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# ULYSSES

(III)

by **James Joyce**

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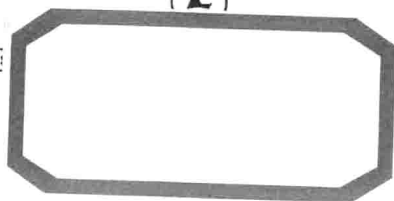
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## III

Preparatory to anything else Mr Bloom brushed off the greater bulk of the shavings and handed Stephen the hat and ashplant and bucked him up generally in orthodox Samaritan fashion which he very badly needed. His (Stephen's) mind was not exactly what you would call wandering but a bit unsteady and on his expressed desire for some beverage to drink Mr Bloom in view of the hour it was and there being no pump of Vartry water available for their ablutions let alone drinking purposes hit upon an expedient by suggesting, off the reel, the propriety of the cabman's shelter, as it was called, hardly a stonethrow away near Butt bridge where they might hit upon some drinkables in the shape of a milk and soda or a mineral. But how to get there was the rub. For the nonce he was rather nonplussed but inasmuch as the duty plainly devolved upon him to take some measures on the subject he pondered suitable ways and means during which Stephen repeatedly yawned. So far as he could see he was rather pale in the face so that it occurred to him as highly advisable to get a conveyance of some description which would answer in their then condition, both of them being e.d.ed, particularly Stephen, always assuming that there was such a thing to be found. Accordingly after a few such preliminaries as brushing, in spite of his having forgotten to take up his rather soapsuddy handkerchief after it had done yeoman service in the shaving line, they both walked together along Beaver street or, more properly, lane as far as the farrier's and the distinctly fetid atmosphere of the livery stables at the corner

of Montgomery street where they made tracks to the left from thence debouching into Amiens street round by the corner of Dan Bergin's. But as he confidently anticipated there was not a sign of a Jehu plying for hire anywhere to be seen except a fourwheeler, probably engaged by some fellows inside on the spree, outside the North Star hotel and there was no symptom of its budging a quarter of an inch when Mr Bloom, who was anything but a professional whistler, endeavoured to hail it by emitting a kind of a whistle, holding his arms arched over his head, twice.

This was a quandary but, bringing common sense to bear on it, evidently there was nothing for it but put a good face on the matter and foot it which they accordingly did. So, bevelling around by Mullett's and the Signal House which they shortly reached, they proceeded perforce in the direction of Amiens street railway terminus, Mr Bloom being handicapped by the circumstance that one of the back buttons of his trousers had, to vary the timehonoured adage, gone the way of all buttons though, entering thoroughly into the spirit of the thing, he heroically made light of the mischance. So as neither of them were particularly pressed for time, as it happened, and the temperature refreshing since it cleared up after the recent visitation of Jupiter Pluvius, they dandered along past by where the empty vehicle was waiting without a fare or a jarvey. As it so happened a Dublin United Tramways Company's sandstrewer happened to be returning and the elder man recounted to his companion *a propos* of the incident his own truly miraculous escape of some little while back. They passed the main entrance of the Great Northern railway station, the starting point for Belfast, where of course all traffic was suspended at that late hour and passing the backdoor of the morgue (a not very enticing locality, not to say gruesome to a degree, more especially at night) ultimately gained the Dock Tavern and in due course turned into Store street,

famous for its C division police station. Between this point and the high at present unlit warehouses of Beresford place Stephen thought to think of Ibsen, associated with Baird's the stonecutter's in his mind somehow in Talbot place, first turning on the right, while the other who was acting as his *fidus Achates* inhaled with internal satisfaction the smell of James Rourke's city bakery, situated quite close to where they were, the very palatable odour indeed of our daily bread, of all commodities of the public the primary and most indispensable. Bread, the staff of life, earn your bread, O tell me where is fancy bread, at Rourke's the baker's it is said.

