That Form Endearing: A Performance of Siren Songs; or, "I was only vamping, man"

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The business at hand is to perform and discuss certain songs in and around the "Sirens" section of Ulysses, particularly Lionel's aria from Flotow's comic opera Martha, a German song sung by Simon Dedalus in English and known to Bloom by its Italian title, "M'Appari." A great deal has been written about this and other siren songs, and about their pertinence to Bloom's marital and extramarital situation, but by and large what has been written treats the songs as texts, not as pieces of music. This is generally true of "Sirens" criticism, which seems to be always searching for great codes. There was the gentleman from New Zealand who shoehorned the opening into The Art of the Fugue:

\[\text{Bronze by gold heard (the) hoof i-rons steel y ringing}\]

The argument is intriguing, but the words don't fit. If Joyce had meant to set his words to this music, he would have omitted the extraneous "the," preserving in one neat excision both the semantic and the musical senses of the phrase. Neither does the overture act as a cryptogrammatic vehicle for musical notation, no matter how pleasant and plausible the resulting melodies may be (Rogers 15–18). It is perhaps worth leaving the false grail of fugal form

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aside for the present, and looking at the siren songs as pieces of music, to see how they work musically in the episode. "It was the only language" (Ulysses 278), Mr. Dedalus says to Ben; this, the music of what happens, is the language of what follows.

The first song sung in the Ormond Bar is sung a cappella by Lydia Douce. It's "The Shade of the Palm," a tenor aria from the musical Floradora. The line in Ulysses reads:

Gaily Miss Douce polished a tumbler, trilling:
—O, Idolores, queen of the eastern seas! (261)

This line establishes Lydia as a musical siren, with her trill, as a sexual siren, in her polishing off a tumbler, and as a singer of siren songs, for "queen of the eastern seas" recalls Cleopatra, a well-known siren, and Floradora is also a perfume, presumably containing some sort of man-luring pheromone. Here is "The Shade of the Palm," then, from the musical Floradora:

There is a garden fair, set in an Eastern sea,
There is a maid, keeping her tryst with me
In the shade of the palm, with a lover's delight,
Where 'tis ever the golden day, or a silvery night;
How can I leave her alone in this dream of sweet Arcadia?
How can I part from her for lands away?
In this valley of Eden, fairest isle of the sea,
Oh, my beloved, bid me to stay
In this fair land of Eden, bid me, belov'd, to stay . . .
Oh, my Dolores, Queen of the Eastern sea!
Fair one of Eden, look to the West for me!
My star will be shining, love,
When you're in the moonlight calm,
So be waiting for me by the Eastern sea,
In the shade of the sheltering palm.2

Cleopatra is a snake in the grass throughout "Sirens": the seagreen drop-blind Lydia later lowers is associated with "eau de Nil" (268), the color of the viceroy's wife's dress, and Bloom echoes Enobarbus's celebration of Cleopatra with "The seat he sat on: warm" (264). Antony and Cleopatra is very much behind Joyce's use of this song, for "look to the West for me" is precisely what Antony would be saying to Cleopatra, and "fair one of Eden," the other half of the line, is transformed in "Sirens" to "fair one of Egypt" (266). It is worth observing that Miss Douce gets it wrong twice in the space of her one short line. It's not "Idolores," as she sings it, but "my Dolores"; neither is it "seas" but "sea."3 With "Idolores," Joyce is preparing us for Bloom's thoughts of the croppy boy ("he dolores" [286]) and Molly ("shedolores" [275]).4 That Bloom has not entered the bar as Lydia sings this little snatch of song and thus can have no idea that he later is mirroring her mistake is one of many fascinating
narrative irregularities in "Sirens" that are perhaps worth developing in a footnote.\(^5\)

The next song, the first one actually played on the Ormond Bar piano in "Sirens," is "Good Bye Sweetheart Good Bye." Before singing the song, Simon Dedalus raises the piano lid: "Upholding the lid he (who?) gazed in the coffin (coffin?) at the oblique triple (piano!) wires. He pressed (the same who pressed indulgently her hand), soft pedalling a triple of keys to see the thicknesses of felt advancing, to hear the muffled hammerfall in action" (263). A tuning fork, left by the piano tuner on the piano, is sounded: "From the saloon a call came, long in dying. That was a tuningfork the tuner had that he forgot that he now struck. A call again. That he now poised that it now throbbed. You hear? It throbbed, pure, purer, softly and softlier, its buzzing prongs. Longer in dying call" (264). The A from the stripling's fork is the tuning note of a concertmaster, preparing the orchestra and the audience for the extraordinary performance to follow. And with Simon's preparatory actions a new narrative voice is set free, a voice that plays musical chairs with syntax, that rings the changes on all possible puns before proceeding. "Sirens" has many voices, all in different registers: the songs themselves, a voice with piano accompaniment; Bloom's thoughts, a solo clarinet; the conversational voices, in the winds; the straight narrative, on strings; the trenchant syllables that shadow Bloom on his way to the bar ("With sadness ... A man ... But Bloom?" [258–59]), on the double basses; the leitmotivs, wandering in and out of the score like mislaid chords; and the sounds of keys, quoits, coins, knockers, tuning forks, garters, farts, bells, and whistles, all on percussion. This new voice, the quicksilver voice of musical language, released like music from a box with the opening of the piano lid, sounds in the highest, the merriest register of all, a glockenspiel played by a lunatic Mozart.

