

NAXOS
AudioBooks

CLASSIC
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CLASSICS

James Joyce
Ulysses

Read by **Jim Norton** with **Marcella Riordan**



NA401112D

1	Stephen Dedalus's day begins. The Martello Tower overlooking Dublin Bay, 16th June, 1904	7:20
2	Recollections of his dead mother	5:28
3	He reproaches Buck Mulligan for his insensitivity	3:04
4	Mr Bloom's day begins. 7 Eccles Street, Dublin. 8am	7:49
5	He pops out to buy kidneys	6:59
6	He returns. Breakfast in bed for Molly	9:11
7	A few minutes of contemplation in the outside privy	3:28
8	Bloom begins his journey. The streets of Dublin. 10am	5:59
9	A meeting with C.P. McCoy	6:22
10	Reads his love letter from Martha	3:37
11	To the chemist to collect Molly's face lotion; then to the baths for a good soak	6:33
12	Time for lunch. 1pm. After Dignam's funeral and a little business at the newspaper offices, Bloom's thoughts turn to food	5:44
13	A meeting with Mrs Breen delays him	6:49
14	Lunch at Davey Byrne's	7:19
15	Reminiscence of happier times	2:50

16	Barney Kiernan's public house. 5pm	7:49
17	Talk about Dignam's death and the effects of capital punishment	7:25
18	A few more drinks, a growling dog and increasingly heated discussion	7:01
19	News that 'Throwaway' has won the Gold Cup	7:20
20	Bloom incurs the citizens' wrath and makes a hasty exit	8:23
21	Sandymount Beach. 8pm. Bloom enjoys the last rays of the sun, looking out over the beach and over Gerty MacDowell, lonely virgin of the rocks. Evensong at twilight	8:14
22	The twins become a nuisance; Gerty dreams of other things	7:20
23	Gerty becomes aware of Bloom's gaze	6:57
24	Fireworks and a distant communion	8:00
25	Nighttown. 12 midnight. Bloom has been in the company of Stephen Dedalus and his friends and has followed Stephen, somewhat the worse for drink, down to the brothel area	5:28
26	The spectres of Molly and Gerty chastise him	4:27
27	Zoe invites him inside	7:21
28	The brothel keeper Bella Cohen humiliates him	9:05
29	Stephen's delirium reaches a climax. He shatters a lamp	7:03

30	Stephen gets involved in an altercation with two English soldiers	8:22
31	Stephen is knocked to the ground. Bloom rescues him and takes him home to Eccles Street	6:59
32	Bloom's house. 2am. Bloom and Stephen have cocoa together	7:13
33	They take leave of one another	6:51
34	Bloom re-enters the house and makes his way to bed	3:04
35	Bloom muses on Molly's afternoon assignation with Boylan at 7 Eccles Street	7:24
36	Bloom recalls some of the day's events for Molly. He drifts off to sleep	5:47
37	Molly Bloom. Head to toe in the matrimonial bed, in the quiet of the early morning, unable to sleep. 7 Eccles Street, Dublin	8:14
38	Bishops, popes and Father Courage	8:40
39	Male and female attitudes compared	2:37
40	A train and an old sweet song	6:59
41	A monthly discomfort. On to the chamber pot	4:52
42	Women should rule the world. Memories of Gibraltar	10:38
43	Flowers, seedcake and sleep at last	6:59

Total time: 4:50:17

James Joyce

Ulysses

Ulysses is one of the greatest literary works in the English language. It created a stir as soon as it was published in 1922, partly because of the experimental nature of the writing and formal design and partly because in certain passages it contained more than usually explicit language. Indeed, the book was banned in this country until 1936, and a New York court required expert witnesses to testify to its artistic merit. Despite such auspicious notoriety, **Ulysses** has remained more famous than popular, and for one simple reason: it is a very difficult book to read. Not so difficult as Joyce's final novel, **Finnegans Wake**, to be sure, but difficult nevertheless. The proof of its greatness, however, is that it rewards effort with an endless feast of delights, the more delightful for being hard won.

Put simply, **Ulysses** is an account of a single day in Dublin, June 16th 1904, seen from the perspective of three characters: Stephen Dedalus, Leopold Bloom and Bloom's wife Molly. Readers of Joyce's earlier novel **Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man** will recall Stephen Dedalus as

its central character – Joyce's own alter ego. Indeed, the confusion of fact with fiction continues in *Ulysses*. Virtually all the characters, from Bloom himself to the dozens of Dubliners with whom he collides during the course of the day, are based in some way on real people known to Joyce, just as all the references to the streets and buildings of Dublin are factually correct in every detail.

