Chapter 9. WRESTLING WITH AN ANGEL:

MARY McCARTHY AND ME

In the fall of 1980, I had the great pleasure of meeting Mary McCarthy (then about to publish her 21st book) and presenting her to both students and faculty during her brief stay at Dartmouth College as a Montgomery Fellow. Two years earlier, the Montgomery Endowment had been established by a Dartmouth grad named Kenneth Montgomery and his wife Harle for the purpose of bringing to Dartmouth men and women of great distinction in the arts as well as various other fields. In 1980 alone, Montgomery Fellows included—along with M. M.—Wallace Stegner, William Styron, John Updike, and Robert Penn Warren: quite a lineup of literary stars!

Montgomery himself was a happy philanthropist who—by a combination of good luck and very hard work—rose from a hardscrabble childhood to the peak of great wealth. Born in 1903 in Apalachicola, Florida to a laborer making only about $3.00 a day, he was spotted as a comer by his Uncle Lawrence Montgomery, who had managed to set himself up nicely in 1916 by marrying Leila Young, the former secretary and then young wife and *then* just a bit older widow of the food baron C.W. Post. (Leaving his first wife to die of a "broken heart," as his daughter Marjorie said later, Post had married Leila in 1904 and presumably spared her more than a few bucks when he died in 1914). So via Leila and Uncle Lawrence,

some of those big bucks trickled down to bright little Ken, and after four years at Dartmouth on his uncle's dime, Ken put himself through Harvard Law by waiting on tables in Cambridge and eventually became a partner in a Chicago law firm, where his work for various oil companies brought him royalties of royal value. But Ken never forgot what he owed to his Dartmouth education, so he established a fund that not only paid for the purchase and refurbishment of the pondside Montgomery House on campus grounds, where all Fellows stay during their residencies, but also for extremely generous honoraria.

His favorite line on philanthropizing came from a sexy blonde in a sky blue Mercedes Benz convertible just outside a hotel in Palm Springs. After driving up one afternoon to the entrance, where he happened to be sitting out there on a bench, she tossed him the car keys and asked him to park the car. When he explained that he was not a parking attendant, she asked him what he was.

"Well," he said. A philanthropist."

"What the hell is that?" she said.

Fortunately, Dartmouth has long known the answer to her question and has made the most of Ken's philanthropy for almost the past fifty years.

Since in 1980 I was the Chair of the Dartmouth English as well as a longtime fan of Mary McCarthy's lucid, incisive, combative prose style, I was asked to be her handler for the duration of her stay. For a start, I introduced her public lecture with a brief account of her work—especially since she was not

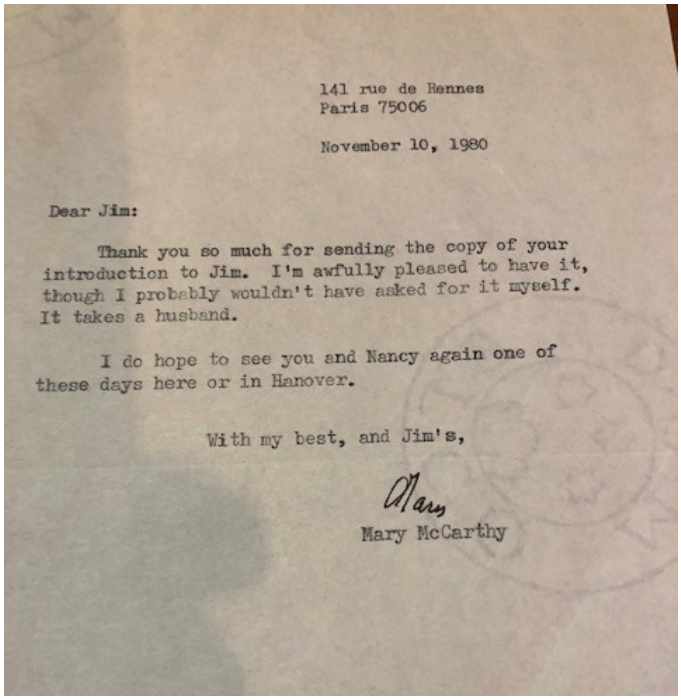
exactly a household name among Dartmouth students or even faculty in 1980 (how soon even the bright names fade as generations pass!). So after first explaining how so many other writers of our time back then had slotted themselves into various ethnic or identity-based categories such as Black, Jewish, feminist, and Chicanos, I cited a few of her twenty books, saluted her range as a journalist, memoirist, novelist, and critic, and concluded as follows:

