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Giuseppe Cafiero

JAMES JOYCE ON THE WITCHES' SABBATH

A Play in Two Parts

Play performed in Buenos Aires

Play broadcast by RSI, Swedish Radio, Australian Broadcasting Corporation and Slovenian Radio

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Characters

JAMES JOYCE

LUCIA

JOHN JOYCE

NORA

STANISLAUS

LADY GREGORY

OLIVER GOGARTY

GEORGE MOORE

AUNT JOSEPHINE

MALE NURSE

CARL GUSTAV JUNG

WILLIAM BLAKE

EZRA POUND

NOTE

Each actor can play several characters with the exception of those playing James Joyce, Lucia Joyce and William Blake

The Chorus will be formed by characters not taking part in the scene as protagonists.

These Characters will walk or sit or play or work, etc...

PART ONE

Dublin, City of Violence.

The scene will be constructed moment to moment by swift successive changes while the play takes place.

Things will descend from above and remain hanging.

The things will be deformed and contorted and broken in two or three parts.

Chorus is on the stage.

Male Nurse enters trailing a strait-jacket.

MALE NURSE (*speaking in a loud voice*):

The gates of Hell are agape / The portals of the place of eternal quarantine.
/ Rows of rickety hovels, / Doors flung open, / Dwellers of the village of salvation... / Bickering men and women / Caught up in their wizened souls.
Hush, I say... / Make way for the doctor / For the high priest / Of the unconscious.

Lucia enters looking around bewildered.

LUCIA:

Behold the reverend Doctor Jung / Who will try to take possession / Of my soul in this clinic / For diseases of the brain / Here in Küsnacht.

MALE NURSE:

The master Jung says:/ "Lucia, take off your clothes / of a young maid!"

Jung enters.

JUNG:

You were talking / All on your own... / Why so?

LUCIA (aloof);

My father says it's / A question of a universally / Understood language.

JUNG:

As a matter of fact / Your father's writings / Can be read from / The first page to the last / Or the other way round...

MALE NURSE:

Your father's writings / Are crammed with obscenities / And corrupt the minds / Of adolescents.

Joyce enters.

JOYCE:

How now, / You Swiss Tweedledum' / Doctor Jung / You've read my book / From start to finish / With not so much as a smile. / There's only one thing / To do in that case / And that's to change / To another diet.

Joyce goes back into the chorus.

JUNG:

Today in 1934, I may tell / You Miss Joyce that / Your father's book has / Disclosed a psychological problem / To the world, / So unnerving as to warrant / My being appealed to many a time / As an authority on the subject.

LUCIA:

And what of Jim / As a man?

JUNG:

He too has a latent form / Of psychosis, yet / He's a genius, / They say.

LUCIA (chanting):

... A genius...

JUNG:

So he's trying to make / Some super woman out of you, / A different being, / As he tried to do / With your mother Nora.

LUCIA (irritated):

My father's wife...

Jung exits.

Lucia follows Male Nurse bewitchingly.

*Male Nurse stirs on the stage trailing the strait-jacket.
Male Nurse stops suddenly and winks at Lucia.
Male Nurse caresses Lucia and gesticulates obscenely.*

CHORUS:

Ex nihilo nihil fit /And it started with James Joyce /Of Clongowes Wood College, Sallins /Country Kildare / Way back there with Father Conmee / In 1890, at the age of six... / In that unrelenting school syllabus / Of the Jesuit school masters... / Exams... / 14 chapters of the Maynooth Catechism... / 150 pages of Bible history... / 75 of Deharbe's Catechism... / Right to the bitter end... / Serving Mass and Receiving the sacrament of Confirmation; / Turned into a soldier of the Lord... / And what of the doubts? / What of the rationale of all that?

Joyce leaves the chorus.

JOYCE:

Why, here's the crowned King of Ireland / Collapsing / Under the blows of Gladstone and / The Catholic bishop... / Charles Steward Parnell / Similarly misunderstood / By his bigoted compatriots. / My own father John shed tears too: / That was Christmas 1891 / The date of a new era / In our downward slide / Into the slums of Dublin.

LUCIA (*shouting and taking shelter in the arms of Male Nurse*):
Charles Steward Parnell / Collapses... / The crowned King of Ireland / Collapses and / Jim is in despair.

JOYCE:

An aurora borealis, the midnight sun, / Or is it some great oven? / Ah, of course, t'is those Irish! / Still, it happened in Cork. / A great blaze up... / T'was the old home / The wolves' den that went up in flames... / My father and I went back /To Dublin in 1893 / With our hearts on fire...

CHORUS:

John Joyce, the incompetent /John Joyce, the workshy / John Joyce, the drunkard.

LUCIA (*shouting while Male Nurse embraces her*):

Cork burn away then... / Cork burn away then... / Soldier on, on... / And

in 1934 reach / The Künsnacht clinic.

Lucia exits.

Male Nurse follows Lucia.

CHORUS:

Careful now, Jim, take heed / Your fair city has ears to hear with / Take due care then, and speak thus... / There's a youth by the name of Joyce, / They 're saying. / Who might be a success / If he were not as arrogant / As old Nick himself even / But is an outlandish kind of wit, / So they say / And others: he's a budding genius! / We must find out more about him... / There's not a single person / Willing to herald his coming / Not even for a billion pounds, / And they also say: / He'd be forever finding fault / With his deity for his bad taste. / Watch out, Jim / For the dreary streets of Dublin.

JOYCE (*laughing*):

Take care of the sacristan / And the pickpockets of Dublin! / Take care of the thieves of our city!

CHORUS:

Where are you going? / Going off in the smart Oxford blue blazer / Like the days of youth / With the white braid and all / And the square shoulders / And a Waterbury watch / Passing the time of day right and left... / A Good Day to you, here... / And a Good Evening, there...

John Joyce leaves the chorus.

JOHN JOYCE (*to himself*):

Now there's a wasted / Half-crown today. / (*aloud*): / Ho there! Jim.

JOYCE:

Yes, Dad! / I know, I know!

JOHN JOYCE:

What brings you here? / Have you no heart? / Are you not my own son James / Grandson of James? / My beloved son James who / Ran away from his father's house / And deserted God / One in three and three in one?

JOYCE (*bewildered*):

I think that's so: / Well, anyway, what's left of him!

JOHN JOYCE:

**Of an evening you're taken / Home dead drunk, / When you've run through
/ All the money in your pockets / What are the names / Of the people you
associate with?**

JOYCE:

They're the ghosts / Of tomorrow.

JOHN JOYCE:

**Foul scum that they are / From head to foot. / Ulysses the wanderer, /
Keep yourself away from them. / They'll be the death of you, / That they
will!**

JOYCE:

**They have defied me / And they'll go on doing it. / Lady Gregory and
George Moore / And there'll be / Bernard Shaw and Lawrence / With all their
own views / On how to be an artist. / There's filth and there's bound to be...
/ So I slither into it... / And will go on on the downward slope.**

JOHN JOYCE:

A fine thing for your poor mother / To set her eyes on to be sure!

JOYCE (*crying out aloud*):

Mother!... Mother!...

CHORUS:

**She asks after you... / About the life you're leading in Paris... / And she tells
you not to give up hope / Because her own hopes for you are high... / Yes,
for you... / She still recalls your words...**

JOYCE:

**Grand Hotel Corneill, Paris / 21st of February 1903... / I'm hardened by now
to these stints / Of starvation... / And when I do get a bit of money / I'm so
famished I'd run / Through a fortune in food. / Your last postal order will last
me / Out till mid-day Monday, then... / I'll have to start another fasting
session.**

JOHN JOYCE:

Mother dying... / Come... Father!

*John Joyce goes back into the chorus.
Male Nurse enters and scans Joyce.*

CHORUS:

Before the body of your mother, / Mary Jane, / This day the 13th of August
1903 / Kneel down, Jim... / Fall to your knees! / Draw closer once more /
To the holy Church of Ireland, / James Augusta Joyce.