This Mozartean voice is also unerringly accurate in its musical renditions.\(^6\) "Good Bye Sweetheart Good Bye" opens with four bars of triplet introduction, described by the narrator as follows: "A duodene of birdnotes chirruped bright treble answer under sensitive hands. Brightly the keys, all twinkling, linked, all harpsichording, called to a voice to sing the strain of dewy morn, of youth, of love's leavetaking, life's, love's morn" (264). The performance of "Good Bye Sweetheart Good Bye" neatly circumscribes Boylan's brief appearance at the bar. The first verse goes like this:

The bright stars fade, that morn is breaking,
The dew drops pearl each bud and leaf,
And I from thee my leave am taking,
With bliss too brief, etc.
How sinks my heart with fond alarms,
The tear is hiding in mine eye,
For time doth thrust me from thine arms;
Good bye sweet heart good bye! etc.

215
And then Bloom enters, hearing only the second verse. As Bloom enters, Boylan prepares to leave, and the mood of the song entirely switches. This is the second verse:

The sun is up, the lark is soaring,
Loud swells the song of chanticleer;
The lev’ret bounds o’er earth’s soft flooring,
Yet I am here, etc.
For since night’s gems from heaven did fade,
And morn to floral lips doth hie,
I could not leave thee, tho’ I said
Good bye sweet heart good bye! etc.?

Bloom enters the bar in between the singer’s reluctant decision to leave and his ecstatic decision to remain. Boylan leaves the bar not when the singer decides to leave but when the singer decides to stay:

— ... Sweetheart, goodbye!
—I’m off, said Boylan with impatience. (267)

Boylan is off at the wrong time, leaving after the wrong verse. The song undercuts his intention, ironizing his departure.

The song’s conclusion coincides with Lenehan’s urging Lydia to “Sonnezla-cloche” (266) as well as Boylan’s departure, raising through the “smackable woman’s warmhosed thigh” (266) the offstage presence of Molly Bloom. The associations with Molly here are narrative, as is a minor lexical adjustment to the lyrics of the song. The second verse, it will be universally acknowledged, has in it some of the worst lines in all of nineteenth-century drawing-room song. They serve Joyce’s purpose well, however, for “the lev’ret” is not only a hare but figuratively a mistress (as exemplified in Shirley’s Gamester: “Some wives will bid her husband’s leverets welcome”) and a spiritless person, thus combining in one word the harelike Boylan, the mistress Molly, and the spiritless Bloom. But the line “And morn to floral lips doth hie” is too horrible even for Joyce, and he changes “floral lips” to “Flora’s lips”:

—Go on, pressed Lenehan. There’s no-one. He never heard.
— ... to Flora’s lips did hie.
High, a high note, pealed in the treble, clear. (266)

This neat exchange from floral to Flora not only gives the moon a much more sensible place to hie to, it makes the association with Molly through the floral network that trails the Bloom family wherever it goes.8

I have had occasion to remark elsewhere that every song sung in the Ormond Bar is threaded with every other through common reference to the siren myth, and to Molly Bloom (Knowles 461). The next song, “Love and War,” is no exception. The singer of “The Shade of the Palm” is dying to stay,
the singer of "Good Bye Sweetheart Good Bye" cannot leave, and the soldier in "Love and War" sings "I care not foror the morrow" (270). Molly is "Dolores shedolores" from "The Shade of the Palm" (275), Bloom knows where Boylan is off to after "Good Bye Sweetheart Good Bye" ("He's off. Light sob of breath Bloom sighed on the silent bluehued flowers" [268]), and "Love and War" reminds Bloom of Molly's reaction to Dollard's "belongings on show" (270) during its earlier performance. All the songs serve to underscore the centrality of Molly Bloom.

"Love and War" is a duet between a tenor, the lover, and a bass, the soldier, sung by Big Ben Dollard. Dollard begins with the tenor part by accident, with disastrous results:

> Over their voices Dollard bassooned attack, booming over bombarding chords:  
> —*When love absorbs my ardent soul* . . . (270)

He is quickly corrected by Father Cowley—"War! War! cried Father Cowley. You're the warrior" (270)—and moves down to the bass part:

> —So I am, Ben Warrior laughed. I was thinking of your landlord. Love or money.  
> He stopped. He wagged huge beard, huge face over his blunder huge.  
> —Sure, you'd burst the tympanum of her ear, man, Mr. Dedalus said through smoke aroma, with an organ like yours.  
> In bearded abundant laughter Dollard shook upon the keyboard. He would.  
> —Not to mention another membrane, Father Cowley added. Half time, Ben. *Amoroso ma non troppo*. Let me there. (270)

Again, this song is afforded a sexual significance, and raises the question of what's taking place offstage. The broken tympanum announces the Virgin Mary, who, with Cleopatra, is one in the series of Bloom's sirens in the episode. Lydia will later have a "Blank face. Virgin should say: or fingered only" (285), and Mary loses the pin of her drawers again as Bloom writes to Martha (279). In "Lotus-Eaters" the Virgin Mary's church is revealed to have, like Farmer McGregor's lettuce, a dangerously soporific effect: "Safe in the arms of kingdom come. Lulls all pain. Wake this time next year" (81). Passing Bassi's blessed virgins in "Sirens," Bloom thinks:

> Bluerobed, white under, come to me. God they believe she is: or goddess.  
> Those today. I could not see. [. . .] All comely virgins. That brings those rakes of fellows in: her white.  
> By went his eyes. The sweets of sin. Sweet are the sweets.  
> Of sin. (259–60)

"Sirens" is a closely woven text: the weave is never closer than it is here. The blue-robed Virgin Mary leads to the rear view of the statues (Venus Kallipyge), which leads to Raoul's mistress from *Sweets of Sin*. "I could not see" looks ahead to the blind stripling, and "Bluerobed, white under, come to me" brings us di-
rectly to the next siren song, the last words of which are, as Bloom anticipates here, “come to me.”

As Cowley sings it to a painted siren on the wall:

—*M'appari* tutt *amor*:

> Il mio sguardo l'incontr . . .