> To sum up all her powers, I have no other word than writer: unadorned, unqualified by any adjective, uncompromised by any category. I use the word "writer" as Robert Frost used the word "poet." Frost said that he could not call himself a poet, because that was a praise word—a word for others to use about him, as of course he expected them to do. But I consider "writer" a praise word too, and it is the only word that fits the person you are about to hear. So it gives me a great pleasure to present someone whom I will not call a Catholic writer, or a journalist, or an essayist, or a cultural historian, or a novelist, or even "the first lady of American letters," but rather simply, unequivocally, and magisterially . . . a writer: Mary McCarthy!"

Drawn from her *Venice Observed,* first published in 1961, McCarthy's lecture included one of the deftest transitions I'd ever seen in print or heard intoned. After carefully explaining just how a hapless little goldie in the fish tank of her Venetian apartment had gradually turned "pallida," pale and wasting away

from some mysterious disease, she segued right into the sordid history of Venice itself, which had long since drained its original energies by feeding on corruption.

After the lecture, Mary's husband Jim West asked me for a copy of my introduction, and soon after sending it I got this lovely note from Mary McCarthy herself:



141 rue de Rennes
Paris 75006

November 10, 1980

Dear Jim:

Thank you so much for sending the copy of your introduction to Jim. I'm awfully pleased to have it, though I probably wouldn't have asked for it myself. It takes a husband.

I do hope to see you and Nancy again one of these days here or in Hanover.

With my best, and Jim's,

Mary

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With my best, and Jim's,

Mary McCarthy

Not surprisingly, since neither she nor her husband ever returned to Hanover, and since Nancy and I don't often get to Paris, we never saw them again. And also not surprisingly, her letter said nothing about the other event that I attended during her brief stay: her visit to a class on Critical Methods taught by a colleague named Darrel Mansell.

In June 1976, four years before McCarthy's visit, Darrel had published in *Modern Language Quarterly* a lengthy academic study of "Artists in Uniform: A Story by Mary McCarthy" first published by *Harper's* magazine in 1953. More precisely, Darrel had "unsettled" a follow-up article by McCarthy called "Settling the Colonel's Hash" (*Harper's* February 1954), which she wrote after a Midwestern college English teacher wrote to ask what the famous author thought about the symbols that the college students were finding in her story.

McCarthy considered it *not* a story at all in the fictional sense ("Story," she told me, was the editor's ambiguous label for it), but rather "a fragment of

autobiography," a *factual* narrative or *true* story of her encounter with an anti-Semitic colonel on a train ride westbound to St, Louis from some unnamed eastern city—probably New York.

Furthermore, she had been so dismayed by all the symbol-hunting of the teacher and her students that she decided to address herself to what she called "a whole school of misunderstanding" at the Middlebury Breadloaf School of Writers in the summer of 1953 and then placed her lecture in *Harpers.*

