

IMAGINATION

IN

DUBLINERS

Imagination, Illusion and Vision
in
James Joyce's
Dubliners

By
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A Thesis
Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies
in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Degree
Master of Arts

McMaster University
April 1991

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MASTER OF ARTS (1991)
(English)

McMASTER UNIVERSITY
Hamilton, Ontario

TITLE: Imagination, Illusion and Vision in James Joyce's Dubliners

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NUMBER OF PAGES: v, 122

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines James Joyce's cycle of short stories entitled Dubliners. I have centered my analysis of the stories on character and, in particular, on the several protagonists set before us. The thesis' objective is to demonstrate the prime importance of the protagonist's imagination in relation to his\her ability to perceive and respond positively to an epiphany when it occurs. I have attempted to show the delicate relationship between the central characters' imaginative capabilities and the frequently destructive external conditions of their lives.

In the Introduction to the thesis I define, and demonstrate the connections between, the terms which are most important to this study. They are 'imagination,' 'vision,' 'empathy,' 'sympathy,' 'illusion,' and 'delusion.' The thesis is divided into four chapters which follow Joyce's patterning for the gradual maturation of the central characters. The thesis also attempts to show a movement from the young and hopeful imaginations of the earlier stories, through a steady lessening of the characters' powers of imagination and a descent into illusion and delusion, until "The Dead" offers a positive example of the visionary potential of the imagination.

It is my hope that this thesis will occasion a reevaluation of the central importance of character to Dubliners and that it will create a heightened awareness that, above all else, Joyce valued the individual's powers of imagination and vision.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. Ronald Granofsky for his desire to see me excel and for his patience while overseeing the writing of this thesis. Two other professors also deserve special mention. My sincere gratitude to Dr. Maqbool Aziz for his friendship, encouragement, and teachings, and for first sparking my interest in Dubliners. My thanks to Dr. Alan Bishop for his enthusiasm and indispensable ideas on all Joyce's writings. Also, much appreciation is extended to David Griffin for his expertise and friendship.

My deepest gratitude to my family and friends without whose assistance and support neither the thesis nor the opportunity to write it would have materialized. Thank you to my parents, Maureen and Jim, for nurturing my interest in learning and in stories. Thanks to my brothers Scott, Sean, and Patrick for their friendship and advice. A very special thanks to Patrick, Denise and Alyssa whose everyday interest in the writing and in seeing me smile did so much to help. Of my close friends, two should be singled out for their unselfish and unique contributions. A sincere thanks to John O'Hara for his constant and varied interest and support. My heart-felt gratitude to Siona Cameron whose encouragement, ideas and unwavering belief in me have been invaluable.

Lastly, I would like to express my thanks to James T. Coleman whose example has always inspired me. It is to his living memory that I dedicate this thesis.

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Introduction

I call the series Dubliners to betray the soul of that hemiplegia or paralysis which many consider a city. (Joyce, Dubliners 259)

Joyce sought to reveal the reality of Dublin. His topic is his people--everyday and average. In these quite unremarkable specimens, however, he finds something disturbing, worthy of exposition and, perhaps, symptomatic of much of modern life. What he discovers, and what may have partly fuelled his own exile, was that the several pressures of Dublin existence thwarted the creative spirit. Dubliners, then, demonstrates many of the possible manifestations of imaginative malaise through the varied spectrum of protagonists Joyce has created. From his youthful narrator in the first three stories, to the compelling portrait of Gabriel and Gretta in "The Dead", a diverse range of citizens finds voice. Paradoxically, the carefully worked reality Joyce depicts is overrun by illusions. The imaginative potential of his characters is, more often than not, trapped by the stifling influence of Dublin's oppressive truth. Once the empathetic or visionary imagination is corrupted, their example suggests that the individual consciousness then slips into dangerous illusions, harmful self-deceptions and destructive delusions. Thus, this study attempts an analysis of the central characters and the events which shape them and eventually bring about a crisis of imaginative growth or death.

To place my study of Dubliners in the broader context of

criticism this much-addressed cycle of stories has produced, it is useful to delineate, firstly, what this paper is *not*. Most notably, this essay does not attempt to impose a single unifying device on the text. However, several critics, perhaps inspired by the example of Ulysses, have opted for this tack. Warren Carrier, Jackson I. Cope. and Mary T. Reynolds, for example, have proposed that the underlying pattern is Dante's Inferno. Similarly, Charles Shattuck and Richard Levin have urged that Homer's Odyssey is the base for Joyce's Dubliners. Other critics, seizing on the several religious images and symbols which populate the text, have opted for a Christian patterning as an organizing force. Florence L. Walzl ("Liturgy and the Epiphany Season") urges that the liturgical services associated with the feast of the Epiphany are the main structuring premise of the collection. Also, the frequently anthologized essay of Brewster Ghiselin ("The Unity of Dubliners") suggests that the theological and cardinal virtues, along with the deadly sins, comprise the true patterning principle.

The greatest single problem with each of these analogy-based approaches is the simple fact that it imposes an external pattern on the text and, therefore, they cannot truly hope to account for all the delicate intricacies and *internal* orderings of Joyce's work. Levin and Shattuck for example, have difficulty making the two texts (The Odyssey and Dubliners) correlate. While these two critics are ingenious in finding similarities, their premise, nevertheless, remains flawed. Indeed, they seem to deny the independent validity of Joyce's creation by their sometimes forced comparisons. Moreover, the obvious fact that Joyce was intent on

approaching the act of writing from a new angle each time he set to create, weighs heavily against them. It seems they have unwisely read backward from Ulysses. William York Tindall offers a more balanced reading with Homer's text in mind because he sees that its influence is not slavishly adhered to.

Of those who would argue that there is some religious pattern, Ghiselin's is the most convincing. Yet even this study, while illuminating in terms of the central themes it uncovers, seems to force its thesis on the slick surface of Joyce's stories. Ghiselin himself has noted that the customary ordering of virtues and vices is not adhered to in Dubliners. More damaging, however, is the attempt to ascribe a single vice or virtue to a single story. Not only does this deny the complexity of the narratives under discussion, but it also seems, in itself, a highly arbitrary task. For example, Ghiselin is hard pressed to convince his readers that lust is the central vice in "The Boarding House" (Mann 30). Clearly, this story's true focus is on the subtle pattern of victims and victimizers which control the lives of all the characters involved. Similarly, it is extremely difficult to accept that gluttony has anything at all to do with "Clay", and Ghiselin's attempts to suggest that in this case his thesis applies more so to the secondary characters only serves to point out further the peripheral position his central idea occupies in relation to these stories.

Other studies of Dubliners, for instance those dealing with the central ideas of plot, character, image/symbol, narrative viewpoint and theme, are far more useful. The plots do, in fact,

follow a general pattern which is comprised of a scene-setting and mood creation succeeded by complication and action and then concluded with a revelatory moment for either reader or character. However, plot, image, symbol, and narrative viewpoint are important to this study only insofar as they reveal character and theme. Several critics have argued that the same main character can be found in the three opening stories of the collection (Donald Torchiana's "The Opening of Dubliners" and Backgrounds for Dubliners, for example). (Torchiana also suggests that Gabriel is actually a grown-up version of the boy of "The Sisters", "An Encounter" and "Araby". Along the same lines, Susan Garland Mann has gone on to note that the "book presents the gradual maturation of what one might consider the archetypal Dubliner" (30). Undoubtedly, Mann, Torchiana and several other critics correctly note the idea of similarities and development between the stories. However, they carry these ideas to extremes when arguing that the same character recurs under the guise of a different name or that all characters are simply aspects of an archetype. At heart, Dubliners deals with a panorama of individuals, and I would strongly contend that Joyce would have us see them firstly and predominantly as individuals. Gabriel is most notable for how he is *different* from the boys of the first three stories and not for how he is similar. That he *might* have had similar experiences in the past is incidental to the situation in which he now finds himself in "The Dead". Similarly, Mann's contention that an archetypal Dubliner exists seems to follow logically from the observable maturation of the protagonists from story to story. Yet

even in this case, the idea of an archetype should not preclude the individuality of the heroes. The author's own pattern of organization¹ certainly need not imply that the individuals are secondary to the archetype. Contrarily, what is of prime importance is their differences. For instance, why does Farrington cruelly abuse his child, whereas Chandler only comes close to action before he himself collapses? While Corley and Lenehan are dubbed the "Two Gallants", how do they differ, if at all? In a discussion which examines the imaginative capabilities of the various characters in Dubliners, one begins to perceive the subtle but significantly life-shaping differences between them.

Critics who have attempted an analysis of theme in relation to the stories, both individually and as a group, have tended to base their arguments on Joyce's own comments on Dubliners. Using the evidence of the letters in which Joyce discussed his work, these readers have frequently seized on the following statements: "My intention was to write a chapter in the moral history of my country and I chose Dublin for the scene because that city seemed to me the centre of paralysis" (269); and "...the special odour of corruption which, I hope, floats over my stories" (264).

Critics of this school have buttressed their stands by stressing

¹Joyce wrote, "The order of the stories is as follows. *The Sisters*, *An Encounter* and another story [*Araby*] which are stories of my childhood: *The Boarding House*, *After the Race* and *Eveline* [and *Two Gallants*], which are stories of adolescence: *The Clay*, *Counterparts*, and *A Painful Case* [and *A Little Cloud*] which are stories of mature life: *Ivy Day in the Committee Room*, *A Mother* and the last story of the book [*Grace*] are stories of public life in Dublin" (262). Joyce later added "The Dead" and rearranged the stories within the separate groups, but his basic pattern of gradual maturation remained constant throughout these changes.

the thematic relevance of the appearance of the word "paralysis" on the very first page of "The Sisters" and hence, of the entire collection. Unfortunately, this type of analysis (Magalaner, Tindall, Kenner and Levin are all examples) tends toward a reduction of and/or naming of the major topics under discussion, instead of a thorough analysis of them. In short, critics often seem content to assert simply that a character is "paralysed" or is an example of Irish "paralysis."

In contrast, more recent criticism has proffered examination that avoids the issue of "paralysis" *per se* and, instead, focusses on less immediately attainable themes. Torchiana's Backgrounds to Dubliners is an obvious example of this type of study. The effect of Torchiana's book, however, is very much like those efforts to place an external pattern over the stories, because its attempts to uncover hidden historical meaning denies the centrality of the characters set squarely before the reader. This in itself is a major flaw because Joyce was most interested in character in Dubliners. Dublin, I would argue, is secondary to its citizens. Thus, the focus of an overprecise analysis of place, or pattern, or symbol for that matter, distorts the central concern of the stories, which is the characters themselves.

While paralysis is undeniably of central concern in Dubliners, it is the intent of this study to uncover exactly why characters are afflicted in this way. To what extent are individuals responsible for their state? How do Dublin's many pressures come to inform and limit the individual psyche? While some critics have attempted an either/or reading of these questions, this analysis

acknowledges the psychological complexity of the main characters and so examines the extent to which the individual and his/her cultural, political, economic, religious and artistic milieu are subtly but deeply intertwined. The full range of characters in Dubliners offers the reader several reactions to the very real spiritual, intellectual and physical threats of this modern city.

As was noted earlier, the structure or method of the separate stories is marked by Joyce's use of the epiphany. This religious term, meaning 'a sudden spiritual manifestation', is reworked to its particular literary use by Joyce. A. Walton Litz has observed that Joyce "employed the term to refer to moments in which things or people in the world revealed their true essence" (253). In respect to Dubliners, critics have often used this term to apply to the key moments of revelation in each of the stories. For the purpose of this thesis, the term 'epiphany' has been used in this precise manner. However, it is not the intent of this work to identify the epiphanic moments as this has been thoroughly done, if not overdone. Instead, I focus on the imaginative capabilities of the several protagonists of Dubliners, in an attempt to demonstrate the important relationship between the capacity for creative thought and the ability to recognize and receive an epiphany when it occurs. I will argue that Dubliners demonstrates the great extent to which imaginative power facilitates spiritual, moral and intellectual growth.

Within the sometimes bleak context of these narratives the individual's imaginative capabilities are often suffocated by his\her experience with Dublin. A detailed character analysis

reveals that Joyce's *Dubliners* receive, overlook or misunderstand their epiphanies in direct proportion to their ability to think passionately and creatively about their lives--to imagine. Yet, as my title *Imagination, Illusion and Vision* suggests, the creative faculty is itself capable of corruption as well as illumination. When corrupted by experience, or by some inherent flaw, or a combination thereof, the individual imagination can often lead the several central characters into the dangerous realm of illusions. Once this occurs, and it happens with some consistency in Dubliners, self-delusion and some form of destructiveness are soon to follow. Conversely, when the imagination is set to less selfish ends, it can elevate the spirit and lift the individual out of the paralysed state in which he/she is so frequently plunged. Within the context of Dubliners, positive instances of the visionary imagination are far more scarce. Nevertheless, this paper urges that they do, in fact, exist. Primarily, examples can be found in the stories Joyce grouped in the "childhood" (Letters II 111) section and even more clearly through his characterization of Gabriel in his complex and concluding story, "The Dead".

Prior to further discussion of the intent and structure of this paper, it will prove useful to define certain key terms. Vision and visionary appear often and, unless specified, they are used in their positive ways. For example, 'vision' is defined as "unusual competence in discernment or perception; intelligent foresight...a mental image produced by the imagination" (R.D.E.D. 1834), and 'visionary' (adj.) as "characterized by vision or foresight..., characterized or given to... revelations" (1834), or

(as a noun) "One with great imagination or foresight" (1834). Sympathy, or "the act of or capacity for sharing or understanding the feelings of another person" (1676), is seen as an affirmative function of the intellect closely related to the imagination. Sympathy facilitates imaginative connections between people. It bridges differences and binds the individual to his/her community. In Dubliners, the absence of this imaginative potentiality often leads to cruelties and abuses, both intentional and unconscious. The closely related term "empathy" is central to this paper because it too is viewed as a positive function of the imagination. Empathy is the important creative power which permits the loss of "self" and the participation in another's reality. This idea seems contained in its usual definition: "Understanding so intimate that the feelings, thoughts, and motives of one person are readily comprehended by another" (553). Joyce appears to see the "empathetic imagination" as greatly lacking but occasionally present in the Dublin of his inspiration.

Imagination, illusion and delusion are three closely related terms which frequently occur in conjunction with one another. My particular usage of the term "imagination" may have already begun to clarify itself due to its relationship with the aforementioned words. Imagination is the central expression and the core idea of this study and it is liberally applied throughout. For example, functions of the imagination include visions, dreams, day-dreams, nightmares, vivid hopes or fears, memories, perceptions and all conscious creative activities. Despite this broad application, all the above associations spring from the term's usual definition:

"the mental faculty permitting visionary or creative thought" or, "the formation of a mental image or concept of that which is not real or present" (841). When paired with a keen sense of empathy, this creative aptitude allows one to enter "imaginatively" into another's state. Moreover, it is observable in Dubliners that becalming fantasies, hopes, and vivid expectations occupy a middle ground between positive realistic visions and unhealthy life-(truth-) denying illusions. In the context of Dubliners I stress that illusions are largely the result of failed, abortive, or corrupted imaginative efforts. Finally, delusion, which "is the stronger term, often associated with harm" (R.D.E.D. 453), occurs as a consequence of a complete collapse of both visionary and empathetic imaginative capabilities and almost always precedes destructive action.

The structure of this study is inspired by and loosely adheres to the pattern ascribed to the stories by the author himself (see footnote pg.5). In the first chapter, following the sequence of the 'childhood' stories, I examine the youthful hopes and imaginations. The context of the oppressive environment and the illusion-piercing quality of the epiphanies in these stories are found to be powerful counter-imaginative forces. Nevertheless, the unnamed narrators of these stories come through harsh experiences and show some indication of the capacity for change and growth. Predominantly, the stories of childhood focus on moments of revelation and the effect on the protagonist(s) these moments produce. While the imagination is often directed into illusory visions and perceptions, there remains hope for the youths of "The

Sisters", "Araby", and "An Encounter". At length, though, this hope is highly qualified by an environment which is threatening to the spirit and inimical to the imagination.

The second major section, comprised of the stories of "adolescence", plunges the reader into a more sinister environment and into the more seriously flawed or corrupted imaginations of the protagonists. Eveline, the protagonist in the story bearing her name, and Jimmy Doyle of "After the Race" are both internally incapable of imaginative vision. More precisely, the former is afflicted by a crippled capacity for imaginative flight due to the oppressive conditions of her life, and, finally, her visionary paralysis precipitates and causes her aborted physical flight and her forsaken love and life. Jimmy Doyle, similarly, is betrayed by his imaginative powers. In his case, though, his failure to perceive the truth of his own reality and his overreaching fantasies lead to his downfall. Concomitant with the inclusion of "Two Gallants" and "The Boarding House", the entire collection turns toward a novel meanness of spirit and a deeply felt imaginative corruption that has been hitherto absent. The former story possesses little evidence to lessen the culpability and internal corruption of its protagonists, whereas the latter depicts a cycle of imaginative destructiveness and self-destruction that, disturbingly, reaches far beyond the boundaries of this narrative.

In the third chapter, the focus again follows suit and thus is about the stories of 'adulthood.' Remaining in tandem with Joyce's ordering, this chapter analyses "A Little Cloud", "Counterparts", "Clay" and "A Painful Case" respectively. In terms of the

imagination, however, these entries form two distinct pairs. For instance, the protagonists of the first two stories of this section exhibit harmful illusions that culminate in self-loathing and violence. Chandler ("A Little Cloud") lives predominantly in a world of his own fantasies which are soon shown to be damaging to himself and to those around him. Even more so, in the following story, Farrington's self-delusion, coupled with a brutal spirit, becomes an intensely vivid and shocking example of the effects of a corrupt imagination. "Clay", in contrast, shifts the discussion to more internal concerns and to a more palatable example of imaginative paralysis. "A Painful Case" is also marked by internal psychological concerns, but here Mr. James Duffy's egoism, self-righteousness and the total failure of his empathetic imagination end in the destruction of another life and in his own tragically-timed intellectual awakening.

Finally, the last section of the thesis is comprised of the three stories of 'public life' and "The Dead". "Ivy Day in the Committee Room", "A Mother" and "Grace" are seen here, respectively, as examples of the political, artistic and religious imagination and are examined in this light. These three stories are studied in a less detailed way than their predecessors due to their more public concerns and in order to allow for a fuller discussion of Joyce's final and complex entry. The focus of this paper is on the imaginative powers of the main characters, but in the three stories prior to "The Dead" Joyce has opted for a more choral effect, implying that his topic is here more the communal imagination. Hence, it is in this spirit that the narratives are

discussed. "The Dead", of course, powerfully combines public voice with private mind. Moreover, in this story's movement from public gathering to individual vision the author reasserts the positive potential of the individual imagination and, in so doing, he once more complicates his own portrait of Dublin.

Chapter I

The Youthful Imagination

As the introductory story in Joyce's short story cycle Dubliners, "The Sisters" possesses the special burden of setting the tone for the entire collection. Thus, the opening assertion "there was no hope for him this time" (9) puts forth one of the bleakest possible beginnings. Yet, it is in terms of the development of its protagonist's visionary powers that this story is, perhaps, most important. As the opening story in the subsection "childhood" (Letters II: 111), it focuses on a boy's developing sense of self and of society. His imaginative awakening unto himself and his increasing understanding of the world around him is entirely consistent with Joyce's epiphanic view of experience. It is through the various examples of the boy's imaginative faculty that the author is able to discuss the nature of and need for his main character's illusions. Considering the impact, on narrator and reader alike, of the disturbing series of events as the story unfolds, Joyce makes clear that there are no easy solutions nor simple causes to the paralysis and despair of modern Dublin and, more generally, to modern life. Thus, the Dublin of this story is inimical to creative thought. However, through his depiction of the narrator in "The Sisters", Joyce establishes a pattern wherein the protagonists' imaginations struggle with the pressures of Dublin life in an attempt to keep the individual personality intact and vibrant.