JOYCE:

What? / There, just for the sake of obliging... / To trigger off a reaction /
Because of some false tribute paid / To some symbol with twenty centuries
/ Of authority.

MALE NURSE (*ironically*):

Provide an answer to the question: / Will you do all in your power / That
justice and mercy may inspire / All your pronouncements / In Ireland and its
dependent territories?

JOYCE (*brusquely*):

What I say is that / The green land of Erin, / The promised land, / Needs
a reform of the municipal morals / And the ten Commandments pure and
simple.

MALE NURSE (*ironically*):

Let's have free money / Free love / Free lay Church in a free State / Or
else... / Cast out into the darkness / All disturbers of the peace of
centuries... / Amen!

JOYCE:

Nora, Nora Barnacle! / Come here!

MALE NURSE (*ironically*):

Lucia, Lucia Joyce / Come here, / In a corner / Of the Künsnacht clinic!

Nora leaves the chorus.

NORA:

Here I am! / I've an answer / To that letter of yours / Dated 15th of June
1904 / From 60 Shelbourne Road, / And that is, / That we can meet

tomorrow / On the 16th of June.

JOYCE:

On Bloomsday! Splendid... / That is as your future lover-husband!

NORA:

Do you realise that / From the 16th of June / There'll be a change?

JOYCE:

Let's go and learn how to live.../ See the world so as to get / The right angle
on Ulysses' day...

CHORUS:

The present social order / And Christendom are anathema... / So are
virtue, social class, doctrines / And the home environment.

MALE NURSE (*ironically*):

Lucia? / The present social order / And Christendom are anathema... /
So are virtue, social class, doctrines / And the home environment if /
They're not immoral.

NORA:

So you care nothing for the comments / Of the most Irish soul of Ireland
/On our concubine honeymoon: / On the 8th of October... / A journey with
no return.

MALE NURSE (*ironically*):

There are the concubines, / The sodomites, / The wizards and diviners... /
And Lucia... a little whore!

Nora and Joyce go back into the chorus.

CHORUS:

Jim and Nora /A fine pair, / If ever there was / He will radiate the earth /
With his light, / She will polish her own patch / Of earth.

Lucia enters looking around bewildered.

Male Nurse calls the attention of Lucia with obscene gestures.

Jung enters.

JUNG:

That fixed stare of yours / Fills me with anxiety.

LUCIA:

Doctor, look over there / Through the window at Jim / And Nora.

JUNG:

But why did you assault / Your own mother so fiercely?

Male Nurse conducts the chorus ironically.

CHORUS:

Cradled in their nutshell / Of a boat... / There they are... / A man and a woman.

JUNG:

What of Jim?

LUCIA:

Why Jim is within myself / Whereas Samuel eludes me. / The young Beckett is entangled / In his web of words and dreams, / A-chasing after another M'Lady Lucia. / So I love Jim... / And together we'll sink down / To the bottom of a river: / A whirling froth of neologisms / And babblings.

JUNG:

You identify yourself in him!

Jung exits.

LUCIA:

Jim-Bloom, right from his youth / And at that time not emotionally involved / With Miss Nora Barnacle... / Today Mister Joyce. / Things were different then. / Jim was a headstrong youth, / A budding poet thirsting for glory.

MALE NURSE:

Lucia, daughter of Molly, / Warm Italian womb, / Will you come with me / Shoeblick of Herr Jung?

LUCIA (*caressing the Male Nurse*):

Where are we going / Into the water of Liffey? / (*clasp*ing Male Nurse):
Here I am, Jim-Charles! / (*shouting*): Charles!... Jim!...

Lucia exits running.

Lady Gregory leaves the chorus.

LADY GREGORY (*vivaciously*):

Mister Joyce!

Joyce leaves the chorus.

JOYCE:

Lady Gregory!

LADY GREGORY (*vivaciously*):

So I've caught you, / You villain!

MALE NURSE (*mimicking*):

So I've caught you, / You villain!

JOYCE:

Hush! Not so loud! / Who do you take me for? / Don't let out my skeleton
/ In the cupboard! / How is it now? / It's an age since I last saw you...

LADY GREGORY:

Nonsense! / I'm almost glad to see you. / You'd better give a good account
/ Of yourself or / It'll be the worse for you.

MALE NURSE (*mimicking*):

Nonsense!

JOYCE:

You've often said you'd like / To get to know / The red light district / Of
the minds of young geniuses... / Even liveried Negro servants / Would have
written what I have... / "The soul of Ireland" / That's the article, is it not!

LADY GREGORY:

But have you properly read / Through what you've written?

MALE NURSE (*mimicking*):

But have you properly read / Through what you've written?

JOYCE (*in a mocking tone*):

Lady Gregory, I'd drink / A toast here and now to Ireland, / To home and to the attractions / Of old age!

MALE NURSE (*mimicking*):

And to the attractions / Of the girls!

Joyce laughs and enjoys himself.

LADY GREGORY (*enthusiastically*):

Yes... to the good old days, / Lost and gone forever, irrevocably... / Love for our own beloved land.

JOYCE (*giggling*):

I'm bound to say that / I'm dying to know if / Certain people are now experiencing / Certain traumatic effects / As a result of certain things.

Male Nurse conducts the chorus ironically.

CHORUS:

That they are, to be sure! / London on the boil, Dublin the same... / After the light, social chat, / Here we are sitting on the sofa / Indulging in earnest conversation... / The brains of England / And the brains of Ireland.

MALE NURSE:

But anyway a long time ago, / You got a splinter out of this hand... / A delicate operation!

LADY GREGORY:

Your writing hand! / Yes, true you did. / Now answer me... / Have you brought / A tiny gift for me, / Your guardian angel?

JOYCE (*giggling*):

Yes! Just a trifle to / Break the fast!

LADY GREGORY (*coyly*):

You do like to tease / With your cajoleries... / Any good reasons for it?

MALE NURSE (*ironically*):

Vice is the greater virtue!

JOYCE:

Remember that a long time ago / In November 1902 / I wrote to you that
/ I was living friendless / And alone?

LADY GREGORY:
For Paristows?

JOYCE:

That's right, and it was there / You say I was unfaithful to you. / All I did
was to break a glass dome, / And I yelled out... / Now today I'm back here /
In the midst of Misses and Misters.

Male Nurse conducts the chorus ironically.

CHORUS:

The 27th of March 1903... / The Daily Express... / And ultimately the
book by... / Wherever Lady Gregory / Undertakes to work on behalf / Of the
people, / She sets up... / In her new total state / Of senility... / A mental
classification that / Yeats defined The Celtic Twilight...

LADY GREGORY (*scandalized*):
That is a bit much!

Lady Gregory goes back into the chorus.

CHORUS:

Whither bound, my handsome lad? / Would you be in your right mind? /
Would you have a penny to spare? / I'll set your wits in order.

Joyce and Male Nurse laugh.
Oliver Gogarty leaves the chorus staggering.

GOGARTY (*tipsy*):
Where's this bloody vagrant / Heading for?

CHORUS:

Dublin Street. / Just a shilling for a bottle of beer / And that's all he asks! /
Oliver Gogarty... he and / Cross-grained Jim were kids together.

GOGARTY (*tipsy*):
Where are the intrepid pace / Setters of the Irish... / That's us.

MALE NURSE (*ironically*):

Say now, you budding vagrant... / Now what do say about your / Oliver Gogarty? / Do you cherish your friend / Oliver?

JOYCE:

'Tis fine company we've got./ You get on to a railway carriage, / And there you are still / Where you started from... / Right on a dead track / The whole night through... / That's what life's all about. / 'Tis not the drinking, / 'Tis the drinking all over again / Once the initiation of Oliver Gogarty / Has been put in motion. / The year is 1903... / But why go chasing after him? / He's the best of the Guinness / Quaffing bunch! / For sure 'tis our national drink!

