

Redemption of a Heroine — ‘Eveline’ and the Joycean Concept of ‘Hospitality’ — *

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I

Two years after he expatriated himself, James Joyce came to notice a subtle change in his feeling toward the homeland he had deserted. It dawned on him when he was living in Rome that Ireland was suffering a certain unfairness or injustice in his artistic production. He was then occupied in composing a series of short stories which were to be compiled and published under the title of *Dubliners* in 1914. In a letter dated 25 September 1906, he confided this curious emotional shift of his own to his younger brother Stanislaus, who humbly began to take on the inglorious role of ‘his brother’s keeper’:

Sometimes thinking of Ireland it seems to me that I have been unnecessarily harsh. I have reproduced (in *Dubliners* at least) none of the attraction of the city for I have never felt at my ease in any city since I left it except in Paris. I have not reproduced its ingenuous insularity and its hospitality. The latter ‘virtue’ so far as I can see does not exist elsewhere in Europe. (Ellmann, *Letters*, 166)

Joyce was faithful in word and rectified his undue ‘harshness’ in his next tale, ‘The Dead’. Completed in the summer of 1907, ‘The Dead’ was the last addition to *Dubliners* and was placed accordingly in it. The term ‘hospitality’ is employed a few times in the story by Gabriel (*Dubliners*, 219 and so on: hereafter page numbers alone). The author offers no definition of the virtue but contrives to have it embodied in the course of the plot, presumably, by the Morkan sisters, priests of the monastery at Mount Melleray and, most impressively, Michael Furey. Despite their wide variance in age, personality and social background, the characters have one thing in common—generosity. Their generosity, in addition, is more often than not leagued with and complemented by their other prominent qualities such as selflessness and taciturnity. Hence this trio of personal attributes might be construed tentatively as essential components of the Joycean idea of hospitality.

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What is unsettling about Joyce's 'mellower' home-thought in connection with his first work of fiction is that 'hospitality' hardly pertains to 'The Dead' alone. The virtue that struck him as exclusively Irish towards the end of his endeavour for *Dubliners* actually asserts itself in the collection right from the beginning. How could this discrepancy between the authorial intention and its artistic substantiation be accounted for? For one thing, in Joyce's fierce love-hate relationship with Ireland, the negative feeling was so predominant, so overwhelming, early in his exile that the national virtue could not be recognized as such. For another, his style of naturalistic inclination, irrespective of his literary ambition and design, contributed to the meticulous delineation of the real phases of Dublin life including its warts and dimples alike. 'Hospitality', as a result, passed through the fine sieve of the highly self-conscious artist's perception and made inroads into his fictional writing. This assumption can be consolidated by examples from the earlier tales of *Dubliners*. The almost disarming kindheartedness and altruism of the two old women in 'The Sisters', the story produced and placed first in the collection, may be categorized as a type of hospitality. The same virtue can be tracked in some of the female characters of the subsequent stories, notably in the heroine of 'Eveline', in Maria of 'Clay', and even in Mrs Sinico of 'A Painful Case' though less obviously. They all dedicate themselves poignantly, almost like a martyr, to the cause and welfare of other people around them. The maternal aspect of their nature is especially accentuated whether they are married or not: Nannie and Eliza jointly look after Father Flynn, Eveline has two boys left to her charge, Maria is Joe's 'proper mother'(111), and Mrs Sinico opens up Mr Duffy's stubbornness 'with almost maternal solicitude'(123). A lack of eloquence is also a quality shared more or less by these female characters.

'Eveline', the fourth story in *Dubliners*, leaves the reader confronted with an inevitable question: what occurs to the eponymous heroine at the end of her brief saga? She is about to embark on her ambitious project of escape from her home, family and country as Joyce did with Nora Barnacle in October 1904. If Eveline suffers a sudden assault of seizure, or 'paralysis' in the author's diction (Ellmann, *Letters*, 134), how does it strike her at that specific moment? What holds her back from seeking love, happiness and, most of all, life in a foreign land? These questions after all serve as a touchstone for solid understanding of the thematic concerns of the vignette.