She waved, unhearing Cowley, her veil to one departing, dear one, to wind, love, speeding sail, return. (271)

And then Simon Dedalus has a go:

Mr Dedalus laid his pipe to rest beside the tuningfork and, sitting, touched the obedient keys.

—No, Simon, Father Cowley turned. Play it in the original. One flat.
The keys, obedient, rose higher, told, faltered, confessed, confused.
Up stage strode Father Cowley.
—Here Simon. I'll accompany you, he said. Get up. (271–72)

Cowley strides upstage, Dedalus rises, and the piece moves up three keys, from D-major, the traditional key in the English-Italian edition, to F-major, the original key for the German aria as it appeared in Flotow's *Martha*, “Ach so fromm.” Cowley takes over the keyboard, and Dedalus sings:

> When first I saw that form endearing,
> Sorrow from me seem'd to depart:
> Each gracefull look, each word so cheering
> Charm'd my eye and won my heart.
> Full of hope, and all delighted,
> None could feel more blest than I;
> All on Earth I then could wish for
> Was near her to live and die:
> But alas! 'twas idle dreaming,
> And the dream too soon hath flown;
> Not one ray of hope is gleaming;
> I am lost, yes I am lost for she is gone.

> When first I saw that form endearing
> Sorrow from me seem'd to depart:
> Each graceful look, each word so cheering
> Charm'd my eye and won my heart.
> Martha, Martha, I am sighing
> I am weeping still; for thee;
> Come thou lost one Come thou dear one,
> Thou alone can'st comfort me:
> Ah! Martha return! Come to me!  

“M'Appari” is the central song of “Sirens”; it is the musical heart of Joyce's book. When Auguste Morel was translating “Sirens” into French, Joyce wrote
to Harriet Shaw Weaver for the record: “I want the Martha one for Mr Morel.” While it is sung Bloom is most literally Odysseus, giving himself fast with a rubber band around his fingers. When it is over Leopold and Simon are consumed into Siopold, Stephen has one father, and the book, which is about the search of father for son and vice versa, is given its impetus for the rest of the day. Lionel, the lover who sings the aria in Flotow’s opera, was originally included in Siopold, according to Zack Bowen via Joseph Prescott via a Harvard proof sheet, which has the progression:

Lionel
Leopold
Simon
Richie
Riichiopold
Siopold

After the song Bloom is “Lionel Leopold” (290) and Dedalus is “Simonlione” (289), further tying them together through Martha. Mario sings Martha throughout Ulysses, he appears in “Circe” as Henry Flower, and Henry Flower sings “When first I saw,” caressing on his breast a severed female head (522). Milly is “thou lost one” in “Oxen” (414), and Martha Clifford, the obvious Martha, calls Bloom “thou lost one” in “Circe” (456). But Molly is the one Bloom has lost, the one who will not “Come. To me, to him, to her, you too, me us” (276). Molly is at the center of all these songs.

Martha takes place in the Middle Ages, in the reign of good Queen Anne—according to Flotow, who obviously had no idea what he was talking about. It is the story of two women, Lady Harriet and her friend Nancy (note the authentic medieval names), who are bored and decide to go to the fair dressed as servants. There they are sold to be chambermaids for Lionel and Mr. Plunkett. In the Odyssey, it is Odysseus who disguises himself as a servant; in the German Verkleidungskomödie the cross-class-dresser is usually a woman. Dressed as a maid, Lady Harriet sings “The Last Rose of Summer,” a song also referred to in “Sirens”:

And The last rose of summer was a lovely song. Mina loved that song. Tankard loved the song that Mina.

'Tis the last rose of summer Dollard left Bloom felt wind wound round inside. (288)

"The Last Rose of Summer" begins “'Tis the last rose of summer, left blooming all alone” (Bauerle 383-85), and it is clear that Joyce knew about "blooming." The twenty-ninth note on the opening keyboard is “I feel so sad. P. S. So lonely blooming” (256). The fiftieth note is “Last rose Castille of summer left bloom I feel so sad alone” (257). But it is not clear how Flotow passed this song off as an original composition. The song was sung at his graveside; everyone seems to have assumed that he had composed it himself. It's lifted
completely from Moore’s *Irish Melodies* of 1807, where it was known as “The Young Man’s Dream,” “The Groves of Blarney,” and by other titles. Its original history is extremely complicated: it was written either by a harper or a hedge schoolmaster in the early nineteenth century, possibly as a parody of yet another tune called “Castlereagh.” Joyce had a copy of Moore’s collection, and so must have Flotow, for in 1845 he beats the tune to death, scoring it for horns, for winds, for strings, for full orchestra in the overture, until you think you’ll go mad if you hear it again. If you don’t like the song, you’re in for a terrible two hours. It’s Sergeant Cuff’s favorite song in *The Moonstone*; Molly reads *The Moonstone* and has a gynecologist called Collins.¹³

So “The Last Rose of Summer” is a false song, which is actually Irish, sung by a woman under a false name, disguised as a false servant, falsely contracted to Lionel in a false landscape, which is not really England. It’s perfect for Joyce. Lionel falls in love with the illusion; Lady Harriet escapes, meets him hunting—“Got the horn or what?” (267)—and hounds him off to prison, where Lionel (and this is the interesting part)¹⁴ has gone mad and doesn’t recognize Lady Harriet. He only recognizes her as Martha, so she puts on peasant dress, and the opera ends with one more rousing chorus of “The Last Rose of Summer” with the illusion maintained.

