

FW IV – 616.02 – 617.02
sparse omnotations by
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616.02 A nought in nought

616.03 Eirinishmhan, called Ervigsen by his first mate.

This is indeed very controversial and a splendid example of Joyce's concomitant contradictory sentences. It may refer to an “out and out” Irishman, perhaps a druid (**shmhan** → shaman) ; or, in opposition, to someone who has not the least part (**nought in nought** : nothing of nothing) of patriotic Irish traits; who is a shameful (**shmhan**) sham; perhaps the “Shem” son of Earwiker (**Ervigsen**); a naughty nullity. A N.N. (*Nomen nescio* – Latin: an anonymous or unnamed person). Or someone who, not being Irish, is indeed an “out and out” pure, mythical figure : Ervig → Evig (Danish): eternal → the eternal son → perhaps the crucified HCE? In which case “**first mate**” could be “sponsa Christi” and **mate** could also be “mater”. Thus a vague image of La Pietà.

At any rate a contradictory character pointing both to HCE and to his for the moment unnamed (anonymous?) slanderer (**the me craws** → Magrath), both victim and perpetrator, namely a Heauton Timorumenos (*Ἐαυτὸν τιμωρούμενος*, The Self-Tormentor). As for “**first mate**” there could also be a hint at the ship's husband of II.3 “The story of Kersse, the tailor, and the Norwegian Captain”.

616.03 May all similar

616.04 douters of our oldhame story have that fancied widming!

Here again a doubly reversed perspective. If “**douters**” are doubters who vilify HCE and FW (→ **oldhame story**) or ALP's version of the facts (old dame's story) may they be called “double zeros” (water closets → **the me craws** / micros of 615.30) “**widming**” pointing to German “Widmung” which in this instance may be read as “dedication / inscription” - as in a book (“ to you, double zeros!”). But if “**douters**” are “daughters” (young ladies) then they certainly may imagine to become sponsae (wedding) of and dedicate themselves (Widmung) to such an extraordinary figure.

Of course, since ALP is defending HCE, the sentences seem openly referred to the slanderers, who deserve to be annihilated so that not even the least part of them (**nought in nought**) might be recovered [616.05-10] (Humpty Dumpty like).

616.05 a pipe of twist or a slug of Hibernia metal

“**pipe of twist**” alluding to “wring somebody's neck” and “**slug of Hibernia metal**” to the stabbing/thrust of a Toledo sword if we blend Hibernia (Ireland) and Iberia (Spain). Or the bullet (slug) of an Irish gun:



[The **Regimiento Hibernia** ("Regiment of **Hibernia**") was one of the Spanish army's foreign regiments (*Infantería de línea extranjera*). Known by many in Spain as "O'Neill's Regiment", it was formed in 1709 from Irishmen who fled their own country in the wake of the **Flight of the Earls** and the **penal laws** and who became known as the **Wild Geese** - a name which has become synonymous in modern times for Irish mercenaries and soldiers throughout the world. WP]

616.10 Good wheat!

Pointing to the separation of “**good wheat**” from “bad chaff”, expressed by the three risible soldiers/Sullivans (**Sulvans of Dulkey** : 616.11) and the pair (**Peris**) of threepenny (**sellpriceget**) whores, with venereal diseases (**Sugars of lead for the chloras ashpots**) trying to disguise themselves as Parisian belles.

“**Monacheena**” (→ mannikin) alluding not only to Italian “little nun”, but also to a “bent over (china – kee-nah) cunt (mona)”. “**Peace**” (616.12) being thus both the “piss” of the monacheena/mannikin and ALP's self-exhortation to remain calm.

616.16-19

A further example of multiple and opposing meanings. (1) HCE, whose splendid figure ALP is the only one who can admire (**our privileged beholdings**), would have no reason to frequent those worthless whores (**salesladies' affectionate company**), whom she heartily despises; and who keep on pestering (**pestituting the whole time**) him no matter how she warns them not to (**committee of amusance** : commit no nuisance).



