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into a Scandinavian—‘Jarl van Hoothr’, a sort of HCE—and gives him two sons, Tristopher and Hilary, who are shown ‘kickahheeling their dummy on the oil cloth flure of his homeerigh, castle and earthenhouse’ (HCE, also the father of Swift’s Vanessa). The dummy seems to be their sister, forbidden fruit the dream keeps shapeless and anonymous, especially as (‘Dare! O dare!’) we see ‘the jiminy Tougherrees and the dummy . . . below on the watercloth, kissing and spitting, and rogueing and poghuing, like knavepally and naivebride and in their second infancy’. Grace O’Malley, who is called ‘the prankquant’, is twice refused a posse of porterpease and, in revenge, kidnaps each son in turn, turning the ‘jiminy’ or twin Tristopher into a blackguard and Hilary into a Cromwellian. The third time she comes, the door is shut in her face with a thunderclap hundred-letter word. It is an allegory of HCE’s inability to control the destinies of his children, his petulance in the face of a desired but forbidden relationship. The thunder is the noise of guilt.

But, says Joyce, ‘O foinix culpit’!, parodying St Augustine’s ‘O felix culpa’—happy that sin of Adam which was to bring us a redeemer. The vague crime in Phoenix Park takes us back to the body of the giant Finnegan. A voice cries: ‘Usqueadhaugham!’ which, among other things, means ‘whiskey’, and the great god awakens with ‘Did ye drink me doornail?’ But he is told to lie down again—‘Now be asy, good Mr Finnimore, sir. And take your laysure like a god on pension and don’t be walking abroad.’ Life is going on well enough without Finnegan. Besides, ‘there’s already a big rody ram lad at random on the premises of his haunt of the hungry bordles, as it is told me’:

... humphing his share of the showthers is senken on him he’s such a grandfullar, with a pokked wife in pickle that’s a flyfire and three lice nittle clinkers, two twilling bugs and one midget pucelle ... Humme the Cheaper, Esq. overseen as we thought him, yet a worthy of the naym, came at this timecoloured place where we live in our paroical ferment one tide on another, with a bumbush in a hull of a wherry ...  

The Scandinavian successor to homegrown Finnegan has arrived by water, and henceforth the tale is all his. ‘Humile, commune and encectuous from his nature’, it is he ‘who will be ultimendy res-p MSNBC for the hububb caused in Edenborough’. In its sly way, that word ‘encectuous’ tells us a great deal. When is a man an Earwick or earwig? When he’s an insect. When is he an insect? When his dream refuses to pronounce the word ‘incest’.

3: Here Comes Everybody

LET US NOT BE TOO MUCH TEMPTED TO DRAG THE BIG DREAM UP towards the light: shadowiness, confusion, the melting of one personage into another, of youth into age, friend into enemy—these are of the essence of the dream. Thus, when we meet Humphrey Chimpden Earwicker, we cannot be sure whether we are looking at a real historical figure (one who kept a pub in Chapelizod) or at a sort of paradigm of humanity. Nor can we be sure whether we meet him first as a child or as Adam, fully grown gardener. His name may be Humphrey or it may be Harold; it may even be best to call him Harumphreyd. Where did he get his surname? The anecdote about the sailor king talking to our ‘lobstertrapping honest blunt’ hero on a ‘sultry sabbath afternoon’ has the portentious emptiness of all dream-stories. We can imagine ourselves laughing heartily at HCE’s ‘aw war jist a cottchin on thon bluggy carwuggers’ and then, on waking, feeling foolish about it. Anyway, there soon emerges a vague big Nordic father-figure—a ‘folksforefather all of the time . . . having the entirety of his house about him, with the invariable broadstretched kerschief cooling his whole neck, nape and shoulder-blades’ and then, with a sort of urgency, we have to consider the nature of his primal Adam-sin. Everything is hearsay, a matter of tales and rumours, like the whole of early history; indeed, the narrator of this part of the dream doubts whether there was a sin at all:

... To anyone who knew and loved the chrestliness of the big clean-minded giant H. C. Earwicker throughout his excellency long vicefreegal existence the mere suggestion of him as a lustleuth nosing for trouble in a boobytrap rings particularly preposterous.

Nevertheless, the story has it that Earwicker ‘behaved with ongentilmsensky immodus opposite a pair of dainty maid servants in the
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swooth of the rushy hollow whither . . . dame nature in all innocency had spontaneously and about the same hour of the eventide sent them both'. Whatever the ‘ongentilmensky immodus’ was, three soldiers saw it.

