually escalates into an argument, ending when Private Carr “rushes towards Stephen, fist outstretched, and strikes him in the face” (*Ulysses* 15.4747-4748). Stephen, at the end of the episode, is in the most helpless position he has been in yet as “*He lies prone, his face to the sky, his hat rolling to the wall*” (15.4748-4749). Bloom again takes on the role of father as he cares for his injured “son,” and waits to take Stephen home, holding on to his money, hat and ashplant sword. The final series of images is that of Bloom gazing down at Stephen curled on the ground as Bloom “recites fragments from the Masonic Master’s oath to the Entered Apprentice”; “this is Maturity welcoming Youth into the order—and uttering the welcome, paradoxically, just when youth has regressed to the fetal stage” (Maddox 143). Maddox adds that “the paradox here is at the center of the initiation rite: Bloom’s life is a

constant dramatization of the truth that one may become reconciled to experience only by submitting to it—just as Stephen may achieve transcendence over the crippling force of his mother only by acknowledging the power of *amor matris*” (143). Bloom then looks up from the prone Stephen and imagines his dead son, Rudy, an image no doubt brought on by the position of father that Bloom has adopted in relation to Stephen. In these final images of the “Circe” episode, there is a juxtaposition of both boyish and adult images, causing the reader to wonder whether Bloom is the key to Stephen taking the next step into maturity.

Though the image of Stephen on the ground in fetal position is obviously meant to highlight his immaturity, so are the images of him as irresponsible and immature that come earlier in the “Circe” episode. But, paradoxically, for the first time there appears to be the opportunity that he can progress out of youth and immaturity and into adulthood under the guidance of Bloom. The final pages of this frantic episode, with its images of the father finally united with his surrogate son, bring Stephen out of the shadowy world and into reality. He appears to have vanquished his ghost, and his muttered thoughts at the end of “Circe” are from the poem he recited to his mother, and also of the physical world: “...shadows...the woods...white breast...dim sea” (*Ulysses* 15.4942-43).

Isn't It Past Your Bed Time?:

The “Eumaeus” and “Ithaca” Episodes

Some critics have found the “Eumaeus” episode sluggish or tired in contrast to the “Circe” episode that precedes it. Others might find relief in the slower pace of the Eumaeus episode, which offers several images of Stephen Dedalus being offered the

advice and assistance of the fatherly Bloom. The episode's pace is not the focus here, but that pace seems to work perfectly with the mental states of the two protagonists as they make their way towards Bloom's home after a long day of mental and physical battles. The images of Stephen in both "Eumaeus" and "Ithaca" are not nearly as boyish as others that have come before in the novel, and they seem to imply that Stephen is on his way to maturity, contrasting the images at the end of *Portrait* when he was on his way to immaturity. What is to become of Stephen is unclear, though, and in spite of his being somewhat more grounded than he was at the beginning of the novel, his stubbornness and philosophy appear to want to lead him again into already charted waters, with negative consequences.

The "Eumaeus" episode begins with Bloom helping Stephen to his feet and dusting him off (*Ulysses* 16.1-2), and in what is Bloom's "finest hour...from the wreck of a long dismal day he has salvaged a genuine poet-professor whom he is about to take home" (Kenner 130). Now Bloom has the opportunity to be the father that he had hoped to be with Rudy, and Stephen the artist that many hoped he would become. Bloom still sees Stephen in the same light that he did when he first saw him in the "Hades" episode, and "now Leopold Bloom can offer advice and be heard out, he who formerly could not so much as venture a funny story without someone else taking over the denouement" (Kenner 130). Bloom's advice varies from an explanation of the "dangers of nighttown" (*Ulysses* 16.63-69) and how it is an example of "fritter[ing] away your time...and health and also character" (16.85-86) to, as Hugh Kenner summarizes, advice for "the poet to write his poetry in Italian; [he] can offer him lodgings, can employ his presence to turn Molly's mind away from thoughts of Boylan; he can even manage him to a lucrative

vocal career” (130). This advice-giving is all important, though it perhaps says more about Bloom than Stephen, especially Bloom’s desire to have a son.

The reality of the situation is that Stephen is very lazy, and the chances of his being able to help Bloom when he can’t even help himself are slim, as Bloom witnesses when he brings up the subject of work: “Count me out, [Stephen] manages to remark, meaning work” (*Ulysses* 16.1148). This conversation turns to a philosophical difference as to whether Stephen belongs to Ireland, or Ireland to Stephen. Bloom has already recounted to Stephen what Parnell said on the subject, that “his advice to every Irishman was: stay in the land of your birth and work for Ireland and live for Ireland” (16.1007-1009). This of course goes against the very core of what Stephen feels about Ireland: “Ireland is the old sow that eats her farrow” and a “country [where] there are nets flung at [one’s soul] to hold it back from flight” (*Portrait* 220). Stephen’s philosophy does not appear to have changed much since *Portrait*, and as he begins to move physically closer to his surrogate Irish father’s home, his mind begins to move farther away, and Stephen seems to be on the verge of making the same sort of escape he made at the end of in *Portrait*, an immature act that leaves him with little or nothing to show for his efforts.