Male Nurse conducts the chorus ironically.

CHORUS:

Jim... / All about Jim... / For Jim... / Jim caught red handed; / An outcast thrown out / On to the streets.

JOYCE:

I'm a benefactor to my neighbour... / Taking in all the customs and the practices, / And parading around Dublin... / The rebirth of Ireland without Gogarty?

GOGARTY:

There in the Martello Tower at Sandycore, / The hub, the safe haven / For our blessed lives of vice / In a priest-ridden Ireland... / The Godforsaken land!

JOYCE:

Once upon a time you were / The wild stallion roving / The plains of desecration ... / A flaming firebrand / With your aromatic poetry soothe / The aches and pains of the paltry worms / Of this land of Ireland, / With your "Songs out of tune" / And your "Cock Crow" / And what now? / (*speaking in a loud voice*): Curtain, then, curtain, I say: / I'm off to introduce Monsieur le Docteur... / Pride of the Dublin circus!

GOGARTY (*merrily*):

And where, pray, have you been / All these long years Mister Joyce? / Have you been ailing now?

JOYCE:

That I have starvation.

GOGARTY:

Indeed, you have the air / Of a consumptive, old friend.

JOYCE:

Your come-back pointless!

GOGARTY:

Meaning what?

JOYCE:

Your revenge on the public, of course, / What else?... / On all those dear figure / On the Irish landscape... / Your showing them all the glory / Of a return to life / In your splendid house in Ely Place... / And of being a good arm-chair poet... / Will you ever admit that / I am the very soul of grandeur?

GOGARTY:

I'm a last ditcher, that I am, Jim... / And I'll reach the winning post, / In the end!

Oliver Gogarty goes back into the chorus.

MALE NURSE (ironically):

I'm a last ditcher, that I am, Lucia... / And I'll manage to seduce a / Young hysterical girl.

CHORUS:

Like father, like daughter... / That's the way it is, always... / No alibis. / You've been warned, Jim. / Why this head in the sand attitude? / Playing the ostrich? / The madness of youth is a galloping disease / With its crazy paranoia, / Affectations, hallucinations.

Lady Gregory leaves the chorus.

LADY GREGORY:

Jim, James Augusta Joyce... / Cleanse my sullied honour.

JOYCE (derisively):

Venerable teacher, Lady Gregory, / I am unjustly charged / One's
profession in one's profession / And that's that! / I have made no charges...
/ I have painstakingly pointed out...

LADY GREGORY:

A tacit understanding has been broken... / You wrote that you were hard
up; / Unhappy and persecuted / But full of great ambitions... / I held out the
friendly hand... / And said, as ever before... / "Come unto me ye poets... /
If ye are penniless!"

JOYCE (*derisively*):

Ah, you are saturated with cheap, / Worthless writing... / They've turned
you head!

MALE NURSE (*ironically*):

Lady Gregory will masturbate / In public.

LADY GREGORY (*angrily*):

You had better hang / Your head in shame.

JOYCE:

I'm respectable, / The very soul of honour!

Lady Gregory goes into the chorus.

George Moore leaves the chorus.

Male Nurse makes a curtsy to Lady Gregory and George Moore.

GEORGE MOORE (*dryly*):

Oh, that you are not, Mister Joyce, / To be sure! Not even a mile off! / 'Tis
George Moore himself / Writer and principal manager / Of the Irish Literary
Theatre, / Telling you straight that / You're no true gentleman. / It's plain to
see that your own pride / It's that stops you / From learning from my
writings.

JOYCE (*derisively*):

Your tone of voice fair bowls / Me over most noble Sir. / If I may be so
bold /

I, for one, would object to more / Than one passage in your books.

MOORE (*in a low mutter*):

A sort of Zola gone rotten, / That's Joyce! / That's not what art is about...

(in a loud voice): No family connections, / No education!

George Moore goes back into the chorus.

MALE NURSE *(ironically):*

You owe George Moore a lot!

Lucia enters.

LUCIA:

What? Proceedings against Jim... / Oh, yes, writers of the Home Guard... /
Enjoy the finest of reputations... / And a social status / With all that goes
with it... / Gratuities and acclaim...

CHORUS:

A mortal sin / Before the sacrosanct institutions. / It's the old story / Of
the black sheep that everyone... / False friends and true enemies alike, /
Wish to see hanging on the gibbet... / So that you can be made to return /
To the fold...

LUCIA:

Our sort of men of letters are / Worthy indeed to wear the ermine cape
/And the laurel crown! / Here are the tangible fruits / Of their fine writings...
fearfully): What of you then Jim? / Anyone to take your part? / Oh, yes,
there's your father!

Male Nurse sits on the ground – He is bored.

Lucia moves around – She is absent.

John Joyce leaves the chorus.

JOHN JOYCE:

This is no place to be slandering /A poor devil behind his back, who... /'Tis
said, has taken the wrong road... / Perhaps on the trail of Bacchus.

MALE NURSE *(he is sitting on the ground):*

His style of writing is the product / Of a hereditary aberration resulting /
From the hallucinatory vision / Of ancient sagas...

JOHN JOYCE:

Jim, you're a mere human wreck / From the wasting disease that /
Attacks the impecunious. / Your actions consist of the fact that / You're

a square peg in a round hole, / And therefore, irresponsible! / You're not
always quite /
In your right mind... / And that's what I have to say, / If it pleases you!

John Joyce goes back into the chorus.

Lucia moves around with an absent countenance.

Male Nurse rises and conducts the chorus ironically.

CHORUS:

Why did you not handle / The officially recognized brains / With extreme
caution?... / So you were taken unawares / By them, Jim lad, / As they
caught you thinking / And expressing things that fell / Outside their
protective wing,

Whereas they, ...masters / Of the literary scene and / Of every
publication... / Were absorbed, as always, / In going round, in circles. /
You shamed them publicly / And they reacted positively.

Lucia moves around.

Male Nurse approaches and embraces Lucia.

Lucia and Male Nurse cling and roll on the ground.

LUCIA (passionately):

Oh, Parnell!... / Jim and I are with you!

Male Nurse tries to undress Lucia.

Lucia wriggles out of the arms of Male Nurse and begins running.

LUCIA (shouting):

Go away from Dublin, Jim! / Forever, Jim... / You conceited bard... / You
exile... / You word juggler... / Away, and come running / Over to me here...
/ At Küsnacht in 1934! / Jim, the end of everything / Will come!

Joyce enters.

CHORUS:

Duino Elegies / Rilke wrote about the castle / Corroded by time / The other
castle now appears / White / Skeletal bones / Dried in the sun / Stately
work of Maximilian.

JOYCE (looking around lost):

To arrive without burdens and you / Beloved Lucia were / Only in our destinies / Year and season of the Berlitz School / September 1903 from the city of Zürich / To this southern tongue of land / Trieste.

CHORUS:

Your youth fell away / Under the nauseating compliments / That exalted your insane folly / Jim Joyce son of John grandson of Jim / When you ran away with the maid of / Finn's Hotel / Nora Barnacle.

JOYCE (*laughs bitterly*):

Thus the Celtic dogs lick / Their wounds and yelp / For the deep and false compassion / Toward my unmarried bride / Frozen from the cold / That accompanies me in life / In profaning the sacred gangrenes of Erin / In stabbing the breasts of / My fellow countrymen.

Male Nurse enters dragging a straitjacket.

MALE NURSE (*reading from a sheet of paper*):

Your stories "Dubliners" / Are an offence a betrayal / You're an outlaw James August Joyce / Now that the umbilical cord / That linked you to your land is severed... / There is a ransom of one thousand pounds / On your penniless head.

JOYCE:

Soon I will go to Küsnacht / To Lucia...

MALE NURSE:

And these citizens of a submerged world? / Imagination to build castles / Is their war cry / Their chimera panacea kingdom... / A cold cell or a bed with straps.

Lucia enters.

Male Nurse rises and runs to her.