Leopold Bloom, an advertising canvasser, is the real protagonist of this novel. He is *Ulysses*. 'Ulysses' was the Roman name for Odysseus, and this novel is, in one way, an updated version of Homer's epic tale: **The Odyssey**. In Homer, Odysseus wanders for several years over several seas, before returning home at last to his faithful wife Penelope. In Joyce's novel, Bloom wanders for but a day through the streets of Dublin, before returning at last to his faithless wife Molly. In Homer, Odysseus escapes from the cave of the one-eyed Cyclops, the Cyclops hurling rocks after his ship as he sails away. In Joyce, a drunken Irish nationalist, blinded by the sun in his eye, hurls a biscuit tin after

Bloom (Jewish, and therefore a foreigner) as he makes his escape on a jaunting car. This is one of the many hundreds of clever parallels with the *Odyssey*, most of them so subtle that they go unnoticed.

Musical references abound too. At the start of Bloom's day he takes breakfast in to Molly, still in bed, along with the morning post. This includes a card from the impresario Hugh 'Blazes' Boylan, informing Molly of the programme she is to sing in a forthcoming concert tour which he is arranging for her. On the programme are the seduction duet 'La ci darem' from Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, and the popular 'Love's Old Sweet Song'. Boylan is to call that afternoon to go through these with her – though in point of fact he and Molly have rather more than musical rehearsal in mind. Bloom is well aware of all this, and for this reason 'La ci darem' and 'Love's Old Sweet Song' are very much in his thoughts throughout the day. In the final chapter, too – Molly's famous 'stream of consciousness' monologue – snatches of the two numbers rise constantly to the surface, both consciously (as she imagines how she will perform them) and unconsciously (to accompany her careful breaking of wind).

The 'stream of consciousness' technique,

for which the novel is so famous, is one of the things which makes it so hard to read. Different trains of thought constantly intercut one another (as they do in real life), often without helpful punctuation, often leaving ideas or even words incomplete, and often making it hard to separate reality from fantasy, trivial matters from matters of significance. This last problem is particularly tricky, for in Joyce apparently trivial events or remarks can suddenly assume a huge significance.

An example: when Bloom is pestered by Bantam Lyons wanting to borrow his newspaper to check on the horses running in the Gold Cup later that day, Bloom tells him to keep the paper, as he was only planning to throw it away. By coincidence (and unbeknown to Bloom), there is a horse called 'Throwaway' running in the race, with odds of twenty to one. Bantam Lyons takes Bloom's remark to be a tip and hurries off excitedly. Much later, when Throwaway actually wins the race, there is huge resentment among the assembled company at Kiernan's pub that Bloom had kept this tip to himself, and it is this which leads to the argument which ends with the biscuit tin episode.

Even more unusual, perhaps, than the

stream of consciousness passages, is the chapter describing Bloom and Stephen's adventures in 'Nighttown' – the brothel area of Dublin – in the early hours of the morning. This chapter, the longest in the book, is set out like a play script, with capitalised character names, followed by stage directions and lines spoken by that character. Although an important episode in the narrative, it also becomes a wild phantasmagorical fantasy, with lines given to THE GASJET and THE FAN, as well as brief appearances by LORD TENNYSON and KING EDWARD THE SEVENTH. The whoremistress Bella Cohen appears in male apparel and is referred to as BELLO as she booms out her orders to Bloom (now female) and whips and threatens him. Bloom has come to the brothel to keep an eye on young Stephen Dedalus who is far too drunk for his own good. When Stephen wildly smashes a gas lamp and races out of the house, Bloom follows after him and eventually takes him home to his own house to sober him up.

The chapter which follows takes yet another unusual literary form – that of question and answer. Here, answers given to direct questions about the sequence of events as they unfold are often elaborate,

even pedantic, and usually very amusing, with no detail going unremarked. At the end of the chapter, Bloom, now finally home in bed with Molly (they sleep head to toe, however), drifts off to sleep with two last questions:

When?

Going to a dark bed there was a square round Sinbad the Sailor roc's auk's egg in the night of the bed of all the auks of the rocs of Darkinbad the Brightdayler.

Where?

The final chapter, Molly's interior monologue, begins with a marvellous and subtle joke. Listening to her husband's final sleepy murmurings she has taken them to be a request for morning room service:

Yes because he never did a thing like that before as ask to get his breakfast in bed with a couple of eggs...

Ulysses abounds with jokes such as this; for, long and difficult as it is, it is in fact a comic novel. For the reader many of the jokes have to be dug out, worked out through careful study – but for the *listener* many of the barriers to understanding simply disappear. This is why the present

recording will be so valuable to those countless readers who have begun reading the book but “never got round to finishing it”. Brought to life through the spoken word, the difficulties melt away, to leave a narrative as natural, as amusing and as moving as anything you have ever read.