*Martha*, then, is an unauthenticated transumption of something Irish, a cracked looking glass in which is pictured a servant, Martha and not-Martha. It is also, as Wilhelm Hübner has remarked, a comic opera obsessed with the music of language: “Der Stil des Stückes kennzeichnet sich vornehmlich durch eine besonders enge Verbindung zwischen Wort und Musik.”¹⁵ At one point in the opera, Tristan, the buffo aristocrat, opens the window and asks for “Luft,” summons a resounding blast from the wind instruments. An editor of Flotow has said that “there are many numbers in Martha which sound curiously like Sullivan.”¹⁶ A recent review of a performance of the opera in New York makes the same comparison: “Now, for the first time since 1944 City Opera has disinterred ‘Martha’ (revived is hardly the word) in what appears to be a similar attempt to pass the work off as Gilbert-Less Sullivan.”¹⁷

And there are also numbers in *Martha* that sound curiously like Joyce. One notorious example is the spinning scene, in which Harriet and Nancy, disguised as Martha and Julia, are forced to learn how to use the spinning wheel. “I can’t spin” says Harriet. “Do it,” says the evil Plunkett. “Like this,” says the helpful Lionel, and Lady Harriet begins to enjoy it, trilling “Oh how lustig” over the grinding syncopation of the men singing “Brr, brr,” imitating the sound of the rotating wheel. “Spin, spin,” “Lick your finger,” they cry, and Lady Harriet flies off the handle, reaching a high D, staccato in her excitement, “sending it flying with a will.” They all pause for breath and Lionel asks “So now you know how?” She says yes, thanks, “here’s a pass,” and they’re off again, laughing in exact time as Harriet rejoices at the “golden thread through my fingers,” and everyone collapses in fits of helpless giggles on the floor.¹⁸
It's German comic romantic opera at its very worst, but it's also extremely Joycean in its overt sexuality, as coarse and comical as Lydia playing with the barpull. Sewing has represented sex since long before Bovary pricked her thumb and Gretchen sat by the spinning wheel worrying about her boyfriend,\textsuperscript{19}
The spinning scene is like Gilbert and Sullivan in its wordplay—Mädchen rhymes with Fädchen, which rhymes with Rädchen—and Arthur Sullivan, in fact, edited the English-Italian edition of Martha that gave rise to the aria's popular name in the British Isles, "M'Appari." Hearing "M'Appari" sung, you notice, though Sullivan is not responsible for it, that the English translation turns the German into a patter song, especially at "full of hope and all delighted," and that the first four lines of the first verse are subtly different from the first four lines of the second—not textually, but in their emphasis. The first time the four lines are sung, you think he's with her. The second time, you know he's not. The "seemed" of "sorrow seemed to depart" cuts the illusion dead; "charmed my eye" becomes the false charm of a siren. It's a trick ending, as in "Good Bye Sweetheart Good Bye," except that here the twist is the other way, and the lover ends the second verse emphatically alone. Already within the song the impossibility of return is established.

While Dedalus and Cowley are preparing to sing "M'Appari," Richie Goulding whistles "All Is Lost Now," from La sonnambula. This, too, parodies the Odyssean nostos in defeating the promise of return: "Thou lost one. All songs on that theme" (277). It has clear connections both with Molly and the siren network and acts as a prelude for Dedalus' more searing loss in "come to me," a distant accompaniment to the grander tragedy Bloom can only overhear.

During the singing of "M'Appari," Bloom thinks of his wife, of the song, of Lydia, of Martha, and back to his wife. At the end, his thoughts race toward a union with all of these, with his wife, with the song, and with the singer, as he becomes consumed by the final soaring phrase. What I would do now, if I had a piano, is play "M'Appari" again, singing only the lines of the song as they appear in Joyce's text. At the same time, I would read Bloom's thoughts, as they are recorded beside the lines of the song. The parallactic presentation of Joyce and Flotow establishes that Joyce has gone to some trouble to have Bloom's thoughts fit with the music that lies beneath his text. Without a piano, I must resort to a written representation of what is essentially an aural analysis. It is not possible to reproduce here what is possible in performance, but the following gives a rough idea. In what follows, the italicized lines from "M'Appari" are those also printed in Ulysses, quoted exactly as they appear in Ulysses. The rest of the song is in smaller roman type, in editorial brackets. Joycean text that is clearly attached to the music has been overlaid into the score. The rest of the text is found on pages 273-76 of the Vintage International edition. Here's how it works:
That Form Endearing: A Performance of Siren Songs

Piano again. Sounds better than last time I heard. Tuned probably.
Stopped again.\textsuperscript{22}

\begin{musicnote}
\begin{music}
\textsf{Allegro moderato}
\begin{musicfigure}
\begin{music}
\textsf{harping chords of prelude}
\end{music}
\end{musicfigure}
\end{music}
\end{musicnote}

Dollard and Cowley still urged the lingering singer out with it.
—With it, Simon.
—It, Simon.
—Ladies and gentlemen, I am most deeply obliged by your kind solicitations.
—It, Simon.
—I have no money but if you will lend me your attention I shall endeavour to sing to you of a heart bowed down.\textsuperscript{23}

\begin{musicnote}
\begin{music}
\begin{musicfigure}
\begin{music}
\textsf{By the sandwichbell in screening shadow, Lydia her bronze and rose, a lady's grace, gave and withheld: as in cool glaucous eau de Nil Mina to tankards two her pinnacles of gold.}
\end{music}
\end{musicfigure}
\end{music}
\end{musicnote}
\end{musicnote}

By the sandwichbell in screening shadow, Lydia her bronze and rose, a lady's grace, gave and withheld: as in cool glaucous eau de Nil Mina to tankards two her pinnacles of gold.

The harping chords of prelude closed. A chord longdrawn, expectant drew a voice away.\textsuperscript{24}

\begin{musicnote}
\begin{music}
\begin{musicfigure}
\begin{music}
\textsf{chord longdrawn skin limbs human heart soul}
\end{music}
\end{musicfigure}
\end{music}
\end{musicnote}

Richie turned.
—Si Dedalus' voice, he said.
Brain tipped, cheek touched with flame, they listened feeling that flow endearing flow over skin limbs human heart soul spine.\textsuperscript{25} Bloom signed to Pat,
bald Pat is a waiter hard of hearing, to set ajar the door of the bar. The door of the bar. So. That will do. Pat, waiter, waited, waiting to hear, for he was hard of hear by the door.