The trouble starts when, ‘ages and ages after the alleged misdeemour’, Earwicker meets a ‘cad with a pipe’ in the park. The word ‘pipe’ seems to suggest musical connotations: CAD is a musical phrase; later, Slaut is to have a GBD in his FACE. The cad asks Earwicker the time. Earwicker, quite unnecessarily, launches into a stuttering refutation of the alleged accusations against him: ‘. . . there is not one tittle of truth, allow me to tell you, in that purest of sifflies fabrications’. The cad goes home, brooding on this, tells his wife about it, and ‘our cad’s bit of strife . . . with a quick ear for spittoons’ tells a priest ‘her particular reverend’ – that there is something fishy about HCE. And so the poison starts to spread, despite the priest’s promise that ‘the gossips so delivered in his epistolcar . . . would go no further than his jesuit’s cloth’.

It is at this point that Joyce introduces the names of the Dublin publishers Browne and Nolan. They are useful names, for ‘Browne’ can be Italianised to ‘Bruno’, and the philosopher Bruno came from Nola (very early in his writing career Joyce called him ‘the Nolan’). Bruno taught that, in a God-run universe, all opposites must eventually merge. He thus provides Joyce with a metaphysical justification for uniting opposing characters in a single personage, as Shem and Shaun, warring brothers, are reconciled in the father HCE. Similarly, HCE’s accusers can take on the qualities of HCE himself. The tale-telling priest is called ‘Mr Browne’; in his secondary personality as a Nolan, he soon has slanders about our hero circulating among the Dublin layabouts, particularly Peter Cloran, Hosty (an ill-starred beachhocker or penniless maker of scarcellars, balls), and O’Mara, ‘an expriate secretary of no fixed abode (locally known as Mildew Lisa)’. Take note of that parenthetical ‘Mildew Lisa’, since it hides the true nature of HCE’s guilt. It is a deformation of the German ‘Mild und leise’, the opening words of the love-death aria that Isolde (Isuelt) sings over dead Tristan (Tristram) in Wagner’s opera.

The scandal culminates in ‘The Ballad of Persse O’Reilly’, which after a guilt-and-f resymbolising thundred-letter word – Hosty sings to a tune that Joyce kindly gives us–literate, undistorted, in the key of A major. ‘Persse O’Reilly’ is a folk version of the French perce-oreille, which means an earwig. Like Bloom, HCE is a foreigner–

any foreigner, all foreigners – with the vices of a foreigner. The song is delightful:

He was one time our King of the Castle
Now he’s kicked about like a rotten old parsnip.
And from Green street he’ll be sent by order of His Worship
To the penal jail of Mountjoy
(Chorus) To the jail of Mountjoy!
Jail him and joy.

In it, HCE is identified with the falling Humpty Dumpty, likened to ‘Lord Olofa Crumple’, accused of a number of bizarre crimes, cursed as a black and tan and a ‘brave son of Scandiknavery’, and threatened with execution and burial:

And not all the king’s men nor his horses
Will resurrect his corpse
For there’s no true spell in Connacht or hell
That’s able to raise a Cain.

And so we come to the third and fourth chapters and the fulfilment of the threat. First, though, we have to go through the form of a trial. The trio Hosty, O’Hara or O’Mara, and Cloran–Horan–Moran (how the names melt and shift, dreamlike) are no more, and, as far as the collecting of evidence is concerned, we have chiefly to rely on the priest Father San Browne or Padre Don Bruno. But opposites (Browne and Nolan) fuse into each other, nothing is certain, vast eras of time have confounded the issue: all that emerges from the murrmurs and shouts is the fact of HCE’s guilt. Still, he has his defenders:

. . . three tommix, soldiers free, cockaleak and cappapee, of the Coldstream Guards were walking in Montgomery Street . . . It was the first woman, they said, souped him, that fatal wednesday, Lili Coningshams, by suggesting him they go in a field. Wroth mod elfdor, ruth redd statand, wrath wrack wroth, confessed private Pat Marchion retro.

The real facts of HCE’s sexual guilt strive to reach the surface, but the girl he longs for is herself a temptress, a sort of prankquean. So Adam blamed Eve. But before Eve there was Lilith: the seducible maiden is turned into the seducing older woman.

