A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man

BY JAMES JOYCE

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A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN

"*Et ignotas animum dimittit in artes.*"
OVID, Metamorphoses, VIII., 18.

CHAPTER I

ONCE upon a time and a very good time it was there was a moocow coming down along the road and this moocow that was down along the road met a nicens little boy named baby tuckoo. . . .

His father told him that story: his father looked at him through a glass: he had a hairy face.

He was baby tuckoo. The moocow came down the road where Betty Byrne lived: she sold lemon platt.

O, the wild rose blossoms
On the little green place.

He sang that song. That was his song.

O, the green wothe botheth.

When you wet the bed, first it is warm then it gets cold. His mother put on the oilsheet. That had the queer smell.

His mother had a nicer smell than his father. She played on the piano the sailor's hornpipe for him to dance. He danced:

Tralala lala,
Tralala tralaladdy,
Tralala lala,
Tralala lala.

Uncle Charles and Dante clapped. They were older than his father and mother but Uncle Charles was older than Dante.

Dante, had two brushes in her press. The brush with the maroon velvet back was for Michael Davitt and the brush with the green velvet back was for Parnell. Dante gave him a cachou every time he brought her a piece of tissue paper.

The Vances lived in number seven. They had a different father and mother. They were Eileen's father and mother. When they were grown up he was going to marry Eileen. He hid under the table. His mother said:

—O, Stephen will apologise.

Dante said:

—O, if not, the eagles will come and pull out his eyes.—

Pull out his eyes,

thought that they must be swallows who had come back from the south. Then he was to go away? for they were birds ever going and coming, building ever an unlasting home under the eaves of men's houses and ever leaving the homes they had built to wander.

Bend down your faces, Oona and Aleel,
I gaze upon them as the swallow gazes
Upon the nest under the eave before
He wander the loud waters.

A soft liquid joy like the noise of many waters flowed over his memory and he felt in his heart the soft peace of silent spaces of fading tenuous sky above the waters, of oceanic silence, of swallows flying through the seadusk over the flowing waters.

A soft liquid joy flowed through the words where the soft long vowels hurtled noiselessly and fell away, lapping and flowing back and ever shaking the white bells of their waves in mute chime and mute peal and soft low swooning cry; and he felt that the augury he had sought in the wheeling darting birds and in the pale space of sky above him had come forth from his heart like a bird from a turret quietly and swiftly.

Symbol of departure or of loneliness? The verses crooned in the ear of his memory composed slowly before his remembering eyes the scene of the hall on the night of the opening of the national theatre. He was alone at the side of the balcony, looking out of jaded eyes at the culture of Dublin in the stalls and at the tawdry scenecloths and human dolls framed by the garish lamps of the stage. A burly policeman sweated behind him and seemed at every moment about to act. The catcalls and hisses and mocking cries ran in rude gusts round the hall from his scattered fellow students.

—A libel on Ireland!—

—Made in Germany—

—Blasphemy!—

—We never sold our faith!—

—No Irish woman ever did it!—

—We want no amateur atheist.—

—We want no budding buddhists.

A sudden swift hiss fell from the windows above him and he knew that the electric lamps had been switched on in the reader's room. He turned into the pillared hall, now calmly lit, went up the staircase and passed in through the clicking turnstile.

Cranly was sitting over near the dictionaries. A thick book, opened at the frontispiece, lay before him on the wooden rest. He leaned back in his chair, inclining his ear like that of a confessor to the face of the medical student who was reading to him a problem from the chess page of a journal. Stephen sat down at his right and

the priest at the other side of the table closed his copy of *The Tablet* with an angry snap and stood up.

Cranly gazed after him blandly and vaguely. The medical student went on in a softer voice:

—Pawn to king's fourth.—

—We had better go, Dixon—said Stephen in warning.—He has gone to complain.—

Dixon folded the journal and rose with dignity, saying:

—Our men retired in good order.—

—With guns and cattle—added Stephen, pointing to the titlepage of Cranly's book on which was written *Diseases of the Ox*.