God above being witness (**could above bring under same notice for it to be able to be seen** : 616.19). (2) If her husband frequents them, that would be no more than an extemporaneous amusement (**the committee of amusance**).

616.19 could above bring under same notice for it to be able to be seen.

This can also be read from a different perspective than the just mentioned one. In other words: the same accusations (**same notice**) made against HCE (**above**: what has been said in the preceding lines) should now be unloaded (**bring under**) on the figure who is now to be seen in the lines that follow (**under**). Thus we have HCE (on high: **above**) and Magrath (on the bottom: **under**): Super-Ego vs Sub-Conscious.

616.20 About that coerogenal hun and his knowing the size of an egg-cup.

Here we have a “scrambled” HCE (C-E-H → H-E-C) in co-existence from the origin (**coerogenal**) with the original one (**coerogenal hun**); although the affection (**coer** → French *coeur*) of this part of him is exclusively directed towards the sexual zones (**erogenal**) of the “hen” (**hun**). A barbarous (**hun** → Hun), totally ignorant, the vastness of his knowledge like the “**size of an egg-cup**”. With a possible allusion to the “roundhead” Cromwell.

616.21 First he was a skulksman at one time and then Cloon's fired

616.22 him through guff

“**skulksman**” probably alluding to an indolent, slack/snake (→ skulk) salesman (balancing the whorish **salesladies** of 616.15). As for “**Cloon**” that's somewhat cryptic. If Irish “*cluain*” is read as “fertile piece of land” then “**skulksman**” may allude to a slack peasant fired because of his insolent talk (Adam?). But I'd rather read it as “deception, beguilement, dissimulation”. So that **Cloon** would be the clownish figure of God, namely the Devil; and the slanderer such a mean person not even worth being sent to hell! But “**Cloon**” might allude to “*Clune*” (as written in the first versions of the letter); in which case it could hint at Conor Clune

[Conor Clune (Irish name Conchobhair Mac Clúin 1893 – 21 November 1920) was one of three men along with Dick McKee and Peadar Clancy killed in controversial circumstances in Dublin Castle on Bloody Sunday, 1920, a day that also saw the killing of a network of British spies by the "Squad" unit of the Irish Republican Army and the killing of 14 people in Croke Park by British forces. WP]

Thus the slanderer would be considered an unreliable patriot; or *clune* could be a more carnal Latin “buttocks”, so that the slanderer becomes a turd “fired out” by the Devil's arse! (A reverse angle of the Russian General, in his Cloonish attire, shitting the skulking Butt).

Another possibility points to **Cloon** → Cluny (the Benedictine Abbey). “skulksman” hinting at a “hooded friar”, chased away from the monastery because of his indecent conduct.

616.22 Be sage about sausages!

“**Sausages**” might hint at piggish slanders. But also “so sages” (alleged wise men). Thus a warning to be careful about what self-appointed sages talk about, usually unctuous pig stuff.

616.22 Stuttutistics shows

616.23 with he's heacups of teatables the old firm's fatspitters are most

616.24 eatenly appreciated by metropolonians.

Here we find an amusing fireworks of subtle innuendoes. Let's try first the last term: “**metropolonians**”. We have “metropolitans”, not necessarily dwellers of a metropolis (perhaps an allusion to Fritz Lang's Metropolis? Metropolitans being then the miserable crew of slave workers),



but also “archbishops” (→ priests). And then “polonians”. If “Polish” we get “Metropolish”: polished/polite city dwellers (well behaved and obedient [police] pious bourgeoisie), comfortably seated at their **tea tables**, getting drunk (**heacups** → hiccups) with cups of tea, feeding themselves with piggish gossips (**fatspitters**) and relishing “baloney”, namely Bologna sausage:

[Bologna sausage, also called baloney , or parizer and known in Australia, Britain, Ireland, Zimbabwe, Zambia, and South Africa as *polony*, is a sausage derived from mortadella, a similar-looking, finely ground pork sausage containing cubes of pork fat, originally from the Italian city of Bologna. WP]

Thus everything said is a mash of “porcherie” (Italian pig-stuff, idiomatically “filth, dirty tricks) and nonsense (polony → baloney). “**Stuttutistics**” may point to the victim of their gossips (the stuttering HCE), but it is also an image of their “chewing mouths”. Graphic stuttering underscored by “**tut-tut**” and “**he's he**” and “**tea-ta**”, the scandalmongers making “**shows**” of it, mimicking their object of fun.