Through the hush of air a voice sang to them, low, not rain, not leaves in murmur, like no voice of strings of reeds or whatdoyoucallthem dulcimers, touching their still ears with words, still hearts of their each his remembered lives. Good, good to hear: sorrow from them each seemed to from both depart when first they heard. When first they saw, lost Richie, Poldy, mercy of beauty, heard from a person wouldn't expect it in the least, her first merciful lovesoft oftloved word.

Alas! The voice rose, sighing, changed: loud, full, shining, proud.


Tenderness it welled: slow, swelling. Full it throbbed. That's the chat. Ha, give! Take! Throb, a throb, a pulsing proud erect.


Bloom looped, unlooped, noded, disnoded.

Bloom. Flood of warm jimjam lickitup secretness flowed to flow in music out, in desire, dark to lick flow, invading. Tipping her tepping her topping her.

Tup. Pores to dilate dilating. Tup. The joy the feel the warm.


Beaming Lydia for Lidwell squeak scarce- so la - the muse a ray Coincidence.  

Martha it is. 

is gleaming; I am lost, yes, I am lost for she is gone.  

ly hear -dy like unsqueaked of hope Just going to write.
Beaming. Lydia for Lidwell squeak scarcely hear so ladylike the muse unsqueaked a ray of hope.

Martha it is. Coincidence. Just going to write. Lionel’s song. Lovely name you have. Can’t write. Accept my little pres. Play on her heartstrings purse-strings too. She’s a. I called you naughty boy. Still the name: Martha. How strange! Today.

The voice of Lionel returned, weaker but unwearied. It sang again to Richie Poldy Lydia Lidwell also sang to Pat open mouth ear waiting, to wait. How first he saw that form endearing, how sorrow seemed to part, how look, form, word charmed him Gould Lidwell, won Pat Bloom’s heart.

Wish I could see his face, though. Explain better. Why the barber in Drago’s always looked my face when I spoke his face in the glass. Still hear it better here than in the bar though farther.

First night when first I saw her at Mat Dillon’s in Terenure. Yellow, black lace she wore. Musical chairs. We two the last. Fate. After her. Fate. Round and round slow. Quick round. We two. All looked. Halt. Down she sat. All ousted looked. Lips laughing. Yellow knees.

That Form Endearing: A Performance of Siren Songs

and won my heart — Martha! Ah, Martha! I am sighing

with deepening yet with rising chords of harmony.

Quitting all languor Lionel cried in grief, in cry of passion dominant to love to return with deepening yet with rising chords of harmony. In cry of Lionel loneliness\(^{33}\) that she should know, must Martha feel. For only her he waited. Where? Here there try there here all try where. Somewhere.

I am weeping still; for thee; — Co-me, thou lost one! Co-me thou dear one!

dominant to love

Alone. One love. One hope. One comfort me. Martha, chestnote, return.

Thou alone can’t comfort me:

One com-fort me.
It soared, a bird, it held its flight, a swift pure cry, soar silver orb it leaped serene, speeding, sustained, to come, don’t spin it out too long long breath he breath long life, soaring high, high resplendent, aflame, crowned, high in the effulgence symbolistic, high, of the ethereal bosom, high, of the high vast irradiation everywhere all soaring all around about the all, the endlessnessness ... 

Siopold! Consumed.

Come. Well sung. All clapped. She ought to. Come. To me, to him, to her, you too, me us.


“Words? Music? No: it’s what’s behind.” And behind this heady and beautifully timed sunburst are two important words, “spin,” as in “don’t spin it out too long,” which clearly ties the note back to Flotow’s spinning-wheel scene, and “Come.” “Come” appears in many forms in “Sirens”: “Come on, Simon,” “I’m coming,” Dollard’s “come down,” Molly’s “kissing comfits,” “Elijah is com.” It is sung in “Comfort me,” “See the conquering hero comes,” “Comes love’s sweet song,” and so on. “Come” presents an unexpected crux in the versions of its broken form in “Aeolus” and “Sirens.” Mario sings in “Aeolus”: 

228
Co-ome thou lost one,
Co-ome thou dear one. (117)

but Dedalus sings in “Sirens”:

—Co-me, thou lost one!
Co-me thou dear one! (275)

The exclamation marks in “Sirens” can be taken as indications of a greater emotional commitment on Dedalus’s part, but how to explain the added comma and the lost o’s? The music clearly requires some sort of separation between the syllables, but which form, “Co-me” or “Co-ome,” is correct? Joyce’s division of the glowworm’s lamp from “The Young May Moon” in “Lestrygonians” supports the “Aeolus” reading: “Glowworm’s la-amp is gleaming, love” (167).34 The “Aeolus” reading also has the virtue of consistency through the text’s various genetic transformations, having begun in manuscript as “Co-ome” and continued that way throughout the process of transcription.

The “Sirens” reading of the last phrases of “M’Appari,” on the other hand, began as follows:

—Co-ome, thou lost one!
Co-ome, thou dear one!

 Alone. One love. One hope. One comfort me. Martha, [“chestnote], re-

 turn!

—Come 4 . . . !

 It soared, a bird, it held its flight, a swift pure cry, soar silver orb it
 leaped serene, to come, dont spin it out too long long breath he breath long
 life, soaring high, high resplendent, crowned, aflame, high in the effulgence
 [“symbolistic], high, of the etherial bosom, high of the vast irradiation, high,
 everywhere all soaring all around about the all, the endlessnessnessness.