As they passed through a lane of the tables Stephen said:

—Cranly, I want to speak to you.—

Cranly did not answer or turn. He laid his book on the counter and passed out, his well shod feet sounding flatly on the floor. On the staircase he paused and gazing absently at Dixon repeated:

—Pawn to king's bloody fourth.—

—Put it that way if you like—Dixon said.

He had a quiet toneless voice and urbane manners and on a finger of his plump clean hand he displayed at moments a signet ring.

As they crossed the hall a man of dwarfish stature came towards them. Under the dome of his tiny hat his unshaven face began to smile with pleasure and he was heard to murmur. The eyes were melancholy as those of a monkey.

—Good evening, gentlemen—said the stubble grown monkeyish face.

—Warm weather for March—said Cranly.—They have the windows open upstairs.—

Dixon smiled and turned his ring. The blackish monkey puckered face pursed its human mouth with gentle pleasure and its voice purred:

—Delightful weather for March. Simply delightful.—

—There are two nice young ladies upstairs, captain, tired of waiting—Dixon said.

Cranly smiled and said kindly:

—The captain has only one love: sir Walter Scott. Isn't that so, captain?—

—What are you reading now, captain?—Dixon asked.—*The Bride of Lammermoor?*—

—I love old Scott—the flexible lips said—I think he writes something lovely. There is no writer can touch sir Walter Scott.—

He moved a thin shrunken brown hand gently in the air in time to his praise and his thin quick eyelids beat often over his sad eyes.

Sadder to Stephen's ear was his speech: a genteel accent, low and moist, marred by errors: and, listening to it, he wondered was the story true and was the thin blood that flowed in his shrunken frame noble and come of an incestuous love?

The park trees were heavy with rain and rain fell still and ever in the lake, lying grey like a shield. A game of swans flew there and the water and the shore beneath were fouled with their greenwhite slime. They embraced softly impelled by the grey rainy light, the wet silent trees, the shield like witnessing lake, the swans. They embraced without joy or passion, his arm about his sister's neck. A grey woollen cloak was wrapped athwart her from her shoulder to her waist: and her fair head was bent in willing shame. He had loose redbrown hair and tender shapely strong freckled hands. Face? There was no face seen. The brother's face was bent upon her fair rain fragrant hair. The hand freckled and strong and shapely and caressing was Davin's hand.

He frowned angrily upon his thought and on the shrivelled mannikin who had called it forth. His father's gibes at the Bantry gang leaped out of his memory. He held them at a distance and brooded uneasily on his own thought again. Why were they not Cranly's hands? Had Davin's simplicity and innocence stung him more secretly?

He walked on across the hall with Dixon, leaving Cranly to take leave elaborately of the dwarf.

Under the colonnade Temple was standing in the midst of a little group of students. One of them cried:

—Dixon, come over till you hear. Temple is in grand form.—

Temple turned on him his dark gipsy eyes.

—You're a hypocrite, O'Keeffe—he said.—And Dixon is a smiler. By hell, I think that's a good literary expression.—

He laughed slily, looking in Stephen's face, repeating:

—By hell, I'm delighted with that name. A smiler.—

A stout student who stood below them on the steps said:

—Come back to the mistress, Temple. We want to hear about that.—

—He had, faith—Temple said.—And he was a married man too. And all the priests used to be dining there. By hell, I think they all had a touch.—

—We shall call it riding a hack to spare the hunter—said Dixon.

—Tell us, Temple—O'Keeffe said—how many quarts of porter have you in you?—

—All your intellectual soul is in that phrase, O'Keeffe—said Temple with open scorn.

He moved with a shambling gait round the group and spoke to Stephen.

—Did you know that the Forsters are the kings of Belgium?—he asked.

Cranly came out through the door of the entrance hall, his hat thrust back on the nape of his neck and picking his teeth with care.

—And here's the wiseacre—said Temple.—Do you know that about the Forsters?—

He paused for an answer. Cranly dislodged a fig seed from his teeth on the point of his rude toothpick and gazed at it intently.

—The Forster family—Temple said—is descended from Baldwin the First, king of Flanders. He was called the Forester. Forester and Forster, are the same name. A descendant of Baldwin the First, captain Francis Forster, settled in Ireland and married the daughter of the last chieftain of Clanbrassil. Then there are the Blake Forsters. That's a different branch.—

—From Baldhead, king of Flanders.—Cranly repeated, rooting again deliberately at his gleaming uncovered teeth.