*En route* to his taciturn and, not to put too fine a point on it, not yet perfectly sober companion Mr Bloom who at all events was in complete possession of his faculties, never more so, in fact disgustingly sober, spoke a word of caution re the dangers of nighttown, women of ill fame and swell mobsmen, which, barely permissible once in a while though not as a habitual practice, was of the nature of a regular deathtrap for young fellows of his age particularly if they had acquired drinking habits under the influence of liquor unless you knew a little jiu-jitsu for every contingency as even a fellow on the broad of his back could administer a nasty kick if you didn't look out. Highly providential was the appearance on the scene of Corny Kelleher when Stephen was blissfully unconscious but for that man in the gap turning up at the eleventh hour the *finis* might have been that he might have been a candidate for the accident ward or, failing that, the bridewell and an appearance in the court next day before Mr Tobias or, he being the solicitor rather, old Wall, he meant to say, or Mahony which simply spelt ruin for a chap when it got bruited about. The reason he mentioned the fact was that a lot of those policemen, whom he cordially disliked, were admittedly unscrupulous in the service of the Crown

and, as Mr Bloom put it, recalling a case or two in the A division in Clanbrassil street, prepared to swear a hole through a ten gallon pot. Never on the spot when wanted but in quiet parts of the city, Pembroke road for example, the

guardians of the law were well in evidence, the obvious reason being they were paid to protect the upper classes. Another thing he commented on was equipping soldiers with firearms or sidearms of any description liable to go off at any time which was tantamount to inciting them against civilians should by any chance they fall out over anything. You frittered away your time, he very sensibly maintained, and health and also character besides which, the squandermania of the thing, fast women of the *demimonde* ran away with a lot of l s. d. into the bargain and the greatest danger of all was who you got drunk with though, touching the much vexed question of stimulants, he relished a glass of choice old wine in season as both

nourishing and bloodmaking and possessing aperient virtues (notably a good burgundy which he was a staunch believer in) still never beyond a certain point where he invariably drew the line as it simply led to trouble all round to say nothing of your being at the tender mercy of others practically. Most of all he commented adversely on the desertion of Stephen by all his pubhunting *confreres* but one, a most glaring piece of ratting on the part of his brother medicos under all the circs.

— And that one was Judas, Stephen said, who up to then had said nothing whatsoever of any kind.

Discussing these and kindred topics they made a beeline across the back of the Customhouse and passed under the Loop Line bridge where a brazier of coke burning in front of a sentrybox or something like one attracted their rather lagging footsteps. Stephen of his own accord stopped for no special reason to look

at the heap of barren cobblestones and by the light emanating from the brazier he could just make out the darker figure of the corporation watchman inside the gloom of the sentrybox. He began to remember that this had happened or had been mentioned as having happened before but it cost him no small effort before he remembered that he recognised in the sentry a quondam friend of his father's, Gumley. To avoid a meeting he drew nearer to the pillars of the railway bridge.

—Someone saluted you, Mr Bloom said.

A figure of middle height on the prowl evidently under the arches saluted again, calling:

—*Night!*

Stephen of course started rather dizzily and stopped to return the compliment. Mr Bloom actuated by motives of inherent delicacy inasmuch as he always believed in minding his own business moved off but nevertheless remained on the *qui vive* with just a shade of anxiety though not funkyish in the least. Though unusual in the Dublin area he knew that it was not by any means unknown for desperadoes who had next to nothing to live on to be abroad waylaying and generally terrorising peaceable pedestrians by placing a pistol at their head in some secluded spot outside the city proper, famished loiterers of the Thames embankment category they might be hanging about there or simply marauders ready to decamp with whatever boodle they could in one fell swoop at a moment's notice, your money or your life, leaving you there to point a moral, gagged and garrotted.

Stephen, that is when the accosting figure came to close quarters, though he was not in an over sober state himself recognised Corley's breath redolent of rotten cornjuice. Lord John Corley some called him and his genealogy came about in this wise. He was the eldest son of inspector Corley of the G division, lately deceased, who had married a certain



Katherine Brophy, the daughter of a Louth farmer. His grandfather Patrick Michael Corley of New Ross had married the widow of a publican there whose maiden name had been Katherine (also) Talbot. Rumour had it (though not proved) that she descended from the house of the lords Talbot de Malahide in whose mansion, really an unquestionably fine residence of its kind and well worth seeing, her mother or aunt or some relative, a woman, as the tale went, of extreme beauty, had enjoyed the distinction of being in service in the washkitchen. This therefore was the reason why the still comparatively young though dissolute man who now addressed Stephen was spoken of by some with facetious proclivities as Lord John Corley.