Anecdotally, I have the strong impression that story tellers of all kinds—whether reporters or fiction writers—generally don't care to think of themselves as trafficking in symbols, or worse still, as Wordsworth has been accused of doing, reporting on the messages he got from natural objects after he had planted them there—like so many crumpled notes thrust into Jerusalem's Wailing Wall. Eight years after McCarthy's visit, when Saul Bellow came to Dartmouth as a Montgomery Fellow, he bit or at least nibbled the hand of the college fund that had so lavishly fed and housed him by complaining that English teachers were ruining novels for students by tearing them apart in quest of symbols--whereas in fact it's mostly English teachers who keep his name alive for each new crop of students year by year. More strikingly, my wife Nancy has told me of a fascinating Q & A with William Faulkner when he was Writer in Residence at the University of Virginia in 1960-61 (before I ever got to UVA or met Nancy). At one of the large sessions that Faulkner held each week in the University's Alderman Library and

that Nancy attended, he was questioned by a UVA senior named Ken Ringle about symbolism in his novelette called *The Bear,* which had first appeared in *The Saturday Evening Post* in 1942. Though Nancy has often recalled for me approximately what was said at this session, the UVA archives preserve no audio of this session (as they have of some earlier ones), a writer for the *Virginia Magazine* recently tracked down Ken Ringle and reported this exchange between a somewhat nervous student and the world-renowned holder of the Nobel Prize for Literarure, which Faulkner had won in 1947:

RINGLE: "Mr. Faulkner, in your short story 'The Bear,' do you consider the bear a positive nature symbol or a negative nature symbol or a symbol both positive and negative like the white whale in *Moby-Dick*?"

FAULKNER [Speaking—according to Ringle—"in a thin, reedy voice, after puffing on his pipe long enough to raise the suspense*"*] --

"That's just a story about a bear."

> (qtd. George M. Spencer, "New Biography Highlights Faulkner at UVA," *University of Virginia Magazine* [Fall 2020] https://uvamagazine.org/articles/william_faulkner_uva)

Pure, cagy, deadpan Faulkner. Like a seasoned poker player, he kept the cards of his art quite close to his chest. According to Stephen Railton, a UVA Professor English Emeritus who specialized in Faulkner's work, Faulkner was posing as a simple-minded storyteller. "It was his way of saying, 'You should be thinking about that. You shouldn't expect me to tell you.'" (qtd. Spencer).

On the other hand, Faulkner was a generous, hospitable *listener* as well as a laconic talker, and according to Nancy (MA UVA '61), who was in the audience for this session and is my sole source for the rest of his exchange with Ringle, he was quietly willing to entertain symbolic readings of his fiction. To the best of Nancy's recollection, his exchange with Ringle went on something like this:

RINGLE: But could you say that the bear might signify X?

FAULKNER [pausing to puff]: Possibly.

RINGLE: And perhaps also Y?

FAULKNER [another puff]: You might infer that, yes.

RINGLE: And maybe even symbolize Z?

FAULKNER [and yet another puff]: Again yes, perhaps.

RINGLE: But Mr. Faulkner, you said just now that this was just story about a bear. What about these symbols?

FAULKNER: They came to me just now as we were talking.

Of course his final comment, which (as Nancy recalls) roused chuckles all around, could be read as a joke on all academic symbol-hunting, or more precisely all efforts to plumb the depths of an author's deepest intentions. But it could also

have been Faulkner's roundabout way of reminding literary critics—as well as eager students—that *interpreting* works of literature was their job (as Railton afterwards said), not the writer's. Turning the tables on the latter, D. H. Lawrence once told critics: "Never trust the teller, trust the tale. The proper function of a critic is to save the tale from the artist who created it." To some extent, academic critics of this time were already doing this job, for by the early sixties, the so-called New Criticism had long decreed that the intentions of an author were both inscrutable and irrelevant to the meaning of a literary work.

Yet if we *can* trust Nancy's recollection of Faulkner's answers to Ringle's follow-up questions about *The Bear,* it's at least possible that the eager student prompted Faulkner to discover his own intentions—more precisely to recognize just how powerfully his re-creations of the bear and the wilderness in this story could inflame the imagination of a reader. In my own reading of his comments (for whose *sound* Nancy is my only source), Faulkner never discounts the reader's imagination or denigrates the value of interpretation. Having done his job as a storyteller, he is perfectly willing to let the critic take over—and maybe even tell *him* a thing or two about the polysemous impact of his key images—the multiple meanings they can beget for the critic who midwifes them.