On one level, the story is entirely straightforward. It deals

with the simple and unalterable physical fact of death. The boy's nightly search for the two lit candles may be an imaginative expression of his desire to free himself from the darkness in which he feels immersed. While fitting, it is a bitter irony that the candles will be lit only upon the priest's death. Consequently, the imagery suggests that the boy's movement from his dark innocence to a new understanding can only come via the harsh light of experience. In addition to these visual expectations, the boy's imagination also latches onto a few highly suggestive words in his attempt to understand his friend's life, sickness and death. These are, of course, the much discussed "*simony*", "*gnomon*" and "*paralysis*" (9). The fact that we are given both a visual and verbal account of the boy's imagination, and that this information comes from the narrator himself, indicates that Joyce begins his story (and Dubliners) with an example of how an individual can actively and imaginatively engage with his surroundings in order to come to a fuller understanding of his world in relation to himself. Regardless of the paralysis discovered, this in itself is cause for hope.

While momentarily trapped in a world of confused isolation, the narrator is unable to come to an adequate understanding of his Dublin. Nevertheless, his dim but growing subconscious awareness finds expression through the child's imaginative faculty. The story depicts nothing close to a strong tie between the youth and his surrogate parents. The boy's only connection is to a dying priest, one who, half-mad and despairing, may have envenomed the boy's purer thoughts. Moreover, the narrator recognizes that there

is something to the blanks in Old Cotter's comments as they linger and torment his thoughts: "Though I was angry with old Cotter for alluding to me as a child I puzzled my head to extract meaning from his unfinished sentences" (11). The story builds toward an epiphany, but, in his relative innocence and confusion, the boy may be ill-prepared to glean much of its meaning. Instead, he acts as a vehicle through which the light can reach the reader. Unfortunately, the child's imagination is corrupted by the priest's influence, as the "heavy grey face" (11) comes unbidden into his vision and becomes an emblem for a sickened Catholicism which is at the heart of Dublin. While entirely human, the boy's fascination with his vision is easily seen as unhealthy. In his imaginative nightmare, the boy, somewhat unnaturally, finds himself in the role of the priest giving absolution to the murmuring paralytic. Once again, he finds that he is both fascinated and repulsed by the strange figure he finds: "I felt my soul receding into some pleasant and vicious region; and there again I found it waiting for me" (11).

The youth's life-denying association with the priest contrasts with a series of more affirmative images. The boy's symbolic rejection of the dark, murmuring greyness of the death chamber and his walk on the sunny side of the street are easily seen as manifestations of a desire to embrace an imaginative, vibrant life and reject the death-in-life with which he has hitherto been preoccupied. However, the narrator is buffeted by conflicting desires, and, as a result, he is unable to enjoy fully the sense of freedom found in this symbolic act. On one hand, he

is bound by a sense of duty toward his now dead friend, while on the other, he yearns for his own freedom and an affirmation of life as is imaged forth by the theatre (art), sunlight (illumination), and the walking motion (implying travel or exploration both geographic and internal). Thus, on one level at least, the boy must recognize that life need not be spiritual suffering, inertia and darkness.

The Persian dream, unfulfilling as it is, becomes an example of the youthful imagination's escapist tendencies and how these efforts ultimately prove fruitless in the face of Dublin's stifling realities. Not surprisingly, the boy's dream remains incomplete. The setting which is typical of eastern romanticism would seem to be indicative of the boy's latent desire to escape the restrictive psychic and spiritual boundaries of Dublin. Magalaner, unlike Levin, is apt to recognize the importance of dreams in relation to the boy's developing attitude toward Dublin: "In Dubliners, Joyce attempts to introduce into all his stories capable of holding it this reference to romantic, exotic, distant unreality as a contrast to the grey drabness of the Dublin scene" (Time 78-79). However, like so much else in this story, his reverie ultimately proves dissatisfying. Unfortunately, Magalaner overlooks the dramatic and psychological importance of the dream and the boy's failure to recall its conclusion: "that addition of the eastern dream environment to 'The Sisters' was intended by Joyce as a strengthening of the entire volume *rather* than for its restricted meaningfulness in this individual story" (Time, *my italics* 79). Joyce was only too well aware that exile, whether imaginative or

physical, need not mean psychological escape and emotional freedom. It is fitting, then, that directly after this incident the story moves again into its oppressive darkness.

The sisters, themselves elderly, infertile and seemingly bowed by the pressures of life, also become examples of Dublin's living dead. They are the very embodiment of all that which is antithetical to this youth's imaginative/visionary potential. Bent double, the one caretaker would appear to bear the brunt of Dublin's paralysis on her shoulders: "The old woman pointed upwards interrogatively and, on my aunt's nodding, proceeded to toil up the narrow staircase before us, her bowed head being scarcely above the level of the banister-rail" (14). At this point she appears almost wraithlike or, perhaps, as an archetypal death-bringer, a keeper of the dead. The sisters, then, can be seen as examples of a vast network of those who minister to the dead and are themselves cut away from that which is truly alive. The room into which Nannie leads becomes the "dead room" as if the ominous presence of the dead has found its way into the woodwork and has become, like the oppressive brown brick houses of Eccles Street, part of the fabric of Dublin "life." As the details of the story accumulate, every aspect of Dublin existence seems pitted against the boy's creative powers.

As within the Persian dream, the story's external events chronicle the boy's movement from an imaginative world to one of deflating realities. It is significant that the child is distracted by the old woman's "mutterings" as this is the same word Joyce uses to describe the priest's speech. Thus, he links the two

in a deathly pattern. Moreover, the woman appears unkempt, worn out and dishevelled, all of which is in keeping with the sickly atmosphere. Furthermore, while the boy has envisioned the priest "smiling as he lay there in his coffin" (14), he finds instead that he is lying "solemn and copious" (14). His face, viewed in its horrible death-mask, casts a disturbing shadow back across his life and across the boy's memory of their friendship: "His face was very truculent, grey and massive, with black cavernous nostrils and circled by a scanty white fur" (14). Finally, the heavy odour in the room is metaphorically the all-pervasive psychological weight of Dublin paralysis as epitomized by the obscene corpse and the memory of the priest's misspent life. Ironically, the odour of flowers (life) is here synonymous with death (funerals).

Toward the end of his life, Father Flynn seems to have retreated into a world of the imagination, entertaining wistful fantasies as a means of escaping what was otherwise a seriously depressed or "resigned" spiritual state. Herein, Joyce suggests that, once the spirit is corrupted, the imagination can only lead to destructive illusions culminating in madness. As Eliza reflects, "And what do you think but there he was, sitting up by himself in the dark in his confession-box, wide-awake and laughing-like softly to himself?" (18). Moreover, the bitter irony of the sister's malapropism (rheumatic instead of pneumatic wheels) further points out the complete futility of his desire for a drive out to the house where he and his sisters were born. Furthermore, the "rheumatic wheels" she describes would seem to make the priest's sickness more a general symptom for an ailing city. Perhaps the

most telling ironic phrase, though, is the sister's description of the father's life as "crossed." This, in itself, would suggest that the man was ill-suited to the priesthood from the beginning and that perhaps he succumbed to some sense of societal duty or family pressure. His interaction with the boy can now be seen as the beginning stage of a repetitive and unimaginative life-denying cycle which eventually, by destroying the individual, creates a living dead. In this way, the priest becomes a pitiable figure and the chalice that he had dropped, which signalled "the beginning of it" (17), is a symbol for a broken and misapplied existence (Brandabur 338, Tindall 16-17, Magalaner Time, 85). The story's conclusion, which suddenly trails off, suggests that Joyce sees no easy solution to the sickly state he chronicles. Rather, he chooses to show a fragment of a larger destructive cycle of existence. It is a fragment which portends a frightening whole.

The second story, "An Encounter," depicts another youth whose imagination clashes with and must readjust to the reality of Dublin. The anonymous narrative voice used again in this story stresses that the boy is as yet ill-defined and in an ongoing state of development. Once more, it is the narrator's imaginings, expectations, illusions and desires which reveal his psychological state and prepare the reader for its altering. Consequently, the unforeseen encounter the story chronicles and not the boys' failure to reach their intended destination is of prime importance. While Magalaner, Tindall, Kaye and Senn offer valuable insights into the possible symbolic meanings of the Pigeon House, they cannot save

this symbol from its peripheral position in the story. It is rather the illusion-destroying, perception-altering power of the actual encounter which is central to the protagonist's understanding and to our reading of the story. Like so many quest narratives, the sought-after object becomes incidental to the adventures experienced and, more specifically, the way in which the protagonist encounters himself through the seeking. In essence, the events of the narrative trace his movement toward a fuller understanding of himself, including his relationship to his surroundings.

Through the use of the literature of the "Wild West," "An Encounter" begins with the idea of imaginative travel. In this instance, as with "Araby" and the sunshine walk the boy in "The Sisters" embarks upon, there is a strong desire for adventure and escape. While the protagonist is severely limited by constraints due to age and means, Fritz Senn's assertion that "escape does take place" (27) is still valid. Moreover, Senn correctly points out that the several young characters in this story possess something rarely found in Dubliners because they "can still be prompted to act on impulse, a capacity which most of the adults seem to have lost" (26). Concomitant with a yearning for the novel is the realization of the dull sameness of the boys' lives. This story, like the two other childhood stories, demonstrates how Joyce would see the native imagination stamped out by the harsh everyday encounters of Dublin life.

While the narrator of "The Sisters" is certainly alienated from the adult world, the narrator of this story finds he is in no

better situation even among his peers. "An Encounter" is easily generalized to any number of experiences which shatter the illusions of youth and are part of the maturing process which, once encountered, thrust the child into the cold grasp of adolescence. It is these very encounters which force the young imagination to accept the reality before it. Moreover, in calling it "An Encounter" Joyce suggests the possibility for more than one of this type of experience. This implication may also be a part of Joyce's generalizing scheme as it may apply to several boys or, simply, to one of several illusion-piercing encounters in the same lifetime.

In the opening paragraph, the supposed ferocity of the youths described is undercut by the intrusion of a number of domestic images which suggest that, at this point in their development, the boys are safely held within the limits of their own imaginations. While these images remind us that what is being described is, in fact, childhood fantasies, they also serve to introduce several of the story's key themes. For example, the backyard garden, the domicile, and the image of the perfumed mother, when combined, create a secure, controlled, virtually Edenic setting. This atmosphere is fitting given the relative innocence of the youths involved in their play. Moreover, it is significant that "the peaceful odour of Mrs. Dillon was prevalent in all the house" (19), enhancing this safe, predictable and womb-like atmosphere. However, the title and the small failure already noted casts a darker hue over this paradise regained and foreshadows the intrusion of evil into the garden. Once again, the characters are caught in a temporal framework, and, consequently, they teeter on

the very edge of adolescence. Through the experience of Dublin they will age, and their youth and innocence will be lost. Like Adam and Eve, these boys also seek knowledge of good and evil and consequently they bring about their own "fall" in their willing interaction with a venomous Dublin.

However, at the outset of the story, the boys achieve a comforting sense of union or solidarity. For the young narrator, the commonality of experience contributing to a pervasive and shared mood can create what seems at the time permanent and inseparable bonds: "A spirit of unruliness diffused itself among us and, under its influence, differences of culture and constitution were waived" (20). What is sought out at this early stage is an imaginary setting wherein the platitudes of everyday life can be forgotten: "The adventures related in the literature of the Wild West were remote from my nature but, at least, they opened the doors of escape" (20). The imagination as stimulated by these tales of adventure is freed momentarily from Dublin's oppressiveness. Moreover, this mood of escape and liberty is paralleled by a theme of sexual awakening as is exhibited by the boy's fascination with the "unkempt fierce and beautiful girls" (20) of detective stories. In this way, the imagination is linked to maturation both physical and intellectual. The narrator, on the precipice of sexual awakening, is himself like a detective eager to explore life's heretofore hidden mysteries. However, the boy's encounter with the reality of Dublin irrevocably alters his capacity for innocent imaginings.

The "Wild West" stories also become a means of keeping the

childhood imagination, almost collectively, distinct from adult influence. They are a part of, or a symbol for, the bond spoken of earlier, as well as a type of relatively tame youthful rebellion. Yet the stories may possess a further symbolic meaning inasmuch as they represent that which is undisciplined, natural, spirited and emotional. By contrast, Father Butler teaches Roman history, which calls to mind images of stoic restraint as an ideal. Leo Dillon's indiscretion in relation to the Father develops the contrast between the world of youthful, innocent imaginings and an adult existence of too harsh knowledge and experience. For the narrator, this entrance into the adult realm signals the beginning of his epiphany and tarnishes the stories themselves: "This rebuke during the sober hours of school paled much of the glory of the Wild West for me and the confused puffy face of Leo Dillon awakened one of my consciences" (20). Once he is a part of the adult world, a deflation somehow occurs. The mystery and excitement of the stories seem contingent on their secrecy. The psychological altering experienced at the moment when the two worlds (childhood and adulthood) collide effectively foreshadows the story's conclusion and sets a mood of gradual awakening. In this case, as with the latter events, the "doors of escape" eventually lead to a state of new and unsettling insight--an epiphany.

The character of the boy/narrator is, it would seem, on an irreversible path into experience. In this way, the story foreshortens a process of maturation which, in actual fact, could take several years. Both the story and the young boy build toward their epiphany with a sense of definite or unforestallable

movement. The boy soon "began to hunger again for wild sensations, for the escape which those chronicles of disorder alone seemed to offer [him]" (21). Escape will, of course, become a theme central to the entire short story cycle. Here, the boy desires to escape into the "real" world, into what he believes will be the adventures of Dublin life. Ironically, stimulated by imaginative writings, the boy's imagination leads him into a world of too harsh realities. He recognizes the necessity of breaking from his everyday pattern of life and all that which is familiar, domestic, and safe as a means to real adventure or real self-discovery: "But real adventures, I reflected, do not happen to people who remain at home: they must be sought abroad" (21). This statement rings with irony, as the boys' thoughts stray only so far as the Pigeon House when considering "abroad" (Kaye 88). However, in spite of this obvious irony, within the larger context of the collection and considering Joyce's life as an expatriate, the theme of exile as a means to self-fulfilment is central. Because the boys are so young and inexperienced, it is fitting that these first adventures are but local excursions. In essence, while he is limited in imaginative scope and bound by certain insurmountable realities due to age and resources, the narrator's willingness to embark on his quest must be read as a hopeful sign.

While the movement from imaginative play and the literature of distant places to a concrete plan for a day's "miching" is clearly an indication that the boys are crossing into new territory, both physically and mentally, there are, nevertheless, vestiges of their former selves which persist. For example, the boy's reference to

their initial plan as "the first stage of the plot" (21) would seem to indicate that the fantasy realm of "*The Halfpenny Marvel*" has found its way into the boys' real life. These young Dubliners are, at least in part, authoring their own scripts and simply playing at reality to the extent that the world of imagination and so-called "real adventure" overlap and blur into one vision of reality. Also, at this stage in the story, a virtual contract between all those involved occurs in the form of the collection of the sixpence and the time agreed upon to meet. This contract, sealed by handshakes amid laughter, which is soon to crumble, signals the dissolution of the sense of camaraderie found earlier under "a spirit of unruliness" (20). For the narrator, this broken contract is a powerful example of the fact that he has thus far lived in a reality largely of his own making--an illusion. For the reader, however, its failure to hold for even one day is a foreseeable part of the maturation process, whereby the individual is split away from the group and suddenly finds himself entirely alone.

The "bad sleep" experienced by the narrator is reminiscent of the unfulfilled dream in "The Sisters" and also speaks of this story's impending disappointments and awakenings. Moreover, when combined with the image of the bridge and the placing of the books in the tall grass, this fitful night's rest can be seen to symbolize the moment of passage or change which is about to be experienced. The restless sleep is clearly indicative of subconscious activity occasioned, perhaps, by the dim realization that the narrator's childhood illusions are no longer tenable. The

bridge would seem to function both naturally and as a relatively conventional symbol for a moment of change--a crossing over and into. However, this meaning is given special punctuation by the hiding of the books in the long grass, a symbolic rejection of the classroom and the well-behaved predictable learning it offers in favour of more spontaneous experience. These nondescript books also call to mind all the adventure stories and detective literature which previously sparked the narrator's imagination. Given this interpretation, the hiding of the books becomes a symbol for the boy's putting aside the world of pure imagination and taking up a real experiential quest with all its potential risks and rewards. Simply, Joyce depicts this willingness to engage actively with unrehearsed life as, at the very least, lightening or liberating.

While it is the imagination which frees the mind from the restraints or limitations of everyday existence, it can also create illusions which delude and entrap. The noon setting and the sighting of the harbour boats again stress the theme of freedom and serve, momentarily, to embody the youth's hope-filled day. Nevertheless, it is significant that the narrator engages with the possibility of travel and the potentialities this offers only on an imaginative level. The same is true of the adventure literature: "the written word opens doors of escape, but it can also become a means of evading confrontation with reality" (Senn 28). As Kaye has argued (89), somehow the foreign sailors' eyes should have been green, and yet the narrator finds them cold "blue and grey" or darker still and perhaps more threateningly, "even black." It is

appropriate that this deflation (in the face of world travel, real adventure, and the "abroad" the reader surely imagined) occurs as the boys traverse the Liffey. This journey may be (like the river Styx of antiquity dividing life and death) representative of the youth's passage from classroom, childhood, and fantasy into the greater, concrete and dangerous adult world. Thus, it is a symbolic death of innocence.

Reality now presses in on the adventure; the streets are squalid, the day sultry, and the fatigued boys come to rest. The world in which they find themselves is, of course, one of deflated expectations and one which is free from neither the burden of the past nor the debilitating tugs of day-to-day experience. It is this life which pierces dreams: "It was too late and we were too tired to carry out our project of visiting the Pigeon House" (24). What is key is their awareness of the simple fact that the day must end. Their acceptance that it has grown "too late" signals the narrator's realization that his escape, tarnished and limited as it is, is also coming to an end. The title of the story indicates that the final object of the quest is secondary to what will be encountered along the way.

The appearance of the old man sets in motion a series of awakenings which powerfully suggests to the boy\narrator that his imaginary perceptions are no longer tenable. While on one level he is dangerous and imposing, the old man the two boys meet is also a pitiable character who would seem to apprehend vaguely that he has lost some vital part of himself. For example, he wistfully remembers his school days. His nostalgia is naturally lost on the

boys: "While he expressed these sentiments which bored us a little we kept silent" (24). The old man's reminiscences and the accompanying sense of loss and disenchantment have festered for so long that they have become perverse. Indeed, his attempts to find points in common with the boy possibly stem from an unconscious desire to recapture a more innocent time. This man, however, much like the priest in "The Sisters," is beyond the point of repair, as might be gleaned from his unnerving, semi-decayed appearance: "I saw that he had great gaps in his mouth between his yellow teeth" (25). In response to the man's liberal talk, the boy is able to intuit that there is something seriously unbalanced and unsound in the man's demeanour. This recognition in itself signals the boy/narrator's awakening consciousness to the difference between appearance and reality. That safe distance between an imaginary world within Dublin and the reality of a sick and poisonous city is now rushing to a violent close.