616.24 While we should like to

616.25 drag attentions to our Wolkman's Cumsensation Act. The magnets

616.26 of our midst being foisted upon by a plethora of parachutes.

Instead of wasting their time with those lies they should focus their attention on the legendary achievements of that “**Wolkman**”. As John Gordon rightly suggests: *sexual innuendo is highly likely, especially if “Wolkman's” echoes “Womans” (compare 617.34-5)*. I add that “**Wolkman**” is “wolf-man” since “wolk” is Russian волк (wolf). Now his “sensational” acts may indeed evoke Алексѣй Стаханов (Alexey Stakhanov)

[On 31 August 1935, it was reported that he had mined a record 102 tonnes of coal in 5 hours and 45 minutes (14 times his quota). On 19 September, Stakhanov was reported to have set a new record by mining 227 tonnes of coal in a single shift.]

Look at that from a sexual perspective and you can have an idea of his virility. But it is a known fact that the Greatest Ones (**magnets**), towering over minuscules commoners, are surrounded by a multitude (**plethora**) of attracted (by magnetism) parasites (**parachutes**) who make fun (feast) of them, like parrots (French perroquets) of any kind (**race**); a bunch of “parrucconi” (Italian “big perukes” → fogeys) infesting (**foisted**) him with any sort of verminous (parasite) muckraking. But that might also allude to venereal disease bacteria.

616.27-29

This is a reference to the gossips about HCE's alleged homosexuality. What populace describe as an act of masturbation (touching of the soldiers' sausages) is in fact the “royal touch” applied by kings to people suffering from scrofula (**King's Evil**). And that is in relation with the above mentioned “**plethorace of parachutes**” (bacteria). So that in “**Did speece permit**” we may read “**speece**” both as “piss” (→ penis) and Venetian “spisa” (spee-sah) [Triestine spiza] (itch). Thus the image of HCE asking the soldiers to allow him (**permit**) to lay his kingly hand (royal touch) on their itching (**speese**) penises so as to cure their venereal disease.

But, once again, these lines may be viewed from a “patriotic” angle, if we read “**king's evil**” as the oppression of the invaders. In this case he would be the champion of “armed resistance” against the English. And the following lines (616.29-32) would march along the same route.

616.29 And how he staired up the

616.30 step after it's the power of the gait.

Here we can see his brave standing in front of the throne and how he jumped over it (**staired up the step**) with a single stride (**the power of the gait**), pointing (steer) to the highest positions (**up the step**). “**His giantstand of manunknown**” being not only a symbol of the many unknown soldiers [John Gordon's note] who fought against the oppressor; but also his incommensurable stately stature (**giantstand**), being the result of the efforts of a resourceful Mr Nobody (**man-unknown**). According to God's (**gait**) will (**the power of**), of course.

616.31 No brad wishy washy wathy wanted neither! Once you

616.32 are balladproof you are unperceable to hailly, icy and missile-throes.

Here we get the description of his high self-esteem. He does not need cheap (→ Irish **bradach**: false, ill-gotten, stolen) watery whiskey (**wishy washy wathy**) to get drunk so as to suffer “the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune” (**haily, icy and missilethroes**).

“**wishy washy wathy**” brings us back to 484.26 “**Washywatchywataywatashy!**”, four different ways to express “I/Ego” in Japanese. (1) washy : very familiar; (2) watti : rustic; (3) watai : feminine; (4) watashy : familiar. HCE does not need (no **wish-y** of him) to be reassured by friendly (**washy**) or motherly (**wathy**) support. No bullet or ballad can pierce him (**balladproof you are unperceable**). As a matter of fact not just a minuscule “him”, but a giant **HIM: H**(haily)-**I**(cy)-**M**(issilethroes).