LUCIA:

A bed to consume / My virtuous mind.

Lucia throws herself to the ground.

Male Nurse looks at her, approaches her: caresses her, lewdly gropes her, kisses her... then moves away.

CHORUS:

Silence / Les jeux sont faits / Rien va plus / A vous Monsieur le docteur!

JOYCE:

Betrayal everywhere / You have also betrayed me Swiss carpenter / Herr doktor Gustav Jung... / And today? / Lucia... Lucia!

LUCIA:

No news, is good news! / Certainly doctor Jung / Not having been raised as a slave / I make a very bad impression / I allow anyone / To look at the flower / I hold tight between my thighs.

MALE NURSE (*with irony*):

Miss Joyce is not accustomed / To wheedle if she appears foolish / It doesn't mean that her mind / Is unlike that of Jim.

Jung enters.

JUNG:

Every spark of your father / Has been transmitted to you Miss Joyce / And it has lit a fire / In your brain.

LUCIA:

Jim also had a fire in his brain / When he arrived in Trieste / Bachelor of Arts of the University College, Dublin / And he began to drink

JOYCE (*voice blurred by alcohol*):

Another litre of the good stuff!

CHORUS:

Once upon a time there was a beautiful child / Called Lucia / She slept during the day / She slept during the night / Because she didn't know how to walk / Because she didn't know how to walk / She slept during the day / She slept during the night.

LUCIA (*angrily*):

I was born for the street Herr doctor / July 26 1907 / Poor Ward Trieste Hospital / My noble mother / Nora Barnacle / Was given 20 crowns in charity!

JUNG:

At that time your father frequented / The workers in the cafés of the old city / He talked endlessly of politics... / The rite of the poet is rest / Thus he falls into ecstasy... / Once firmly on this road / The pleasure trip in Heaven becomes / For these heroes of the pen / A relaxing thing.

MALE NURSE (*with soft voice*):

Heaven of a rose picked / At first light.
(*draws near to Lucia and lewdly gropes her*)

CHORUS:

A tonic indeed / Sensational idea / Cross the arms / Drain bottles of white wine... / Jim in Trieste / A buffoon at the court of miracles!

LUCIA (*with anger*):

The work of my father is / A fabled history.

Jung exits.

Lucia watches him while Male Nurse throws kisses at Lucia.

JOYCE:

Seek fortune? / From Dublin running / Searching until / This port of the civilized world / Cosmopolitan city Trieste / Not belonging to any nation / And thus to none of the seven deadly sins.

CHORUS:

No gluttony which is English / No anger which is Spanish / No sloth which is Slavic / No pride which is French / No lust which is German / No avarice which is Italian... / A Pontius Pilate city.

JOYCE:

Which is the city that doesn't pay homage / To the state nor serves a king / Nor even the people because it believes / That each man already has enough / Trouble just looking out for himself?

CHORUS:

It's Trieste / The most judicious city in the world / While all of Europe is dragged / Like sheep to the slaughter. / But you Stanislaus / Brother of

Jim / When will you arrive? / Here awaits you the double task / Of Cato with regard to power / Of policeman with regard to Jim.

Stanislaus Joyce leaves the Chorus.

STANISLAUS:

I, Stanislaus Joyce, upon my soul, / Do proclaim this to you! / Stannie's word of honour. / Before long you are destined to... / You must... enter in the Golden Age / In store for you... yes, / The new Age of Gold... / So stop your chatter!

JOYCE (*sadly*):

I know what you mean... / I do!

Male Nurse conducts the chorus ironically.

CHORUS:

Ireland... now is that a great country? / The Emerald Isle she's called, / Yet the metropolitan government / That's brought her / To her knees has driven her / Into the rocks.

MALE NURSE (*ironically*):

Today, when all that is left / Is starvation and syphilis, / Superstition and drunkenness, well, / Out of all that, / Have sprung puritans, / Jesuits and bigots.

STANISLAUS:

You're still the same old suicidal bard / Who upon seeing others cleansing themselves, / Thinks they're trying to touch down / To the depths of their own consciences / And if they don't do it, / He thinks the opposite.

JOYCE (*irritated*):

Stannie, I've a political creed, / You can reduce to three words...

MALE NURSE (*readily*):

Constitutional monarchies/ Make him sick... / Kings are charlatans... / Republics are inept... / Temporal power has vanished...

JOYCE (*readily*):

So what else is left?

Lucia enters.

Stanislaus goes back into the chorus.

LUCIA (*reproaching*):

Jim, the war you're waging / At this moment against conventions, / You haven't embarked upon / For the sake of matching / Your strength against / The conventions themselves / But so as to live according / To your own moral code.

MALE NURSE (*caressing Lucia*):

Judgement, / If it's to be fair, / You wouldn't want carried out / By a jury of ten dignitaries / But by a jury of outsiders / And by an exile judge rejecting / All the legal claptrap / Of the English.

LUCIA (*caressing Male Nurse*):

So to get your own back / You print the satirical poem / "The Holy Office", / In Pola in 1904, / Saying that not only / Galileo was the victim / Of betrayal.

CHORUS:

Jim, Jim, / Today you're no longer / The youthful Jim... / But a grown man
And as sozzled as any / Of your fellow Irish.

Male Nurse tries to possess Lucia.

Lucia caresses Male Nurse.

LUCIA (*shouting*):

Jim, Jim!

Lucia wriggles out of the arms of Male Nurse.

LUCIA (*shouting*):

Jim-Parnell / Hero among heroes, / Liberating Messiah / Among our people!

Joyce approaches Lucia

JOYCE:

I forgot the past / Like the exile I was / And the present too... / For that matter, I forgot myself / In the drinking dens, / Though the reverend

doctor Jung, / Nurtured in a tradition / Of fanatic prohibitionism, / Says
that my psychosis is proved / By that very fact.

LUCIA: (*shouting*):
Doctor Jung!

Jung enters.

JUNG:
Restrained hysterics, Mister Joyce / Or else restrained schizophrenia... /
Your writing, when all is said and done, / Is what proves my point...

JOYCE:
You infamous kindler / Of the mind, Herr Jung...

LUCIA (*shouting*):
A man by the name of Carl Jung / Unmatched in his fame as a doctor /
Would be able to make Tutankhamun / Leap up in his grave like a Solomon!

JUNG:
Lucia, your daughter, is / The last link in the chain.

MALE NURSE:
Lucia, my love!

LUCIA (*shouting*):
Jim-Parnell! / You're the whore / Of Ireland!

Male Nurse caresses Lucia.

Lucia caresses Male Nurse.

Lucia and Male Nurse cling and roll on the round.

Male Nurse tries to possess Lucia.

Jung exits in disgust.

Lucia follows Jung: she crawls on all fours.

Male Nurse follows Lucia and makes obscene gestures.

End of Part One.

PART TWO

Condemnation of Institutional Violence through Literary Suicide

The scene is as in Part One.

CHORUS:

Is that the family environment / In which Lucia was brought up, / So far?

Joyce enters.

JOYCE:

Frankly, I'm telling that / The disagreements with my wife Nora... / And that was in 1905, / Came almost as an inevitable consequence... / I was alone and deserted by everybody / And wrote to aunt Josephine / Who had stayed behind / In the sacred land of Ireland.

Aunt Josephine enters and pushes forward a bookstall.

Joyce takes a book.

JOYCE (reading):

Dear Aunt Josephine... / I'm miserable.

AUNT JOSEPHINE (taking a book and reading):

Dear Jim..., / Beware of the young girl / Who has appeal. / Come now, make a move / In some direction / You ugly duckling / Of the Joyce tribe.

JOYCE (taking another book and reading):

Dear Aunt Josephine... / I hang on your every word, / With a sense of misgiving, / For I've no skill as a huntsman.

AUNT JOSEPHINE (taking another book and reading):

Dear Jim... / There are all kinds of women / Gentle ones, in-between ones, /

Strong ones. / You pay your money and / You take your choice.