Mary McCarthy, however, had nothing to do with such obstetrics.

To settle both the hash of the anti-Semitic colonel in her story and also grind up once and for all questions about its would-be symbolism, she set out in her "Settling" article to crush the latter by first of all quoting the questions posed by the Midwest college English teacher who wrote to her about it—questions that McCarthy said "reduced her to despair." After analyzing "Artists in Uniform" for a week, the teacher wrote, "some of them insisted that the story has no other level than the realistic one, [but] most of them decided it has symbolic overtones." She then put her own questions to McCarthy:

> The question is: how closely do you want the symbols labeled? They wrestled with the nuns, the author's two shades of green with pink accents, with the 'materialistic godlessness' of the Colonel. ... A surprising number wanted exact symbols; for example, they searched for the significance of the Colonel's eating hash and the author eating a sandwich. . . .

Though McCarthy writes that she "probably" should have answered this letter, she never did. Instead she answered it in *Harper's*, for all to see, in two parts. First, she writes,

> the whole point of this "story" was that it really happened; it is written in the first person; I speak of myself in my own name, McCarthy; at the end, I mention my husband's name, Broadwater. When I was thinking about writing the story, I decided not to treat it fictionally; the chief interest;

> I felt, lay in the fact that it happened, in real life, last summer [the summer of 1952], to the writer herself.

Secondly, given the realism of the story, given "the *fact* that it *happened*," McCarthy argued that it had to be wholly free of symbolism:

> There were no symbols in this story; there was no deeper level. The nuns were in the story because they were on the train; the contrasting greens were the dress I happened to be wearing; the Colonel had hash because he had hash. . . .

Strangely enough, however, the hash that is supposed to be nothing *but* hash becomes in McCarthy's would-be "settling" of it a symbol of the colonel's masculinity—just as her sandwich becomes a contrasting symbol of her femininity:

> The sandwich and the hash were our provisional, *ad hoc* **symbols** of ourselves. But in this sense all human actions are symbolic because they represent the person who does them. If the Colonel had ordered a fruit salad with whipped cream, this too would have represented him in some way; given his other traits, it would have pointed to a complexity in his character that the hash did not suggest. (boldfaced mine)

Likewise, she admits, her green shirtdress defined her as

> a **symbol** of the perplexity I found myself in with the Colonel; I did not want to be categorized as a member of a peculiar minority--an artist or a Jew;. but brute fate and the

> Colonel kept resolutely cramming me into both those uncomfortable pigeonholes. (boldfaced mine)

So in addressing critics of the symbol-hunting "school of misunderstanding" (as well as aspiring writers like the student she mentions who had written a story and then wanted to "put in the symbols" [69]), McCarthy does not aim to ban *all* symbols. On the contrary, she spends most of the piece explaining the difference between "natural symbolism," which is supposed to rise up organically from all the "natural" and realistic details of the story, and meanings *imposed* on those details by some code or set of conventions drawn from outside the story—from what she calls at the end "the dry Morse code of the disengaged mind." Had she written this piece in our time, for instance, she might have said that she would never dream of putting a blue dress on herself and a red tie on her anti-Semitic colonel (hardly regulation gear anyway!) because those colors are now politically coded as Democrat and Republican, and she doesn't play with such ordinary cards. She makes her own cards and thus makes their meanings *earn* their place in our minds.

Having read McCarthy's "Settling" piece after Darrel—my Dartmouth colleague—drew it to my attention at the time of McCarthy's visit, I asked her if she would be good enough to visit Darrel's class on Critical Methods to discuss the story, her follow-up article on it, and Darrel's meticulous "Unsettling [of] the Colonel's Hash: 'Fact' in Autobiography" in *Modern Language Quarterly* (June 1976). To that end, I gave her a copy of Darrell's article on the night we first met

(at Montgomery House), had copies made for all his students, and anticipated a lively discussion.