—Where did you pick up all that history?—O'Keeffe asked.

—I know all the history of your family too—Temple said, turning to Stephen.—Do you know what Giraldus Cambrensis says about your family?—

—Is he descended from Baldwin too?—asked a tall consumptive student with dark eyes.

—Baldhead—Cranly repeated, sucking at a crevice in his teeth.

—*Pernobilis et pervetusta familia*—Temple said to Stephen.

The stout student who stood below them on the steps farted briefly. Dixon turned towards him saying in a soft voice:

—Did an angel speak?

Cranly turned also and said vehemently but without anger:

—Goggins, you're the flamingest dirty devil I ever met, do you know.—

—I had it on my mind to say that—Goggins answered firmly.—It did no one any harm, did it?—

—We hope—Dixon said suavely—that it was not of the kind known to science as a *paulo post futurum*.—

—Didn't I tell you he was a smiler?—said Temple, turning right and left.—Didn't I give him that name?—

—You did. We're not deaf—said the tall consumptive.

Cranly still frowned at the stout student below him. Then, with a snort of disgust, he shoved him violently down the steps.

—Go away from here—he said rudely.—Go away, you stinkpot. And you are a stinkpot.—

Goggins skipped down on to the gravel and at once returned to his place with good humour. Temple turned back to Stephen and asked:

—Do you believe in the law of heredity?—

—Are you drunk or what are you or what are you trying to say?—asked Cranly, facing round on him with an expression of wonder.

—The most profound sentence ever written—Temple said with enthusiasm—is the sentence at the end of the zoology. Reproduction is the beginning of death.—

He touched Stephen timidly at the elbow and said eagerly:

—Do you feel how profound that is because you are a poet?—

Cranly pointed his long forefinger.

—Look at him!—he said with scorn to the others—Look at Ireland's hope!—

They laughed at his words and gesture. Temple turned on him bravely, saying:

—Cranly, you're always sneering at me. I can see that. But I am as good as you any day. Do you know what I think about you now as compared with myself?—

—My dear man—said Cranly urbanely—you are incapable, do you know, absolutely incapable of thinking.—

—But do you know—Temple went on—what I think of you and of myself compared together?—

—Out with it, Temple!—the stout student cried from the steps.—Get it out in bits!—

Temple turned right and left, making sudden feeble gestures as he spoke.

—I'm a ballocks—he said, shaking his head in despair—I am and I know am. And I admit it that I am.—

Dixon patted him lightly on the shoulder and said mildly:

—And it does you every credit, Temple.—

—But he—Temple said, pointing to Cranly—he is a ballocks, too, like me. Only he doesn't know it. And that's the only difference, I see.—

A burst of laughter covered his words. But he turned again to Stephen and said with a sudden eagerness:

—That word is a most interesting word. That's the only English dual number. Did you know?—

—Is it?—Stephen said vaguely.

He was watching Cranly's firm featured suffering face, lit up now by a smile of false patience. The gross name had passed over it like foul water poured over an old stone image, patient of injuries: and, as he watched him, he saw him raise his hat in salute and uncover the black hair that stood up stiffly from his forehead like an iron crown.

She passed out from the porch of the library and bowed across Stephen in reply to Cranly's greeting. He also? Was there not a slight flush on Cranly's cheek? Or had it come forth at Temple's words? The light had waned. He could not see.

Did that explain his friend's listless silence, his harsh comments, the sudden intrusions of rude speech with which he had shattered so often Stephen's ardent wayward confessions? Stephen had forgiven freely for he had found this rudeness also in himself. And he remembered an evening when he had dismounted from a borrowed creaking bicycle to pray to God in a wood near Malahide. He had lifted up his arms and spoken in ecstasy to the sombre nave of the trees, knowing that he stood on holy ground and in a holy hour. And when two constabulary men had come into sight round a bend

in the gloomy road he had broken off his prayer to whistle loudly an air from the last pantomime.