Like the other tales in *Dubliners*, 'Eveline' has provoked a host of critical commentaries. As regards the heroine's extraordinary reaction at the North Wall station, there has been a sort of general tendency or consensus in the critique of the story. According to William York Tindall, she is 'too moribund to abandon the dust of her native city for the good air of exile'(4). In the same vein, Clive Hart observes that 'as she is loveless, she must continue to be lifeless'(51). On the conviction that 'Eveline' was written in response to W. B. Yeats's *The Countess Cathleen* (1902), Richard Ellmann

avers that, while the latter extols 'the virtue of sacrifice', the former evokes 'the counter virtue of self-realization'(Joyce, 170). In Patrick Parrinder's view, she is stopped 'not by external restraints, but because she has learnt a self-restraint which cuts off her capacity for action and wipes out the adult personality she was struggling to establish'(59). Heyward Ehrlich contends that, educated to serve and obey in the feudal system of Dublin, 'she is responding to her potential new master, Frank, just as she had responded to her old master, her father'(98). In Bernard Benstock's interpretation, the heroine is 'inextricably bound by the constraints of her own condition'(116). Edward Brandabur goes as far as to say that 'The true object of Eveline's quest is a vengeful self-immolation'(59).

Most of the verdicts converge in Eveline's lack of selfhood and her unapologetically passive immersion in the paralysing circumstances. She is even reduced to a human nonentity who, in an alarming extremity and acuteness, falls victim to a spiritual malady endemic to the ethos of Dublin. The question that can and should be asked immediately is whether this reading exhausts the text and the characterization of the heroine in all their possibilities. Isn't there any other approach to the woes and agonies that Eveline has silently endured, to the immense burden that she is expected to shoulder? The focus of commentaries on 'Eveline' has long rested on such received values and virtues as independence, freedom and self-realization. The tale calls for a critical paradigm more responsive to and receptive of its humanistic aspects, which could be what truly lurked in the subconscious domain underneath the author's intention as *Dubliners* was in the making. The recent years have witnessed the emergence of new critical perspectives that range from feminism to post-colonialism. Scrutiny of the white slave propaganda in Ireland during Joyce's times brings Katherine Mullen to the conclusion that the heroine is 'a very private woman who succumbs to very public fictions of her proper place: home'(198). In view of 'the internalization and reproduction of a patriarchal and militarized culture'(76), Trevor L. Williams argues that 'she is unable to act in the present *because* the nightmare of history lies on her brain(77, his emphasis). The concept of 'hospitality' may hopefully provide another fresh perspective which sets Eveline's 'story of paralysis', as Robert Scholes labels it(78), in a little more positive, compassionate light.

II

There run various streams of ideas, associations and symbols in the simple, almost plotless narrative of 'Eveline'. What dominates the opening scene is the interaction of the thoughts of 'death' and of 'invasion'. Critical writings on the story often discuss the two topics separately but they are actually integrated in the narrative scheme and play into each other's hand. Invasion makes latent or veiled death palpable, while death invites and facilitates further invasion. The more invasion, the more death

inflicted on the soul and soil. Both hazards loom larger and more threatening as the tale unfolds. They especially strengthen their collaboration towards the finale to effect the living death of an invaded selfhood molded by an invaded nationhood.

The opening scene envisages the encroachment of Eveline's consciousness by thoughts of death. Or, she herself inadvertently flirts with death by remaining motionless and languid in the growing darkness of the evening. Her sombre silhouette framed by the window pane conjures up the imaginary picture of a body ensconced in a coffin. Her stillness stems from her absorption in reverie and contemplation. As a matter of fact, two-thirds of the story are woven out of her recollection of the happier past and her speculation on the uncertain future. This entails the frequent traversing of the narrative through the barriers of the tenses. The repeated shuffling in the time-sequence at first confuses the sense of distance in time and space and then erodes the sense of identity about the characters. The principal personages soon begin to merge with other minor characters and eventually come to represent their shared qualities and traits instead of claiming their own individuality. For instance, as a result of the combined operation of death and invasion, Eveline has her fate overshadowed by that of her dead mother and Blessed Margaret Mary Alacoque (Donald T. Torchiana, 23). A man from Belfast and an Italian organ player dissolve, through the channel of intrusion, into the figure of Frank, whose purpose of homecoming and identity, including his role as a saviour, are deliberately kept blurred. Joyce's objective in composing 'Eveline', it seems, lies somewhere other than distinct characterization. It is not until the past closes in on the present and casts an ominous shadow over the future that the plot reverts back to the present. The heroine in her turn, as if fleeing from the clutch of death, decides to shove off the past and run away from the present toward a future that promises her with 'life, perhaps, love, too'(41).