Unfortunately it did not turn out that way—in part because I myself had not really studied her "Settling" piece—let alone Darrel's dissection of its arguments. Essentially, she pressed the basic point that "Artists" was just a factual report on her train ride—albeit *enhanced* by the hard work of her art. She said, for instance, that she had taken a long time to make the face of the colonel's sycophantic sidekick "white as Roquefort and of a glistening, cheese-like texture," which I tend to imagine now as symbolizing the cheese course that might have followed the colonel's hash. But our class discussion never really got into her basic distinction between natural symbolism and literary Morse code. Rather than pressing any of his own points on this topic, Darrell graciously deferred to the wisdom of a major writer, and I thanked her for joining us.

Had I known then, however, what I know now, I would have dared to wrestle with this angel of mid-twentieth-century literature. For in spite of the breadth of her wings, the keenness of her insight, and the sharpness of her critical talons, her distinction between natural symbolism and coded symbolism simply cannot begin to explain what James Joyce does with my favorite of all literary characters: Leopold Bloom.

To be perfectly fair to the memory of Mary McCarthy, she cites in “Settling” one example of “natural symbolism” that perfectly fits her definition of this category: the trains in Leo Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina.*

Besides the fact that the novel begins with Anna meeting Vronsky at a train station where a workman has just been killed, and ends with her throwing herself under a train, McCarthy writes,

> The train is necessary to the plot of the novel, and I believe it is also symbolic, both of the iron forces of material progress that Tolstoy hated so and that played a part in Anna's moral destruction, and also of those iron laws of necessity and consequence that govern human action when it remains on the sensual level.
>
> One can read the whole novel, however, without being aware that the train is a symbol; we do not have to "interpret" to feel the import of doom and loneliness conveyed by the train's whistle--the same import we ourselves can feel when we hear a train go by in the country, even today. (“Settling 72-73).

In other words, she plausibly argues, the train-as-symbol-of-iron-law is precisely the kind of symbol that the reader or critic can justly deliver from the novel—whether or not Tolstoy consciously intended it or not—which she leaves an open question.

But now consider what she writes about the “mysterious” symbolism of Joyce’s Mr, Bloom in *Ulysses*:

> Mr. Bloom can be called a symbol of eternal recurrence--the wandering Jew, Ulysses the voyager--but he is a symbol thickly incarnate. fleshed out in a Dublin advertising canvasser. He is not *like* Ulysses or vaguely suggestive of Ulysses; he is Ulysses, circa 1905 [actually June 16, 1904, Mary! No circa here] Joyce evidently believed in a cyclical theory of history, in which everything repeated itself; he also subscribed in youth to the doctrine of the Incarnation, which declares that the Host, a piece of bread, is also God's body and blood. How it can be both things at the same time, consubstantially, is a mystery, and Mr. Bloom is just such a mystery: Ulysses in the visible appearance of a Dublin advertising-canvasser.
>
> Mr. Bloom is not a symbol of Ulysses, but Ulysses-Bloom together, one and indivisible, symbolize or rather demonstrate eternal recurrence. I hope I make myself clear. The point is consubstantiation: Bloom and Ulysses are transfused into each other and neither reality is diminished. Both realities are locked together, like the protons and neutrons of an atom. (“Settling” 71-72).

But given your loathing for coded symbolism, dear Mary, the awkward thing about this example is that Leopold Bloom is probably the most elaborately coded literary character ever conceived.