Taking Stephen on one side he had the customary doleful ditty to tell. Not as much as a farthing to purchase a night's lodgings. His friends had all deserted him. Furthermore he had a row with Lenehan and called him to Stephen a mean bloody swab with a sprinkling of a number of other uncalledfor expressions. He was out of a job and implored of Stephen to tell him where on God's earth he could get something, anything at all, to do. No, it was the daughter of the mother in the washkitchen that was fostersister to the heir of the house or else they were connected through the mother in some way, both occurrences happening at the same time if the whole thing wasn't a complete fabrication from start to finish. Anyhow he was all in.

— I wouldn't ask you only, pursued he, on my solemn oath and God knows I'm on the rocks.

— There'll be a job tomorrow or next day, Stephen told him, in a boys' school at Dalkey for a gentleman usher. Mr Garrett Deasy. Try it. You may mention my name.

— Ah, God, Corley replied, sure I couldn't teach in a school, man. I was never one of your bright ones, he added with a half laugh. I got stuck twice in the junior

at the christian brothers.

— I have no place to sleep myself, Stephen informed him.

Corley at the first go-off was inclined to suspect it was something to do with Stephen being fired out of his digs for bringing in a bloody tart off the street. There was a doss-house in Marlborough street, Mrs Maloney's, but it was only a tanner touch and full of undesirables but M'Conachie told him you got a decent enough do in the Brazen Head over in Winetavern street (which was distantly suggestive to the person addressed of friar Bacon) for a bob. He was starving too though he hadn't said a word about it.

Though this sort of thing went on every other night or very near it still Stephen's feelings got the better of him in a sense though he knew that Corley's brandnew rigmarole on a par with the others was hardly deserving of much credence. However *haud ignarus malorum miseris succurrere disco* etcetera as the Latin poet remarks especially as luck would have it he got paid his screw after every middle of the month on the sixteenth which was the date of the month as a matter of fact though a good bit of the wherewithal was demolished. But the cream of the joke was nothing would get it out of Corley's head that he was living in affluence and hadn't a thing to do but hand out the needful. Whereas. He put his hand in a pocket anyhow not with the idea of finding any food there but thinking he might lend him anything up to a bob or so in lieu so that he might endeavour at all events and get sufficient to eat but the result was in the negative for, to his chagrin, he found his cash missing. A few broken biscuits were all the result of his investigation. He tried his hardest to recollect for the moment whether he had lost as well he might have or left because in that contingency it was not a pleasant lookout, very much the reverse in fact. He was altogether too fagged out to institute a thorough search though he tried to

recollect. About biscuits he dimly remembered. Who now exactly gave them he wondered or where was or did he buy. However in another pocket he came across what he surmised in the dark were pennies, erroneously however, as it turned out.

— Those are halfcrowns, man, Corley corrected him.

And so in point of fact they turned out to be. Stephen anyhow lent him one of them.

— Thanks, Corley answered, you're a gentleman. I'll pay you back one time. Who's that with you? I saw him a few times in the Bleeding Horse in Camden street with Boylan, the billsticker. You might put in a good word for us to get me taken on there. I'd carry a sandwichboard only the girl in the office told me they're full up for the next three weeks, man. God, you've to book ahead, man, you'd think it was for the Carl Rosa. I don't give a shite anyway so long as I get a job, even as a crossing sweeper.

Subsequently being not quite so down in the mouth after the two and six he got he informed Stephen about a fellow by the name of Bags Comisky that he said Stephen knew well out of Fullam's, the shipchandler's, bookkeeper there that used to be often round in Nagle's back with O'Mara and a little chap with a stutter the name of Tighe. Anyhow he was lagged the night before last and fined ten bob for a drunk and disorderly and refusing to go with the constable.

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Mr Bloom in the meanwhile kept dodging about in the vicinity of the cobblestones near the brazier of coke in front of the corporation watchman's sentrybox who evidently a glutton for work, it struck him, was having a quiet forty winks for all intents and purposes on his own private account while Dublin slept. He threw an odd eye at the same time now and then at Stephen's anything but immaculately attired interlocutor as if he had seen that nobleman somewhere or other though where he was not in a

position to truthfully state nor had he the remotest idea when. Being a levelheaded individual who could give points to not a few in point of shrewd observation he also remarked on his very dilapidated hat and slouchy wearing apparel generally testifying to a chronic impecuniosity. Palpably he was one of his hangerson but for the matter of that it was merely a question of one preying on his nextdoor neighbour all round, in every deep, so to put it, a deeper depth and for the matter of that if the man in the street chanced to be in the dock himself penal servitude with or without the option of a fine would be a very *rara avis* altogether. In any case he had a consummate amount of cool assurance intercepting people at that hour of the night or morning. Pretty thick that was certainly.