In the midst of the predominant atmosphere of ennui and inertia, however, attention should be directed to signs of life that emanate, quite paradoxically, from the heroine. Right from the outset, her sensory organs and power of reasoning remain quite 'lively': her eyes trace the progress of the evening, her ears arrest the footsteps of a passer-by, and her nose discerns the dusty smell of the curtains. Her memory, above all, is kept alert and at full work. The plot chronicles the abrupt reversal of this mixed state of circumstantial quietude and internal hyperactivity to suspended mental functioning and clamorous surroundings at the end. What is executed in the interim is Eveline's inner death, beyond which emerges her transformation from an ordinary girl of nineteen into a woman with a mission. Her change corresponds with the change of 'Eveline' from a story of tragic love into a history of a soul born anew.

Back to the topic of 'invasion', the footsteps of a neighbour who has 'passed on his way home'(37)

disrupt the serenity of the evening. The sounds also infringe upon the heroine's personal world of contemplation. This invasion enhances the ambience of desertion and bleakness triggered by 'Few people passed'(37). A warning may be issued on the interpretation of that specific sentence: critics tend to give it a greater emphasis than it actually deserves and hear the overtone of paralysis in it. Clive Hart, for example, holds that '... few people pass out of the Dublin paralysis, no one in this city is going anywhere'(52). Robert Scholes contends that 'A Dubliner never decides, never escapes'(79). Wilhelm Fugen chimes in by saying that '... in reality no Dubliner passes to anywhere'(90). Quite contrary to these readings, however, the story is amazingly rife, for its size and theme, with the anecdotes of comings and goings of people.

'Passing' in 'Eveline' is a well-loaded word that carries the opposite senses of 'going away' and 'coming over'. To make the matter more complicated, the former sense further diverges with the secondary meaning of 'death'. First, there are some people who have 'passed' out of the land or the city. The Waters, perhaps a Protestant English family, have gone across the 'water'. Eveline's brother, Harry, is always away from home, employed in the church decorating business. A priest, who was once a school friend of Eveline's father, now lives in Melbourne, the distant city regarded in Ireland as a 'better place' (Jackson and McGinley, 29). Mention must also be made of those who have 'passed' away and out of the heroine's life. Her mother and other brother, Ernest, are dead, and Tizzie Dunne is 'done'. Mrs Hill's 'passing' accelerated her daughter's passage from childhood to the premature role of keeper of the household. 'Everything changes'(37), Eveline muses to herself in a nostalgic retrospection. Hinted in her interior monologue is a view of life to the effect that nothing lasts in a happy state and that any change is for worse, seldom for better. With this frame of mind pervading the story, 'passing', in whichever of its dual senses of 'leaving' and 'dying', provides the citizens of Dublin with the only means of 'escape' from their dreary conditions of life.

The passing away of those familiar to Eveline coincides with 'passing in' by total strangers. Dublin is ever beset and impoverished in the vital aspects of economy, politics and culture by the two-way traffic of 'passing', namely, immigration and invasion. This 'no-gain, all-loss' demography, on one hand, aggravates the general feeling of deterioration and hopelessness and, on the other, enkindles the nationalistic bigotry and insularity demonstrated by Mr Hill. 'Passing' in this sense is epitomized by the 'dust' which Eveline has been wiping once a week for many years, 'wondering where on earth all the dust came from' (38). External forces, as persistent and obnoxious as dust, infiltrate stealthily into the stagnant milieu of Dublin and accumulate thickly on top, sending the conquered folks to gradual suffocation. Dubliners are definitely in need of 'good air', which appears to be abundant only in such distant foreign lands as Buenos Ayres and Melbourne.