The workings of the old man's mind are the imagistic parallels to his physical movements as if the body is now unconsciously driven. His perverse fascination with young women seems another example of his unbridled nostalgia and his own dimly-perceived sense of his lost life. The boy, "without changing the direction of my gaze" (26), as if mesmerized by his strange speech, sees the man walk away. On a psychological level, the boy's silence and his downcast eyes would seem to embody his willingness to avoid an unpleasant epiphany, which would rush him into a new and harsher understanding of his world. It is not surprising, then, that he adopts a false name in the presence of the stranger, possibly as a

means to an imaginative escape from the pressures of the situation. However, illusions or not, the tide of change associated with the pervert is unstemmable.

The man's final long dissertation on whipping becomes an unavoidable reality, and no measure of denial or manufactured illusion can buttress the child's mind from the violent pervert before him. The pervert's speech, seemingly a manifestation of a lifetime of sexual repression coupled with a violent sense of disciplinary action, shakes the boy utterly. All the day's expectations and the romantic literature of the Wild West now recede far into the past and are finally shattered completely by the recognition of the man's "bottle-green eyes" (27). This is not the vibrant life-affirming green of the adventuresome sailors, but rather something domestic, fragile, and clouded. As the boy glances up he finds this powerful and formerly hopeful symbol lodged in a "twitching forehead" (27). For the youth this is the green of the actual world versus the life of his confused notions. The encounter has irreversibly altered his perception of Dublin life and his place in it. He has crossed from relative innocence into an experience from which he cannot return. Bathed in this harsh epiphanic light he comes into a new consciousness and recognizes his essential difference from Mahony and the fact that never again will they feel the camaraderie they might once have shared. Their youthful illusions have vanished.

Like "An Encounter", "Araby" is a story about maturation that comes by way of a hard recognition of the inadequacy of illusions

and of the fact that the reality of Dublin is inimical to boyish imaginings. As with the previous two stories, "Araby" deals with the chasm between that which is and that which is perceived, and with the development of the perceiver. It too depicts the shattering of illusions. In this case, however, these untenable imaginings are romantic fancies. Ultimately, though, "Araby's" significance stems from the narrator's bitter recognition that he has lived in an illusion of his own creation.

"Araby", perhaps even more than its two predecessors, examines the way in which a young imagination shapes impressions of reality. At the start of the story it is truly a world of imagination in which the youths play. Despite an atmosphere of virtual all-embracing darkness, the boys' games continue happily. For the reader, however, the images which convey the story's oppressiveness are too powerful to overlook. The early dusk, the houses "grown sombre," the street lamps lifting their "feeble lanterns," the "cold air" (30), the silent street, dark muddy lanes, dark dripping gardens, and the dark odorous stables, all combine to create an atmosphere of oppressive and inescapable gloom (Atherton 43-45). However, where the feeble lamplight fails to illuminate significantly the sombre mood, from the youth's perspective, Mangan's sister succeeds. In fact, she appears in light, or, at least, "defined by light from the half opened door" (30). Tindall argues that Mangan's sister is "Ireland herself, becoming and inviting like the sisters of Father Flynn" (20). This reading seems far too simple, given the complexities of the narrator's description of his beloved. The sister appears only via a few

suggestive sensual images: "Her dress swung as she moved her body and the soft rope of her hair tossed from side to side" (30). Any other details are superfluous to the boy's description; she exists solely in his mind as an imagined romantic construct. Joyce's sparse use of detail underlines the fact that the boy's attention is both highly selective and vaguely sexual. She exists only on the level of adolescent fantasy, and is not truly perceived as a real human being--whole, separate, unique, and complex. This highly discriminatory and sexually-tuned description is again a symptom of the youth's "blindness."

The narrator's failure to engage in a conversation with her might stem from a subtle, albeit unconscious, fear of reality. This boy, like the youth in "An Encounter," is in the midst of major changes in the way he perceives both the world and his place in it. His safe distance and restricted vision allow him to maintain a comfortable measure of control over his surroundings: "Every morning I lay on the floor in the front parlour watching her door. The blind was pulled down to within an inch of the sash so that I could not be seen" (30). In this way she exists solely within the orbit of the perceiver's imagination, remaining safely romantic and predominately unreal. The books the boy "seizes" are reminiscent of the protagonist's preoccupation with surface meaning, as is exemplified by his treatment of the volumes he finds in the "waste room." Moreover, the fact that he seizes the books exactly at the moment he pursues his love may be a further indication of his unconscious desire to keep her within the circumference of his imagination. Books themselves are fixed,

controlled, imaginative visions. In addition, these books are reminiscent of those adventure stories so closely linked to the narrator's imaginative conception of the world in "An Encounter." Similarly, then, they may function as emblems for the "Araby"-boy's romantic world view and his inability to escape the limitations of his own perceptions.

The world in which he moves seems antithetical to his youthful idealism. While he can assert that "I kept her brown figure always in my eye" (30) as if to exert dominion over his world, the brown colour of her figure suggests that Dublin's paralysis will eventually shatter his fanciful illusion. Moreover, this assertion indicates that the narrator's penchant for the construction of illusions insulates him from the paralysis all around, and yet his somewhat innocent understanding of both himself and his city is all too fragile in the face of Dublin's very harsh realities. The little drama he enacts "morning after morning" also fixes his experience in the realm of a predictable fantasy, making it a safe but, unfortunately, also fragile, delusion.

The boy's ability to maintain his belief in his romantic illusion even in the hostile marketplace is, in fact, a great testimony to the power of the imagination to triumph over the corruption everywhere in day-to-day living: "I imagined that I bore my chalice safely through a throng of foes" (31). The boy seems strengthened by his feeling of alienation. While his illusion is tenuous, it is, nevertheless, worth protecting--it is beautiful. The chalice, another carry-over symbol (this time from "The Sisters"), comes to represent his cherished ideal. As Brooks and

Warren argue, "the metaphor of the chalice implies the same kind of precious secret triumph" (93) that the name Araby suggests to the boy. At this juncture in the story, the narrator, virtually overcome by his emotion, becomes pathetic in his confusion, innocence, passion and vulnerability: "My eyes were often full of tears (I could not tell why)" (31). He is, however, utterly alone and unable to control the flow of his emotions, let alone fully understand them, and consequently he relates his condition as purely passive: "My body was like a harp and her words and gestures were like fingers running upon the wires" (31). In this way, Joyce appropriately characterizes the boy's world view as surprisingly close to the Romantic conception of the Aeolian harp which is inspired by the wind. Similarly, the girl's words and gestures inspire the boy's passive body. (Her influence stirs his imagination and his passion. Moreover, the author may be using the young romantic boy as a symbol for an earlier literary era in which the real often gave way to pure poetic constructs. In modern Dublin, this artistic outlook is no longer tenable, and, consequently, a new mode needs to be adopted.

The real world is unforgiving to the boy's love, and nestled in "the back drawing-room in which the priest had died" (31), the boy finds that his surroundings intensify his state. In this final scene before the narrator speaks to Mangan's sister, the whole of the external Dublin world seems to oppose his love. Given the illusion-shattering potential of the outside world, the boy instinctively withdraws from this cold reality captured imagistically by "The fine incessant needles of water playing in

the sodden beds" (31). Clearly this is a fallen world and, while the epiphanic light of reality can be staved off temporarily, it will eventually assert itself. For the moment, however, he remains blissfully ignorant, "thankful that I could see so little" (31).

When Mangan's sister and the protagonist finally meet, the girl (quite predictably) falls somewhat short of expectations. While an appropriately shadowy character, the girl is, nevertheless, still bound and shaped by Dublin's often contradictory psychological pressures. Indeed, the ambiguity of her description suggests that she is so real that she resists the narrator's attempts to fix her in an imaginary world. Once the narrator speaks to Mangan's sister and makes his promise, the illusion the narrator has carefully constructed crumbles. From this point on, the story rushes to its close. The power of the illusion can no longer buffer the boy against a harsh world; it only serves to compound his troubles. For example, he confesses, "At night in my bedroom and by day in the classroom her image came between me and the page I strove to read" (32).

"Araby," of course, becomes the central symbol of the narrator's romantic imaginings. Moreover, it can be seen as the focus of his longing for release from the drab Dublin in which he finds himself. The word itself seems to embody his fantasy of escape and soothes his anxious thoughts: "the syllables of the word 'Araby' were called to me through the silence in which my soul luxuriated" (32). While providing a comforting balm for his sense of angst, his vision of "Araby," nevertheless, transports him further from his actual life and creates a dangerous psychological

rift between perception and reality. No longer does he appear in control of his illusion, as he admits "I could not call my wandering thoughts together" (32).

Nevertheless, his imagination struggles to reassert itself over the oppressive environment and the relentless passage of time, as represented by the clock's incessant ticking. Time, for the remainder of the story, becomes an indomitable force against which the passionate youth pits his delicate dreams. Yet it becomes painfully obvious that the evening, the bazaar, and his illusions cannot be held for long. This innocent and romantic view is both a function of his youth and inexperience, but as the irritating ticking on the wall suggests, he is unavoidably moving toward an encounter with himself that will cause him to age. Not surprisingly, the child flees this portentous sign of the future and retreats to the solitude of "the high cold, empty, gloomy" rooms wherein his mind can achieve a momentary timelessness: "I may have stood there for an hour" (33). Yet even this time out of time, this retreat into the self, is laced with Joycean irony. While he sees "nothing but the brown-clad figure cast by my imagination" (33), it is the way in which the child "sees", or fails to see her which is most striking. She appears only as a Picasso-like creation of half-remembered fractured images. In this way she is unreal, static and beautiful, but this vision quickly dissolves upon his descent into the lower part of the house. This, perhaps, is a descent from the safe confines of his intellect into the cruelties of reality as characterized by Mrs. Mercer, the very antithesis of his beautiful dark vision. Mrs. Mercer is the very

embodiment of uninspired, predictable, and monetary-minded Dublin. Alongside the forgetful drunken uncle, she serves, completely, to alienate the child from the adult world.

It is the reality of Araby which is, of course, the final and fatal blow to the narrator's illusion-creating tendency. The "large dial of a clock" (34) marks the entrance to Araby and punctuates the boy's transition from a state of innocence to increasing experience, or, in the terms of North Richmond Street, from blindness to sight. Sordid, gloomy and exploitatively commercial, the actual bazaar is the furthest thing from the Araby of his mind. Consequently, it is only "with difficulty" that he can remember why he has come. While outwardly trivial, the conversation the boy overhears is, all the same, central to his epiphany. It too deals with lies. This idea of betrayal applies directly to the protagonist's sudden perception of his personality, because he has spoken and lived a foolish fancy--a lie. Now that the boy is cast out from the safe world of childish play, where bodies glowed despite the blackness of the night, the darkness asserts its dominion. Atherton argues that the drama of the story comes from the protagonist's realization of his entrapment (46). However, the psychological drama which takes place is contingent on the boy's recognition of the important part he has played in the creation of a false Araby. His "anguish," then, is directed at that part of experience seen as impersonal and unalterable, but his "anger" is at himself. Finally, this self-reproach can be seen positively, because it indicates that the acquisition of this deeper understanding has, nevertheless, left that passionate part

of his being intact. Moreover, "the very fact of the anger suggests that the boy's search for escape will not stop here" (Atherton 47). He has come through the experience.

Chapter II

The Imagination Falters

"Eveline" introduces the segment of four stories Joyce was to characterize as "adolescence" (Letters II: 111). Like its three predecessors, this story is about entrapment and the desire for escape. Yet, the title character remains forever trapped by the limits of her own imagination and therefore she is, in part, the author of her own confinement. *Eveline*, as her name suggests, may be seen as the archetypal female Dubliner. Consequently, her failure to leave her oppressive environment becomes a broader comment on the powerlessness and paralysis of women in Dublin. Of course, it is in the combination of powerfully suggestive symbols and in the heroine's psychological waverings that the true drama lies. Eveline's internal conflict between her duty to her past and her obligation to herself, however, is limited by her own inability to imagine/envision a different life for herself. Her connection with Frank, though, offers a very real chance at life, community, and even love. Eveline's eleventh-hour rejection of her potential husband urges us to assess the reasons behind her failure to depart. In this questioning, we are asked to consider both the effect of the environment and the individual character. Undoubtedly, a substantial part of the cause behind Eveline's ultimate paralysis lies in her inability to imagine. Her failure to see herself in Buenos Ayres -- the 'good air' which contrasts with Dublin's dust (Dolch 97) -- coupled with a tendency to misread

her memories, suggest that the positive potential of her imagination is all but extinguished. Having lost that life-affirming, imaginative capacity in herself, only illusion and madness await, as the example of her mother's life attests.

"Eveline" is also a story wherein Joyce further explores the deflation and potential self-destruction which can be brought about by the belief in unhealthy illusions. For children, illusions can ease the pain of harsh realities and, for the most part, broad margins for error exist even where an escapist imagination could potentially cause strife. In "the Sisters," "An Encounter," and "Araby," for example, we see that even Dublin will often indulge the illusions of her youth. Eveline, however, is no longer a child, and her native city will no longer forgive her for any wishful untruths or self-deceptions. It is a fitting example of Joyce's psychological realism that Eveline looks back to a better time in the hope of finding solace. The content of her fanciful memories is often highly revealing. As Magalaner has pointed out, "even her father, whom she has little reason to love, remains most pleasantly in her memory for his unusual thoughtfulness on the day that 'he had read her out a ghost story'" (Time 121). It is most significant, however, that Magalaner characterizes the ghost story as "a romantic means of escape from her life" (Time 121). Unfortunately for Eveline, she wrongly assigns the positive emotion associated with this memory to her father rather than to the idea of escape where it rightly belongs.

Eveline also remembers images of harmony, community and life which are clearly the very opposite of her current situation: "One

time there used to be a field there in which they used to play every evening with other people's children" (36). With its fairy-tale quality, this memory is very much in keeping with the illusion-creating tendency found in the earlier stories. Moreover, in this instance it reinforces Eveline's sense of isolation. She is cut away from the past by time, changes and decay, yet she desperately clings to her memories as a buffer against an uncaring present. Eveline's understanding, or misunderstanding, of her past changes her perception of her present. In that she focusses on the friendship and momentary happiness she achieved while playing away from home, she distorts her perception of her former life, and, in particular, her father's brutality: "Her father used often to hunt them in out of the field with his blackthorn stick; but usually little Keogh used to keep 'nix' and call out when he saw her father coming" (36). Years of having been forced to deal with obvious injustices have left her without the capacity to recognize them for the horrors they are. Mentally, Eveline is deeply scarred and, as a result, her imagination leads her toward illusory memories instead of toward a vision of the happier life which is potentially at hand.

More generally, the children can be seen to symbolize an innocence and potentiality which is now lost. Because they exist in a relatively harmonious state, they act as a surrogate family for Eveline. It is a bitter irony, then, that this family of children actually protects Eveline from her real father. The children's conduct becomes an affirmation of humanity by providing an example of the possibility for people to coexist in mutually

beneficial relationships. However, the even more tragic irony of this memory hinges on Eveline's failure to interpret correctly its significance. Instead of being horrified by the oppressive and violent conditions of her youth, she seizes on the few moments where she escaped and achieved some happiness. Yet even in this, Eveline is unable to see that she was happy because she attained the measure of escape she was capable of at that age. The result of her failure to interpret correctly her past is her inability to use this knowledge to solidify her resolve to flee Dublin with Frank. It is unfortunate that Eveline chooses illusion over reality, because it is only through an acceptance of the brutal reality of her past that she will allow herself to depart. That she creates comforting illusions out of memories is an understandable facet of her efforts to survive. Nevertheless, that these illusions come to harden her into an acceptance of her lot makes her the object of much pathos.

Despite the fact that Eveline colours her memories, they do serve to illustrate the deterioration of her family life. She recognizes that much has changed and much has worsened: "That was a long time ago; she and her brothers were all grown up; her mother was dead" (37). This observation is an example of the oscillating pattern of Eveline's thoughts. Her mind seems to move unconsciously from illusion to reality, and from a selective and softened version of the past to a stark understanding of her present difficulties.

At this early point in the narrative, Joyce sets in tension the two phrases which occupy the poles of Eveline's psyche. They

are the simple recognition "everything changes" and Eveline's exclamation "Home!" (37). The former suggests a realistic acceptance of change that would allow for a healthy future, whereas the latter plunges her imagination into thoughts of the past where familial duty and entrapment lie. While Magalaner has rightly suggested that "the chains of convention, habit, and a vow to her dying mother are too strong" (Time 120) to allow Eveline any real chance at freedom, he fails to note that the above causes for her entrapment grow in significance when one considers the effects they have had on her imaginative powers. The tiresome regimen of Eveline's home-life, coupled with her unrewarding work seem to have deadened her capacity to imagine a more fulfilling life. For example, even when she foresees her departure with Frank, her thoughts return to the petty, unkind women at her job. However, this shortsightedness on the protagonist's part aside, it is not until she remembers her vow to her dying mother that the complete collapse of her imaginative faculty ensues. Prior to this she could picture herself freed from Dublin's oppression: "But in her new home, in a distant unknown country, it would not be like that. Then she would be married--she, Eveline. People would treat her with respect then. She would not be treated as her mother had been" (37). In the end, however, Eveline fears that Frank "would drown her" (41) and she cannot leave. Magalaner has urged that this fear "of death by a watery grave [which replaces] the more appropriate snuffing out in a handful of dust seems an unnecessary waste of a carefully built-up symbol" (Time 126). Yet upon close examination, the water symbol seems entirely consistent with

Eveline's state of mind when it comes time to leave. Her fear of drowning is caused by her utter inability to conceive of a life outside Dublin as anything but threatening. In fact, that she rejects the life Frank offers is made all the more poignant through his association with water, because, by contrast, Dublin's dust offers only a continuation of her deadened existence. In essence, the story's most tragic irony is that Eveline mistakes her only chance at life for death.

Eveline's final paralysis can be traced back to her vow to her dying mother. That foreign music was playing at her deathbed, pricking Eveline's consciousness into thoughts of life outside Dublin, is supremely ironic (Dolch 100). We are reminded that Frank loved to sing and that, predictably, her father had sent away the Italian organist even as her mother lay dying. Now, on her way to the dock, the song is heard once more. It causes Eveline to recall her life-crushing duty and occasions the final collapse of her ability to imagine. Herein, Joyce suggests that Dublin's myopia (Eveline's father exclaims "Damned Italians coming over here"(40)) kills the artistic (imaginative) impulse in its citizens. In Eveline's case, after she remembers her mother, even her outwardly optimistic thoughts are conveyed in a style of panicked shortness of breath which belies their hopeful content. For example, Eveline struggles to convince herself of her resolve:

She stood up in a sudden impulse of terror. Escape! She must escape! Frank would save her. He would give her life, perhaps love, too. But she wanted to live. Why should she be unhappy? She had a right to happiness. Frank would take her in his arms, fold her in his arms. He would save her. (40)

That Clive Hart should argue that Eveline "lacks the courage

to go because she has no capacity for love" (48) seems to ignore certain key aspects of her life. It is not a failure of love but a lack of self-love and her inability to truly imagine herself in a happy life which bring about her paralysis. Moreover, the love for her siblings, her father, and the memory of her dead mother, while tragically misplaced, are undoubtedly strong. However, late in his article, almost as an afterthought, Hart considers the injured state of Eveline's imagination. He seizes on the line, "perhaps she would never see again those familiar objects from which she had never dreamed of being divided" (37), and notes that Eveline's casual use of the word "dreamed" differs from the reader's understanding of it: "but for the reader the word dreamed is an indication of the quality of her imagination which has never taken her beyond her native city, and of the unreality of her projected flight with Frank" (52). In the end, it is this very inability to see which brings on her utter inertia. It is fitting, then, that "her eyes gave him no sign of love or farewell or recognition" (41) because her experience with Frank has totally blinded her. Thus, in her final passivity Joyce leaves us with an image of her obliterated imagination.