The pair parted company and Stephen rejoined Mr Bloom who, with his practised eye, was not without perceiving that he had succumbed to the blandiloquence of the other parasite. Alluding to the encounter he said, laughingly, Stephen, that is:

— He is down on his luck. He asked me to ask you to ask somebody named Boylan, a billsticker, to give him a job as a sandwichman.

At this intelligence, in which he seemingly evinced little interest, Mr Bloom gazed abstractedly for the space of a half a second or so in the direction of a bucketdredger, rejoicing in the farfamed name of Eblana, moored alongside Customhouse quay and quite possibly out of repair, whereupon he observed evasively:

— Everybody gets their own ration of luck, they say. Now you mention it his face was familiar to me. But, leaving that for the moment, how much did you part with, he queried, if I am not too inquisitive?

— Half a crown, Stephen responded. I daresay he needs it to sleep somewhere.

— Needs! Mr Bloom ejaculated, professing not the least surprise at the intelligence, I can quite credit the

assertion and I guarantee he invariably does. Everyone according to his needs or everyone according to his deeds. But, talking about things in general, where, added he with a smile, will you sleep yourself? Walking to Sandycove is out of the question. And even supposing you did you won't get in after what occurred at Westland Row station. Simply fag out there for nothing. I don't mean to presume to dictate to you in the slightest degree but why did you leave your father's house?

— To seek misfortune, was Stephen's answer.

— I met your respected father on a recent occasion, Mr Bloom diplomatically returned, today in fact, or to be strictly accurate, on yesterday. Where does he live at present? I gathered in the course of conversation that he had moved.

— I believe he is in Dublin somewhere, Stephen answered unconcernedly. Why?

— A gifted man, Mr Bloom said of Mr Dedalus senior, in more respects than one and a born *raconteur* if ever there was one. He takes great pride, quite legitimate, out of you. You could go back perhaps, he hasarded, still thinking of the very unpleasant scene at Westland Row terminus when it was perfectly evident that the other two, Mulligan, that is, and that English tourist friend of his, who eventually euchred their third companion, were patently trying as if the whole bally station belonged to them to give Stephen the slip in the confusion, which they did.

There was no response forthcoming to the suggestion however, such as it was, Stephen's mind's eye being too busily engaged in repicturing his family hearth the last time he saw it with his sister Dilly sitting by the ingle, her hair hanging down, waiting for some weak Trinidad shell cocoa that was in the sootcoated kettle to be done so that she and he could drink it with the oatmealwater for milk after the Friday herrings they had eaten at two a penny with an egg apiece for

Maggy, Boody and Katey, the cat meanwhile under the mangle devouring a mess of eggshells and charred fish heads and bones on a square of brown paper, in accordance with the third precept of the church to fast and abstain on the days commanded, it being quarter tense or if not, ember days or something like that.

— No, Mr Bloom repeated again, I wouldn't personally repose much trust in that boon companion of yours who contributes the humorous element, Dr Mulligan, as a guide, philosopher and friend if I were in your shoes. He knows which side his bread is buttered on though in all probability he never realised what it is to be without regular meals. Of course you didn't notice as much as I did. But it wouldn't occasion me the least surprise to learn that a pinch of tobacco or some narcotic was put in your drink for some ulterior object.

He understood however from all he heard that Dr Mulligan was a versatile allround man, by no means confined to medicine only, who was rapidly coming to the fore in his line and, if the report was verified, bade fair to enjoy a flourishing practice in the not too distant future as a tony medical practitioner drawing a handsome fee for his services in addition to which professional status his rescue of that man from certain drowning by artificial respiration and what they call first aid at Skerries, or Malahide was it?, was, he was bound to admit, an exceedingly plucky deed which he could not too highly praise, so that frankly he was utterly at a loss to fathom what earthly reason could be at the back of it except he put it down to sheer cussedness or jealousy, pure and simple.

— Except it simply amounts to one thing and he is what they call picking your brains, he ventured to throw out.

The guarded glance of half solicitude half curiosity augmented by friendliness which he gave at Stephen's at present morose expression of features did not throw

a flood of light, none at all in fact on the problem as to whether he had let himself be badly bamboozled to judge by two or three lowspirited remarks he let drop or the other way about saw through the affair and for some reason or other best known to himself allowed matters to more or less. Grinding poverty did have that effect and he more than conjectured that, high educational abilities though he possessed, he experienced no little difficulty in making both ends meet.