Actual intrusion into the beleaguered city is initiated in the story by 'a man from Belfast'(37), who came over on the scent of lucrative business. He purchased a field which had been the playground for Eveline and her pals and developed it into a housing estate. The 'little Eve'(Torchiana, 22; Jackson and McGinley, 34; Culleton, 37) was abruptly ousted from her precious little garden of pleasure. The pecuniary concern entices another intruder. When the heroine's mother was on her deathbed, an Italian organ player strolled into the alley where the Hills were living. The musician was immediately driven away by Mr Hill, or rather, by the six shillings he offered. Eveline's father successfully bribed into retreat not only the invader but also music, which could have brought harmony back into his family of 'the broken harmonium'(38). But the waves of invasion cannot be held at bay too long by a failed patriarch bent on further failure and destruction. When Frank comes along with money and music, there is little resistance the father can put up: the young man's songs of love and affluence ever ring louder and more seductive in the daughter's ear. When the two types of music, the 'melancholy air of Italy'(41) and the eerie repetition of inscrutable Irish phrases, intrude into the immovable heroine's musing and terrorize her into action, her domesticity perishes at the onslaught of alien forces.

The case of Frank in terms of invasion is much less overt and definable chiefly because he plays an ambivalent double role. He is at once an Irish immigrant who fell 'on his feet in Buenos Ayres'(40) and a virtual outsider who ought to be treated with suspicion as one of 'these sailor chaps'(40). This double-edged identity dresses him in the symbolic role of an intermediary bridging the vast psychological gap between the two meanings of 'passing'. He is certainly not a 'West Briton'(216) like Gabriel Conroy of 'The Dead' but has somewhat lost an Irish identity like Jimmy Doyle of 'After the Race'. Back in his old country, Frank seeks no materialistic gain like his predecessors. On the contrary, he liberally confers on the heroine pleasures that money can buy. His one-time escape has refashioned him from a down-and-out immigrant into a practitioner of generosity. In this sense, he can still claim himself to be genuinely Irish. There is, however, another facet to his characterization. He before long succeeds in fascinating Eveline with 'an excitement . . . to have a fellow'(40). In utter disregard of her father's opposition, Frank proceeds to elate her more with a proposal and persuade her into a clandestine scheme of elopement. His courtship, if examined in practical terms and from the point of view of the Hills, is no better than 'intrusion' into their private territory with a readily foreseeable consequence of subversion of them as a unit. His sin, if any, might be his lack of prudence and discretion about the bleak reality of the family, in particular the presence of two small boys. This more than counterpoises his virtue of generosity and tips the scale of commonsense and humanism against him. Men are generally egotistical in *Dubliners*.

It might be surprising that a more intricate, insidious kind of invasion is administered on the

heroine by her fellow Dubliners. Miss Gavan, due to her shortage of civility and delicacy, has no hesitation to violate Eveline's personal dignity with acerbic remarks: 'Miss Hill, don't you see these ladies are waiting?'(38), and 'Look lively, Miss Hill, please'(38). Eveline's routine drudgery on Saturday evenings is to have a squabble with her father over money and be mobbed by crowds at the market. Her laborious navigation through a sea of crowds is reiterated at the station where she feels distressed among a mass of travellers. When allusion is made to British soldiers waiting to get aboard for homebound voyage, the Port scene strikes the sober undertone of the Irish reality of military invasion and occupation. The sight of people whose mission it is to fight and kill recalls in Eveline the thought of death, which is swiftly converted into a vivid image by the sequence of 'black mass of the boat - lying - long mournful whistle - drown' (42). Ever stalking the heroine like a spectre, the joint force of death and invasion has finally caught up with her and enervated her faculty for judgement. What love could hold out against this sudden and devastating assault, especially when an individual is equipped with a far stronger instinct for life than for love?