"After the Race", perhaps more than any of its predecessors, depicts a protagonist who is actively involved in self-delusion. The race creates an illusion of motion which can be seen as an emblem for the hopes of the Dubliners themselves, so that the race referred to is, in fact, the Irish. In this way, Jimmy Doyle and his father can be seen to embody a flawed aspect of the popular

Irish imagination through their mistaken understanding of their foreign visitors and themselves. While obviously confined by the limited scope of their Dublin experience, the Doyles, nevertheless, attempt to better their social status and financial situation through their association with the international set. Moreover, the story clearly focusses on middle-class mercantile ambitions, as depicted through the young Jimmy Doyle. Yet, it becomes painfully obvious to all except the protagonist that both father and son are out of their depth in their dealings with the Continentals (Adams 101). Their provincialism emerges as they both confuse a fierce capitalism with the possibility of liberation from a drab middle-class Dublin existence. Thus, through the sort of league of nations represented, Joyce here suggests a type of national ignorance, self-deception and exploitability, as symbolized by the naive and hopeful Doyles.

Despite its sharp and resonant portrait of the Doyles, many critics have followed Joyce's cue in their judgement of the story as unpolished and even amateurish. Tindall, for example, argues that it is "But plainly prentice work," and that "'After the Race' seems meagre by comparison with the rest" (23). Similarly, Bowen has written that "the portrait of Jimmy Doyle with his exhilaration, aspirations, hopes, fears and guilt is truthful and realistic, even if the significance of the entire piece seems less apparent" (Scholes and Litz 54). Bowen's vague condemnation of the "entire piece" is barely worth consideration, as it seems more an admission of the critic's inability to locate meaning in the story than it is an account of the author's artistic failing. Tindall's

judgement, however, is also suspect. He has urged that "the trouble seems Joyce's unfamiliarity with the subject," feeling that Joyce had "little knowledge of the upper or the lower upper" classes (23). Yet upon close scrutiny, the story reveals itself to be much more occupied with social climbing and cultural illusions than with class concerns. In essence, when approached on its own terms, "After the Race" offers a convincing portrait of a youth whose flawed imagination and impeded vision ultimately bring on an unpleasant, if only dimly perceived, revelation.

Clearly, Joyce seems to be asking to what degree the Doyles are representative of prevalent cultural beliefs. The narrator's descriptions of the Irish people tell us much about their visionary powers. The story's opening imagery dehumanizes and collectivizes the local people, as they are referred to merely as "clumps" (42), and, similarly, later they become "a knot of gazers" (45). In contrast, the flashy race cars seem far more vibrant, and serve to epitomize the wealth and industry associated with the Europeans. The cars speed by in a showy procession, creating only a momentary illusion of excitement and potential. The French are especially welcomed by the derisively labelled "gratefully oppressed" (42), but the blue cars pass by, their drivers seemingly oblivious to their involvement in the myth of Irish liberation.² Although Jimmy believes himself to be set apart from his countrymen, he, nevertheless, remains captivated by the style and glitz of the Continentals. In imagistic terms, the "trimly built cars" (42)

²In his book Joyce's Dubliners Torchiana offers a full account of the historical allusions present in "After the Race."

embody the attraction Jimmy has toward the wealth and appearance of his European counterparts. While the young Irishman deludes himself into believing he is considered an equal by his co-racers, it is significant that he rides in the back seat with the Hungarian artist and is left to walk home from his so-called racy day "with a curious feeling of disappointment in the exercise" (45).

Despite this portentous interruption in the "joviality," Jimmy's desires are soon rekindled. The often excited tone and the stress on "merriment" and "hilarity" become increasingly ironic as the story unfolds. Indeed, the deliberate overuse of these terms points to the inevitable undercutting or deflation of this mood. In short, what Jimmy believes to be shared laughter soon becomes mockery. The driver's "line of shining white teeth" (44) exposes the aggression concealed behind a false smile. Thus, through Jimmy's unsuccessful attempts to set himself apart from Dublin life, he, ironically, becomes the very epitome of that "little knot of people collected on the footpath to pay homage to the snorting motor" (44).

Jimmy is easily seen as an extension or continuation of his father. In fact, the two characters seem to overlap somewhat, as Mr. Doyle vicariously enjoys his son's youth and is "covertly proud of the excess" (43) he displays. Similarly, Jimmy seems to reflect the provincial values of his father, as, despite his attempts to cut a dashing figure, he nevertheless "kept his bills within the limits of reasonable recklessness" (44). As a consequence of this relationship, a repetitive pattern emerges so that all that is novel, bold or imaginative becomes predictable, and all so-called

action is seen merely as stagnation. Moreover, in that Jimmy's father's desires shift from his youthful nationalist sympathies to his more mature capitalism, Joyce is able to make an even broader comment on the transformed values of his age.

However, on board the American's yacht, the thin veneer of international camaraderie the Doyles mistakenly adhere to begins to dissolve when politics become the topic of discussion. Clearly, the facade of the light-hearted mood is quick to degenerate. Yet Jimmy remains oblivious, and it is not until well into the card game that he is forced to accept the incongruity of his situation amongst this elite set. The merriment is here soon to dissolve and the harbour, as "darkened mirror" (47), reflects the dim, confused revelation in the youth's mind as he finally refers to his companions as "devils" (48). At the story's conclusion, the young Irishman expresses his wish to remain in his "dark stupor" (48) and evade the imminent epiphany. Nevertheless, the cruel light of morning illuminates his folly and the unsympathetic announcement of the Hungarian throws his shame into greater relief. As the representative of a positive imaginative force it is fitting that Villona remains both unaffected by the slick Europeans and lets in the symbolic light at the story's close. As Bowen has noted, "it is the artist who will be the priest of the Irish, leading them out of their fallacious ways by discovering to them the truth about themselves" (61). Furthermore, the Hungarian's role in the story is undoubtedly akin to Joyce's method of illumination in all of Dubliners. Yet Villona can also represent the imaginative or visionary part of Jimmy Doyle's consciousness which is seen to be

so desperately lacking. As the DoYLES' beliefs may express the status quo, then by extension Joyce is surely commenting on widespread cultural illusions. What is perhaps most disturbing is that Jimmy might want to cling to his illusion despite the humiliation of the previous night, which for the reader recalls the disturbing notion of the Irish as the "gratefully oppressed" (42), and brings the story full circle.

In "Two Gallants" Joyce looks directly into the psyche of two characters who are imaginatively bankrupt. Both Lenehan and Corley live out selfish, uninspired and sordid street lives. They seem to strive solely for the most immediate, short-term monetary or sexual gratifications, and they appear unwilling or unable to free themselves from the unchanging condition of their lives. Largely, it is through the interrelationship of the two men that their unconscious fears and imaginative shortcomings are brought into focus. The title itself not only invites comparison between some ideal gallant and the reality of these men's lives, but it also urges us to compare the two men. Are they, indeed, two of a kind?

While Corley and Lenehan have a similar outlook on life and, obviously, work toward similar underhanded ends, they *do*, in fact, exhibit some key differences. Corley, it becomes apparent, is the more direct, aggressive and active of the duo. He is uncomplicatedly self-serving and entirely unimaginative and, as a result, he is utterly devoid of empathy for another human being:

He spoke without listening to the speech of his companions. His conversation was mainly about himself:

What he had said to such a person and what such a person had said to him and what he had said to settle the matter. (51-2)

By contrast, that Lenehan has a flare for the use of language and that he possesses some imaginative powers, however stunted, is evident enough: "He was a sporting vagrant armed with a vast stock of stories, limericks and riddles" (50). Most importantly, though, are the passive, reflective and introspective aspects of his character which give Lenehan the potential to come to a deeper understanding of himself and his place in Dublin. Consequently, the story's dramatic centre is the scene in the "Refreshment Bar" wherein Lenehan catches a glimpse of his true self and, in a rare moment, he contemplates the direction his life is taking. Most critics (e.g. William T. Noon, F.L. Walzl, and A. Walton Litz) have urged that the story is first and foremost about betrayal. However, given the particular nature of Lenehan's thoughts and given the ultimate failure of his imagination to lead him toward either vision or empathy, one must conclude that the story is, at core, about *self*-betrayal.

The opening images of late summer Joyce provides as part of his scene-setting speak of change and death: "The grey warm evening of August had descended upon the city and a mild warm air, a memory of summer, circulated in the streets" (49). Most commonly, the end of summer symbolizes the end of an era in an individual's life. In human terms, this season signals the passing from youth into maturity. In imaginative terms, however, the end of summer should parallel the recognition of one's own humanity through an unflinching acceptance of mortality. Yet, both main characters are

trapped by their own petty desires, selfishness and lack of vision, and thus they overlook the symbolic import of this time and can feel no common bond with other people. Corley seems entirely incapable of empathy, whereas Lenehan simply fails to embrace the truth of his own vision--be it through the unhealthy habit of his life or merely through cowardice. Consequently, the late summer setting ultimately proves ironic as the two men remain essentially unchanged amid what is perhaps nature's most powerful image of flux.

As the two men move down the city streets, their walking is as unharmonious as the rest of their friendship ultimately proves to be. This, again, is an example of both men's complete inability to truly communicate with another human being. Without empathy their only bond is a mutual desire to exploit, and, as a result, they walk side by side but without any real concern for each other: "The other, who walked on the verge of the path and was at times obliged to step on the road owing to his companion's rudeness, wore an amused listening face" (49). Even at this early stage in the story there are indications that these so-called "gallants" are actually characterized by corrupt imaginations. Lenehan, for example, like an actor, simply wears an amused face. Similarly, Corley's speech referred to as a monologue, suggests that he is indifferent to the thoughts of his companion and, like an actor, he too may be using his imaginative powers to create illusions. In this case, however, his efforts are not for the entertainment of others but are instead solely for self-aggrandizement. In short, the imagination is set to base designs as both men are preoccupied with the manipulation

of the other.

Symbolically, this dim evening setting suggests that, shrouded in darkness and without even the faintest illumination of self-knowledge, they are not fully alive. As the story eventually reveals, Corley and Lenehan are merely living half-lives and they are only vaguely aware that some better existence is possible. More importantly, though, the darkness is to be seen as a facet of their psyches, since both men are trapped by the habit of their own self-deceptions. The years of playing roles, manipulation and the changing of appearance, demeanour and opinion for petty personal gain have destroyed their purer thoughts and battered their visionary imaginations. Consequently, we find that they are left with only indistinct recollections of their dreams of what their lives might have been, and yet they remain too corrupt and too ensnared in their own small-minded day-to-day (night by night) schemes to imagine vividly any other existence. The moon, then, is an appropriate symbol for their darkened minds, as it is representative of a psychological state that is inconsistent, mutable, gloomy and threatening. Finally, in the presence of the two gallants the moon itself darkens, suggesting that there is a cumulative oppressiveness when these two men are together, as one intensifies the other's illusions and baser notions of reality.

Each player seems controlled by his own immediate desires, and yet each is, predictably, anxiously concerned about the other's power to abandon or manipulate. In short, as the two men are essentially trapped by their own embitterment and doomed to see only with selfish ends in mind, they, rather pathetically, seek

allies in each other. Paradoxically, because each man recognizes his inherent similarity to the other, they also recognize the corruption at the root of the other's character. As a result, they are both attracted to and repulsed by the personality they discern. However, neither man can truly connect with the other because both lack the necessary empathy. The men's silent walk with the mournful music at their backs further illustrates the insurmountable gaps in communication that exist between them. There is no spontaneity in their response to the harpist's music exactly because this requires the imagination. Moreover, it points out the forced nature of their bond and is, itself, another example of their psychic darkness, as they can perceive nothing uplifting or life-affirming in this art form. They are bound to shadows and silence as a consequence of their pedestrian, unimaginative lives. Thus, while "the noise of the trams, the lights and the crowd released them from their silence" (54), this is merely a distraction and no substantial change has taken place.

When Corley and Lenehan finally come upon the unsuspecting girl, further tensions arise. Again, due to his complete failure to empathize, itself a function of his imaginative powers, Corley sees the woman solely as a possession. In his corrupted eyes she loses her essential humanity and is reduced to a prize to be won--hence, the gold coin at the story's close. He appears monstrous, brutish and dehumanized in his efforts to exploit: "His bulk, his easy pace and the solid sound of his boots had something of the conqueror in them" (55). After Corley and the girl depart, Lenehan's observation of the couple is a betrayal of their

intimacy, and it attests to the unhealthy relationship of the two gallants. Lenehan's character is so inveterately corrupted that he is reduced to these deceitful activities as his only way of feeling alive. No longer is he truly able to imagine his life any other way. Moreover, when left to his solitude and his own sordid thoughts, "his face looked older [and] gaiety seemed to forsake him" (56). His imagination paralysed, he can no longer perceive the beauty around him. His mind has cast a grey film over all his surroundings:

He found trivial all that was meant to charm him and did not answer the glances that invited him to be bold. He knew that he would have to speak a great deal, to invent and to amuse, and his brain and throat were too dry for such a task. (56)

Most pointed is Lenehan's inability to speak. Indeed, his failure to express himself in words emphasizes the decayed state of his imaginative capabilities because, especially for Joyce, there always exists an intimate and powerful connection between language, art, life and the imagination.

Generally, the story moves increasingly toward physical details and in so doing reflects the main characters' own entrance into a solely physical world. Herein all thoughts are self-serving and the spirit and the imagination are deadened. However, in the "Restaurant Bar" we find that Lenehan's visionary powers struggle to assert themselves even amid the squalor of his conscious thoughts:

In his imagination he beheld the pair of lovers walking along some dark road; he heard Corley's voice in deep energetic gallantries and saw again the leer of the young woman's mouth. This vision made him feel keenly his own poverty of purse and spirit. He was tired of knocking about, of pulling the devil by the tail,

of shifts and intrigues. He would be thirty-one in November. Would he never get a good job? Would he never have a home of his own? He thought how pleasant it would be to have a warm fire to sit by and a good dinner to sit down to. He had walked the streets long enough with friends and with girls. He knew what those friends were worth: he knew the girls too. Experience had embittered his heart against the world. But all hope had not left him. He felt better after having eaten than he had felt before, less weary of his life, less vanquished in spirit. He might yet be able to settle down in some snug corner and live happily if he could only come across some good simple-minded girl with a little of the ready. (58-9)

In this vision, Lenehan, for the first time in the story, confronts himself and the verity of his personal history. His imaginary construction of Corley and his lover is clearly suggestive of his own, perhaps unconscious, understanding that he is desperately lacking a true connection with another human being. His vision, if he could only accept the truth it tells, would liberate him from his sullied existence. What his soul truly desires is real passion and heart-felt gallantries, and not the mere play-acting and shallow seductions of his friend. In his imaginative vision of the "lovers" it is possible to identify a projection of Lenehan in his figure of Corley, and, therein, an idealized example of what he might be. For a moment, hope returns. Lenehan feels "less weary," and indeed his whole life might be "refreshed." Unfortunately, his more practical conscious thoughts ultimately undercut the strength of his imaginings. His thinking is irreparably flawed by monetary concerns as he comes to envision a "simple minded girl with a little of the ready" (58). It seems it is too late for his imagination to save him and, predictably enough, the remainder of the story demonstrates Lenehan's total inability to connect meaningfully with other people, an inability which tragically

culminates in an inescapable sense of isolation.

Once his mind "became active again," the story resumes its initial thrust and any thoughts of a different life are all but forgotten by Lenehan. Now, Lenehan returns to his former self and so turns once more to his hard-edged experience and cunning intellect while simultaneously forsaking his visionary imagination. Again he becomes a schemer and a distant observer who has cut himself away from all first-hand experience. Instead of a positive reality, Lenehan has become an outsider and an exile from his own dreams of life. He has betrayed his own vision and thus his own soul. As the story rapidly winds to its close, Lenehan feels anxious as he rejoins a world of deception and ruthlessness. The coin swindled from the girl, of course, becomes the final symbol of their deception and money-mindedness. For the two gallants there can be no redemptive vision but only blinkered eyes fixed inward on their prize. With the coin, they can share in the immediate physical pleasures of drink, food and the company that it will bring, but, as the late autumn rain falls on these dimly lit figures, all traces of Lenehan's vision and possible future have vanished before his dispassionate and illusory God--Mammon.

At core "The Boarding House" is a story about victims. Everyone involved seems to suffer because of some impersonal but powerful life condition which demands that the various characters respond with imagination and personal vision. However, this story demonstrates the great extent to which the realities of Dublin thwart the individual creative spirit, thereby denying the

possibility of a vision of a better life. For example, Mrs. Mooney's failed marriage and failed business have embittered her. While Polly seems largely naive, she does, however, recognize the relative powerlessness of her social position. Bob Doran is similarly trapped as he appears governed by his conscience, the weight of community opinion and propriety. Lastly, even Mr. Mooney's alcoholism may (at least in part) be brought on by social factors and hereditary tendency. This is a society wherein the individual imagination is repressed and discouraged. All the characters seem inextricably bound to their roles and doomed to act out parts that they would otherwise not choose. Thus, Doran, Polly and the Mooneys are both victims, victimizers and the authors of their own misfortunes. In essence, this story's conditions of existence demand that the characters respond with imagination and self-reliance because failure to do so will trap them in the nets of social conformity, religious propriety, familial duty and personal guilt--all of which combine to annihilate the individual.

Mrs. Mooney responds to the hard terms of her life in equally hard terms. She remains compassionless toward her estranged husband, and he is eventually reduced to "a shabby stooped little drunkard" (61). Contrarily, Mrs. Mooney, who had always been "a determined woman," is now become "a big imposing woman." Thus, the pattern for the entire story is established in a very short period of time, as marriage is seen solely as a power struggle that can become an abusive, destructive and even life-threatening contract. In short, Mrs. Mooney responds utterly unimaginatively to her world. She hardens her heart to her family and to all Dubliners,

and it becomes clear that her disillusioned outlook filters down into her dealings with her children. A story potentially about young love and marriage is soon reduced to questions of power relations, entrapment, manipulation and control. This is a world orchestrated by Mrs. Mooney and it is without imagination, empathy, compassion or love. Clearly, as a result of Mrs. Mooney's money-minded, self-conscious, and self-seeking desires, her role is transformed from victim to victimizer. She has become the destructive epicentre of Dublin's petty materialism, sham conservatism, and unimaginativeness.

As a matronly force, Mrs. Mooney is sovereign within the microcosm of her boarding house world. Both Polly and Jack fall under her domain and her direct influence. Jack, the least important of the two, plays the ruffian or bully and seems cut from the same mould as Corley ("Two Gallants"):

He was fond of using soldiers' obscenities: usually he came home in the small hours. When he met his friends he had always a good one to tell them and he was always sure to be on to a good thing -- that is to say, a likely horse or a likely artiste. He was also handy with the mits and sang comic songs. (62)

In short, Jack's existence is one wherein the imagination is set to the most immediate and self-serving ends. His "comic songs" and his efforts to be onto a "good thing" suggest that what talent and understanding of his situation he does possess are simply turned toward his own selfish ends. Thus, like Corley and Lenehan, Jack too is a willing victim (willing in that he does not question or examine his world) of an unempathetic Dublin. However, Jack remains a peripheral character and is easily seen simply as the symbolic embodiment of male power and aggression. We are reminded

that he is "handy with the mits"(62), and at a crucial point in the story Bob Doran recalls his threats to Polly's would-be debauchers. Jack remains largely unconscious of his role in the story and, predictably as Mrs. Mooney's son, he has no concept or vision of a different life, and blindly plays out his ascribed part.