Many voices, as in a series of television interviews, give opinions and make judgements. It is we ourselves, we begin to recognise, who will soon be on trial: HCE means ‘Here Comes Everybody’. Solidities emerge–a letter written by HCE’s own wife (at least, it is signed ‘A Laughable Party’–ALP–Anna Livia Plurabelle), and a
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coffin. This coffin has been removed from the hardware premises of Oetzmann and Nephew, a noted house of the gonemost west, which in the natural course of all things continues to supply funeral requisites of every needed description. It is destined for HCE: he must be buried deep down, unable to rise again. Finnegan was an amoral giant, but Earwicker is a man, and man must be cast into the bottomless depths for his primal sin. There is, as yet, no redeemer.

And so to the trial. Long Lally Tobkidi, 'the special', gives evidence in which HCE appears as a sort of drunken butcher (he delivers 'matoncheppa and meatjutes' – we are back with Mutt and Jute, foreigner-hating native and invading Teuton). But a certain MackPartland defends HCE: 'these cavalier excesses are thought to have been instigated by one or either of the causing causes of all, those rusty hollow heroinies in their skirtsleeves'. And, he adds, 'has not levy of black mail from the times the fairies were in it, and fain for wilde erthe bloothoms followed an impresssive private reputation for whispered sins? HCE, like Parnell, is suffering for his greatness.

As for the accused himself, he has shut himself away from it all with his Swiftian guilt: 'And let eggs be good old gaggles and Esther Estarr play Yester Asterr' – there is Esther, there is ('Estarr') Stella. But he has an unsolicited visitor – 'Davy or Tirus, on a burgler's clan march from the middle west, the likely excellent crude man about road who knew his Bullfoot Mountains like a starring bird.' The new world of America has to have its say –

... weathuring against him in moomed metaphores from eleven thirty to two in the afternoon without even a luncheonette interval for House, son of Clod, to come out, you jeweggar, to be executed Amen.

(Note the significant period of time – 11.30 to 2.0, which can be telescoped into the only real date in the whole book: 1132.)

Poor Earwicker has compiled a long list of 'all abusive names he was called'. Some are dream-nonsense; others make all too much sense – Unworthy of the Homely Protestant Religion, I Divorce thee Husband, Cumberer of Lord's Holy Ground, Dirt, Michel Daddy, Guiltierig's Bastard, and so on. The people are against him, even though the trial went in his favour. And so, 'playing on the least change of his ranjester's voice, the first heroic couplet from the fuguall tropicall, Opus Elf, Thortytoe: *My schemes into obedience for This time has had to fall* (1132 again), he goes off to 'the duff and demb institutions' and we bid him 'Adyoe! He is not yet to die, but he is to shut himself away from all communication with men:

'Humph is in his doge. Words weigh no no more to him than raindrops to Rethernihim.' His death and resurrection are reserved to Joyce's next chapter.

This man 'Devayd of the Commoner Characteristics of an Irish Nature' remembers, in his incarceration (like 'the lion in our tear-garden' remembering 'the nenuphars of his Nile'), those two 'illithis' who undid him, combining as they do in 'corngold Yisit', desired daughter. But the time has come for an indignant people to shave him, guilt and all, in that stolen teak coffin and then bury him deep under Lough Neagh. The making of 'this wastohavebeen underground heaven, or mole's paradise which was probably also an inverion of a phallophores, intended to foster wheat crops and to ginger up tourist trade' is a big civilised job, involving blasting with T.N.T., but HCE remains a primitive hero, whose buried corpse is – despite the lack of a redeemer – a potential source of new life: 'bide Zeit's sumonserving, rise afterfall'. Even in the ground (or, rather, in his watery grave) HCE seems to send out shoots of chaotic energy – lightning and flood abound. He becomes as legendary as sleeping Finnegan, 'all this time of totality secretley and by suckage feecing on his own misplaced fat'. And the times, too, we see, are legendary – 'pagan ironed times of the first city (called after the ugliest Dana-dune).