For ordinary Dubliners like Eveline, home of all places provides the safest shelter. It is not quite true that children and women are perfectly protected at home, but they certainly stand a better chance of survival there, surrounded by 'those familiar objects' (38). They could even live on there as long as they like on one specific condition: they must give up on psychological and financial independence like Polly of 'The Boarding House' and Kathleen of 'The Mother'. At the same time, home is the very place where a more relentless and stealthy mode of invasion is acted out. As a little girl, the heroine used to be hunted in by her father brandishing his blackthorn stick like an angry god. He still tyrannizes her with a gesture of violence, to which he perhaps resorted with much less restraint against her mother to enforce his masculine and patriarchal power.

As is often the case, a victim turns into a worse perpetrator without realizing it and breeds another victim. If the vicious cycle grows stronger from generation to generation and spreads all over, the system of exploitation and control is ingrained in the psychological fibers of a nation. Mrs Hill, before she succumbed to a raving madness, performed on her daughter a cruel ritual observed almost on a national basis: she transmitted the gender-oriented duty of keeping home together to her daughter. Here the word 'pass' may further enlarge its area of connotation to accommodate the meaning of 'convey'. It helps to highlight the immeasurable distance that separates the male and female members of the Hills: while the father nonchalantly 'passed'(38) the photograph of a priest to a visitor, the mother handed down her tremendous responsibility to her own flesh and blood. By so doing, the dying mother blatantly invaded and conquered the essential, innermost part of Eveline's femininity. There was no room for discussion or negotiation, not to mention refusal, on the daughter's part. Moreover, Mrs Hill,

even after her death and now as 'dust', still encroaches covertly on the heroine's mind. The familial contract exchanged between mother and daughter is as much binding as the divine promises between Jesus and Blessed Margaret Mary Alacoque. The network of invasion in 'Eveline' trammels up this devout, reclusive French woman and turns her into a significant player on the heroine's fate: the saint psychologically invades the collective mentality of the Hills by occupying a corner of the wall in their living room.

III

In the artistic design of *Dubliners*, Joyce divided its heroes and heroines in four different categories which he thought could represent the entire population of Dublin and, for that matter, of any city — 'childhood, adolescence, maturity, and public life'(Ellmann, *Letters*, 134). With fifteen featured characters and as many slices of life, the collection fixes the capital of Ireland indelibly in the memory of the reader. Richard Ellmann shrewdly sums up the collective doom of the nation: 'women act (or fail to act) the mother, men drink, children suffer'(Joyce, 306). Truly, in Ireland, some men are born to privilege, some are pampered to bad habits, and some bully their way to both. Ascribed by and large to their chauvinistic behaviour is the notorious proliferation of dire poverty, broken families and miserable childhood. Of children, boys learn their trade during their limited time of innocence by watching grown-ups around them. Girls are taught from early childhood to conform to the institution of patriarchy and endure the brunt of flaws and failures of the male members of their family. Eveline has two boys entrusted in her care, although it is unknown whether they are her younger brothers or not. What really matters to her story is that she is forced to play the mother while still in her girlhood. Her tragedy arises out of a circumstantial cul-de-sac where ethical obligations eliminate all options but a de facto situation, in which she must degrade herself virtually to the status of 'slavey' (53). The natural order of maturity, matrimony and maternity for girls is disrupted so brutally in her case that the last phase springs up first and foremost with a likelihood of wiping all the others out.

In the author's four categories, Eveline falls in the second stage of growth. Her story has quite a few characters for all its brevity, but most of them are merely alluded to and never appear in person. Besides the heroine, only two personages are active and directly involved in the plot, her father and her lover. They represent the opposite ends of the spectrum of Irish men. Mr Hill is trapped in the city and wastes his life blowing steam off on his dependents. His vision of the world hardly travels beyond Howth, where he once took his family on a picnic. Frank, on the other hand, enjoys the wealth, freedom and mobility inaccessible to most of Irish men of his age and background: he is one of those lucky few who have succeeded in severing themselves from the constraints of family, religion and country. It

seems that Joyce playfully encodes the contrasting masculine ego of Mr Hill and Frank in the visually rhyming pair of words 'Home! (37) and 'Come!' (42) respectively. He also leaves the former's insular mentality best reflected in the family name and the latter's liberated disposition in the profession.