Adjacent to the men's public urinal they perceived an icecream car round which a group of presumably Italians in heated altercation were getting rid of voluble expressions in their vivacious language in a particularly animated way, there being some little differences between the parties.

— *Puttana madonna, che ci dia i quattrini! Ho ragione? Culo rotto!*

— *Intendiamoci. Mezzo sovrano piu...*

— *Dice lui, pero!*

— *Mezzo.*

— *Farabutto! Mortacci sui!*

— *Ma ascolta! Cinque la testa piu...*

Mr Bloom and Stephen entered the cabman's shelter, an unpretentious wooden structure, where, prior to then, he had rarely if ever been before, the former having previously whispered to the latter a few hints anent the keeper of it said to be the once famous Skin-the-Goat Fitzharris, the invincible, though he could not vouch for the actual facts which quite possibly there was not one vestige of truth in. A few moments later saw our two noctambules safely seated in a discreet corner only to be greeted by stares from the decidedly miscellaneous collection of waifs and strays and other nondescript specimens of the genus *homo* already there engaged in eating and drinking diversified by conversation for whom they seemingly formed an object of marked curiosity.

— Now touching a cup of coffee, Mr Bloom ventured to plausibly suggest to break the ice, it occurs to me you ought to sample something in the shape of solid food, say, a roll of some description.

Accordingly his first act was with characteristic *sangfroid* to order these commodities quietly. The *hoi polloi* of jarvies or stevedores or whatever they were after a cursory examination turned their eyes apparently dissatisfied, away though one redbearded bibulous individual portion of whose hair was greyish, a sailor probably, still stared for some appreciable time before transferring his rapt attention to the floor. Mr Bloom, availing himself of the right of free speech, he having just a bowing acquaintance with the language in dispute, though, to be sure, rather in a quandary over *voglio*, remarked to his *protege* in an audible tone of voice *a propos* of the battle royal in the street which was still raging fast and furious:

— A beautiful language. I mean for singing purposes. Why do you not write your poetry in that language? *Bella Poetria!* It is so melodious and full. *Belladonna. Voglio.*

Stephen, who was trying his dead best to yawn if he could, suffering from lassitude generally, replied:

— To fill the ear of a cow elephant. They were haggling over money.

— Is that so? Mr Bloom asked. Of course, he subjoined pensively, at the inward reflection of there being more languages to start with than were absolutely necessary, it may be only the southern glamour that surrounds it.

The keeper of the shelter in the middle of this *tete-a-tete* put a boiling swimming cup of a choice concoction labelled coffee on the table and a rather antediluvian specimen of a bun, or so it seemed. After which he beat a retreat to his counter, Mr Bloom determining to have a good square look at him later on so as not to appear to. For which reason he



encouraged Stephen to proceed with his eyes while he did the honours by surreptitiously pushing the cup of what was temporarily supposed to be called coffee gradually nearer him.

— Sounds are impostures, Stephen said after a pause of some little time, like names. Cicero, Podmore. Napoleon, Mr Goodbody. Jesus, Mr Doyle. Shakespeares were as common as Murphies. What's in a name?

— Yes, to be sure, Mr Bloom unaffectedly concurred. Of course. Our name was changed too, he added, pushing the so-called roll across.

The redbearded sailor who had his weather eye on the newcomers boarded Stephen, whom he had singled out for attention in particular, squarely by asking:

— And what might your name be?

Just in the nick of time Mr Bloom touched his companion's boot but Stephen, apparently disregarding the warm pressure from an unexpected quarter, answered:

— Dedalus.

The sailor stared at him heavily from a pair of drowsy baggy eyes, rather bunged up from excessive use of booze, preferably good old Hollands and water.

— You know Simon Dedalus? he asked at length.

— I've heard of him, Stephen said.

Mr Bloom was all at sea for a moment, seeing the others evidently eavesdropping too.

— He's Irish, the seaman bold affirmed, staring still in much the same way and nodding. All Irish.

— All too Irish, Stephen rejoined.

As for Mr Bloom he could neither make head or tail of the whole business and he was just asking himself what possible connection when the sailor of his own accord turned to the other occupants of the shelter with the remark:

— I seen him shoot two eggs off two bottles at fifty yards over his shoulder. The lefthand dead shot.