JOYCE (taking another book and reading):

Dear Aunt Jo... / What's that you say?

AUNT JOSEPHINE (*taking another book and reading*):

Dear Jim... / Take a look around you... / If the supreme panacea / For you is sex, well, / It's not for sale / But it can be hired.

JOYCE (*taking another book and reading*):

Dear Aunt Jo... / Your letters read rather like / An exhausting cross-questioning, / And the last few days / Have been unusually wearing... / Just one damned thing after another. / Let me have news of you.

AUNT JOSEPHINE (*taking another book and reading*):

Dear Jim... / Stop twiddling your thumbs / And start thinking for a minute or so. / Balance one against the other, / Your own sacred cause / Versus the real problems / That bedevil your life.

Aunt Josephine exits pushing forward the bookstall.

Lucia and Jung enter.

Jung holds Lucia in leash.

CHORUS:

Once upon a time there was a beautiful child / Called Lucia / Today she doesn't sleep during the day / Today she doesn't sleep during the night.

LUCIA:

Nice lulla by Herr doktor? / A lulla by all for me / Poor material of human body.

JUNG:

Miss Joyce / You musn't despair... / If your father is considered / An absolutely normal man / You will also enjoy / Such consideration.

JOYCE:

In the public opinion I am / And always will be guilty / Of all your ills Lucia.

LUCIA:

Oh Jim dear Jim / Don't abandon this / Delicate barbaric creature...

JUNG:

Paternity for Mister Joyce is / A mystical state / An apostolic succession from the one and only / Generator to the one and only generated. / 'amor matris /

Subjective and objective genitive / It is not the only true thing in life /
And paternity is not / A legal pretence.

Jung exits pulling Lucia.

Stanislaus leaves the chorus.

STANISLAUS:

James Joyce, / Your beloved and / Detested brother Stannie, / Like the
Roman Cato the Censor, / Your keeper-brother, / Has to tell you / The
real state of things, / And as he sees them, / Since coming to Italy.

CHORUS:

At present all you're doing is / To parade around in front / Of a mirror
wearing / Your spell-binding apparel / Like some clever conjuror / With
no tricks and / For all to see in broad daylight. / Your pupils from the
Berlitz School / And your private students / Are fascinated...

STANISLAUS:

Look at Roberto Prezioso, / Director of the newspaper / "Piccolo della
Sera" / Hasn't he invited you / To write articles for his paper? / Have
you heard his offers? / There's space in which to move

JOYCE (*ironically*):

Clean with the pen / The ship's bridge and / Throw into the sea / Our
dear compatriots?

CHORUS (*with irony*):

Because of Mammon* / All writings of the diabolical James Joyce / Are
banned / His high spirit is in acrid fury / Against Mammon and his servants
/ The contemptible cannot always be exempted / From contempt / He
looks at Erin and from afar / Sees a pompous gang of bad writers / In
their crass ignorance they hate / His lucid strength which he owes to
Aquinas.

JOYCE:

Will power / Memory / Sin / Sufferance...

STANISLAUS:

A total of nine articles / March 1907 September 1912 / Excellent Italian /
Purposeful archaic euphuisms / Penetrating style / Trieste and Dublin

*The devil as incarnation of material riches.

irredentism / Indictment against injustices / New champion of the
oppressed / Or defender of yourself?

Stanislaus goes back into the chorus.

CHORUS:

Cold grey winds are blowing / Where you go you hear the sound of water
/ Distant and deep / All day long / All night long you listen to / The ebb
and flow.

JOYCE (*shouting*):

One thing is clear to me. / It'll soon be time for Ireland / To put an end
once / And for all to its failures. / If Ireland is truly capable / Of rising to
greater heights, / Let it be so, / Or else let her bow her land / And sink
modestly for all time / Into the grave.

Lucia and Jung enter.

Jung holds Lucia in leash.

LUCIA:

Jim, mortal creature / You find your daughter / In wretched company: /
Half wits, psychiatric cases / Neurotics and all goes with them!

JUNG:

Lucia, mortal creature / You find your father / In wretched company: /
Crocodiles of the Liffey, / A river cut short where / The ocean devours it.

LUCIA (*shouting*):

I see sheets of paper, / Red white and green, / Stinking of the holy oil /
Of a Dublin family.

JUNG:

The Dublin family / Of James Joyce / Is dispersed.

LUCIA (*shouting*):

What haven't I been through / In this life of mine? / What have my eyes
yet /

In store to see?

Jung and Lucia exit.

Jung drags Lucia in leash.

JOYCE:

My thoughts are with you, / My child and I'll soon be / By your side.

CHORUS:

Your bark is old and frail, / And you must stop / For breath every so often...
/ And so your thoughts are / Inevitably turned to the past.

JOYCE:

I have been nurtured beneath / A torrent of verbal melody, / And I have
offered myself / As a refreshing haven, / In those languorous days in Trieste,
/ To all kinds of men of letters... / But I for myself sought refuge / With that
genial Jew Schmitz-Svevo!

CHORUS:

Are you trying to shake / The foundation of Mister Svevo?

JOYCE:

Schmitz-Svevo has broken / The spell of my ivory tower... / Schmitz-Svevo
is the good wine that / Fills the cup of reputation and friendship.

CHORUS:

Certain passages in the books / Of Mister Svevo couldn't have / Been
written better by Anatole France, / Even!

JOYCE:

Schmitz-Svevo and Trieste! / Trieste and its daughter Lucia! / (*shouting*):
Lucia... Lucia!

Lucia and Jung enter.

Jung holds Lucia in leash.

CHORUS:

Here we go round the mulberry bush / The mulberry bush the mulberry
bush, / Here we go round the mulberry bush / So early in the morning.

JUNG (*interrupting*):

In solidarity with your father you / Miss Joyce that 27 April of 1932 /
Leaving for Calais with your parents / Suffered at the Gare du Nord / A
"crise de nerfs" shouting that / You hated England?

CHORUS:

The drunkard Dublin snores through her nose / The drunkard Dublin
croaks with her voice / And with all her En... gli... sh whims / Added to her
Irish dialect / The drunkard Dublin is protectress of all rascals.

JOYCE:

My dear illustrious Carl Gustav Jung / My daughter tells quite a few lies /
She often puts on / Like all girls... / Here are 4,000 French francs / For a
fur coat... / That will do you better than / Any discourse / Of a certain
doctor.

JUNG (*professional tone*):

Schizophrenia is cured by / Persuasion and suggestion / Not with mirrors
to attract birds!

LUCIA (*irate*):

It is infamous what / You are saying about Jim!

JUNG:

Do you wish to consent to / Your father's game or to my care?

LUCIA (*absent tone*):

I was a girl that grew up well / Needing very little... / The cradle of a pram
/ The scents of the garden or of the sea / The crowd packed into our homes
/ ... Trieste... Zürich...Paris...

JUNG:

Dissociations of ideas.

JOYCE:

She is only a poor child who / Has tried to do too much... / Her
dependence on me today is / Absolute!

JUNG:

Mister Joyce, tell me how / Can you help your daughter, / Since your every
action, / Throughout life, / Is evidence that / You have no emotional
relationships / With other people?

JOYCE:

Cases affect circumstances / Doctor Jung. / Now, if you were under

accusation, / As I am, / One could say the same of you...

CHORUS:

What have you, Doctor Jung, / Against Jim that you should encompass /
His daughter with barbed wire?

JUNG (*brusquely*):

His personal life, / His matrimonial life... / A determining influence / On
his daughter / Lucia's character traits.

JOYCE :

Well, so there's nothing before me / But a brick wall or a chasm... / In
every sense / Physical, moral and material!

JUNG:

Right, as far as today goes! / But in 1913...

CHORUS:

But in 1913 Amalia Popper / One again undermined / Your monogamous
rapport / With Nora Barnacle / And you said you were faithful, Jim. / And
you produced / Your book "Giacomo Joyce"... / Notebook jottings... / And
what of you cherished Lucia?