Pitted against these men are Mrs Hill and Blessed Margaret Mary Alacoque. The two women, who at first glance appear to have little in common between them, are actually yoked together by the mutual bond of madness and devotion. They both sacrificed themselves for the sake of others, Mrs Hill for her family and Blessed Margaret-Mary for the love of Jesus. Total devotion precipitated the former eventually into lunacy, while extreme physical and mental sufferings brought the latter to fervent devotion (Don Gifford, 49). It is known that the nun's religious dedication was eccentric at best and something fanatic or pathological at worst. Her life of perpetual self-immolation borders on 'that life of commonplace sacrifices closing in final craziness' (41). The two women are furthermore linked together by 'promise'. They were entangled with the formative years of the heroine, who grew up looking at the coloured print of the promises made to the nun in the living room and also seeing her own mother languish in a married life. It has taken many years before the value of self-denial is instilled in the delicate texture of Eveline's innocent mind. As the city stands exposed to invasion, so does the heroine to moral encroachment by her immediate role-models. It is indeed in such a surreptitious, protracted manner that the seeds of hospitality are strewn in 'Eveline'.

In the meantime, the heroine's courtship with Frank ought to be put to careful scrutiny before any judgement is delivered on her in the final scene. They were total strangers, exactly like Joyce and Nora, when they met on a Dublin street before the story opens. As his name indicates, Frank is 'very kind, manly, open-hearted' (39). Given the fact that their 'passage' is already booked, it can safely be conjectured that he has 'promised' to take her to Buenos Ayres, marry her there, and treat her in the way her mother could never have imagined: 'Frank would take her in his arms, fold her in his arms' (42). In Eveline's girlish euphoria, the wooer begins to assume a larger-than-life image and achieve as much venerated a stature as a saviour: 'He would save her' (42). With the two terms of 'promise' and 'saviour' as a hinge, her life veers widely away from the traditional feminine legacies bequeathed by her mother and the French nun. Respectable life, happiness, independence - all seem to be within Eveline's reach. Yet there is one thing that remains uneasy and even disconcerting about the lovers, their continuous lack of equality in their relationship. The man talks, and the girl listens. The husband-to-be guides while the prospective bride follows meekly. His song on a sailor and a lass always makes her feel 'pleasantly confused' (40). Under Frank's tutorage on love, the heroine awakens to her long-forgotten identity as a girl of nineteen and finds herself attracted more toward her promise with the bronze-faced young man than with the dead mother. Her silent plea for life and love is

gratified by the offer of 'a home waiting for her' (39). The old home depleted of harmony is bound to be replaced by a new one that promises to overflow with music of wealth and happiness.

At the North Wall station, nothing basically changes about the couple, at least outwardly. Frank speaks constantly, and Eveline 'answer[s] nothing' (42) as if speechlessness were her natural state of being. Their joint project of elopement so far runs into no obstacle. But Eveline's taciturnity and docility enshroud a subtle change that is under way deep inside her: she now prays not to him but to Him to 'direct her, to show her what [is] her duty' (42). Yet her desperate invocation never receives a answer from Him as Blessed Margaret Mary's did. No communion, no epiphany, visits this secular girl. With the priest now residing in a much sunnier place, Dublin is a religious moorland in which lost sheep roam aimlessly in confusion. Eveline is relinquished by one god, and she herself is soon to relinquish another. The fact that she never prays to Frank, never pleads with him for instructions, attests to his fall from the status of a saviour at the last moment. Daunted by a fear of death and paralyzed between 'Home' and 'Come', Eveline has her life force temporarily suspended: 'Her eyes gave him no sign of love or farewell or recognition' (43). What is eventually left with her as a corollary of her passive choice of 'no choice' is a 'duty' which requires total devotion and self-sacrifice. It is the duty rooted in the time-honoured feminine tradition of homemaking in her country. The painful saga of Eveline comes to an abrupt halt, and it can be predictable and even certain that she will return to her humdrum life and resign herself to acting the mother instead of the wife without a single word of protest, chagrin, or sorrow.