616.33 Order now before we reach Ruggers' Rush!

At this point comes a sort of résumé (616.33-617.02) in other words, the “**moral**” (616.34) of the tale, so as to clear ideas and gather up forces needed when fronting vis-a-vis, in a sort of rugby rush, the arch-enemy MacCrawl (617.11), who, up to this moment, has been only hinted at (**me craws** [615.30]) but never called by name. And here we can taste Joyce's linguistic ribaldry. Let us start from what, at first sight, seems a “good luck” wish to HCE.

616.34 hoping to Saint Laurans all in the best.

“**Saint Laurans**” hinting at Sir Amorey Tristram (St Lawrence), Earl of Howth. And to Saint Lawrence, as well; not only O' Tool, patron saint of Dublin, but the Roman martyr Laurentius, who, the legend says, having been placed on a gridiron and suffered pain for a long time, he eventually said (to his cooks): “I am well done on this side. Turn me over!” Mirroring HCE's suffered slings and arrows.

ALP wants to assert once and for all that her husband is innocent. And she faces him, directly, staring at him (**Mrs Stores**), in the eyes, she who “**stores**” all his deeds, be they real or made up. No titles in their confrontation, no ALP, no HCE, but plain **Mrs** and **Mr Humphrey(s)**, wife and husband, calling a spade a spade.

616.35 Mrs Stores Humphreys: So you are expecting trouble, Pondups, from

616.36 the domestic service questioned?

Since we are speaking of the innkeeper Humphrey, I agree with John Gordon's hypothesis that “**the domestic service questioned**” may refer to Kate (and I would add Sackerson) whose loose talk might have revealed unpleasant facts. As for “**Pondups**”, leaving aside the possible “perhaps”, I wonder whether, in this specific perspective, it may hint at the twins detectives “Dupont & Dupont” (pon-dup ↔ dup-pon) of the Tintin comic series:



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomson_and_Thompson

But I wouldn't exclude “pondus → ponder → pander”, the innkeeper pondering upon (ond-up → dup-on) the weight (Latin pondus) of sneaky and compromising love affairs (pander). Or even the image of Humphrey, sustaining on his back (hunchback), Atlantis like, the weight (pondus) of the slanders.



616.36 Mr Stores Humphreys: Just as

617.01 there is a good in even, Levia, my cheek is a compleet bleenk.

617.02 Plumb.

It seems there is no doubt about Humphrey's innocence, who swears to God (**as there is a good in even**) he has nothing to blush about; that his cheeks are candid (**my cheek is a compleet bleenk**), and “good night to it!” (**good in even**). That's the “**plumb**” truth! However: why “**Levia, compleet, bleenk**”? We may suggest that “**Levia**” points to “Levi tribe”, the Levites selected to serve God in the Holy Temple. Thus Livia/Levi being her holy husband's priestess, she who “**al-levia-tes**” his afflictions. “**Compleet**” may allude to the “compleat” husband; and “**bleenk**” to the eyes' reaction (blink) at such a shining sight.

But, as I said, there might be another ribald view. Once again starting from “**hoping to Saint Laurans all in the best**”. Now we know that St Lawrence is in fact Howth, and that Howth, in many instances, may be read as a phallic symbol. So plain Mrs Humphrey wishes her husband's member to stand up (Pondus up!) so as to comply with the “conjugal rights” (**domestic service**) she asks for (**questioned**). Has he any problem (**you are expecting trouble**)?

The innkeeper (*who keeps it in?*) his answer is disheartening. His “chick” is totally “blank”, completely uncompleted. “*Passer mortuus est meae puellae*” (My girl's sparrow is dead) [Catullus III], hanging down like a mason's “**plumb**”.

And that may be indeed ALP's unconfessed feelings about her husband, whom she considers a nullity (**nought in nought**), but, nonetheless she must defend and take care of. As a matter of fact Humphrey's incapability may be underscored by a further “economic” view. Mrs Humphrey asks her husband how “domestic affairs” are going. And he admits that his bank account (check) is completely blank. Totally broke.

That's why it's up to her to put things together. Which is what she is going to do in the pages that follow.