LUCIA (*shouting*):

Amalia... / Ulysses' Penelope!

CHORUS:

A lovable source of inspiration / Was Amalia! Begotten by Leopold
Popper, / A business man, / So as to give you the model image / For your
very own dear Molly... / Ulysses' woman!

JOYCE:

I felt a surge of warmth / For that wan face of yours / Amalia Popper!
(*voice in soft tones*): Could I ever throw you over, / My talisman?

Lucia takes off her leash.

LUCIA (*shouting*):

You lousy cur, / Fawning like some Irish Casanova / Round the petticoats
of some girl. / I am your woman; / You can forget Nora Barnacle as well! /

(pathetically): Now didn't you just fall right / Into it, Jim, old man? / And you broke the understanding / Between the two of us... / My feeling for you / And my peace of mind.

JUNG:

His inspiration, / That's what she is! / Which is why he's set against having / Her declared mentally abnormal!

LUCIA:

What else did you do / In St. Just's fair city, Trieste, / Than to run into debt, / Go hungry and get drunk / Old Jim? / You've waited for the sun / To dry out your drink / Sodden plumage.

Jung exits.

JOYCE (*touched*):

The sun, did you say? / The fifteenth of December, / 1913... / A letter signed by a new friend / By the name of Ezra Pound!

Joyce exits running.

CHORUS:

Ezra Pound says: / "Here I am surrounded / by fine liqueurs and wines!"

LUCIA (*ironically*):

How's the poetry / Coming along?

CHORUS:

Ezra replies: / "I've a great desire / for these delights of Jim... / after the laboured publication / of Dubliners, it looks as if / publisher Grant Richards / is available!"

LUCIA (*ironically*):

Ezra is a talent-scout!

CHORUS:

Where is Jim going?

Chorus exits.

LUCIA (*ironically*):

Jim is gone! / Jim is gone / To hell, / To Küsnacht!

CHORUS (*off stage*):

Küsnacht... land of conquest / Like Trieste was in 1915, / Where Herr Doctor Gustav Jung / Proclaims under his breath that / Lucia is incurable!

LUCIA (*hysterical laughter*):

In... cur... able... / (*sadly*): Come now, Jim... / Jim my father... / I want to set eyes on you, / Have you by my side / For my protection! / When I open my eyes, / It's for... / A long wakeful night... / Greenwich comes late... / Things, shapes, a few moments / Before they're due... / (*in frightened tones*): Jim, Jim, help me... / Every thing's going blurred / Before me... / And mi... sty...

Darkness for a few seconds.

Multicoloured lights on a black background against which is resting a grating.

On the ground, the straitjacket in shreds.

Chorus enters

SOME OF CHORUS:

Our gentle patient, Lucia Joyce / Daughter of the illustrious writer / James Augusta Joyce, / Will soon be leaving us... / Soon be deserting the comfortable / And welcoming clinic at Küsnacht / To go home with her congenital condition / Of mental disorder... / We quote Doctor Carl Gustav Jung... / Back to the family environment... / Happy home coming, Miss Joyce...

SOME OF CHORUS:

The great god James / On his golden chariot / Has elected you as his sibyl, / His prophetess. / Your tongue is loosed / For him and with him, / And so you form your riddles, / And play havoc with time itself.

SOME OF CHORUS:

The words you utter are engraved / On the minds of your listeners, / And... that means your very own Jim, / According to a code that belongs / Exclusively to the two of you...

CHORUS:

Miss Joyce, Jim is here / And waiting to listen / And talk to you...

Joyce and Lucia enter from opposite sides.

LUCIA (*emotionally*):

Oh, Jim...father!

JOYCE:

An act of violence / That has not spared / You my child... / I know your secret... / It's a kind / Of tacit understanding, / So that you can let / The hours drift by... / And where do you think / My wish to view before me, / Numbers, information and men, / Sprang from?

LUCIA:

The city's greenery, / And the city's waters / Pass before my eyes...

CHORUS:

A lean man, and blind... / Rich in his poverty, / James Augusta Joyce, / You are turned away / From all shelter / Where you might seek a haven.

LUCIA:

Now that you've buried / One chapter of your immense / And chaotic writings / You rush towards / A fresh adventure of the mind!

SOME OF CHORUS:

A faithful pack of hounds / In your wake, baying and fawning, / Waiting upon your every word / And gesture, / Misunderstanding the reason / Behind those words / And gesture of yours...

SOME OF CHORUS:

Excited intellectuals of Paris / Who would make good herdsmen / And are shouting / Like frenzied gamblers, / Dressed up as magicians, / They heap blessings on your head!

JOYCE:

Paris was the selected spot / For a brief stay by my friend Ezra... / Before returning to the stifling hollow bowl / Of Zürich with its Swissness... / Just a brief stay... / We stayed on in Paris.

LUCIA (*frightened*):

Jim old man... / Things and events which never / Took place are shaping themselves / Before my very eyes / With spine-chilling clarity. / By now my path is the way / Of no return, / Obscure but enlightened too... /

(shouting): That was a noise! / Do you hear it?

JOYCE:

My child, I have happened / And still do happen / To visualize people and
/ Things I had only encountered / In my imagination.

LUCIA (shouting):

That sound... / It's the swift passage / Of time.

CHORUS:

Jim, your Cassandra also prophesies / Your own despair and / The ever
green shrub / That will be strewn / Over your grave.

JOYCE (gently):

And what do you think, / My child?

LUCIA:

I know what lies in store for me... / It's like a deep dream... / Reminding
me of the one / In your Finnegans Wake! / It's the entire saga / Of the
Joyce family and company.

JOYCE:

Cast your mind back to the past... / Our first hours in Paris.

LUCIA (frightened):

The seventh of December 1921?

CHORUS:

On that day Miss Adrienne Monnier / Made of Jim a celebrated /And
fashionable writer, / Presenting Jim as a dressed up model / In the Maison
des Amis des Livres...

SOME OF CHORUS :

Virginia Wolf: / "A book of conspicuous indecency".

SOME OF CHORUS:

George Moore: / "A piece of writing that shows / how its author lacks /
Literary tradition and / Cultural heritage".

SOME OF CHORUS:

André Gide: / “A false masterpiece”.

LUCIA:

There you are now, / And here’s to better times!

JOYCE:

Now we’ve reached the moment / When Ulysses’ morning hours /
Recede to make way for the hours / Of darkness of Finnegans Wake.

LUCIA:

A more wicked and better / Leavened pastiche is / Finnegans Wake... /
Or as your friend Oliver Gogarty / Will say... / The most monumental piece
/ Of literary deception / Since Ossian.

JOYCE:

1939 did you say?

LUCIA (*shouting*):

That’s today, Jim / Or it was so a moment ago.

JOYCE (*frightened*):

Just what game is this?

LUCIA (*shouting*):

William the unfathomable Englishman / Rushed to the end / Of this blind
alley / And found no way out.

CHORUS:

He’ll tell you / About life and death, / About sorrow and about love, /
About the past and the future...

LUCIA (*shouting*):

William Blake, / The obscure, / Is by my side.

William Blake enters.

BLAKE (*singing to himself*):

Oh memories that surface / Disappear and surface... / Oh present of
uncertain destinies... / Oh futures that always choose / A shop counter / To

expose yourselves to mockery. */(bows obsequiously and with irony toward Lucia and Joyce):* I am William Blake, the obscure, / Born in London / In the year of grace 1757. / A visionary and a madman, / Yet an engraver and a poet... / And similarly an impassioned / And prophetic spirit...

JOYCE:

Your Albion of prophetic books / Is like Ulysses my Leopold Bloom.

BLAKE:

I have always been / At your side, Mister Joyce, / And now I'm / With dear Lucia too.

LUCIA (*distraught*):

James Augusta Joyce... / William Blake... / My mind is in a frenzy... / In a turmoil... / The flames encompass me...