In the “Ithaca” and “Eumaeus” episodes, Bloom tries, or thinks about trying, to persuade Stephen to do three things that a parent might want a child to do: eat his dinner, take a bath, and go to bed. Bloom first suggests to Stephen, “you ought to have something in the shape of solid food, say, a roll of some description,” in addition to the coffee he is already drinking (*Ulysses* 16.332-33). Stephen accepts the roll, but he does not eat it. Later, in “Ithaca,” Bloom thinks about, but then decides against, suggesting to Stephen that he seriously consider his personal hygiene, before again thinking about

discussing, more seriously, Stephen's diet (17.229-51). Lastly, the reader learns that Stephen is offered a spare bed by Bloom but "Promptly, inexplicably, with amicability, gratefully it was declined" (17.955). Stephen is now firmly back in the role of stubborn child, but it appears not to be the same stubborn child we encounter at the end of *Portrait* or the beginning of *Ulysses*.

Stephen clearly still has trouble connecting to reality, but even Bloom, who is completely grounded, sees in Stephen "the erratic originality of genius" (17.247) and observes that Stephen has "confidence in himself" (17.253). Hugh Kenner implies that Bloom represents another trap that Stephen must escape, and "in one of the ways *Ulysses* might have ended—would have ended, had Bloom been the author—Stephen has everything he seemed to lack only that morning: decent quarters, a piano handy, a nubile woman about the house, the prospect of the nubile woman's daughter, time for literary pursuits, an indulgent provident 'father': everything save freedom" (139). Had Bloom forced or pressured Stephen into accepting any of this help, it would have contradicted the very thing he said he would do for his own son, make him independent. The reader is in the same position as Bloom, who cannot force his help and advice onto Stephen but only offer it, and as Stephen goes off into the night, it is still unclear whether he is any more mature than he was 600 pages earlier, or whether he has gained experience enough to "forge in the smithy of [his] soul the uncreated conscience of [his] race" (*Portrait* 276).

Molly: *Amor Matris*

During the “Eumaeus” episode Bloom thinks of Stephen, “it was a thousand pities a young fellow, blessed with an allowance of brains...should waste his valuable time with profligate women” and gives the impression that he is hopeful that Stephen “would one day take unto himself a wife when Miss Right came on the scene” (*Ulysses* 16.1553-1557). Molly Bloom in the “Penelope” episode appears to be ready to step into this role of lover, as well as the role of mother, and she offers to Stephen, should he become aware of her thoughts, the connection to both woman and reality that he needs in order to become a father/creator of art.

In “Penelope,” Stephen starts to emerge from boy to man, but only in the mind of Molly Bloom. Molly thinks back to the first time she met Stephen and continues, “I suppose he is a man by now he was an innocent boy then and a darling little fellow in his lord Fauntleroy suit” (18.1310-1312). But while Molly supposes Stephen to be a man, he is one in age only. She calculates that he is 20 or more and decides, “Im not too old for him if he is 23 or 24” (18.1328). She imagines that she will “teach him the other part Ill make him feel all over him till he half faints under me then hell write about me” (18.1363-1365). If this were to come to pass, Stephen would then move from childhood to manhood, just as Shakespeare did when he met Ann Hathaway and as James Joyce did when he met Nora Barnacle. Ann Kimble Loux adds that there would be “no more writer’s paralysis for Stephen; after her lessons, Molly says he’ll write. Physical love making becomes a step towards creative love making, toward the communion that engenders, gives birth and sustains new life” (293). If this unlikely fantasy were to become a reality, Stephen would gain that connection to a woman and to the real and

concrete world that would allow him at last create and become an artist/father. Molly never physically sees Stephen as a man or has the opportunity to “make a man of him” by seducing him, and for this reason, it is unclear whether the novel brings Stephen out of boyhood, at least in the way that Stephen conceptualizes the end of boyhood in his discussion of Shakespeare during the “Scylla and Charybdis” episode.

During the “Circe” episode Stephen faces the ghost of his mother and is both “fearful and needful,” but “we are meant to infer that as the livid final flame of June 16, 1904 leaps, Stephen is no longer paralyzed by matricidal guilt” (Zimmerman 65). Zimmerman adds that because of his confrontation of his mother’s ghost, Stephen has gained “phallic assertiveness that does not need to brutalize the beloved or the enemy,” and this along with his freedom “from patricidal guilt suggests that he is no longer the hapless son” (65). Though Stephen may be free from the guilt of his mother’s death, whether or not he is ill-fated is still very much up in the air. And in the “Penelope” episode, Stephen appears to have a surrogate mother in Molly Bloom. There is a paradox created in *Ulysses*, which Zimmerman explores, as to whether Molly is Stephen’s lover, mother, or both and whether or not he is a man capable of uniting with Molly as lover, or a boy who needs her physical connection as son. Zimmerman also says that “Joyce’s paradox suggests that Molly is creating Stephen, feeding him with her heart’s blood; she is sustaining him with milk, too, for that matter, milk for the piano keys” (64). The significance of these ambiguous images of Stephen’s possible relationships with Molly seems only to serve to make the status of Stephen even more uncertain at the end of *Ulysses*. The “Penelope” episode does nothing more than the rest of the novel does to give us an indication of where Stephen is heading or the level of maturity he has reached.

The final four episodes of *Ulysses* at first appear to be leading toward Stephen's transition from boyhood to manhood, maturity to immaturity. He seems to escape the haunting image of his mother's death and has at last found the assistance and guidance of a capable father figure. However, for every image of maturity, there seems to be a number of contradictory images of immaturity, boyishness, and infancy. In the end the reader can only make a guess as to whether Stephen might have more success, for this is the second time he has made an escape at the end of one of Joyce's novels.

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