

It was eight o'clock on a June morning with the sun shining on the bay, and the women of Sandycove were at their household chores or doing their shopping, most of them in their customary attire for summer and winter alike of drab wool and, if they were out of doors, a coarse shawl by way of headgear.

Few of them heard and none of them heeded the blasphemous tones of a young plump medical student who appeared on the roof of a tower that rose high above the suburb, and greeted the morning with the Latin words that, in those old pre-vernacular days, began the Roman Catholic mass.

The tower was of the kind called Martello. It had been erected, with many others of its type, all along the coast of Ireland by William Pitt, Prime Minister of England, during the time when an invasion by Napoleon had seemed to be imminent. Now it was rented by the young medical student and his friend for a trifling sum paid annually to the Secretary of State for War. At this time Ireland was still under English rule.

The student, Mulligan, was shaving himself with an old-fashioned cut-throat razor and quipping coarsely at his friend, Stephen Dedalus, who leaned on the top of the stairs that led to the living quarters from the roof and looked coldly at his friend, Mulligan. His friend was shaving with care and oblivious of the cold look.

'Your name, my friend,' he said at length, 'is like a Greek name. Have you ever thought that it was like a Greek name?'

'Yes,' said Dedalus at length. 'It's the name of the first man to be airborne. It was in Crete. The spelling is a little different though, I guess.'

'Is that so?' said Mulligan. 'I thought all your family were Irish but I guess I've not really thought about it all that much before.' He carefully removed a patch of lather and stubble from

his chin. 'It's a kind of mockery, I guess. We must go to Athens sometime when I can raise the needful. Haines says there is a little place on the Piraeus where you can get the best ouzo and moussaka in the whole of the Aegean.'

'How long is Haines going to stay here?' said Stephen.

'He's dreadful, isn't he?' said Mulligan after he had shaved further along his plump face. 'He is a heavy Anglo-Saxon who thinks that you're not a gentleman. Jeez, these bloody English. He comes from Oxford and can't understand you, I guess, because you have the Oxford manner.'

'If he stays here,' said Stephen, 'I am off.'

After a time Mulligan inserted a plump hand into the upper pocket of Stephen's black suit and said, 'Lend me your noserag to wipe my razor.' He held it up and said at length: 'It's covered in mucus.'

'Green mucus,' said Stephen. 'Green for Ireland.'

Mulligan moved his plump form to the parapet to look out intently at the bay.

'It's the colour of the sea too, I guess,' he said. 'Look at the sea. When you get near the sea it makes your guts tighten, did you know that? The wine-dark sea is what the Greeks called it. Come and look at it.'

Stephen went over to look at the sea. He leaned coldly on the parapet next to his friend's plump form and looked down at the water. The mailboat was just leaving Kingstown harbour. Neither of them thought that in their lifetimes it would change its name to Dun Laoghaire (pronounced Dunleary), following the withdrawal of English domination from the Irish scene.

'Somebody once called it our mighty mother,' said Mulligan. 'A poet, I guess.'

He turned his large observant eyes from looking at the sea and turned them to look at the face of his friend.

'My aunt thinks you killed your mother,' he said at last. 'She doesn't want us to be, you know, friends.'

'Somebody killed her,' said Stephen. He remembered the time when she was writhing in the agony of terminal carcinoma and all the family were kneeling to pray round her bed. They were a Roman Catholic family, like most of the families of Ireland, but he, Stephen, had recently left the religion of his family and country and was not willing to kneel with the others. He knew that

Mulligan thought he should have knelt down but he just couldn't do it. He wanted to think of himself as liberated. But he knew at the same time that it was very hard to be liberated. He was an Irishman under the domination of the Pope of Rome and the King of England. It would be a long time before liberation.

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