JOYCE:

Lucia, child of mine / Today you appear as / The link in the endless chain / Of events that form my life... / Since Zürich 1915... until... until?

LUCIA:

Zürich, old man! / Zürich spells the end / Of the road for you!

JOYCE (*ironically*):

With William Blake / At your side?

John Joyce leaves the chorus.

JOHN JOYCE (*with tipsy voice*):

Jim, both as a man and an artist. / You've always been / Extremely aware and / You've laughed to scorn / Any detractors / Of your work... / Before and after / The present year of 1934.

John Joyce goes back into the chorus.

LUCIA:

My obscure, my inscrutable cavalier, / Is making me a gift of his engravings: / "The Gates of Paradise", 16 plates... / Before and after 1934 in Küsnacht... / Come, Jim, your fate is bound / To my visions...

BLAKE (*with detachment*):

“The Gates of Paradise”... / The series was started in 1810... / A set of sixteen engravings...

LUCIA (*violently*):

Over to you now, / William Blake!

The engravings that Blake will describe will appear In the background.

BLAKE:

The first entitled: / “I discovered him under a tree”, / And it shows a woman holding / A child in her left arm, / While with the other hand / She plucks a mandrake plant rooted / At the foot of a willow tree.

LUCIA (*violently*):

Fraulein Marthe Fleischmann, / Mister Joyce... / The buxom Swiss girl / Of your platonic relationship.

SOME OF CHORUS:

That was in Zürich / On the 9th of December 1918 / Along the Universitaetstrasse.

JOYCE:

Lucia, my child, / That meeting was a disturbing apparition / That made me feel / I had retraced my steps / To an earlier stage in my life, / When in 1898 I caught sight / Of that limping girlish figure, / Hurrying along the shores / Of the North Sea...

SOME OF CHORUS:

An apparition that will be / One of Bloom’s ephemeral infatuations!

LUCIA:

Do you circumvent / Marthe Fleischmann?

JOYCE:

I spoke to her only once!

Aunt Josephine leaves the chorus

AUNT JOSEPHINE:

An infatuation that served / To revive passions extinguished / Amidst the piles of papers.

Aunt Josephine goes back into the chorus.

LUCIA (*maliciously*):

So the tears of your dissatisfaction / With life drove you to make a bid / To free yourself from all of us... / Nora Barnacle... / George Joyce... / And me!

JOYCE (*heatedly*):

I still did cradle you / In my arms and / I never let a soul down...

Nora Barnacle leaves the chorus.

NORA:

Fraulein Fleischmann came / At a moment of concrete creativity!

Nora Barnacle goes back into the chorus.

LUCIA:

And what of the end / Of Fraulein Marthe?

CHORUS:

She too ended up / In a psychiatric clinic!

LUCIA:

Still, all her patronizing gentility, / Which so appealed to you, / Didn't stop her from selling off / Four letters of yours, cheaply, in 1941!

JOYCE (*distressed*):

Lucia, don't tell lies!

LUCIA:

Anyone who was able to, / Speculated over you. / Now my obscure guide, / Philosopher and friend / It is for you to speak!

BLAKE:

The second engraving is entitled: / "Water", and shows an old man / Beneath a leafless tree, / Seated on a rock / Under the driving rain.

JOYCE (*emotionally*):

My father John, it is! / For eleven years / I have promised myself / And him that I would go to see him...

CHORUS:

Maybe his end is nigh...!

LUCIA:

It is the 29th of December 1931, Jim. / John Stanislaus Joyce has died /
Whispering to your sister Mary: / "I have had more out of life / than any
man."

JOYCE (*emotionally*):

He has always loved me, / And the older he grew, / The greater his love.

LUCIA (*agitated*):

Make a move now, / Bestir yourself, Jim... / All the Dubliners are / Dancing
merrily / Around your father's coffin.

JOYCE (*disgustedly and with emotional reaction*):

I loathe the very stench / Of Bloom's cursed city.

LUCIA (*agitated*):

The dance is perpetuated, / For ever and ever, / Old man!

JOYCE (*tenderly*):

Yet John was one / Of the few men left / In this land of Ireland.

LUCIA (*agitated*):

And now what is left to you?

JOYCE (*tenderly*):

I am the one and only heir / Of his estate and the perpetuator / Of his
memory...

LUCIA (*in an outburst*):

What of me, then, / When you die? / (*in peremptory tones*): William, speak
now!

BLAKE:

The third engraving: / "Earth – Life's struggle". / Showing a man trying /
To wriggle free / In the cavity of a rock.

CHORUS:

The atmosphere and / The great fervour / Of creative work / In the early twenties...

JOYCE:

Paris! / No part was so arduous, / Yet so wholesomely stimulating / As the one shown me by Ezra!

LUCIA:

Our own Mister Pound!

JOYCE (*merrily*):

The old fox with the great pack / Of hounds at his heels.

LUCIA (*violently*):

Old half wit of a fox... / And a traitor!

JOYCE:

What's that I hear?

LUCIA:

He'll let you down / When you're dead and gone... / And in a despicable way too!

JOYCE:

He's already told me / That my "Finnegan's Wake" looks / Like a meaningless jumble. / Ezra the Pound Sterling / Has never lied to me!

LUCIA (*with violent reaction*):

What if he were the son / Of the diehard brigade?

JOYCE:

I'm not concerned / With politics.

CHORUS:

You said you were / A socialist in Trieste / And you used to haunt / The drinking dens / Of the working classes... / In 1938 you'll be using / Your influence to help / The intellectuals to flee / From Nazi territory... / Hermann Broch will be the first!

JOYCE:

I've never mixed politics / With my semi-profession as a writer!

LUCIA (*emotionally*):

Many will suffer / Because of Mister Pound.

JOYCE:

And what will / Brother Ezra do?

CHORUS:

Twelve years in an asylum / At St. Elizabeth, U.S.A., / Confirmed mentally alienated...

LUCIA (*shouting*):

He supported Fascism / In all its cruelty and / Its ferocity.

JOYCE (*moved*):

But, my child, / He was mentally unbalanced.

LUCIA (*shouting*):

William the inscrutable, / Let's have another!

BLAKE:

The fourth engraving: / "Air, amidst nagging doubt / and anxiety..." / Showing a naked man, / His arms clasped round his body, / Seated on a cloud and / Encircled by the starry sky.

LUCIA:

Jim, / Your great long restless sleep...

JOYCE (*agitated*):

Finnegan's Wake, / Finnegan's Wake...

LUCIA:

Published on the 2nd of February 1939 / By Faber and Faber.

JOYCE:

And so to the great starry firmament / After Bloom's great day.

LUCIA:

Finnegan's Wake rounds off / Your renegade mongrel needs!

John Joyce leaves the chorus.

JOHN JOYCE:

The Irish soul will burst / With fury and exasperation / Against James Joyce... / His is the worst form / Of prostitution of all the Irish traitors / To the cause of Ireland.

John Joyce goes back into the chorus.

JOYCE:

My enemies are full / Of spite and envy, / And damned through the stench / Of their own carrion. / Thus has it ever been / Throughout the centuries / And will be for all eternity.

LUCIA:

Old Englishman come forth!

BLAKE:

The fifth engraving: / "Fire... this is the end / Of an eternal struggle", / Showing an armed demon, / Hideous and rising up / In the midst of flames.

LUCIA:

What demon, Mister Blake?

BLAKE:

All evil may be concentrated / Into one single great evil...

LUCIA:

1939, William Blake?

BLAKE:

A sombre flag / Bearing the swastika !

JOYCE:

So everything's / In the melting pot! / Is it?

LUCIA (*grimly*):

You bloody individualist / On the Ezra Pound band wagon!

JOYCE:

It's those gloomy thoughts / Of death that my Anna Livia had...

CHORUS:

This Hitlerland will spread / Like a patch of oil, / And everyone will be powerless / To prevent it happening.