Lest we should think all this some remote fairy tale, however, we are dragged back to the Earwicker bedroom to hear the tapping of the dead branch on the window-pane: 'Tip! Tipit! Tipiptip!' The sleeping mind picks on Kate, the Earwickers' cleaning-woman, to take on the role of eternal widow, gatherer of the scattered fragments of her dead lord, to paint a picture for us, in a dreaddreaming setting, glowing and very vidulal, of old dumplan as she nosed it'. We see that she is a very old aspect of ALP, as Issy or Iselt is a very young one. She recalls the mythical past, ending up, as we must always end up, in the park with HCE's fall. We ought really to reconsider that sin, the trial, the incarceration and burial, but the sinner-victim is long dead. All we can do is to call on his two sons, Shem and Shaun, to re-enact the whole affair. Shun plays a character called Festy King – 'of a family long and honourably associated with the tar and feather industries'. But, though it is he who is arraigned on various charges, there is a great deal of confusion caused by the fact that the chief witness for the prosecution is his twin brother, Shem. The verdict of the four judges (Mamalujo, the four old men who praise the past, the four bedposts) is 'Nolans Brumans'. This (Bruno the
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Nolan, with his doctrine of the identity of opposites, is hidden in the mock-Latin) encapsulates the defence of Shaun (‘Show’m the Posed’). The twins are—

... equals of opposites, evolved by a oneness of power of nature or of spirit, iste, as the sole condition and means of its himirdnber manifestation and polarised for reunion by the symphysis of their antipathies. Distinctly different were their duadstessties.

Shaun is a mere shadow of his father HCE. He is incapable of guilt, and he revels in the admiration of ‘the maidens of the bar’, the twenty-eight girls who flutter and flatter around him. There is a twentieth girl, for Leap-year (a lovelooking leapgirl), who is evidently a manifestation of Issy: she too adores him. He is made for sexual success, the unworthy demagogic successor of his father, though his time is not yet. As for Shem (‘Shun the Punman!’), he is recognised as the enemy, the real betrayer of the father who, presumed dead and made mythical, is no longer a sinner but a saint. Hard words are spoken to Shem: ‘You and your gift of your gift of your garbage abaat our Farver! and gaingridando: Hon! Verg! Nau! Putor! Skam! Schams! Siames!’ The artist, truth-seeker, is always reviled.

The four old men, judges, bedposts, gospellers, provinces of Ireland, drone on among themselves about the glorious past. But the truth is surely not to be found in old men’s drivellings but in that letter from ALP we all heard about before. Anyway, what happened to HCE? Previously he was presented to us (among so many things) as John Peel, the hunter, complete with horn in the morning, but now it seems that he is running up and down like a fox, a quarry like poor Parnell (‘But the spoil of hesitants, the spell of hesitency’). Or else ‘he had laid violent hands on himself... lain down, all in, gagged out, with equally melancholy death’. It is best to assume that he is gone, his successor elected, a new pope (‘the prisoner of that sacred edifice’). We must turn now to his widow, ALP, the brave little woman, cleanser of the reputation of her dead lord, always ready ‘to crush the slander’s head’. She is the river by which we mourn his death, the water which will purify him into sainthood:

... For we, we have taken our sheet upon her stones where we have hanged our hearts in her tress; and we list, as she babs us, by the waters of babalong.

The next few chapters of Finnegans Wake will be all about Anna Livia.

4: ALP and her Letter

I shall try now to say something useful about the next four chapters of Finnegans Wake. We are still on the first great section of the book, which deals mainly with the coming of the archetypal family man after the fall of the primitive god-giant, and this section divides itself about equally into an account of Earwicker’s fall, trial, death and burial (though his substance is spread, like a great spilt egg, all about the world) and his wife Anna’s life and letter—that hidden letter which tells the truth about HCE and thus, in a cryptic way, explains the universe. There are eight chapters in all—four chapters for the man-hill, four chapters for the woman-river. Now, then, we come to Anna Livia Plurabelle—the river Anna Lifley, a plurality of femininity and beauty. She is hymned at the outset, however, as if she were God the Father:

In the name of Anna the Almaziful, the Everliving, the bringer of Plurabilities, halloed be her eve, her singtime sung, her rill be run, unhemmed as it is uneven!

But, of course, she reflects the eternal father, she bore his sons, she is the custodian of the truth about him. She deserves divine honours. First, though, we are concerned with her famous letter.

This ‘untitled manifesta’ has had many names (Joyce gives us three full pages of these, from The Auguss Augussimmoi for Old Seabeastus’ Salvation to First and Last Only True Account all about the Honorary Miruru Earwicker, L.S.D., and the Snake (Nuggets!) by a Woman of the World who only can Tell Naked Truths about a Dear Man and all his Conspirators how they all Tried to Fall him Putting it all around Localized about Private Earwicker and A Pair of Sloppy Shuts plainly Showing all the Unmentionability falsely Accusing about the Raincoats). There is a learned scholar at work here who, before he plunges into the depths of a lecture about the letter, tells us (and this is also Joyce telling us): ‘Now, patience; and remember patience...