Polly, like her brother, is controlled by her mother's wishes. We see that Mrs. Mooney at first "sent her daughter to be a typist" but later had "taken her home again" (63). Nevertheless, Polly is both victim and victimizer, and similarly she is both seduced and seductress. When first introduced into the story, Polly is seen in the habitual act of singing--something the Madam feels is good for business. The song, and Polly's particular rendition of it, is an example of her creative powers. Polly's imagination, then, is set to base ends and her performance becomes the groundwork for the seduction of Mr. Doran, which is, all the while, being orchestrated by her mother. Because of her complex role, Polly is best characterized as *wisely innocent* (64). Perhaps more than any other character in "The Boarding House," Polly best embodies the self-contradictory and self-defeating aspects of Dublin life. She has just enough imaginative power to assure for herself the stagnant security of an unhappy marriage. Of course, the relationship between Polly and her life-hardened mother deeply affects the former's attitudes and actions towards men, marriage and, indeed, her future life.

Polly also occupies an important position at the story's close. She appears to go through a wide range of emotions as she contemplates her past, present and future. Through her thought

processes, we recognize that her imaginative powers have undergone a total collapse in the face of present realities and, with them, her self and soul. Faced with the reality of her situation and her complicity in it, she retreats into a world of wistful fantasy. Realizing that in entrapping Mr. Doran she has indeed entrapped herself, she then turns from her all-too-real condition toward the comfort of escapist remembrances: "She regarded the pillows for a long time and the sight of them awakened in her mind secret amiable memories. She rested the nape of her neck against the cool iron bed-rail and fell into a revery" (68). In her reflections, Polly can return to a more hopeful and innocent time. But, given her current situation, her memories are mere comforting illusions and while she is momentarily assuaged--"There was no longer any perturbation visible on her face" (68)--her lot has, in fact, been cast. Moreover, her "hopes and visions of the future" (68) are also expressions of a mind under pressure. She has turned to imaginative fantasy as a balm against the truth of her life. Thus, her mind flees from the concrete world into an abstract one of Eveline-like paralysis: "Her hopes and visions were so intricate that she no longer saw the white pillows on which her gaze was fixed or remembered that she was waiting for anything" (68). For a moment she has achieved a passive mindless ecstasy. Indeed, only in an absence of self-consciousness is there to be any happiness for Polly because the truth of her existence is sordid. That this type of imaginative construct must crumble is unavoidable for Joyce because it is antithetical to the related concepts of personal epiphany and self-realization. Instead, it is simply mental

evasion and self-deception. Finally, it is entirely fitting that it is Polly's mother who shatters her imaginative escape. The Madam is the bitter truth of Dublin, and this "determined woman" will certainly have the last word.

Bob Doran, of course, is also an important character in terms of the individual imagination, and much of the story demonstrates how his vision of himself is controlled and directed by social convention, economic considerations and religious pressures. The boundaries of his vision seem, ultimately, to be shaped and confined by the scope of Dublin culture and morality. Bob's memory of his confession is the first striking indication that his thoughts, actions and even his imagination are deeply intertwined with the constricting norms of his native city. In this instance he recalls how his sense of guilt was carefully nurtured:

The recollection of his confession of the night before was a cause of acute pain to him; the priest had drawn out every ridiculous detail of the affair and in the end had so magnified his sin that he was almost thankful at being afforded a loophole of reparation. (65)

Irish Catholicism, then, creates its own unhealthy illusions and distorts the truth to its own ends in addition to preying on its parishioner's conscience and sense of propriety. Subsequently, and perhaps most powerfully, Doran imagines his work-place and the altering effect the news of the affair would produce. It is as if in every avenue Doran turns his mental gaze he finds only rebuke, guilt and condemnation which foster his own fears of ostracization. As he knows only too well,

Dublin is such a small city: everyone knows everyone else's business. He felt his heart leap warmly in his throat as he heard in his excited imagination old Mr. Leonard calling out in his rasping voice: "send Mr. Doran

here please." (66)

Doran also feels alienated and finds little comfort in his musings in respect to his private life because "he could imagine his friends talking of the affair and laughing" (66).

Finally, however, Doran's too accurate imaginings of Dublin's response to the affair, coupled with his own sense of guilt (no doubt a product of Dublin morality), culminate in the complete destruction of his visionary powers. In the aftermath of his unforgiving imaginings he is left simply with a consuming irrational desire to escape: "He longed to ascend through the roof and fly away to another country where he would never hear again of his trouble" (68). It is his fear of a physical threat from Mrs. Mooney's son which finalizes Bob's decision to wed Polly. The victim (Mrs. Mooney) has become victimizer and a woman who at one time might have possessed passion and imagination is now occupied by stamping out those very attributes in all those she affects. This is her most powerful legacy and, thus, she has assured the perpetuation of another cycle of imaginative paralysis and personal grief.

Chapter III

Descent into Illusion, Delusion and Violence

In "A Little Cloud" Joyce once again depicts a crisis of the imagination in the life of an otherwise inconsequential Dubliner. In essence, Chandler's story is a study of an insignificant imagination--one which is over-timid, small-minded and prone to reality-denying sentimental imaginings. In keeping with the earlier stories, this, the first in the "mature life" (Letters II: 111) group, is largely concerned with internal action. The physical facts of the narrative are, by themselves, undramatic. Nevertheless, some critics (e.g. Kenner) have focused their attention on Chandler's closing feelings of "remorse," attributing this solely to his prior outburst at his child. Yet Chandler's many imaginings, which comprise a large portion of the story, suggest that the condition of bitter regret in which the diminutive hero is left has come from a much deeper sense of personal failure. The author initially divulges several key details from Chandler's background which reveal telling character traits--the most significant of which is his unfulfilled desire to be a poet. Every step Chandler takes toward the realization of this dream is characterized by insecurities, misunderstandings, sentimentalizations and fears. Consequently, Chandler can be seen as a virtual imaginative Hamlet, who, like his Shakespearean counterpart, is complex, tortured and paralysed by his own multifarious thoughts.

At the story's beginning, the groundwork for the developing

portrait of Chandler is set before us. Joyce begins to unfold his protagonist's psychic state, with the emphasis on the central characteristic of underdevelopment, through a description of Chandler's physical stature:

He was called Little Chandler because, though he was but slightly under the average stature, he gave the idea of being a little man. His hands were white and small, his frame was fragile, his voice was quiet and his manners were refined. He took the greatest care of his fair silken hair and moustache and used discreetly on his handkerchief. The half-moons of his nails were perfect and when he smiled you caught a glimpse of a row of childish white teeth. (70)

Chandler's imagination can also be thought of as stunted and fragile. When he "thought of life" he seems resigned and sentimental: "A gentle melancholy took possession of him. He felt how useless it was to struggle against fortune..." (71). He lacks vision. Instead of imagining a better life he resigns himself to his failings. For Chandler, all that is truly passionate, beautiful and loving is somehow perceived as removed from his immediate experience. When he thinks of the books of poetry he bought in his "bachelor days," it becomes apparent that he sees the imagination as something entirely apart from everyday life. This concept of art and life is complicated by the protagonist's childlike timidity. Consequently, Chandler's imagination and his full participation in his own life remain shelved and stunted: "he had been tempted to take one down from the bookshelf. But shyness had always held him back; and so the books remained on their shelves" (71).

Chandler's walk to Corless' bar reveals that he is one more Dubliner who does not live in his native city but simply finds

himself there--existing. Instead of drawing him into his surroundings and giving him a sense of community, his fantastical imagination separates him from his fellow citizens. Chandler's lack of empathy is implied by the emotional chasm he feels between himself and the people on the streets:

A horde of grimy children populated the streets. They stood or ran in the roadway or crawled up on the steps before the gaping doors or squatted like mice upon the thresholds. Little Chandler gave them no thought. (71)

Here the children seem even smaller than they actually are as they appear reduced and made inhuman in the little man's gaze. Of course this foreshadows his later inability to consider the humanity of his child before his own selfish imaginings. Even as Chandler approaches his destination he cloaks the bar in a sort of mythic and foreign shroud, keeping it safely within the realm of the unreal:

...he had heard the waiters there spoke French and German. Walking swiftly by at night he had seen the cabs drawn up before the door and richly dressed ladies, escorted by cavaliers, alight and enter quickly. They wore noisy dresses and many wraps. Their faces were powdered and they caught up their dresses when they touched the earth, like alarmed Atalantas. (72)

Thus, Chandler sinks the real Dublin into a sea of his own illusory and envious imaginings.

Given that Joyce has established Chandler's propensity for viewing his world from a distanced and illusion-minded perspective, his understanding of Ignatius Gallaher's success is immediately called into question. In fact, evidence in Chandler's memories of Gallaher suggests that his friend's subsequent account of himself may be largely fabricated or, at the very least, greatly embroidered. For example, Chandler recalls that "in the end he

[Gallagher] had got mixed up in some shady affair, some money transaction: at least, that was one version of his flight" (72). Nevertheless, prior to their actual meeting, Chandler remains enthralled with the idea of his friend and insists, rather dubiously, that "there was always a certain...something in Ignatius Gallagher that impressed you in spite of yourself" (72). Of course, it may very well be exactly *because* of himself that Chandler is impressed. Indeed, the little man is so excited and so overcome by anticipation that he is again subsumed by his own imagination. At this point, however, his illusions lead only to spite and thus he comes to a further rejection of his native city as a result of his envy. He broods, "You could do nothing in Dublin" (73).

Aloof and for a moment self-assured in his fantasy of escape, Chandler "felt superior to the people he passed...and as he crossed Grattan Bridge he looked down the river toward the lower quays and pitied the poor stunted houses" (73). Ironically, because of his own stunted imaginative powers, the protagonist remains at a distance from his world as he is utterly unable to empathize with his fellow Dubliners. Instead of any real connection with his surroundings, he opts for an artistic fantasy--itself a bastardization of his visionary power: "He wondered whether he could write a poem to express his idea" (73). However, Chandler's feelings overwhelm his thoughts and as a result his sentimentalizing has left him confused: "He was not sure what idea he wished to express but the thought that a poetic moment had touched him took life within him like an infant hope" (73). That this "infant hope" will never come to fruition in this childish man

is evident enough. But this is not because he has remained physically in Dublin; rather, it is because the flawed workings of his imagination lead him away from the reality at hand and into self-deception and delusion. In this spirit he pictures that "every step brought him nearer to London, farther from his own sober inartistic life" (73). In keeping with all dreamers, Chandler's vision of himself as an artist is undercut by fears and uncertainties. Consequently, he deflates his own lofty hopes even while they are still in the imaginary stage: "He would never be popular: he saw that" (74). In essence, in his musings prior to his meeting with Gallaher, Chandler reveals his own dissatisfaction with his life, while simultaneously exposing a flawed, self-conscious and self-deceiving imagination.

Eventually, Chandler's illusions totally consume his conscious thoughts: "He pursued his reverie so ardently that he passed his street and had to turn back" (74). This redirection of both body and mind marks a key transition in Chandler's thinking. As he now approaches the bar where his friend awaits, Chandler's epiphany begins to take shape. At Corless's, the real Gallaher awaits and Chandler (subconsciously) dreads the illusion-piercing truth that their upcoming conversation will surely bring: "As he came near Corless's his former agitation began to overmaster him and he halted before the door in indecision" (74). This door, of course, divides Chandler's fantasies of the place, people, and his friend from their truths. Upon their reunion, Gallaher's reality asserts itself immediately. He is visibly older and he is all too willing to divulge that his 'glamorous' job "pulls you down" (75).

Gallagher, however, preys on his old friend's weak and impressionable imagination as he speaks of Paris' "gaiety, movement, [and] excitement..." (76), creating verbally for Chandler the same sort of fascination Jimmy Doyle held for the Parisian auto-racers in "After the Race." Nevertheless, Chandler is not altogether overwhelmed by his former friend's tales of travel and, in fact, the earlier illusion created in memory of Gallagher's appealing character is now more fully debunked. Chandler

was beginning to feel somewhat disillusioned. Gallagher's accent and way of expressing himself did not please him. There was something vulgar in his friend which he had not observed before. (76-7)

More importantly, though, it is Gallagher who has the last word in their debate on the merits of married life and it is the image of "thousands of rich Germans and Jews, rotten with money, that'd only be too glad..." (81) which hangs in Chandler's mind as a cancerous vision.

In the final section of "A Little Cloud" Joyce begins with a description of Chandler's wife Annie. She appears to be both realistic and pragmatic and is, seemingly, a very good homemaker and an affectionate wife. However, it soon becomes obvious that all Chandler is able to see is that she is a part of the apparatus of his mundane life. Chandler's difficulty is one of perception and, poisoned by his own weak imagination and Gallagher's spiteful comments, the would-be poet projects his own lack of passion and empathy onto his wife and then proceeds to rail at the flaws he has created. Joyce writes, "*He* looked coldly into the eyes of the photograph and they answered coldly. Certainly they were pretty and the face itself was pretty. But *he* found something mean in it"

(my italics 83). Thus, the eyes are cold and mean because the heart of the perceiver is itself both cold and mean. Later, he again projects his own dissatisfaction with his life into her picture, finding that the eyes therein "repelled him and defied him" (83). It is while in this self-deluded state of mind that Chandler's imagination finally and irreversibly betrays him: "He thought of what Gallaher had said about rich Jewesses. Those dark Oriental eyes, he thought, how full they are of passion, of voluptuous longing!...Why had he married the eyes in the photograph?" (83 Joyce's ellipsis). From this moment on, Chandler's mental/emotional state deteriorates rapidly as "a dull resentment of his life awoke within him" (83). While Chandler's final outburst is sad and shocking, it is a predictable culmination of his frustrations. Due to the many dangerous illusions already presented, the reader is well-prepared for the aggression Chandler directs at his innocent child. Unfortunately, it is only in this action that Chandler finally becomes aware that he has both created and participated in an unhealthy illusion. When he suddenly thinks, "If it died!..." (84), the disturbing reality of his life in addition to the lives of his family has irrefutably exerted itself on his consciousness. Somewhere deep in Chandler's own thinking he has recognized that his mean fantasies made him forsake his own life, as well as his family's. For the protagonist, it is an epiphany too intense to bear: "Little Chandler felt his cheeks suffused with shame and he stood back out of the lamplight" (85). In conclusion, his own "tears of remorse" (85) come to symbolize not only the bitter regret he feels at his action toward his child,

but they also express a penetrating shame occasioned by his true vision of himself as a man prone to self-pity and sick imaginings which culminate in harmful delusions.

"Counterparts" marks Joyce's most pronounced foray into the psyche of a violent and destructive Dubliner. Initially, the protagonist seems caught in a cycle of aggression and bullying, but it soon becomes apparent that it is his own corrupt and vindictive imagination which continually fuels his own rage. He is both abused and abuser, victim and victimizer. But at the very core of his mental life are his flawed and violent perceptions. Farrington, even more so than Chandler, sees a world that is greatly informed by his own illusions. It is as a result of his imaginative bankruptcy that Farrington seeks the intellectual stupor afforded by drink and the concomitant emotional escape from his mechanical and uninspired being. This unsettling fragment of Dublin existence is punctuated by the protagonist's attempts to elude the reality of his life. However, these attempts are continually thwarted by illusion-shattering antagonists who, ultimately, force the hero to face himself, his failings and an unshakable sense of his misspent, vicious life. Unfortunately, his is a dark and brooding revelation.

The physical almost completely governs Farrington's imagination. Spiritually and emotionally beaten down, he resorts to his bodily strength in an attempt to rediscover a sense of a formidable personal identity, but even his physique betrays him. He is older, weaker and poorer than he used to be. His friends are

insincere; he is bettered in a contest of strength by a London youth and, finally, his foolish lusts after a half-imagined 'exotic' and foreign woman leave him empty and full of self-loathing. He is ensnared in the destructive machinery of Dublin existence and no measure of his dreams of power nor his drunkenness provides any real refuge from the reality at hand. He has been ruled by a violent, physical and unimaginative mindset and, as the ending suggests, his actions and the example of his life combine in the only ferocious legacy he has to offer. In short, Farrington is a shocking example of an utter failure of empathy, since his hatred of his own intellectual weakness is finally and brutally vented on his son.

Farrington is first introduced as a violent physical man, and his imagination clearly reflects his inherent brutality. For example, he responds to emotional abuse and verbal chastisement with vivid imaginings of physical retaliation: "The man stared fixedly at the polished skull which directed the affairs of Crosbie and Alleyne, gauging its fragility" (87). The protagonist's imagination is further linked to the physical insofar as his anger is succeeded by a desire for drink which, for Farrington, translates into a need to escape into the imagination-destroying habit of alcohol: "A spasm of rage gripped his throat for a few moments and then passed, leaving after it a sharp sensation of thirst" (87). Like so many of the Dubliners before him, he too desires escape. However, in this case, fuelled by his anger and confined by the limits of a furious imagination, Farrington can only conceive of bettering his lot through the oblivion of alcohol.

The story, of course, goes on to demonstrate exactly the extent to which the hero's drinking is connected to a whole series of destructive illusions. Indeed, the chief clerk seems to understand that the protagonist's appetite for the comforting illusions of the tavern is unstemmable: "'I know that game,' he said. 'Five times in one day is a little bit...'" (89). His is a mind entirely unprepared to accept the reality of his life, but it is also completely unable to envision a better existence. Instead, he unthinkingly succumbs to his illusions of deliverance: "The dark damp night was coming and he longed to spend it in the bars, drinking with his friends amid the glare of gas and clatter of glasses" (89).

The realities of Farrington's existence constantly thwart his desire for refuge in drink and in the intoxicating conversation of his friends. His clerical responsibilities, dodged as they have been throughout the day, threaten to prolong his time in the office and extend his feelings of suffocation. In his mind, the longer he stays at his desk the more injuries he has to bear. The appearance of Miss Delacour (from the heart), for example, carries with it an implicit slight to Farrington. This well-perfumed, available woman is virtually the Dublin equivalent of the "rich Jewesses" (83) Gallaher dangled before Chandler's self-deluding imagination in "A Little Cloud." Similarly, in "Counterparts," Mr. Alleyne "was said to be sweet on her or her money" (90) and he functions as a type of Gallaher who, having remained at home, seeks advancement through marriage.

The effect of Delacour's presence is also consistent with

Gallagher's tales of foreign exoticisms in the preceding story as, in this case, Farrington like Chandler feels alienated from and abused by his surroundings. Only now, these already distracting emotions are compounded by jealousy. Subsequently, the whole machinery of his work-life seems to mock this man's yearning for recognition. At his desk again, he is unknown (referred to almost exclusively as "the man") and replaceable, and the physical apparatus of his environment asserts itself as an imagination-destroying power, thereby reminding him of the truth of his prosaic career. Distracted by this vague impersonal force, he is momentarily compliant: "the man listened to the clicking of the machine for a few minutes and then set to work to finish the copy" (90). Thus, as the story unfolds, Joyce complicates what might otherwise simply be the tale of a brutal, imaginatively dead Dubliner. As it stands, the pattern of events consists of an intricate interplay between a heartless Dublin and a nameless, and equally heartless, man.