A Note about the Abridgement

To record the whole of **Ulysses** would be a vast project, and would result in some 22 discs. In order to keep the issue to a size which would not deter listeners either financially or in terms of sheer duration, a decision was made at the outset to limit ourselves to four compact discs or four tapes. This has meant cutting on a considerable scale. The outline of Bloom’s day remains, however, and we believe that enough of the narrative, colour and variety have been retained to leave a version that will be satisfying as a first encounter with the book.

For those who already know **Ulysses** well, we hope that there will also be much here that will provide further elucidation as well as great entertainment.

As with any abridgement, the starting point has been to maintain all that is essential to an understanding of the

narrative. Of the first three chapters, we have retained only the opening of the first (Telemachus) – a famous opening and the important first account of Stephen’s mother’s death. The second chapter (Nestor) – with headmaster Deasey’s gleeful observation that Ireland has had no history of persecuting the Jews because “she never let them in” – has regrettably gone. For reasons of balance, so too has the third, ‘Stephen’ chapter (Proteus) – ineluctably invisible in this case.

In the next two chapters (Calypso and The Lotus Eaters) only small cuts have been made. It is here that we meet Leopold and Molly Bloom, and that many of the themes which are to recur throughout the book are first encountered – the music for the tour, the death of Paddy Dignam, the Gold Cup, and so on.

From here on we have selected key points in Bloom’s day: the meeting with Mrs Breen and her litigious husband, lunch and its attendant nostalgic reminiscences (The Lestrygonians), political debate at Barney Kiernan’s (The Cyclops), Bloom’s erotic episode at the beach (Nausicaa), the fantastic events in Nighttown (Circe), Bloom’s return to Eccles Street (Ithaca) and Molly’s final soliloquy (Penelope). All of

these chapters have been cut to a greater or lesser extent, so that what we present here is clearly not **Ulysses** but ‘readings from **Ulysses**’. Our hope is that listeners will be intrigued and captivated by this material and subsequently feel emboldened to take on the book in its entirety. With the sound of these readings in their ears, this should now seem a far less daunting prospect.

All the music used on the CD is music specifically referred to in **Ulysses**. Indeed, ‘Don Giovanni’ and ‘The Flying Dutchman’ are models for the book almost as important as **The Odyssey** itself. And the popular ‘Love’s Old Sweet Song’ permeates the text.

Notes by Roger Marsh



Jim Norton, one of Ireland’s leading actors, has worked regularly on Joycean topics, and particularly **Ulysses**, during his long career in film, television, radio and theatre. Born and brought up in Dublin, he spent his early acting years in Irish radio. He now divides his time between London and Hollywood – where, among his many parts, has been the role of Einstein on the popular TV serial **Star Trek**. He has also recorded **Seven Pillars of Wisdom** by T.E. Lawrence for Naxos AudioBooks.



Marcella Riordan, the Irish actress, has also a long-standing familiarity with Joyce, having played Gerty MacDowell (BBC Radio) and Zoe (RTE Radio) among a varied career in television, radio and theatre.

The music on this CD taken from the NAXOS Catalogue

- WAGNER The Flying Dutchman 8.660025-6075
Soloists, ORF Symphony Orchestra, Pinchas Steinberg
- MOZART Arias and Duets from Don Giovanni etc. 8.550435
Andrea Martin, Donna Robin, Capella Istropolitana, Vienna Mozart Orchestra,
Johannes Wilder/Konrad Leitner
- J.J. MOLLOY Love's Old Sweet Song
Anna Myatt, soprano; Richard Burton, piano; Nick Fells, recording engineer
(Recorded especially for Ulysses)

Cover picture: Photo of The Joyce Tower, Dublin, Brian Murphy.
Courtesy of Joyce Tower, Sandycove, Dublin.

James Joyce Ulysses

Read by **Jim Norton** with **Marcella Riordan**

Ulysses is one of the greatest literary works in the English language.

In his remarkable tour de force, Joyce catalogues one day – June 16 1904 – in immense detail as Leopold Bloom wanders through Dublin, talking, observing, musing – and always remembering Molly, his passionate, wayward wife. Set in the shadow of Homer's **Odyssey**, internal thoughts – Joyce's famous stream of consciousness – give physical reality extra colour and perspective.

Though **Ulysses** is widely regarded as a 'difficult' novel, this fresh and lively reading shows its comic genius as well as its great moments of poignance, making it more accessible than ever before.

*"The performance by Jim Norton with Marcella Riordan is a revelation.
Norton brilliantly dramatises the inner musings of Leopold Bloom...
brings tears to the eyes."*

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