What remains to be done about the tale is to recover and scrutinize a mental landscape that lies hidden under the puzzling veil of paralysis. Application of the concept of hospitality takes the reader a little farther beyond the bound of the narrative and to the section unwritten by the author yet germinal in his subconscious. First, here is Frank's version of the Port scene projected on the screen of hospitality. Roughly pushed beyond the barrier by a crowd of passengers, he keeps on looking back and shouting the heroine's name, 'Eveline! Evvy!' (42), instead of 'Poppens' (40) he used to employ out of fun. But he does not and will not come back to fetch her, to persuade her further. He may be too perplexed to act properly on the spot, but it is utterly beside the point to assume that his love dissipates all of a sudden or that he never takes her seriously. Neither does he feel betrayed by her seemingly blank response, which he figures out as signaling firm refusal of any concession.

What takes hold of him at this critical moment is an instant discerning on her face of his defeat, or the defeat of the cause that unites them together. Frank's own Irish blood convinces him that his girl is a genuine child of the native soil who, after the stormy period of oscillation and indecision, now readily and unconditionally gives herself up for the sake of others, for the welfare of an aging father

and two small boys. The plot necessitates Frank's Irish extraction chiefly for this comradely, psychological communion: he might otherwise just as well be a complete foreigner like a man from Belfast and an Italian organ-player. Frank returned to his old country as a somewhat dubious cosmopolitan and goes back to his adopted country as a sterling native son of Ireland at heart. By virtue of their shared Irishness, the lovers accomplish mute but profound communication and mutuality, ironically, at the moment that their liaison of love permanently dissolves. Their spiritual linkage is also fortified by their mutual act of reiteration at the station: Frank repeatedly shouts 'Come!' and the heroine's name while Eveline continuously utters 'silent fervent prayer' (42). This evinces as much consummation as is allowed on Eveline's ill-doomed first love. Frank realizes that there are two types of Irishmen, those who stay and those who drift, and that no personal bond of perdurable nature can be conceivable between them. The cloud of ambiguity that long hangs over Frank's identity is now lifted. His acceptance of departure without a companion is a hallmark of hospitality on his part.

As for the heroine, the sudden assault of paralysis occasions her awakening, or more precisely, her re-awakening after her acknowledgement of first love. It constitutes in the narrative a vital section, almost a sacred ritual, in which she transmutes herself from a girl with no selfhood into a woman of 'selflessness'. The suspension of her physical and mental functioning betokens the end of the old Eveline who wavers and wobbles, who looks back and forth without reaching any decision. Richard Ellmann maintains that the heroine appears 'as if surrendering the very qualities that had made her human' (*Joyce*, 170). It remains open to interpretation what entity will emerge after a loss of human qualities, an animal or something more than human. The Port scene is designed to pull her down to the nadir of her fate through total abandonment of her dream, through termination of her pursuit of love and life. The dismissal of her worldly wishes and desires prepares her to follow in the footsteps of her own mother and Blessed Margaret Mary Alacoque (F. L. Walzl, 202). The 'promise' has to be respected and redeemed, not a promise of happiness but one of sufferings, which could never be fulfilled without absolute commitment and dedication. By letting go of a golden opportunity to attain independence and self-realization, Eveline unknowingly preserves a birthright to humanity, Irish identity and motherhood. Who knows which virtue holds a greater value, self-realization or hospitality? Furthermore, can self-denial or total selflessness on behalf of others, no matter how it may be reached, not be an ultimate form of self-realization?

A new Eveline looms as she is thrust, regardless of her wish, capacity and inclination, onto the path of hospitality. Her unvoiced 'cry of anguish' reverberating in the dark sea is her fervent prayer which anticipates no answer, because it is directed toward her own person. While she scarcely matches

the French nun in saintliness or spiritual intensity, she is blessed amply with pristine charity and compassion for those who are weaker and suffer more than her. She no longer feels a need to seek for a saviour. She will in a sense be one herself with deepening motherhood, which will make her comparable to the mother of the Saviour. Under the lead of the French 'Mary', the 'little Eve' is on her way to being a 'little Mary'. Her fate is sealed for something of secular martyrdom. A hundred years after the creation of her story, Eveline's affiliation with the Irish virtue of hospitality grows palpable and even potent in the eye of the modern reader.

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