He began to beat the frayed end of his ashplant against the base of a pillar. Had Cranly not heard him? Yet he could wait. The talk about him ceased for a moment: and a soft hiss fell again from a window above. But no other sound was in the air and the swallows whose flight had followed with idle eyes were sleeping.

She had passed through the dusk. And therefore the air was silent save for one soft hiss that fell. And therefore the tongues about him had ceased their babble. Darkness was falling.

Darkness falls from the air.

A trembling joy, lambent as a faint light, played like a fairy host around him. But why? Her passage through the darkening air or the verse with its black vowels and its opening sound, rich and lutelike?

He walked away slowly towards the deeper shadows at the end of the colonnade, beating the stone softly with his stick to hide his revery from the students whom he had left: and allowed his mind to summon back to itself the age of Dowland and Byrd and Nash.

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

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

It was not thought nor vision, though he knew vaguely that her figure was passing homeward through the city. Vaguely first and then more sharply he smelt her body. A conscious unrest seethed in his blood. Yes, it was her body he smelt: a wild and languid smell: the tepid limbs over which his music had flowed desirously and the secret soft linen upon which her flesh distilled odour and a dew.

A louse crawled over the nape of his neck and, putting his thumb and forefinger deftly beneath his loose collar, he caught it. He rolled its body, tender yet brittle as a grain of rice, between thumb and finger for an instant before he let it fall from him and wondered would it live or die. There came to his mind a curious

phrase from Cornelius a Lapide which said that the lice born of human sweat were not created by God with the other animals on the sixth day. But the tickling of the skin of his neck made his mind raw and red. The life of his body, ill clad, ill fed, louse eaten, made him close his eyelids in a sudden spasm of despair: and in the darkness he saw the brittle bright bodies of lice falling from the air and turning often as they fell. Yes; and it was not darkness that fell from the air. It was brightness.

Brightness falls from the air.

He had not even remembered rightly Nash's line. All the images it had awakened were false. His mind bred vermin. His thoughts were lice born of the sweat of sloth.

He came back quickly along the colonnade towards the group of students. Well then let her go and be damned to her! She could love some clean athlete who washed himself every morning to the waist and had black hair on his chest. Let her.

Cranly had taken another dried fig from the supply in his pocket and was eating it slowly and noisily. Temple sat on the pediment of a pillar, leaning back, his cap pulled down on his sleepy eyes. A squat young man came out of the porch, a leather portfolio tucked under his armpit. He marched towards the group, striking the flags with the heels of his boots and with the ferrule of his heavy umbrella. Then, raising the umbrella in salute, he said to all:

—Good evening, sirs.—

He struck the flags again and tittered while his head trembled with a slight nervous movement. The tall consumptive student and Dixon and O'Keeffe were speaking in Irish and did not answer him. Then, turning to Cranly, he said:

—Good evening, particularly to you.—

He moved the umbrella in indication and tittered again. Cranly, who was still chewing the fig, answered with loud movements of his jaws.

—Good? Yes. It is a good evening.—

The squat student looked at him seriously and shook his umbrella gently and reprovingly.

—I can see—he said—that you are about to make obvious remarks.—

—Um—Cranly answered, holding out what remained of the half chewed fig and jerking it towards the squat student's mouth in sign that he should eat.

The squat student did not eat it but, indulging his special humour, said gravely, still tittering and prodding his phrase with his umbrella:

—Do you intend that . . .—

He broke off, pointed bluntly to the munched pulp of the fig and said loudly:

—I allude to that.—

—Um—Cranly said as before.

—Do you intend that now—the squat student said—as *ipso facto* or, let us say, as so to speak?—

Dixon turned aside from his group, saying:

—Goggins was waiting for you, Glynn. He has gone round to the Adelphi to look for you and Moynihan. What have you there?—he asked, tapping the portfolio under Glynn's arm.

—Examination papers—Glynn answered.—I give them monthly examinations to see that they are profiting by my tuition.—

He also tapped the portfolio and coughed gently and smiled.

—Tuition!—said Cranly rudely.—I suppose you mean the barefooted children that are taught by a bloody ape like you. God help them!—

He bit off the rest of the fig and flung away the butt.