Humiliated by Mr. Alleyne, Farrington longs to define himself physically and thus reclaim his sense of self. To this end he imagines a twisted scene of destructive action: "He felt strong enough to clear out the office singlehanded. His body ached to do something, to rush out and revel in violence" (90). In this way, Farrington's self-justified violent imaginings obliterate any charitable thoughts he might have possessed. At this point in the narrative, it is likely that only his fantasy of his friends ("He knew where he would meet the boys" (91)) prevents him from enacting his destructive, vindictive vision. Yet, as each moment passes in

the office, Farrington's overblown fantasies of violence and persecution only serve to compound his already deeply troubled psychic state. His thoughts come to construct a false world wherein he can dominate those who, in reality, bully him. Ultimately, though, his mind is completely overrun with corrupt imaginings which deny the realities before him. Clearly, Joyce would have us note that his hero is individually responsible for his condition. In a state of delusion, "his imagination had so abstracted him that his name was called twice before he answered" (90). As his failure to respond to his name indicates, Farrington no longer knows himself (and perhaps never has), nor does he truly understand his surroundings. Instead he remains tortured by his own dreams of domination. It is as a direct result of the inevitable deflation of these dangerous illusions that Farrington comes to commit the utterly contemptible violence on his son. This, the story's brutal epiphany, is but the protagonist's thinly veiled self-destruction.

Having unwisely seized the opportunity to ridicule his boss, Farrington is only too ready to re-create his earlier verbal prowess with a new self-assuredness as soon as he finds himself amid his 'friends'. Yet even this small victory has come with a high price: "He had been obliged to offer an abject apology to Mr. Alleyne for his impertinence" (92). Indeed, Farrington is further assaulted by the reality he has created for himself and, for one of the few times in the story, his thinking appears to yield up an accurate picture of what the future holds for this furious man:

...he knew what a hornet's nest the office would be for him. He could remember the way in which Mr.

Alleyne had hounded little Peake out of the office...
Mr. Alleyne would never give him an hours rest: his
life would be a hell for him. (92)

Unfortunately, once out of the office, Farrington seems completely able to set aside his more prudent concerns in favour of an inflated sense of self worth. Like Chandler in the preceding story, Farrington reveals an utter inability to empathize with his fellow Dubliners as he travels through the city streets: "The man passed through the crowd, looking on the spectacle generally with proud satisfaction and staring masterfully at the office girls" (93). During his expectant transition between work and the bar, "the man" remains content, mainly because--unqualified by the conditions of reality--the evening still holds promise.

However, his optimism is soon exposed as mere self-deception and, through a relatively commonplace series of events, Farrington's fury is to return unbridled. But first, low on money and half drunk, he plunges into a fantasy about the London woman in the bar admiring "her large dark brown eyes" (95). Farrington's perception of this woman suggests that he finds her appealingly exotic. Her London accent, however, seems both the crowning attraction and the final insult as he ultimately finds himself alone with the dim recognition that he has been deluding himself:

He watched her leave the room in the hope she would look back at him, but he was disappointed. He cursed his want of money and cursed all the rounds he had stood, particularly all the whiskies and Apollinaris which he had stood to Weathers. If there was one thing he hated it was a sponge. He was so angry that he lost count of the conversation of his friends. (95)

Of course the final destruction of Farrington's falsified image of himself comes with his loss to Weathers in a feat of strength.

Stripped of his masculinity, his money, and his sense of national pride at the hands of this foreign adversary, Farrington descends into the most pronounced anger of the day. Now all his illusions have been pierced and, faced with the naked reality of his life, he "was full of smouldering anger and revengefulness" (96). His spirit, intellect, and purse all bankrupt, the protagonist simply becomes a spiteful physical entity who, returning home, can no longer deny the reality of his existence: "He steered his great body along in the shadow of the wall of the barracks. He loathed returning to his home" (97). In essence, his hatred at coming home is but another expression of his self-hatred.

At home he finds not only the very real responsibility of his five children but as well the vicious cycle of abuse between himself and his wife. Also, at this late point in the story, images of light and dark add to Joyce's picture of the protagonist's imaginative/empathetic state. Clearly, the burnt-out home fire symbolizes the man's utter lack of compassion for even his own child. Strangely, it is through her absence that Farrington's wife seems developed into a further counterpart. At the chapel she has found her own means of escape by drowning herself in a religious opiate. This, of course, echoes Farrington's earlier efforts at drunkenness; both characters seek an oblivion from themselves.

Through the final pitiless act in the story, Joyce powerfully demonstrates the horror of these cultural illusions. Farrington's actions are, no doubt, a manifestation of his intense self-loathing brought on by the shattering of his illusions and a projection of

his desire for self-destruction. Nevertheless, it is the very real circumstance of his child which dominates the story's ending. This is Dublin at its least forgiving. In short, both individual delusion, drunkenness, denial and the mass delusion of Catholicism all contribute to the violent reality the boy inherits:

O, pa! he cried. Don't beat me, pa! And I'll...I'll
say a Hail Mary for you...I'll say a Hail Mary for
you, pa, if you don't beat me...I'll say a Hail Mary....(98)

In "Clay," Joyce explores the nature of an individual whose visionary imagination has all but atrophied due to disuse. Maria, like sediment or clay, has completely settled into the comfortable routine of her life. She has looked forever earthward instead of skyward; her fragile spirit entirely controlled, she has become known as a pious peacemaker. Indeed, Maria has restrained her more powerful emotions for so long that deep passion is no longer possible. While it appears as if Maria's world is subdued beneath her peaceable influence and calming gaze, she has only created an illusion of Dublin and has then chosen to live within the safe boundaries of that illusion. Meanwhile, however, Dublin continues to seethe beneath this placid surface. For example, Maria is treated, at best, with indulgent condescension at work and while shopping, and, once at Joe's, her host shows himself to be disturbingly Farrington-like ("Counterparts") as he relates his tale of witty responses to his employer. Together with his drinking, sentimentalisms and explosive temper, Joe's anecdote creates a sinister thrust to this otherwise innocent story. Maria and her illusions of her life are ever so fragile. The final and

most telling of her imaginative failures, of course, comes at the story's epiphany. In her bungled version of "I Dreamt I Dwelt," Maria unveils the ruins of her powers of personal vision. The song itself is supremely ironic in that Maria can no longer truly dream about herself. This story suggests that, for Joyce, the individual imagination shapes our understanding of ourselves and our worlds. But its illusions, although comforting, ultimately compound existing problems and in actuality can never capture past innocence or regain wasted potential. No matter what she sings, Maria is "clay."

At first, Maria appears well-organized, predictable, efficient and useful. Her world, like the "barmbracks...cut into long thick even slices" (99), is parcelled up in an impeccable order. A virginal, elderly spinster, she is virtually the archetypal good witch (Kain 126) with her "very long nose and a very long chin" (99). She is soothing and unabrasive and, unlike so many of the other Dubliners, she seems capable of both sympathy and empathy: "She was always sent for when the women quarrelled over their tubs and always succeeded in making peace" (99). Unfortunately, as a consequence of her many servile roles, Maria fails to exist as a full individual with her own separate wants and desires. Her imagination is completely fettered in her daily routine and in her constricting image of herself as a useful, meticulous peacemaker. It is this latter quality that her matron feels is her predominate character trait and thus compliments her accordingly: "Maria, you are a veritable peace-maker!" (99). Nevertheless, it is exactly her role as "peace-maker" which

suggests much about the limited state of Maria's power of imagination. As the Donlevy Catechism would have it:

Q. Who are the peace-makers?

A. Those who subdue their passions so well, that they are at peace with God, with their neighbour; and with themselves; and that endeavour to make peace among others; and who, upon that account, are called the children of God and co-heirs with Christ in heaven. (Gifford 79)

Thus, with her passions utterly subdued, Maria seems to exist as a pious shade who wanders about the Dublin streets patiently and selflessly waiting to be gathered into eternity. She is at peace, but is she truly alive?

Maria's peace-making and her willingness to perceive her fellow Dubliners in the most favourable light possible cause her to overlook or trivialize what are certainly grave situations. For instance, when she imagines the upcoming evening at Joe's, she does so in the most banal terms: "What a nice evening they would have, all the children singing! Only she hoped that Joe wouldn't come in drunk. He was so different when he took any drink" (100). This juxtaposition of the playful and jubilant children with the drunken, "different" father is especially disturbing due to this story's positioning in the Dubliners' sequence. Indeed, the image of the drunken and abusive Farrington ("Counterparts") is still freshly lodged in the reader's imagination. Even more specific to "Clay" is the question whether Maria's understanding of her world is so entirely peaceable that she overlooks the intensely serious problems which affect her immediate circumstance. Despite this obvious shortcoming, there are indications that Maria possesses some degree of self-consciousness. For instance, when the protagonist's co-workers come to imagine the upcoming evening,

Maria's amiable protestations at the suggestion that she will choose the ring imply that she is, in her own softened way, tormented by her lack of personal vision and action: "Maria had to laugh and say she didn't want any ring or man either; and when she laughed her grey-green eyes sparkled with disappointed shyness and the tip of her nose almost met the tip of her chin" (100). In her dismissive lie Maria unveils the extent to which she has deceived herself by living a life of subdued passions and forever deferred visions of personal happiness. The emphasis on her witch-like appearance in the context of her ringless, manless and futureless "life" is significant because she seems to be becoming less and less human as a consequence of her chosen path. Thus, while always pleasant and inoffensive, she is, in effect, imaginatively dead. Fittingly, when Maria comes to look at her body in the mirror, she finds that little has changed from her school days. While this protagonist suffers from the same visionary malaise seen earlier in Dubliners, her example of it is far less harmful than that of her predecessors:

She thought of how she used to dress for mass on Sunday morning when she was a young girl; and she looked with quaint affection on the diminutive body which she had so often adorned. In spite of its years she found it a nice tidy little body. (101)

Herein Maria shows herself to have remained as a spectator of life and her "little body" acts as a symbol for a too safely Catholic mind and an untried imagination--one which has not dared to dream nor to live fully.

While Joyce offers several clues to the nature of Maria's character, it is not until her arrival at the party that she fully

reveals herself. Like the rest of her life, the scope of her disappointments is small. Yet even in this small, highly-ordered world which she has carefully constructed, she remains intensely fragile and acutely vulnerable to life's many shocks. With the possible exception of occasional cracks in her illusion, her sense of personal remorse remains forever buried beneath the well-polished surface of her character and, in the context of the story, beneath the surface of the party's slightly forced joviality. While Maria almost unconsciously patches over life's many difficulties, it is apparent that she fails to recognize the gravity of Dublin's realities. Instead, she lives in a blissful illusion of conviviality, and it is her own character which half-creates and sustains this illusion.

However, it is not until Maria sings at the end of the soiree that her character is epiphanized for the reader. At this point in the narrative it is as if the evening has already dissolved into a sleepy illusion. The children have grown tired and teeter on the edge of unconsciousness, and, muttering amongst themselves, they need to be once more waked into the adult world. Due to her tendency toward comforting illusions it is appropriate that the protagonist sing about dreams, but her "tiny quavering voice" ultimately belies the song's theme of romantic passion. Moreover it is a tiny quavering imagination which has for the moment engaged itself with this song. This final dramatic situation in "Clay", the thematic content of the song, and Maria's mistake concerning the second verse conspire ever so subtly to elicit our pathos. The key, ballad-like refrain of "I Dreamt", which is even more

pronounced in the missing verse, signals once again the protagonist's utter inability to dream about her own life:

I Dreamt that suitors sought my hand,
 That knights on bended knee,
 And when with vows no maiden heart could withstand,
 They pledged their faith to me.
 And I dreamt that one of that noble band,
 Came forth my heart to claim,
 But I also dreamt, which charmed me most
 That you loved me all the same. (Gifford 80-81)

Thus, the simple fact that she chooses to sing the song is every bit as ironic as the unconscious omission of the second verse. Moreover, the contents of the song serve to pinpoint exactly what aspect of her life Maria has so completely failed to conceive of. As a consequence of this failure, she has but lived a half-life. Ironically, the song speaks of both the joy and necessity of dreams (visionary imaginings) as well as the more crucial need for tangible romantic love. Joe's intoxicated emotions are, predictably enough, sufficiently roused by her rendering of the song, to the extent that he is moved to nostalgic commentary. We are left in Joe's confused and sentimental imagination as he wistfully ponders some ideal former era while remaining trapped in the midst of his own squalid and drunken intellect. In this final context Maria's voice and, indeed, her entire character--her being--seems to have dissolved into nothingness.

Art, as the embodiment of human creativity and the expression of the individual imagination, remains absolutely distinct from everyday life for Mr. James Duffy of "A Painful Case." This attitude and somewhat artificial distinction between life and the imagination is clearly antithetical to what Joyce saw as the

function and material of the artist³. Duffy's artistic interests, like his own imaginative life, are tamed, ordered, classified and, finally, shelved. Literary art, like the poetry of Wordsworth, seems acceptable only insofar as it is reassuringly fixed and confined within the limits of texts, shelves, houses, conservative approval and the stultifying influence of his own artistic perception. While Duffy has shunned society and while he shows himself to be utterly unempathetic through his experience with Mrs. Sinico, he does, nevertheless, show a movement from his callous isolationism through a thwarted potential and into a state of bitter loneliness. The tragically mistimed awakening of his imagination punctuates this inner movement. Mrs. Sinico has openly offered life, passion and even love, but he has embraced self-control, solitude and imaginative death. Thus, "A Painful Case" chronicles the gradual transition from a deathly imaginative existence through a blossoming relationship which, once rejected, plunges the protagonist into a painful understanding of his own flawed perceptions. In essence, this story examines the disturbingly unempathetic imagination of Mr. Duffy who has not only exiled himself from life but, in the doing, has tragically failed to acknowledge his own humanity.

As the several aspects of his life unravel, his entire

³In regard to Dubliners Joyce wrote that "the book is not a collection of tourist impressions but an attempt to represent certain aspects of the life of one of the European capitals" (Letters II: 110). Similarly, in Stephen Hero the protagonist argues, "The poet is the intense centre of the life of his age to which he stands in a relation than which none can be more vital. He alone is capable of absorbing the life that surrounds him and of flinging it abroad again amid planetary music" (80).

existence comes to reflect the atrophied state of his imagination which is, in turn, marked by a complete absence of human contact. Duffy is a fiercely solitary man who has wilfully shunned both his city and its inhabitants: "he wished to live as far as possible from the city of which he was a citizen" (107). His house and its highly organized contents also speak of the character walled within. The building is itself an "old sombre house" (107) on the outskirts of the city. Similarly, then, Duffy exists only on the very outer edge of life and in his hardened, distant character he has walled up his empathies. Fittingly, the house is filled with hard, black accoutrements and the walls themselves are utterly barren of signs of life. There is nothing to remind him of his place amidst other people. There is simply Mr. James Duffy--alone: "The lofty walls of his uncarpeted room were free from pictures. He had himself bought every article of furniture in the room: a black iron bedstead, an iron washstand..." (107).

The contents of Mr. Duffy's house would seem to suggest that he has an active intellectual life. In particular, his tastes in books and music outwardly argue for a man of refined sensibility. Yet, here again, even his private thoughts seem restrained, bound and, above all, ordered: "Mr. Duffy abhorred anything which betokened physical or mental disorder" (108). His book collection itself seems balanced and bridled. Wordsworth is set alongside and tempered by the Maynooth Catechism and, as Gifford tellingly points out, even "Wordsworth was regarded at the beginning of the twentieth century as a safe and essentially undaring romantic poet" (82). In this context, Wordsworth is employed as a symbol for

Duffy's own fettered and over-bound imagination. Clearly, this Dubliner could dream--but he dares not. The other text mentioned, Hauptmann's "Michael Kramer," is supremely ironic given the framework of the story's later events. This four-act naturalistic play ultimately has its title character come to the disturbing realization that "he has failed in life to give the warmth and love...a warmth and love he can proffer only after death, in death" (Gifford 82). Obviously, while Duffy has read the play, he has, none the less, failed (imaginatively) to engage himself with it. Instead he has remained at a safe distance from its disturbingly relevant theme. This allusion, of course, foreshadows the protagonist's own failure in a similar effort involving the marriage of emotion and intellect. Yet in his opening portrait of Duffy, Joyce is careful not to simply put forth the stereotypical saturnine man. For example, in the description of Duffy's face, the author writes that his protagonist's eyes (symbolically the key to Duffy's imaginative perception) "gave the impression of a man ever alert to greet a redeeming instinct in others" (108). As a direct consequence of this encouraging potential, Mr. Duffy's final inability to receive affection proves all the more tragic. He could have loved, but fails to. However, prior to his meeting with Mrs. Sinico, Mr. Duffy's temperament is predominantly unimaginative and unempathetic. He is the epitome of an uncaring paralysis of personal vision: "He never gave alms to beggars and walked firmly...his life rolled out evenly--an adventureless tale" (108-09).

The second major section of "A Painful Case" begins with the

meeting of Mr. Duffy and Mrs. Sinico. In short, Sinico offers life. At the moment of their meeting, she is imaginatively alive to the unrealized potential of her life. She gives freely in their initial conversation and Duffy responds by being both encouraged by her openness and attracted to her eyes and what he believes they signify. She is perceptive, sensitive and communicative, and Duffy is immediately drawn to these very traits, which are so lacking in his own character: "Their [her eyes'] gaze began with a defiant note but was confused by what seemed a deliberate swoon of the pupil into the iris, revealing for an instant a temperament of great sensibility" (109). Mrs. Sinico clearly possesses the power to envision a better life despite the fact that she is trapped in an abysmal marriage. Regardless of her oppressive personal history, Sinico manages to offer an imaginative awakening for Duffy: "she urged him to let his nature open to the full...Her companionship was like a warm soil about an exotic" (110-11). Suddenly, beneath her passionate influence, he finds his mundane life is now graced with an "adventure." Herein there is potential--in friendship and even in love. Not surprisingly, however, Mr. Duffy is very slow to allow her into his more intimate thoughts, and it is only "little by little, as their thoughts entangled, [that] they spoke of subjects less remote" (111). Gradually, though, Mr. Duffy responds to her gentle intellectual nourishings and, in the process, he finds himself newly capable of sharing and of understanding. Through her patient companionship Mrs. Sinico coaxes his imagination to life: "this union exalted him, wore away the rough edges of his character, emotionalized his mental life"

(111). Nevertheless, underneath these outward advances, Mr. Duffy remains tormented by his former self as if all the weight of his past existence is arguing against his present happiness and intellectual/emotional revivification. It is this stifling life-denying voice which finally asserts itself in the rejection of Mrs. Sinico and all she offers: "He heard a strange impersonal voice which he recognized as his own, insisting on the soul's incurable loneliness. We cannot give ourselves it said: we are our own" (111). Mr. Duffy is unwilling to relinquish his earlier illusions about himself and his life, and, therefore, he is drawn back to solitude and stagnation. This retreat into the past is met with the complete collapse of his newly realized empathetic and visionary powers. In this painful case, Mr. Duffy's intense selfishness and arrogant self-delusions are doubly tragic because he will deeply and irreversibly affect another psyche and another life in addition to the irreparable self-destruction he has wrought.

Mr. Duffy mistakenly sees this gentle woman as an unfortunate detour from his arid and self-assured path and so he ends the affair. In contrast, for Mrs. Sinico, this violent reversal of fortune and further rejection (her husband having first denied her love) brutalizes her fragile character. Life itself seems to have forsaken her: "'every bond,' he said, 'is a bond to sorrow'" (112). Mr. Duffy's smug generalizations concerning the nature of human interaction ultimately prove tragically ironic for Mrs. Sinico, and his unfeeling dismissal of the power of the imagination to overcome difficulties of character and situation is to be seen as

wrongheaded and vicious.