—To me!35

In the typescript the comma of the second line was dropped for good, leaving the first comma to dangle by itself all the way into the 1990 edition. The four dots were removed from “Come. . . .!” and seven dots were added after “end-

lessnessness,” of which now only three remain.36 By the first version of the page proofs, in September 1921, the second o of “Co-ome” had been lost; it was not until the second version of the proofs approximately a month later that “Siopold!” was added between “—To me!” and “Consumed” (Ulysses: Facsimile Page Proofs 192, 208–9).

At the same time, in October 1921, Joyce made two significant alterations to the paragraph just before “Co-me, thou lost one!”: “Quitting all langour Li-
onel cried in grief, in cry of passion [“dominant] to love to return with deep-
ening yet with rising chords chords of harmony. In cry of lionel loneliness that
she should know, must martha feel. For only her he waited. Where? [“Here
there try there here all try where.] Somewhere.”37 These two changes, marked
here by editorial brackets, are musical, tied directly to the music of "M'Appari." The phrase is amended to read "dominant to love," and the music moves smartly into the dominant at that moment (see bar 76). "Here there try there here all try where" fits exactly with the deepening yet rising chords of harmony underneath the voice (see bars 69–77). As the io of Siopold is not just an i from Simon and an o from Leopold but also the io of Lionel and an Italian I, so at the same time that he writes in this all-consuming word Joyce is strengthening the link between his text and Flotow's, between language and music. It is no accident that it takes as long for me to say the paragraph between "—Come!" and "—To me!" as it does for my page turner to sing the line.

Gabler, it is worth noting, chooses to keep the second o, both commas, three of the four dots after "—Come!", and all seven of the dots after "endlessnessness." It is not clear that the "Aeolus" reading is to be preferred over the "Sirens" one, since "Co-me" is a sufficient indication to a singer to separate the word into two distinct parts, one for each of two notes, and "Co-ome" both takes the sense of the word away by misspelling it and overdetermines the sense of the word by raising the slag heap, Coombe Hill, and the sluts in the Coombe singing "O, Mary lost the pin of her drawers." What is clear is that Joyce is uncharacteristically precise in his musical effects at this point in "Sirens." Having sloppily mistranscribed lines from "The Shade of the Palm," "Good Bye Sweetheart Good Bye," and other half-remembered songs, he takes a certain amount of trouble to make the words and music fit. This kind of precision, it may be added, invalidates the practice of taking the final "Come!" up to the fifth, from B-flat to C, as certain tenors have allowed themselves the liberty of doing. The absence of a hyphen within the word clearly establishes unequivocally that the note is to be held and not raised.

Leopold Bloom can never return to his wife, and his desire for return to Molly is the message of "come to me." Molly is behind all these songs. She is the queen of the Eastern seas, the last rose of summer, the sweetheart in "Good Bye Sweetheart Good Bye." She is the flower of the mountain, Floradora, the Flora of "Flora's lips." Her husband's penname is Henry Flower, or Enrique de la Flor, his real name is Bloom, his member is a languid floating flower, she kisses him among the rhododendrons, she will wear a white rose, she's the Yorkshire Girl, "Rose, Rose, Rose." It is entirely a coincidence, however, that when "M'Appari" appeared as a jazz tune some fifteen years after Ulysses was published it was called "Flowers for Madame."

"Sirens" is a tremendously funny episode; it is also unbearably sad. Listening to "The Croppy Boy," the next song sung at the bar, Bloom realizes that his son Rudy is dead, that his daughter Milly is in love with a Gentile, and that he cannot have another child: "I too, last my race. Milly young student. Well, my fault perhaps. No son. Rudy. Too late now. Or if not? If not? If still?" (285). This hope, this very false and painful hope of "If not? If still?", the desire for love, a true father, a true wife, a true son, is all compressed into "The Croppy
Boy." The boy is Bloom, the last of his race; is Stephen, omitting to pray for his mother; and is the blind stripling, tapping his way to the Ormond Bar during the singing of the song, on his way back to pick up the tuning fork he left on the lid of the piano. The connections with Molly are obvious: thoughts of Molly are raging in Bloom's head as he listens to the song, the tap of the blind stripling's cane is the cockcarra on the door of 7 Eccles Street, the tap of the barpull Lydia caresses, and the phonetic link to tip/top/tup, all established as sexually descriptive verbs during "M'Appari." The betrayal of the false priest is Molly's, and the loneliness of the croppy boy is Bloom's.

While all this is going on in the bar, Molly is keeping her assignation with Blazes Boylan. It's a musical appointment as well, and presumably the songs Molly will take with her on the concert tour are rehearsed before or after anything else takes place, if anything does. Two songs lined up for the concert are the duet "La Ci Darem" and "Love's Old Sweet Song." "La Ci Darem" is, curiously, a nonstarter in "Sirens": Bloom, though he is obsessed with the correct words of the song throughout the day, never wonders about that voglio in the Ormond Bar. Cowley does play the Don Giovanni minuet before "The Croppy Boy," which would have been as good a moment as any for Bloom to think of Zerlina. But for "La Ci Darem" to appear in an episode about maids and sirens and music would perhaps be overkill: this may be a rare instance of Joycean restraint, a delicate resistance of the temptation to pile it on. In any case, the omission of Bloom's pedantic insistence on the correct words to a song is particularly interesting, given Joyce's blatant disregard of actual song lyrics throughout most of the episode.

The final piece on Molly's program, "Love's Old Sweet Song," is really, if any song is, Molly's song. Bloom thinks of it as he hears "M'Appari": "Love that is singing: love's old sweet song" (274). It should be sung at twilight, for obvious reasons, and it has to be sung at the end:

Once in the dear dead days beyond recall,
When on the world the mists began to fall,
Out of the dreams that rose in happy throng
Low to our hearts Love sung an old sweet song;
And in the dusk where fell the firelight gleam,
Softly it wove itself into our dream.
Just a song at twilight, when the lights are low,
And the flick'ring shadows softly come and go,
Though the heart be weary, sad the day and long,
Still to us at twilight, comes Love's old song,
Comes Love's old sweet song.