—I suffer little children to come unto me—Glynn said amiably.

—A bloody ape—Cranly repeated with emphasis—and a blasphemous bloody ape!—

Temple stood up and, pushing past Cranly addressed Glynn:

—That phrase you said now—he said—is from the new testament about suffer the children to come to me.—

—Go to sleep again, Temple—said O'Keeffe.

—Very well, then—Temple continued, still addressing Glynn—and if Jesus suffered the children to come why does the church send them all to hell if they die unbaptised? Why is that?—

—Were you baptised yourself, Temple?—the consumptive student asked.

—But why are they sent to hell if Jesus said they were all to come?—Temple said, his eyes searching Glynn's eyes.

Glynn coughed and said gently, holding back with difficulty the nervous titter in his voice and moving his umbrella at every word:

—And, as you remark, if it is thus I ask emphatically whence comes this thusness.—

—Because the church is cruel like all old sinners—Temple said.

—Are you quite orthodox on that point, Temple?—Dixon said suavely.

—Saint Augustine says that about unbaptised children going to hell—Temple answered—because he was a cruel old sinner too.—

—I bow to you—Dixon said—but I had the impression that limbo existed for such cases.—

—Don't argue with him, Dixon—Cranly said brutally.—Don't talk to him or look at him. Lead him home with a sugan the way you'd lead a bleating goat.—

—Limbo!—Temple cried.—That's a fine invention too. Like hell.—

—But with the unpleasantness left out—Dixon said.

He turned smiling to the others and said:

—I think I am voicing the opinions of all present in saying so much.—

—You are—Glynn said in a firm tone.—On that point Ireland is united.—

He struck the ferrule of his umbrella on the stone floor of the colonnade.

—Hell—Temple said.—I can respect that invention of the grey spouse of Satan. Hell is Roman, like the walls of the Romans, strong and ugly. But what is limbo?—

—Put him back into the perambulator, Cranly—O'Keeffe called out.

Cranly made a swift step towards Temple, halted, stamping his foot, crying as if to a fowl:

—Hoosh!—

Temple moved away nimbly.

—Do you know what limbo is?—he cried.—Do you know what we call a notion like that in Roscommon?—

—Hoosh! Blast you!—Cranly cried, clapping his hands.

—Neither my arse nor my elbow!—Temple cried out scornfully—And that's what I call limbo.—

—Give us that stick here—Cranly said.

He snatched the ashplant roughly from Stephen's hand and sprang down the steps: but Temple, hearing him move in pursuit, fled through the dusk like a wild creature, nimble and fleet footed. Cranly's heavy boots were heard loudly charging across the quadrangle and then returning heavily, foiled and spurning the gravel at each step.

His step was angry and with an angry abrupt gesture he thrust the stick hack into Stephen's hand. Stephen felt that his anger had another cause, but feigning patience, touched his arm slightly and said quietly:

—Cranly, I told you I wanted to speak to you. Come away.—

Cranly looked at him for a few moments and asked:

—Now?—

—Yes, now—Stephen said—We can't speak here. Come away.—

They crossed the quadrangle together without speaking. The bird call from Siegfried whistled softly followed them from the steps of the porch. Cranly turned: and Dixon, who had whistled, called out:

—Where are you fellows off to? What about that game, Cranly?—

They parleyed in shouts across the still air about a game of billiards to be played in the Adelphi hotel. Stephen walked on alone and out into the quiet of Kildare Street opposite Maple's hotel he stood to wait, patient again. The name of the hotel, a colourless pol-

ished wood, and its colourless front stung him like a glance of polite disdain. He stared angrily back at the softly lit drawingroom of the hotel in which he imagined the sleek lives of the patricians of Ireland housed in calm. They thought of army commissions and land agents: peasants greeted them along the roads in the country: they knew the names of certain French dishes and gave orders to jarvies in highpitched provincial voices which pierced through their skintight accents.

How could he hit their conscience or how cast his shadow over the imaginations of their daughters, before their squires begat upon them, that they might breed a race less ignoble than their own? And under the deepened dusk he felt the thoughts and desires of the race to which he belonged flitting like bats, across the dark country lanes, under trees by the edges of streams and near the pool mottled bogs. A woman had waited in the doorway as Davin had passed by at night and, offering him a cup of milk, had all but wooed him to her bed: for Davin had the mild eyes of one who could be secret. But him no woman's eyes had wooed.