In the wake of the protagonist's separation from Mrs. Sinico, Joyce flatly asserts that "four years passed" (112), suggesting that Duffy has remained in a virtual imaginative coma--unchanging and, for all intents and purposes, paralysed. At length, the news of Mrs. Sinico's disturbing death occasions a series of emotions which rouse him out of his deathly sleep. After conquering his astonishment, Mr. Duffy's response to the newspaper account of her demise is predictably callous. Upon further contemplation of the event, however, demonstrates that he is now utterly devoid of any imaginative connection as he finds himself revolted by both her actions and his own former association with the woman: "He thought of the hobbling wretches whom he had seen carrying cans and bottles to be filled by the barman. Just God, what an end!" (115). Evidently when one is bereft of empathy, the harshest of judgements are soon to follow. However, at this stage in his thoughts on her death, the protagonist is not merely denying that he is implicated in Mrs. Sinico's tragic history, he has also unconsciously evaded the fact that her death is an unalterable reality. It is not until he has been in the public-house for some time that he begins to move from an illusion of and condemnation of her death toward an acceptance of its unflinching truth: "As he sat there living over his life with her and evoking alternately the two images in which he now conceived her, he realized that she was dead, that she had ceased to exist, that she had become a memory" (116).

Once Mr. Duffy arrives at a simple acceptance of her death, the floodgates to further perceptions are flung wide open. Yet,

like the unfortunate history of Michael Kramer, it is only in a tragic death that the protagonist's true empathies are awakened: "Now that she was gone he understood how lonely her life must have been, sitting night after night in that room" (116). From his acceptance that her emotional life was a legitimate and vital part of her being it is but a short leap to Mr. Duffy's understanding of his implication in her death. It is this unforgivable reality that utterly shatters his character: "One human being had seemed to love him and he had denied her life and happiness: he had sentenced her to ignominy, a death of shame" (117). Thus, not only does Duffy recognize that "he was an outcast from life's feast" (117), but he also sees that he has, through his absence of imaginative connections, cast *himself* out from humanity. Finally, he has come to accept that his former perceptions of himself and his world were misguided by a harsh and unforgiving intellect and, as a result, he suffers a full-scale collapse: "He began to doubt the reality of what memory told him..., he felt that he was alone" (117). In essence, Mr. Duffy has moved from an unconscious, unfeeling solitude into an awareness of his own and others' humanity but, coming as it has through the destruction of another person, it has banished him from life and left him wasted.

Chapter IV

The Focus Broadens and Gabriel's Redemptive Vision

In "Ivy Day in the Committee Room", "A Mother", and "Grace" Joyce examines three different, but often intertwined, facets of the Irish cultural imagination. They are, respectively, the political, the artistic and the religious imaginations. In each story, however, his method is more or less the same, insofar as he divides reader attention amongst several characters and, in so doing, gives voice to several perspectives. No longer is the individual imagination to be used as a symbol of a larger context. Nevertheless, while the creative gaze is widened, these stories do not occasion a significant departure in the author's impression of Dublin. In essence, the very same individual imaginative paralysis depicted earlier is here spread into large groups who, in turn, affect the entire cultural climate of Dublin religion, politics and art.

"Ivy Day in the Committee Room" provides Dubliners with an unflinching look at the state of the Irish political imagination. In this story, Joyce steadily uncovers the failure of his countrymen to think creatively and positively about the governmental makeup of their homeland. However, tonally, this story differs greatly from the preceding section, as its characters are generally handled with far more indulgence and affection. Yet this narrative seems to express a profound ambivalence toward its subject. Joyce's attitude toward the Dubliners in this story seems to oscillate between feelings of anger and melancholy in relation

to the civic apathy it unearths.

The complexities of Dublin political sentiment are represented through Joyce's depiction of the party leanings of the various characters. However, it is clear that the gamut of Irish thought represented in "Ivy Day in the Committee Room" is presided over by the deeply influential memory of Parnell. Not only do Parnell's accomplishments undercut and devalue these men's political convictions (elusive as they are), but it is also evident that their political predecessor was a man of vision as well as action. Consequently the memory of Parnell functions as a barometer for the dim and failing imaginations found in the committee room. In the opening portrait of Old Jack, the author sets the tone for the dilapidated state of Irish political life. The corpse-like caretaker seems to be an archetype for this wizened age, and his constant struggle to keep the flame lit is itself portentous. Symbolically, then, the spark of inspiration which could have been inherited from the previous epoch is now in grave danger of being extinguished. Indeed, there are numerous references to a pervasive darkness throughout the story, suggesting that an unsettling mental apathy has set in and has rooted itself in the populace, inhibiting change and vision. Old Jack is an emblem of the past as it has been transformed by the present era. He is the burnt-out residue of those times and that imaginary spirit--that Zeitgeist which has now all but vanished: "'Musha! God be with them times!' said the old man. 'There was some life in it then'" (122). Today, the old man fans the fire diligently, but it threatens to go out all the same. Likewise, he does what he can for these minor political

figures, but even they are hampered by the most immediate concerns. For example, they worry about getting paid and are easily dissuaded by the inclement weather. Furthermore, their interest in the drink and society that their involvement provides seems to have supplanted any ideological commitment or greater social purpose.

Despite their haphazard engagement in political life, these men certainly do not represent the worst possible element, and Joyce seems only too well aware that "shoneens" and the lure of economic opportunism are more serious threats, as they constantly eat away at political integrity and party unity. As Mr. Henchy complains, "'That's a fellow now that'd sell his country for fourpence--ay--and go down on his bended knees and thank the Almighty Christ he had a country to sell'" (125). What "Ivy Day in the Committee Room" reveals is that the dream of political independence is constantly pierced by economic realities, while it is simultaneously confused and redirected by religious and traditional beliefs. Nevertheless, there is a lack of passion and imaginative involvement amongst these men that seems unforgivable even in light of the difficulties around them. For instance, the intermittent "Pok!" of the stout bottles significantly ridicules and discredits all their assertions as it points up their own idle engagement in the very issues that should concern them. While indulgent, and aware of the many problems that hamper imaginative vision, Joyce still laments the utter lack of conviction and the gelding of political creativity in this post-Parnell era. The want of Parnell is keenly felt in the shadow of the imaginative impotence of this group. In a typically dispassionate non-

committal spirit, Mr. O'Connor attempts to appease his associates: "this is Parnell's anniversary,...and don't let us stir up any bad blood, we all respect him now that he's dead and gone--even the conservatives" (132).

The final blow to the imaginative powers of these men comes, fittingly enough, in the form of a poem. Henchy's creative effort in verse communicates a variety of ironies. As the coda to this story, its nearly forgotten heart-felt sentiment mocks this gathering's current apathy. Moreover, its use of a highly conventional poetic style suggests that its creator possesses a severely limited imaginative scope at best. Yet the poem itself demonstrates on a personal level the contrast between the emotional involvement in the pre- and post-Parnell eras. One further irony is expressed through the poem's last line: "One grief--the memory of Parnell" (135). This double-edged summation on the one hand can be read as a sincere lament of a great Irishman but, on the other hand, his "memory" can itself become a "grief" because of the truth it sheds on the political figures before us. They are dwarfed by his having existed, and their political efforts are belittled by the scope of their predecessor's vision. His memory, then, shows the present for what it is, and the effect of the group is to suggest that this is a widespread cultural unimaginativeness. Moreover, given the present context, the varied reaction to the poem's reading implies the ambivalence of the statement therein. Clearly, the "Pok!" of another stout brings the reader out of this momentary dream of political conviction and returns him/her to the shady, half-drunk reality of the story. Nevertheless, in its own

diminished way, the poem does have an effect. For example, Mr. O'Connor exclaims: "'Good man Joe!...' taking out his cigarette papers and pouch the better to hide his emotion" (135). Mr. O'Connor's sentimentalism is, of course, balanced by Crofton's flat response: "it was a very fine piece of writing" (135). There seems little else to be said--the past is forever lost and the present is what it is.

The second in the series of "public life" stories (Letters II: 111), "A Mother," examines the state of the communal imagination through its manifestation in art and, more specifically, musical performance. Yet this story differs significantly from "Ivy Day in the Committee Room" inasmuch as it is more clearly focused on a single character. Mrs. Kearney, however, is not to be perceived solely as an individual. She seems to represent a common type due to her attitudes concerning artistic expression. In short, Kearney shows herself to be an artistic opportunist who ungenerously attempts to ride the crest of the wave of Irish Revival merely for personal aggrandizement and monetary gain.

Within her family, she acts as an emotional bully who officiously works toward the realization of her own desires: "When the Irish Revival began to be appreciable Mrs. Kearney determined to take advantage of her daughter's name [Kathleen] and brought an Irish teacher to the house" (137). That Mrs. Kearney measures her misfortune in economic terms enhances our understanding of the extent to which she is imaginatively corrupt. Every aspect of her imaginative experience is clouded by monetary concerns. That so few people come to the concerts suggests that the Revivalists are

themselves somewhat deluded in regard to popular opinion concerning a genuine belief in the cultural/artistic value of the Revival. Moreover, the Kearneys' own self-centred or forced participation in the event undoubtedly renders the concept the Revival as a means to self-actualization absurd. In the Kearneys' case, both mother and daughter seem extremely detached and distanced from a genuine imaginative involvement in their own Irishness.

However, the well-meaning Mr. Holohan and Mr. Fitzpatrick do not seem to possess any lofty expectations for their concerts, and the less than anticipated attendance seems dealt with in a very matter-of-fact spirit. This, in itself, lessens Joyce's indictment of the Revival as it suggests that not all involved are fuelled by the meanness or the vicarious delusions of grandeur exemplified by Mrs. Kearney. It is noteworthy that the latter does eventually receive public censure: "After that Mrs. Kearney's conduct was condemned on all hands" (149). For the moment, though, this laissez-faire attitude on the organizers' part enrages Mrs. Kearney, as it fosters her persecution paranoia. Ultimately, even the committee's sincere efforts to appease her fall short and she remains adamant and obstinate in her quest for full payment. As a true-to-life and representative figure, Mrs. Kearney points out the hypocrisy of the Revival as her interest in it is shown to be solely financial and self-serving. It is particularly revealing that, with Mrs. Kearney as the focus, the story moves further and further from any discussion of the imaginative activity at hand. Instead, it turns more toward the inner-absorbed and self-righteous psyche of this angry woman. Finally, then, the story's own inner

movement toward the depiction of an example of social and artistic self-destruction is itself a comment on the Revival's similar inward-looking preoccupations with a manufactured Irishness. This too, the story seems to prophesy, will culminate in implosion.

"Grace" uses very much the same multi-voice method as "Ivy Day in the Committee Room", except in this case the several characters' imaginations are tuned to the subject of Catholicism. Also, like the other "public life" stories (Letters II: 111), the extent and manner in which the "Grace" cast of characters engage with their religion is greatly tempered by monetary concerns. This is very much a story about fortunes. From the initial misfortune of Mr. Kernan, to the depiction of his wife's life, through the various portraits of the Dublin men of affairs which are to follow and culminating in his portrait of Father Purdon, Joyce creates a realistic sampling of a Catholic subculture. In essence, this limited panorama of Dubliners, capped by the appeasing Father Purdon (pardon), suggests the extent to which the religious imagination is shackled by worldly concerns and presided over by Mammon.

The graphic opening portrait, and the sheer physicality with which the unidentified drunken Dubliner is described, set the tone for this truly unspiritual story. Initially conceived as the final entry in the Dubliners sequence, "Grace" touches on many of the themes already well-established by its author. Drunkenness, for example, as a destructive expression of the imagination--in that it is an example of illusion-creating escapism--is only too prevalent in the preceding stories. In this instance, however, it is taken

to the extreme, insofar as the main character is first discovered literally unconscious and in an utterly graceless condition. Drunk and having caused his own injury, he is, verily, in complete disgrace: "His hat had rolled a few yards away and his clothes were smeared with the filth and ooze of the floor on which he had lain, face downwards" (150). Discovered in this circumstance, the protagonist is not only without a voice, he is also faceless or virtually without identity. Symbolically, then, he has annihilated his character through his own destructive need for illusions. The constable who surveys the fallen man seems to apprehend intuitively the imaginative bankruptcy before him: "He [the constable] moved his head slowly from right and left and from the manager to the person on the floor, as if he feared to be the victim of some delusion" (151). In fact, he is. But the constable himself seems more occupied with questions of legality than he is with simple compassion and it is not until the arrival of an unnamed cyclist that anything positive is done for this needy patron. The cyclist is an eye-catching figure and, while his place in the story is relatively minor, this youth's Samaritanism is a key yardstick with which the other characters can be measured. His actions are unselfish; his intent is good; and he will not make a deal for compensation. Moreover, his example is one of good works which, according to Catholic dogma, is the correct way to attain a state of grace. The assistance completed, the cyclist quickly departs because he is not truly a part of this bar scene nor is he to figure as a member of Kernan's "friends." Instead, he remains alien and anonymous, and his curiously European pastime suggests

that there is a significant distance between his character and the characters who occupy the subsequent pages of "Grace." Thus, he is an unpretentious example of an empathetic imagination and his absence is keenly registered in the remainder of the tale.

Mr. Kernan, we soon learn, is a businessman of moderate but lately declined fortunes. His depiction likens him to a Dublin version of Willy Loman, as he seems to possess similar illusions about his occupation coupled with a lack of realistic vision concerning the nature of trade itself. Resembling his American counterpart, Kernan clings to an antiquated, and perhaps even half-concocted, understanding of his profession:

Mr. Kernan was a commercial traveller of the old school which believed in the dignity of his calling. He had never been seen in the city without a silk hat of some decency and a pair of gaiters. By grace of these two articles of clothing, he said, a man could always pass muster. He carried on the tradition of his Napoleon, the great Blackwhite, whose memory he evoked at times by legend and mimicry. Modern business methods had spared him...a little office in Crowe Street.... (153-4)

The protagonist's wife also adds to our understanding of Kernan, as we are privy to her reflection on their marriage: "'there were worse husbands. He had never been violent since the boys had grown up...'" (156). Like a toned down version of Farrington's wife she too has turned to religion and motherhood as a means of escape and as part of her limited imaginative self-realization: "when she was beginning to find it [a wife's life] unbearable, she had become a mother" (156). Given the earlier portraits of Dublin married life, these two are predictable, plain and, once again, compromised.

The four friends who come to visit the bed-ridden Kernan in the hope of joining him on a retreat provide the reader with a tidy

cross-section of Dublin businessmen. While these characters are portrayed as distinct entities it seems likely that it is primarily their collective influence which works on Kernan's conscience. This movement from an individual to a small gathering and, finally, to a larger public group signals that Joyce's main concern is more the communal imagination than it is the individual. However, the religious imagination finds its particular expression in the characters set before us. Their Catholicism, while humorous, nevertheless reveals a spirituality corrupted by superstition, inaccuracies and, above all, monetary concerns. For example, of Mr. Hartford we learn,

Though he had never embraced more than a Jewish ethical code his fellow-Catholics, whenever they had smarted in person or by proxy under his exactions, spoke of him bitterly as an Irish Jew and an illiterate and saw divine disapproval of usury made manifest through the person of his idiot son. (159)

Moreover, in this "pious" conversation virtually every fact cited is inaccurate (163-170), indicating that this representative group can, in reality, but claim a nominal participation in Catholicism. Perhaps the most precise expression of their shared spiritual malaise comes through Mr. Fogarty's outburst: "'Get behind me, Satan!'" (171). Ironic itself as a misquotation, it is doubly so because it recalls Christ's admonition to Peter for his attempt to gain Grace through flattery (Gifford 109). This, of course, establishes the true motivation for the businessmen's retreat.

Their spiritual hypocrisy and imaginative apathy are, at length, epitomized by Father Purdon's forgiving, justifying and therefore altogether welcome speech. We find that he appeases guilt, in his own worldly terms, and at a minimal spiritual cost to

his patrons. His use of Biblical quotation for his own ends and to the collective end of his listeners suggests the priest's spiritual and imaginative corruption, as he reduces matters of the soul to the language of commerce, offering himself as a "spiritual accountant" (174). Under Purdon's tutelage, the concept of good works and of a truly Christian life topple before a much less arduous appeal for God's grace. In short, the entire final scene is sadly reminiscent of the selling of indulgences, and it also suggests the same corrupt spirit which would attempt to secure evidence of one's election.

In the three stories of "public life," it gradually becomes clear that Joyce has adopted a more balanced posture toward his countrymen. Yet ultimately Joyce depicts an ambivalent portrait of the imaginative capabilities of Dublin spiritual, artistic and political life. These, originally the final three stories, are characterized by an unsettlingly persistent lack of passion, empathy and vision. We cannot forget that Parnell is dead, the Irish Revival is corrupted by inward-looking ignorant and selfish participants, and Catholicism is often a matter of guilt-ridding or unconscious habits. Finally, in the several groups portrayed in the three stories preceding "The Dead", the imagination is not at its lowest ebb, but neither does it attain any true height. Like Gallaher in "A Little Cloud," through a haze of ambivalence Joyce again sees his "dear dirty Dublin" (75).

"The Dead", Joyce's final instalment in Dubliners, puts forth a blending of public imagination and private mind. In so doing

this story acts as a summation and reflection of the earlier stories. It recaptures several of the key motifs from its predecessors and re-creates some of the very same conditions of emotional paralysis. However, "The Dead" offers something completely novel, not merely because it combines the various examples of social, religious, artistic and political unimaginativeness, but because Joyce depicts a positive embodiment of the capacity for spiritual growth through the power of the individual imagination. Gabriel receives a series of minor shocks to his consciousness and sense of self which build toward and gather at the story's conclusion into a profound and life-altering epiphany. While Gabriel's personal plight attests to the central role of the individual imagination in relation to a person's capacity for evolution, the entire tone of the story also comes to mirror this more positive potential. Drunkenness, forsaken love, self-repression, missed opportunities, insecurity and hard-heartedness are undoubtedly present at the Morkans, but the Dubliners and their many flaws are treated even more indulgently here than in "Grace". With its humour, dance, song, conversation and communal supper, "The Dead" allows for a more comic mood in spite of the sentimental nostalgia, misunderstandings, ironies and lack of inventiveness which threaten to deflate the festiveness. Moreover, the story's shift in focus from the social gathering to the Conroys and, finally, to Gabriel's solitary thoughts and visions implies a reassertion of the life-affirming capacity in personal imaginings. In short, "The Dead" chronicles Gabriel's gradual imaginative awakening through his social interaction at the

party and most forcefully as a result of a newly realized empathetic bond with his wife. This latter imaginative connection not only brings about a piercing insight into his own character and Gretta's but it also allows for an expansive and inclusive vision of Ireland and Irishness past, present and future.

"The Dead" is a culmination of the previous stories even as it puts forth the possibility of an imaginative redemption from the decay of the moral fabric in modern Dublin. While this redemptive quality comes, in large part, through the character of Gabriel, he is nevertheless far from a one-dimensional saviour. For instance, initially he is emblematic of a resigned imagination. He disassociates himself from his past, politics, religion and Irish culture, and as a result he seems to have lost touch with the people in his life and thus with himself.

From a spontaneous, creative and visionary standpoint, all the characters in the story have ceased to exist. Indeed, Lily, the breathless caretaker's daughter, moves about in what is a spectral environment amid "the wheezy hall-door bell" and the "bare hallway" which can be seen to represent the deadened imaginative condition of the Dubliners at the gathering. Joyce further undercuts the celebratory mood as the affair itself is characterized almost invariably in relation to its past. Indeed, as a collective group, the Morkans and guests seem to have frozen their imaginative capabilities in their individual histories and in the drab routine of their lives.