LUCIA:

Thousands of places there'll be to occupy / Fair cities throwing open their gates, / Their history and their homes... / There'll be harlots dressed / As princesses to save what can be saved, / And the old fieldmarshall in military splendour / Will come to visit the scattered rubble! / And where do you come in, / James Augusta?

JOYCE:

My thoughts will be with you... / I'll be trying to carry you / To safety and protect you.

LUCIA:

Events will overcome us. / (*fearfully*): I'm scared, that I am, Jim... / Hold my hand! / (*screaming*): Mister Blake, proceed!

BLAKE:

The sixth engraving:/ "When he's ready for birth / he'll break out of the eggshell", / And it shows a tiny angel / Emerging from an egg.

JOYCE (*tenderly*):

Ecce puer! / The 15 of February 1932, / The day Stephen James Joyce / Was born! My son's child!

LUCIA:

Where is my sister-in-law, Helen? / The Fleischmann women, dear Jim, / Are all subject to the same fate / As the women of our own family. / How does my brother George fare?

JOYCE:

Today he has become a father / And so rejoices / As I do to be a grandfather... / Lucia, it's a moving moment... / Ecce puer!

CHORUS:

Little Stephen's mother,/ Only seven years after her confinement, / There

she is, a wan figure, / Wracked with nervous spasms, / Restless for want of affection, / And she'll be throwing / To the four winds / And into the water of the Seine / Her orange blossoms.

JOYCE (*desperately*):

Lucia... / You'll recover without a doubt.

LUCIA:

Come, you obscure Englishman!

BLAKE:

The seventh engraving: / "Is the female martyr / The image of divinity?" / And it shows a youth / Attempting to catch / A fairy in flight in his hat, / While another fairy is seen / Lying on the ground.

JOYCE:

My little one, your escort / And cavalier, William Blake / Is performing an act that is / Something your conscience / Should prompt you to do...

Lady Gregory leaves the chorus.

LADY GREGORY:

Jim Augusta Joyce is hailed / As a great reformer / Of literary landmarks and subjects... / Literary squibs, you see, / So that Ulysses may be absolved. / Sylvia Beach will leap for joy / Together with all the other friends / In Paris...

Lady Gregory goes back into the chorus.

LUCIA:

Come, oh English visionary... / The eighth one please!

BLAKE:

The eighth engraving: / "My son, my son" / Showing an old man / Bowed down and / Deep in thought while / A youth encircles him, / With menacing gesture.

LUCIA (*vexed*):

Clear evidence of moral decay... / The only remedy / For future generations / Is to cut / Through your stinking atheism, Jim!

JOYCE:

I've never abandoned the Church, / It's the Church that has deserted me.

LUCIA:

Still, old man, you'll never / Shake off your Catholic education.

JOYCE:

By now my faith in art has / Supplanted my faith in the / Church of Rome.

LUCIA:

Will, the inscrutable, is about / To show another engraving.

BLAKE:

The ninth engraving: / "I wish, I wish..." / And it shows a man starting / To climb a long ladder / On his way to the moon...

LUCIA:

It's the moon?

BLAKE:

Two lovers are locked / In close embrace, / As they watch him.

LUCIA (*sadly*):

Samuel, Samuel! / I have been forgetful / Of myself for his sake, / And I've even told him / That I'm lost...

JOYCE:

You know perfectly well / That Samuel has not the milk / Of human kindness within him, / Which is why he hasn't fallen / In love with you.

LUCY (*fiercely*):

But I'm sex starved!

JOYCE (*with forced laughter*):

A new Molly-Penelope / For Ulysses-Jim, eh?

LUCIA (*angrily*):

William, decrepit one... / Step forth!

BLAKE:

The tenth engraving: / "Help, help!" / Showing a drowning man / Waving

one arm desperately / In the midst of billowing waves.

JOYCE:

Your ancient Jim moves now / Towards the world of darkness...

CHORUS:

The outrageous conceit in imagining / He's anything like the Greek poet /
Would drive Jim as far as / Washing his eyes with corrosive acids.

JOYCE:

The darkness closes around me / More and more now, / And the surgeon's
knife repeatedly / Has its way on my unseeing eyes!

LUCIA (*laughing nervously*):

To everyone his clinic! / Speak up now, Blake!

BLAKE:

The eleventh engraving: / "The ignorance of years: / faculties dimmed, /
objects blotted out" / And it shows an old man / Attempting to clip / The
wings of a young lad.

Oliver Gogarty leaves the chorus.

GOGARTY:

Are you resentful at all, James Joyce? / Each newcomer in the world / Of
letters exasperates and hurts you.

Oliver Gogarty goes back into the chorus.

LUCIA:

'Tis agony to you to concede / Any ground to another pen pusher / Who
isn't either your master / Or your pupil... is it not?

JOYCE:

You have to know how / To move on your own tracks.

LUCIA:

My obscure one, proceed!

BLAKE:

The twelfth engraving: / "Can your god, o priest, / his revenge in such a way?" / Showing an old man in a cell / Surrounded by little children.

LUCIA:

And what of your concubine / Nora Barnacle?

JOYCE:

I'll have you know, / My little one, / That your mother was / My lawful wedded wife / From the 4th of July 1931.

LUCIA (*shouting*);

Legalize a whore? / Over to you, / You damned Englishman!

BLAKE:

The thirteenth engraving: / "I am fear and hope: / a vision", and it shows a wake.

LUCIA:

Father Jim bequeaths to me / The hatred of the Irish diehards.

JOYCE:

You've nothing to fear Lucia... / I am forever by your side.

LUCIA:

As far as the devil, Jim. / William, more please!

BLAKE:

The fourteenth engraving: / "The wayfarer quickens his pace /in the evening". / Showing a man walking rapidly /And leaning on a stick.

JOYCE:

'Tis a gruesome sight... / A lame donkey trying / To scale a mountain...

CHORUS:

The English visionary is about / To end his game with you, Jim.

Chorus exits.

LUCIA (*resentfully*):

You will desert me, Jim, / You faithless wretch, / In the face of the clangour Of war, air raids, starvation / And squalor that come with defeat.

Chorus – off stage – sings Gustav Mahler’s „Das Lied von der Erde – Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde“.

JOYCE:

We’ll be powerless and distraught... / God alone knows the outcome of this.

LUCIA:

Odysseus the unbeliever, / Your barque is not to sink so soon... / A few more months / In the detestable Swiss hole... / You’ll be leaving French territory / With your fine little family, / And there won’t be / A single mind unbalanced. / Lucia and Helen Joyce will be shut up / Conveniently behind padded walls.

JOYCE (*fearfully*):

My child, / The imponderable Blake / Is deceiving you!

BLAKE (*hastily*):

The roundabout is / Coming to a stop... / The fifteenth engraving: / “The gates of death”: / An old man steps / Over the threshold... / The sixteenth engraving: / “And I said to the worm: / you are my mother and / my sister”: a woman / Wrapped in a shroud. / (*shouting*): Yes, the roundabout / Is slowing down... / Stopping!

William Blake exits running.

Chorus – off stage – sings Gustav Mahler’s „Das Lied von der Erde – Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde“.

LUCIA:

The 13th of January 1941 / And the 10th of April 1951 / Then I’ll be an orphan.

Chorus – off stage – sings Monteverdi’s “Addio terra, addio cielo”.

LUCIA:

Your prophetess, Jim, / Will spend years... / A great number of years / In St. Andrew’s hospital, / Northampton, while / Your coffin is lowered / Into the grave / In the cemetery at Zürich. / Somebody will play Monteverdi’s / “Addio terra, addio cielo” / For you. / (*shouting*): Farewell, Jim / Farewell for

ever!

Lucia exits running.

JOYCE (shouting):

Lucia, Lucia!

Chorus – off stage – sings Monteverdi’s “Addio terra, addio cielo”.

THE END

Performance rights must be obtained before production. For contact information, please see the [James Joyce On The Witches' Sabbath](#) information page.