His arm was taken in a strong grip and Cranly's voice said:

—Let us eke go.—

They walked southward in silence. Then Cranly said:

—That blithering idiot, Temple! I swear to Moses, do you know, that I'll be the death of that fellow one time.—

But his voice was no longer angry and Stephen wondered was he thinking of her greeting to him under the porch.

They turned to the left and walked on as before. When they had gone on so far for some time Stephen said:

—Cranly, I had an unpleasant quarrel this evening.—

—With your people?—Cranly asked.

—With my mother.—

—About religion?—

—Yes—Stephen answered.

After a pause Cranly asked:

—What age is your mother?—

—Not old—Stephen said.—She wishes me to make my easter duty.—

—And will you?—

—I will not—Stephen said.

—Why not?—Cranly said.

—I will not serve—answered Stephen.

—That remark was made before—Cranly said calmly.

—It is made behind now—said Stephen hotly.

Cranly pressed Stephen's arm, saying:

—Go easy, my dear man. You're an excitable bloody man, do you know.—

He laughed nervously as he spoke and, looking up into Stephen's face with moved and friendly eyes, said:

—Do you know that you are an excitable man?—

—I daresay I am—said Stephen, laughing also.

Their minds, lately estranged, seemed suddenly to have been drawn closer, one to the other.

—Do you believe in the eucharist?—Cranly asked.

—I do not—Stephen said.

—Do you disbelieve then?—

—I neither believe in it nor disbelieve in it—Stephen answered.

—Many persons have doubts, even religious persons, yet they overcome them or put them aside—Cranly said.—Are your doubts on that point too strong?—

—I do not wish to overcome them—Stephen answered.

Cranly, embarrassed for a moment, took another fig from his pocket and was about to eat it when Stephen said:

—Don't, please. You cannot discuss this question with your mouth full of chewed fig.—

Cranly examined the fig by the light of a lamp under which he halted. Then he smelt it with both nostrils, bit a tiny piece, spat it out and threw the fig rudely into the gutter. Addressing it as it lay, he said:

—Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire!—

Taking Stephen's arm, he went on again and said:

—Do you not fear that those words may be spoken to you on the day of judgment?—

—What is offered me on the other hand?—Stephen asked.—An eternity of bliss in the company of the dean of studies?—

—Remember—Cranly said—that he would be glorified.—

—Ay—Stephen said somewhat bitterly—bright agile, impassible and, above all, subtle.

—It is a curious thing, do you know—Cranly said dispassionately—how your mind is supersaturated with the religion in which you say you disbelieve. Did you believe in it when you were at school? I bet you did.—

—I did—Stephen answered.

—And were you happier then?—Cranly asked softly—happier than you are now, for instance?—

—Often happy—Stephen said—and often unhappy. I was someone else then.—

—How someone else? What do you mean by that statement?—

—I mean—said Stephen—that I was not myself as I am now, as I had to become.—

—Not as you are now, not as you had to become—Cranly repeated.—Let me ask you a question. Do you love your mother?—

Stephen shook his head slowly.

—I don't know what your words mean—he said simply.

—Have you never loved anyone?—Cranly asked.

—Do you mean women?—

—I am not speaking of that—Cranly said in a colder tone.—I ask you if you ever felt love towards anyone or anything.—

Stephen walked on beside his friend, staring gloomily at the footpath.

—I tried to love Cod,—he said at length.—It seems now I failed. It is very difficult. I tried to unite my will with the will of God instant by instant. In that I did not always fail. I could perhaps do that still . . .—

Cranly cut him short by asking:

—Has your mother had a happy life?—

—How do I know?—Stephen said.

—How many children had she?—

—Nine or ten—Stephen answered.—Some died.—

—Was your father . . . .—Cranly interrupted himself for an instant: and then said:—I don't want to pry into your family affairs. But was your father what is called well-to-do? I mean when you were growing up?—

—Yes—Stephen said.