Even today we hear Love's song of yore,
Deep in our hearts it dwells for evermore
Footsteps may falter, weary grow the way,
Still we can hear it at the close of day,

231
Knowles

So till the end, when life's dim shadows fall,  
Love will be found the sweetest song of all.  
Just a song at twilight... .

NOTES

1. Lees 47. The example is as printed in the James Joyce Quarterly. The article does usefully point out, however, that "Sirens" originally opened with an acrostic that anagrammatizes the name of The Art of the Fugue's composer. Bronze, Chips, Horrid, And (47). The new line given to "Imperthnthn thnthnthn" in the Gabler text bitches up this argument. "Wandering Rocks" also has an acrostic (SWAM) as Stephen envisions his mother drowning (Ulysses 243).

2. Leslie Stuart, "The Shade of the Palm," in Bauerle 358–61. Only the first verse is printed here. Bauerle's invaluable collection is the source for all of the song lyrics printed in these pages.

3. The dropped h from "Oh" we will give her, as a scribal error, since it is not aspirated. For more on Dolores, and on her possible connections with Swinburne, see Crumb, 239–45.

4. "Shedolores" is more likely to be Bloom's voice than the narrator's, while "he dolores" could be either narrative or indirect discourse. See below for more on this blurred distinction.

5. Bloom and the narrator do maintain a kind of counterpoint in their overlapping voices, especially in the sections describing Bloom's progress to the Ormond Bar. It is, for instance, impossible to determine whether Bloom or the narrator thinks of Sweets of Sin in the following passage: "Hair streaming: lovelorn. For some man. For Raoul. He eyed and saw afar on Essex bridge a gay hat riding on a jauntingcar" (263). At the beginning, the voice is clearly Bloom's and at the end it is clearly the narrator's, but "For Raoul" can be taken as either. If it is Bloom's association, it reveals Bloom's awareness of Boylan's role as Raoul; if it is the narrator's, it mimics Bloom's syntax to undercut Bloom with a reference to Boylan's correlative. The one reading is sympathetic, the other sardonic, and both occur at exactly the same time. See Knowles 447–63.

6. Though not in its attention to song lyrics, about which Joyce is strikingly cavalier.


8. "Doth" is also switched for "did," like "seas" for "sea" in "The Shade of the Palm," one of the many trivial adjustments Joyce makes to his song texts in "Sirens."

9. Friedrich von Flotow, "M'Appari," Martha, in Bauerle 395–403. English words by Charles Jeffrys. There are as many different versions of the words as there are editions; this text is particularly corrupt, with variant spellings of "graceful," and what can only be described as singer's punctuation.

10. Letter to Harriet Shaw Weaver, 1 May 1925, in Letters III 120. Morel translated "Sirens" four years earlier: on 3 April 1921 Joyce wrote to Weaver that "about a week ago Mr Auguste Morel took The Sirens to translate for a French review" (Letters I 161). Nevertheless, Ellmann writes that the late request was "Presumably to help Morel with the translation of the Sirens episode" (Letters III 120 n).

11. Joseph Prescott, "James Joyce's Ulysses as a Work in Progress," quoted in Bowen
That Form Endearing: A Performance of Siren Songs

354. It is surely irrelevant that the name of a third tenor, the lead singer of the "Commodores," is also concealed in this progression.

12. Shades of Mrs. Bellingham and Mary Driscoll. The counterassaulting chambermaid ("I had more respect for the scouringbrush, so I had" [461]) is connected to Bellingham not only by virtue of appearing with her at Bloom's trial, but also by vice of originally appearing in nineteenth-century sadomasochistic soft pornography: Bellingham as Venus in Furs (466) and Driscoll in The Way of a Man with a Maid. Bloom refers to this latter book in "Sirens" ("Better give way only half way the way of a man with a maid" [288]), after the discussion of "The Last Rose of Summer."

13. Who, it should be said, is not primarily modeled on Wilkie but on Dr. Joseph Collins, author of The Doctor Looks at Literature.

14. Almost worth waiting for... . It will not have escaped students of Michael Flanders that this gambit, like many others in this essay, is lifted from A Drop of a Hat. Any parallels between the stately Flanders & his diffident accompanist Donald Swann and Bowen & Knowles are purely superficial.

15. Hübner 619. Hübner speaks particularly of occasions when the musical rhythm serves to underscore the dramatic situation, listing examples as follows: "'Vornehme Langeweile' (wiegendwohlklingende, einförmige 6/8-Melodie); der eitle Nichtstuer Lord Tristran (bombastisch grotesker Marsch); 'Spinnrad' (schnurrendes Motiv); das hurtige Treiben und das Durcheinanderschnattern der Magde auf dem Markt (Jagd­musik); die 'Verlobung' des Buffopaares (mit einer altvaterlich gezierten Gavotte begin­nend) und vieles andere" (619).

16. Dent xvi. Dent even suggests that one song in the English-Italian edition edited by Sullivan, not found in the original, may actually have been written by Sullivan.

17. Oestreich. This was not, needless to say, a rave review: set in a seaside carnival, the production "postured interminably," "pander[ed] to current American sitcom sensibilities," and ultimately "resembled nothing so much as a televised beer commercial."