Gabriel Conroy and Freddy Malins are the two most discussed of the late arriving guests and, fittingly, they represent the

opposites in their capacity for vision. The anticipation felt by Kate, Julia and Mary Jane for the arrival of Gabriel is balanced by an apprehension regarding the appearance of Malins. The former, it is implied, is reliable and solid whereas the latter is unmanageable due to his frequent inebriation. In this way the two men are set in opposition, establishing that Gabriel still has the potential for learning and growth because he has not retreated into the oblivion of alcohol or any other illusion-fostering habit. At least in theory, then, this leaves him open to new intellectual experiences. However, in spite of his potential, the introductory impression Gabriel leaves is one of (an imagination-inhibiting) excessive self-control. His sense of restraint finds symbolic expression through his somewhat eccentric efforts to keep the snow (water/ life/ creative energy) safely away from his person (Walzl 434). It is only through a series of disquieting events that Gabriel begins to recognize that this very same quality of self-reliant solidity has a disturbing underside which is characteristically predictable and uninspired.

The protagonist's interaction with Lily suggests that, while well-meaning, he is somewhat disengaged from the lives around him. When Gabriel asks Lily, "'I suppose we'll be going to your wedding one of these fine days with your young man, eh?'" he receives only the bitter retort--"'the men that is now is only all palaver and what they can get out of you'" (178). Fittingly enough, in the aftermath of his short conversation with Lily, Gabriel begins to second-guess the content and tone of his upcoming supper-time speech. His talk with the caretaker's daughter has forced Gabriel

to see for the first time in this transforming evening that he is, in fact, imaginatively separate from his world.

Imagistically this opening scene strongly links Gabriel with the snow which, we later discover, is "general all over Ireland" (229). In this case, the image seems to represent the protagonist's attempts to keep life out, to remain unaffected by changing circumstances, and, equipped with his galoshes, he almost manages. Yet, as the story unfolds, the snow begins, with its many and often contradictory implications, to press on Gabriel's consciousness and inform his imagination. It becomes, of course, an emblem of his desire to escape his present condition--both mental and physical. In this entrance scene, however, he continuously brushes his clothes in an apparent effort to recompose himself. Thus, after he receives Lily's rebuff, he immediately "kicked off his galoshes and flicked actively with his muffler at his patent leather shoes" (193). The image of the snow, then, even at this early point, is associated with psychological pressures and Gabriel's futile attempts to master them.

The second woman to cause Gabriel to question himself is the enigmatic Miss Ivors. His discussion with his colleague ("their careers had been parallel") during "Lancers" establishes a pattern which echoes the entire scene as, within the framework of outward harmony and celebration in a form of the dance, music, and, more generally, the gathering, there are expressions of inward fragmentation and growing disillusionment. Indeed, before the protagonist's imagination can take hold of a new order of life he has to tear down the current deathly one. Thus, under the scrutiny

of the nationalist Miss Ivors, Gabriel feels awkward or threatened, once again "colors," and becomes defensive. More precisely, Ivors exposes the extent to which his political and cultural imagination has been either ignored or denied. Moreover, while relatively good-natured in tone, this conflict still manages to point out Gabriel's failure to empathize fully with, or for that matter, acknowledge, his wife's distinct and valid cultural background and personal history. This imaginative shortcoming also greatly inhibits his own sense of self. Hence, in part he is the author of his own alienation and imaginative paralysis. In the eyes of Miss Ivors, Gabriel once again sees a disturbing reflection of his character and, even as he desperately attempts to elude or deny this vision, it nevertheless leaves a profound mark on his psyche. In the immediate aftermath of this encounter, the epiphanic moment gathers strength as his imagination further struggles to assess the nature of his own character.

Miss Ivors not only contributes to Gabriel's developing sense of self but she also exists in her own right. In the structure of "The Dead" she is merely one of several Dubliners who, for varying reasons, suffer from some form of imaginative death. In her particular case it is noteworthy that she choose to depart from the gathering prior to the meal. As the personification of the political-nationalist imagination, her abrupt leave-taking suggests that she has ostracized herself from the group. She has, in a sense, scripted her own banishment from the party. One presumes this is due to some pressing political commitment. Thus, by symbolic extension she has become one more Dubliner who is an

"outcast from life's feast" ("A Painful Case" 117). While she has left an imprint on Gabriel's consciousness, she, nevertheless, remains herself essentially unchanged and so walks off into the cold January night snow, alone.

Similarly, Kathleen Kearney's ("A Mother") appearance at the Morkans speaks of another type of imaginative death. Kathleen's presence recalls Mrs. Kearney's artistic insincerity and opportunism, and the money-corrupted imagination associated with the Irish Revival. In keeping with the more forgiving tone of this story Mrs. Kearney does not physically appear. However, in "The Dead", music is most powerfully employed as a means of expressing the state of an individual's imagination, through the example of Aunt Julia's song "Arrayed for the Bridal". This song's ironic title and content is, of course, reminiscent of Joyce's use of song at the conclusion of "Clay". Like Maria, Aunt Julia has never married and, also, seems to have but half lived. For example, her sister Kate urges that "she was simply thrown away in that choir" (194). Yet while Aunt Kate protests vehemently about the injustices of church policy in regard to female parishioners, she still exhibits the very same imaginative mind-set which, like Julia's, eventually acquiesces in the Pope's legitimacy and infallibility, in spite of her persistent indignation. She is an example of an intellect that relinquishes what it knows to be true in the face of a greater authority. Evidently, in this religious system, the individual imagination is sadly devalued and eventually destroyed or, as this case suggests, is simply wasted. Kate urges,

"O, I don't question the Pope's being right. I'm only a stupid old woman and I wouldn't presume to do such a thing.

But there's such a thing as common everyday politeness and gratitude. And if I were in Julia's place I'd tell that Father Healy straight up to his face...." (194-5)

* The subsequent discussion on vocalists both past and present is particularly revealing as a commentary on the prevailing attitudes about art as an imaginative activity. While the likeable Freddy Malins is clearly quite drunk, he, nevertheless, seems open-minded and receptive to change in this regard. When he urges that the "negro chieftain singing in the second part of the Gaiety Pantomime...had one of the finest tenor voices he had ever heard" (198), he is utterly ignored. Freddy finds he is a voice alone--cast out for his creative and forward thinking. Contrarily, Mr. Browne sums up the mainstream discussion as he expounds a backward-looking type of illusion creation which, intoxicated by clouded memories, escapes present realities through wistful nostalgia. Finally, the topic of music (art) having been exhausted in this way, the religious imagination is once again addressed through the image of the monks at Mount Melleray who sleep in their coffins and never speak. Both their death-like existence and their wordlessness suggest an imaginative quietus that is intensely unnatural and antithetical to humanity because it denies this life in favour of the next. In short, the intertwined examples of artistic, political and religious unimaginativeness in "The Dead" re-create in miniature the similar types of half-lived lives and creative paralysis which are portrayed in the earlier stories. Moreover, not only does this final group of Dubliners embody Joyce's ambivalence toward his native city, it also provides the context in which and, indeed, from which Gabriel must redeem and

reclaim his own imagination.

The snow, which continually falls throughout the story, is also linked to Gabriel's mental condition, as it is clearly associated with the potential for imaginative escape. Symbolically, the snow is connected to Gabriel's desire to free himself from the Dublin society in which he feels enmeshed: "How cool it must be outside! How pleasant it must be to walk alone, first along by the river and then through the park" (208). The cool outdoor world of calm snowfall offers oblivion and an alternative to the anxieties of the party and the speech which, more and more, Gabriel is beginning to dread. Thus, the snow, as an image of a vibrant other life or simply of an escape, once again seems to press on the protagonist's consciousness, but, in contrast to his earlier rejection of it, Gabriel now openly acknowledges its pull. He has recognized his own need for imaginative revivification. Inasmuch as the snow is linked to Gabriel's thoughts, it foreshadows the story's conclusion, while it simultaneously grows in symbolic implication. Even as the speech is begun, the orator is drawn to the snow-world outside. Consequently, the speech and the occasion itself are deflated as the snow provides an image of refreshing vibrancy which is preferable to the asphyxiating warmth of the party and the stale society provided by the guests. Gabriel's growing self-awareness is here manifested in that he is distanced from himself as he imagines an outside perspective on the party:

The indefinite group, "people perhaps," looking up at the lighted window, seems to suggest a desire to become a part of the festive occasion, a covert desire of the outsider to come inside and become a part of the community, fore-

shadowing the end of the story. (Brown 92)

Moreover, the depiction of the snow is now more forcefully associated with potential illumination, and thus the story's end, as "The Wellington monument wore a gleaming cap of snow that flashed westward..." (219).

The content and effect of Gabriel's speech provides another insight into his evolving imaginative capabilities. Indeed, his defensiveness in the face of Miss Ivors' perceived onslaught and his cold reply to his wife's inquiry about the Aran Isles both suggest that it is he who in fact epitomizes this "...new generation, educated or hypereducated as it is, [that] will lack those qualities of humanity, of hospitality, of kindly humor" (221). Ironically, while Gabriel is detached from the emotional content of his speech, it nevertheless has a noticeable emotional impact on its intended subjects, viz. the sisters Morkan. Even at this relatively early point in the evening, Gabriel seems to understand vaguely that he is merely playing a part. Thus, he increasingly seems split between the way he has portrayed himself ("character") and his own private being ("self")--his inner and evolving consciousness. These two selves, the external and the internal, are now moving on divergent paths as his imagination is gradually tuned to the reality of his life.

While Joyce slowly unveils a reality for both Gabriel and the reader, he also manages to build toward a more pronounced and climactic epiphany. As the story gathers to its conclusion, it is ironic that Gabriel misread the symbolic importance of the image of his wife listening to the music. He focuses on the static picture

before him instead of on the song. This oversight in itself suggests that he is, at this point, still unable to achieve an empathetic understanding of his wife. However, even in his misreading of the "*Distant Music*" (210) image, he points to the event's importance as if it had been unconsciously recognized. At this juncture Gabriel is simply unable to penetrate the surface meaning, despite the fact that he seems to intuit that Gretta is absorbed in some deeply meaningful contemplation. Unfortunately, Gabriel has yet to recognize fully his wife as a distinct individual with a separate and unalterable past, and consequently he can only remain on the outer edge of understanding: "There was a grace and mystery in her attitude as if she were a symbol of something" (210).

The final few pages of "The Dead" complete and reiterate ~~the~~ Gabriel's transformation in microcosm. He moves from a somewhat blind and self-absorbed introspection to an understanding which includes the experience of others as his perception reaches outward. Symbolically, the reflected vision of his figure in the mirror, "the face whose expression always puzzled him" (236), indicates that Gabriel is now on the very edge of self-discovery. Indeed, Gretta becomes the mirror in which her husband's external character dissolves, so that he is left to apprehend the bare image of his "self". Through the unavoidable recognition of another's pain and "the failure of his irony...a shameful consciousness of his own person assailed him" (238). The vision of his life he now perceives is an unforgiving reality, and, as a result, it is all the more remarkable that Gabriel accepts this epiphany. This fact

in itself is an affirmation of the human capacity for change. Suddenly, as if a veil has been lifted, Gabriel is capable of fellow-feeling, of an unmitigated and unselfish compassion: "a strange friendly pity for her entered his soul" (240). In addition,

He recognizes Furey's feeling, although he "had never felt like that himself." But, while Gabriel thinks of his own inadequacy, he too has surrendered himself to another person. He has experienced a sympathy so profound it must be called love. (Brown 99)

Moreover, Gabriel's understanding widens not only in its embracing of the past but also in respect to the future as he envisions the passing of his Aunts and what is surely the loss of a living past. In short, he is struck by the fragility and transience of all life and now seems filled with compassion for the unalterable human condition. Death is understood as an unavoidable facet of existence, and "Generous tears filled Gabriel's eyes" (241) as he recognizes that love and death can be bound together in an inescapable and unresolvable tension. This is his wife's pain. Now that his imagination is precisely tuned to the world around him, the doors to further perceptions are opened wide. For example, as his mind moves toward more general considerations, Michael Furey seems somewhat depersonalized: "in the partial darkness he imagined he saw the form of a young man standing under a dripping tree" (241). In this non-specific description, Furey becomes a symbol for the loss of life which can be extended to include the living death of the Conroys and many of the Dubliners. Yet Gabriel does not fall into despair as a consequence of his new, if somewhat bleak, understanding. Rather, as an individual in the

narrow sense, he begins to fade as the story moves toward its broadening and inclusive end. Paradoxically, even as his character is dismantled by a series of epiphanies, a new selfhood capable of greater vision is coming into being and is embraced. By accepting death, and the fragility of his existence, he is propelled into a new understanding and appreciation for life. As Brown suggests, "it is a death that leads not only to self knowledge but also to an imaginative involvement with others" (84).

Thus, even as he commences "his journey westward" (242), which is clearly toward death, it is also a voyage back into life and back to an acceptance of his "Irishness", as the association of the west with Miss Ivors and Galway suggests. Also, the proposed journey indicates that he has arrived at a new acceptance of his wife, her specific background, and her separate past, and now he can view her more compassionately. In this final context, the falling snow joins present with past, and unites and revitalizes a universe which Joyce presented earlier as fragmented and imaginatively paralysed. Gabriel's revelation, while painful, is nevertheless one filled with potential for life and the creative spirit as is symbolized by the embarkation on a journey. Finally, the "Yes" coming so near the story's summation prefigures Molly's great affirmation of life in Ulysses and becomes the keynote for a Dublin which, in this last of the stories, at the very least allows the possibility of a redemptive vision.

Conclusion

"The Dead" is a fitting conclusion to Dubliners and to this study because it re-examines and synthesizes many of the key themes from the earlier stories while, paradoxically, remaining suggestive, complex, enigmatic and open-ended. It is a hopeful portrait of the modern imagination, but it is an intensely realistic hope, one which is tempered by the greater context of the volume and by its own internal truths. More specifically, "The Dead" is central to this study's concluding remarks because it puts forth the most complicated and comprehensive examination of the individual imagination in the work. It is psychologically believable in its portrait of its protagonist but, more importantly, we find that Gabriel has courageously faced the truth of his life and his vision of himself. He is the rare and hopeful example of a visionary imagination which has prevailed over Dublin's oppressiveness and its own illusions. But "The Dead" recaptures the positive potential of the 'childhood' stories only after Gabriel has first descended into the sometimes harsh facts of his life. He does, however, re-emerge from the imaginative paralysis of his past.

The 'childhood' stories are marked by characters whose imaginations grapple with the truth of Dublin. The unnamed boy/narrators of "The Sisters", "An Encounter" and "Araby" see their fantasies clash with the realities of Dublin. In each case their budding imaginations have to readjust to new experiences which necessitate self-examination and the dismantling of illusions. I

have argued that the Dublin of Joyce's inspiration is in strong opposition to boyish creativity and, indeed, the city often appears threatening and sinister. For example, in "The Sisters" the legacy of corruption from Father Flynn has deeply penetrated and significantly limited the narrator's imaginative capabilities. Similarly, in "An Encounter" the "real adventure," which supplants the literature of the Wild West and the playful fantasies of the narrator, destroys his boyish world and hurries him toward an understanding of a perverse adult reality. Once again, in "Araby" Joyce's native city is portrayed as inimical to creative or passionate thought as the author explores the potential for young romance in the context of a mean-spirited and commercialized Dublin. Thus, all three stories contain epiphanies which deflate and disillusion but, at this opening stage in the collection, these youthful protagonists survive their respective encounters with Dublin's harsh truth. Finally, the main characters' loss of youthful illusions is easily perceived as an unavoidable facet of maturing so that, unlike so many of their successors, these protagonists remain imaginatively intact in the aftermath of their disillusioning epiphanies.

What youthful hope remains after the introductory group of stories is soon to falter and expire in the tales of 'adolescence'. In fact all the narratives which fall under Joyce's general headings 'adolescence', 'maturity' and 'public life' can be characterized as the illusory stage of Dubliners. This thesis has attempted to show that a propensity for misunderstanding due to damaging illusions is common to almost all characters in these

stories, in addition to demonstrating the important differences in degree, background and situation which affect our reading of these characters. Eveline, for example, is pitiable because the habit of creating illusory memories to protect her psyche from the cruel facts of her life finally comes to ensnare her in her past and so, deny her future. The DoYLES in "After the Race" and all the characters in "The Boarding House" are each and every one caught in an intricate and destructive network of cultural misgivings and provincial pressures. While their illusions are finally epiphanized for the reader, the characters themselves remain only dimly aware of their imaginative deaths. However, because its characters are active, "Two Gallants" uncovers a far more seedy reality in its examination of the harmful and self-destructive illusions of Dublin street life.

The stories of 'maturity' mark the most pronounced descent into the unhealthy imaginations of Joyce's Dubliners. Here, mere illusions often give way to deluded thought and destructive action. My study loosely paired these stories into two subsections. The first pair, "A Little Cloud" and "Counterparts", are two separate manifestations of a similar imaginative mindset. Both Chandler and Farrington feel compromised, undervalued and trapped and each man seeks refuge from his life in fantasies of escape and delusions of grandeur. The key difference between these characters, of course, is one of degree. Inherently, Chandler is by far the more fragile of the two men and he expresses his disillusionment at the story's close in a violence proportionate to his "little" character. Likewise Farrington's drinking and his severely deluded thought

processes combine in the shocking and unforgivable violence which epiphanizes *his* character. None the less, Farrington's physical destructiveness must share the lowest point in the Dubliners sequence with the emotional and psychological ruination perpetrated by Mr. James Duffy of "A Painful Case". Maria in "Clay" prepares us for the imaginative malaise of Mr. Duffy, and in so doing she echoes Chandler's relationship to Farrington in the two previous narratives. While similar in her failure to truly live or imagine happiness for herself, Maria differs significantly from Mr. Duffy insofar as she is able to empathize with her fellow Dubliners. Mr. Duffy, by contrast, exhibits an utter failure of his empathetic and visionary imagination and his awakening to this reality is, tragically, far too late to stem the suffering he has wrought.

As I argued, "Ivy Day in the Committee Room", "A Mother" and "Grace" shift the focus of the collection from personal illusions to cultural ones. In "Ivy Day in the Committee Room", for instance, the remembrance of Parnell casts a light on the present which bodes ill for the political imagination in Dublin. Similarly, "A Mother" exposes the extent to which the Irish Revival is afflicted with imaginative myopia and is often more concerned with money and social acceptance than with artistic or cultural pursuits. In my analysis of "Grace" (the religious imagination) I argued that Joyce exposes Catholicism as, frequently, merely a function of a guilt-appeasing habit, which is, itself, part of a broader set of becalming illusions. However, these stories of 'public life' are also significant in that they possess far less severe examples of the destructive and self-destructive action seen

in the previous four. Instead, this public group balances potentially harmful cultural illusions with the humour and friendliness of many of its characters and so rescues the book from the bleak mood created by "Counterparts" and "A Painful Case". Moreover, in the three 'public' stories Joyce's concern for the individual imagination relative to a broader cultural context prepares us for "The Dead". Again, the final story's movement from a group portrait to Gabriel's expansive and inclusive vision via a series of imaginative awakenings is clearly redemptive, but only cautiously so. Gabriel, "The Dead" and Joyce, we are reminded, are still in the Dublin of the preceding pages.

When viewed together, Joyce's stories of Dublin possess several subtle interconnections and delicate thematic echoes. In this light (shadow) one can discern an overall pattern wherein the imagination continually struggles with the reality of Dublin and with the individual's personal past. It is a fight for survival -- one, which the bulk of Joyce's examples in this collection reveal, is often lost. Yet while sometimes bleak, Joyce is never single-minded in his depiction of his native city. His anger at harmful illusions (cultural and/or personal) is frequently tempered by a deep sympathy for his characters and the resulting portrait of *Dubliners* is complex and strangely paradoxical. Finally, in his poem "The Tollund Man", Joyce's latter-century countryman Seamus Heaney seems to recapture this very same Dubliners-like ambivalence toward Ireland. Heaney's words succinctly embody Joyce's overall sentiment in Dubliners:

In the old man-killing parishes
I will feel lost,
Unhappy and at home.

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