—What was he?—Crawly asked after a pause.

Stephen began to enumerate glibly his father's attributes.

—A medical student, an oarsman, a tenor, an amateur actor, a shouting politician, a small landlord, a small investor, a drinker, a good fellow, a storyteller, somebody's secretary, something in a distillery, a taxgatherer, a bankrupt and at present a praiser of his own past.—

Cranly laughed, tightening his grip on Stephen's arm, and said:

—The distillery is damn good.—

—Is there anything else you want to know?—Stephen asked.

—Are you in good circumstances at present?—

—Do I look it?—Stephen asked bluntly.

—So then—Cranly went on musingly—you were born in the lap of luxury.—

He used the phrase broadly and loudly as he often used technical expressions as if he wished his hearer to understand that they were used by him without conviction.

—Your mother must have gone through a good deal of suffering—he said then.—Would you not try to save her from suffering more even if . . . or would you?—

—If I could—Stephen said—that would cost me very little.—

—Then do so—Cranly said.—Do as she wishes you to do. What is it for you? You disbelieve in it. It is a form: nothing else. And you will set her mind at rest.—

He ceased and, as Stephen did not reply, remained silent. Then, as if giving utterance to the process of his own thought, he said:

—Whatever else is unsure in this stinking dunghill of a world a mother's love is not. Your mother brings you into the world, carries you first in her body. What do we know about what she feels? But

whatever she feels, it, at least, must be real. It must be. What are our ideas or ambitions? Play. Ideas! Why, that bloody bleating goat Temple has ideas. MacCann has ideas too. Every jackass going the roads thinks he has ideas.—

Stephen, who had been listening to the unspoken speech behind the words, said with assumed carelessness:

—Pascal, if I remember rightly, would not suffer his mother to kiss him as he feared the contact of her sex.—

—Pascal was a pig—said Cranly.

—Aloysius Gonzaga, I think, was of the same mind—Stephen said.

—And he was another pig then—said Cranly.

—The church calls him a saint—Stephen objected.

—I don't care a flaming damn what anyone calls him —Cranly said rudely and flatly.—I call him a pig.—

Stephen, preparing the words neatly in his mind, continued:

—Jesus, too, seems to have treated his mother with scant courtesy in public but Suarez a jesuit theologian and Spanish gentleman, has apologised for him.—

—Did the idea ever occur to you—Cranly asked—that Jesus was not what he pretended to be?—

—The first person to whom that idea occurred—Stephen answered—was Jesus himself.—

—I mean—Cranly said, hardening in his speech—did the idea ever occur to you that he was himself a conscious hypocrite, what he called the jews of his time, a white sepulchre? Or, to put it more plainly, that he was a blackguard?—

—That idea never occurred to me—Stephen answered.—But I am curious to know are you trying to make a convert of me or a pervert of yourself?—

He turned towards his friend's face and saw there a raw smile which some force of will strove to make finely significant.—

Cranly asked suddenly in a plain sensible tone:—Tell me the truth. Were you at all shocked by what I said?—

—Somewhat—Stephen said.

—And why were you shocked—Cranly pressed on in the same tone—if you feel sure that our religion is false and that Jesus was not the son of God?—

—I am not at all sure of it—Stephen said.—He is more like a son of God than a son of Mary.—

—And is that why you will not communicate—Cranly asked—because you are not sure of that too, because you feel that the host, too, may be the body and

blood of the son of God and not a wafer of bread? And because you fear that it may be?—

—Yes—Stephen said quietly—I feel that and I also fear it.—

—I see.—Cranly said.

The spell of arms and voices: the white arms of roads, their promise of close embraces and the black arms of tall ships that stand against the moon, their tale of distant nations. They are held out to say: We are alone—come. And the voices say with them: We are your kinsmen. And the air is thick with their company as they call to me, their kinsman, making ready to go, shaking the wings of their exultant and terrible youth.

April 26. Mother is putting my new secondhand clothes in order. She 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. So be it. Welcome, O life! I go to encounter for the millionth time the reality of experience and to forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race.

April 27. Old father, old artificer, stand me now and ever in good stead.

THE END

Dublin, 1904.
Trieste, 1914.