18. Flotow, act 2, Spinning Quartet. The translation is by Natalia Macfarren.

19. Schubert, "Gretchen am Spinnrade," words by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, in Goethe-Lieder, 12-21. What Hübner calls the "schnurrendes Motiv" is a familiar trope for female sexuality—the magic web of the Lady of Shalott is worth recalling here. Roland Barthes remarks of Schubert's song in The Responsibility of Forms that "this first great song, Gretchen at the Spinning Wheel, utters the tumult of absence, the hallucination of return" (289). The hallucination of return is precisely the tumult at the heart of Rudy's reappearance, the return of Stephen's mother and Bloom's father, and the botched and thwarted reunion between the three protagonists at the book's close. Barthes is more clearly Joycean, in Howard's translation, when discussing Gretchen in A Lover's Discourse: "The Spinning Songs express both immobility (by the hum of the wheel) and absence (far away, rhythms of travel, sea surges, cavalcades)" (14). The only other place where cavalcades and sea surges go side by side is "Sirens," which expresses both immobility (Bloom is unable to return to 7 Eccles Street during the episode) and absence ("Sirens" acts as a cover for Ulysses' most absent scene).

20. The score is from Flotow, act 3. This musical text differs from Glover's version, printed in The James Joyce Songbook, in several respects. First, it is in F, the actual key of the performance, rather than D, the key Dedalus first plays the song in. Second, it is a piano reduction of the full orchestral score rather than an arrangement for drawing-
Knowles

room piano. Flotow's introduction foreshadows the modulation in "But, alas 'twas idle dreaming," and has a long-drawn line on solo winds that Glover replaces with a breathless pause. Glover's version is the one heard on most recordings of the piece made for Joycean purposes, perhaps because it is easier to sing. I have amended the syllabification of the text printed here in order to bring it into line with the English translation. The English translation is as printed earlier (see no. 9 for variant spellings).

21. Murray Beja reminds me of the possibly apocryphal Syrian pastry chef, who, despairing of being able to properly describe the complicated steps required in the preparation of a particular pastry, simply printed her phone number in the cookbook and asked curious readers to call her. (614) 292-6065.

22. "Piano again" is a reprise: just before Dedalus is urged to perform Bloom thinks "Piano again. Cowley it is" (271). "Stopped again" similarly recalls Cowley's truncated performance of "Love and War": "Bad breath he has, poor chap. Stopped" (270). "Tuned probably" anticipates the blind stripling, and "than last time I heard" is an advance warning of the coming song. The narrator scavenges this line twenty-two bars into the song with "sorrow from them each seemed to from both depart when first they heard" (273).

23. If Cowley is playing during the persuading of Dedalus, then Simon's speech can be usefully considered a form of recitative. And Cowley presumably knows that is easier to convince reluctant singers with the music rolling. "If you will lend me your attention" is probably a gloss on "If you give me your attention I will tell you what I am," King Gama's song in Gilbert and Sullivan's Princess Ida. If so, this is the only identified reference to Princess Ida in Joyce's works.

24. "Harping" presumably refers to the arpeggiated accompaniment in the strings, played by the left hand in bars 1–7, and the right hand from bar 17. The "chord long-drawn," broken off in Glover's version, is the C\(^7\) chord held in bars 15–16.

25. I take "human" here as a noun rather than an adjective, allowing all six to be represented in the six times repeated F-major chord.

26. The leaves can be heard falling in the melody in bars 23–24.

27. This elastic band, lashing Odysseus to the mast next to the deaf waiter, establishes "M'Appari" as the central siren song.

28. Note the anagram ("to flow") of the composer here. This flow is flower ("language of flow" [263]), the flow of language, the sexual flow in this paragraph, and Flotow himself.

29. Mabel Worthington says that this may possibly be an allusion to the fairies "Tripping hither, tripping thither" in Iolanthe, but it isn't. See Worthington 212.

30. Cf. "A way a lone a last a loved a long the" (FW 628). Love, music, and language discover each other in this paragraph; they become—what shall I call them?—the Three Graces of the Joycean world. Finnegans Wake continues their dance.

31. The word in the song is "gleaming." Having criticized Dedalus for "singing wrong words," Bloom is getting them wrong himself. In performance, the transition from the sung "ray of hope" to the spoken "Beaming" is an enormous fall.

32. In the next line of Joyce's text, "Martha! Ah, Martha!", the "Ah" is wrong. It is a compound borrowed from "Ah, alluring." It didn't take an eon for this plastic voice to become pleonastic.

33. Lionleness is an anagram of loneliness. Note also the use of the dominant in bar 76, and the deepening/rising chord progression of bars 69–77.
34. What the glowworm possessed was, in manuscript, “laamp,” then typed as “lamp,” then corrected by the typist to “laamp,” then returned to “lamp” for the placards, and finally corrected by Joyce in the placards to “la-amp,” as it reads in the 1990 edition. The added hyphen in the placards may in this case be evidence of nothing more than frustration.

35. *Ulysses: A Facsimile*, vol. 1, P 264–65/L 355–56/N 275–76. The carets indicate insertions made in the manuscript. Note that the two insertions in the manuscript, “chestnote” and “symbolistic,” are directly linked to the music: one a directive to the tenor to sing with his diaphragm, the other a comment on the nature of music in literature. The exclamation point after the unbroken “Come” is struck through, as printed here.

36. *Ulysses: Facsimile and Typescripts* 71. Other changes made in the typescript, all retained in all editions, are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>original</th>
<th>changed to</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dont</td>
<td>don't</td>
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<tr>
<td>return!</td>
<td>return.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crowned, aflame,</td>
<td>aflame, crowned,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the vast irradiation</td>
<td>the high vast irradiation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

37. *Ulysses: Facsimile Page Proofs* 208. “In cry of passion” is reinserted by hand, since the phrase was accidentally dropped in preparing this second version of the page proofs.

38. Interestingly, this was the case with the two manuscript insertions as well.


40. *Ulysses* 78. Overdetermination, however, is never a bad thing; Bloom thinks of the song the sluts sing as he writes to Martha Clifford in “Sirens”: “You naughty too? O, Mairey lost the pin of her” (279).


**WORKS CITED**