Take for a start the atomic fusing of Bloom and Ulysses. (And to simplify matters, let's pretend that the ancient theological doctrine of consubstantiality between the Father and the Son is somehow natural, or at least *mysteriously* natural.) To connect Bloom and Ulysses, whose relation is nowhere explained in the novel, you first have to know that *Ulysses* is the Latin name for Odysseus, the eponymous hero of Homer's *Odyssey,* whose adventures are all unwittingly re-enacted by Joyce's Bloom (who's never read *The Odyssey*). And to know this, you have to know something—directly or indirectly, through commentaries by Stuart Gilbert, Hugh Kenner, and scores of others including me—about the Homeric episodes that Joyce recycled for *Ulysses* and then explained in a *schema* that he gave to a friend named Carlo Linati in 1920 (Wikipedia) –but without ever using even the names of the episodes as chapter titles, though Joyceans in the know commonly refer to them as running from "Telemachus" (Chapter 1) to "Penelope" (Chapter 18). Are you still with me, Mary? Our coded roller-coaster is just cresting its first hill. Hang on tight!

"Mr. Bloom," you say, "can be called a symbol of eternal recurrence--the wandering Jew, Ulysses the voyager--but he is a symbol thickly incarnate." Yes indeed, but a vessel of flabbergasting contradictions. Homer's heroic voyager was also a fiercely aggressive warrior, and after he finally returns to his palace on the island kingdom of Ithaca, he kills every one of the suitors merely for camping out

there *in hopes* that his wife Penelope will agree to marry one of them. Just how, dear Mary, can this character be "naturally" re-enacted by an ardent, mild-mannered pacifist who has never left his native Ireland in his life, whose sole experience of sea-going was a little bout of afternoon rowing with wife and child in which his totally inept management of the oars nearly swamped the boat, and who—after he finally gets back to home and wife Molly—re-enters with "equanimity" (!) a marriage bed imprinted not just by Molly but also by another "human form, male, not his"—namely that of the utterly shameless suitor named Blazes Boylan, who bedded Molly at about 4:00 PM and will pay no price of any kind—let alone his life—for doing so, can these two characters have *anything* in common?

Actually it turns out they can—because amazingly enough, Joyce makes us see the soul of Odysseus / Ulysses shining right through that flesh incarnate of Leopold Bloom—so long as you've been coded into the *color que sanno*—those in the know, the Joycean cognoscenti. In Chapter 4, the Homeric title "Calypso" implicitly links Bloom's wife Molly to Homer's sexy nymph (Ulysses' last squeeze before he heads home) even though Molly will later play the part of stay-at-home Penelope (another contradiction!). But as she lies in bed waiting for Bloom to bring her breakfast, this not very observant Jewish man goes out to buy

a pork kidney (!) for his own breakfast (his first wandering of the day) and returns to find slipped under the door of his house a letter that breaks his heartbeat:

> Two letters and a card lay on the hallfloor. He stooped and gathered them. Mrs Marion Bloom. His quickened heart slowed at once. Bold hand. Mrs Marion.

Remember, dear Mary, the days when a married woman was always formally known to others by only her husband's full name? (My own mother, who outlived her husband for ten years, was listed as "Mrs. Roy Heffernan" in the phone book until she died.) So you may begin to see how "Mr. Leopold Bloom," as he is called in the very opening sentence of this chapter, might be alarmed to see his lordly name—"Leopold" actually means "the people's prince"—displaced by that of his wife alone on this envelope. Worse still, the name is written by the "bold hand" of Blazes Boylan, the flashy promoter in charge of Molly's singing tours and also the man (as Bloom knows all too well) who is after Molly—bent on shortly *usurping* Bloom's bed as well as his place in his own house. For those who know the Homeric code to this novel, this is the very first moment in which we *feel* Bloom re-enacting the fraught homecoming of Homer's hero, and it feels not just fully embodied but heart-brakingly natural—as his heartbeat is braked.

Or consider how Bloom reacts to the sight of Boylan on his way to the cemetery in Chapter 6 (Homeric title “Hades”). When one of the other men in the funeral carriage calls his attention to Boylan flashing his straw hat at them from the door of a Dublin pub, Bloom looks only at his fingernails:

> Mr. Bloom reviewed the nails of his left hand, then those of his right hand. The nails, yes. Is there anything more in him that they she sees? Fascination. Worst man in Dublin. That keeps him alive.

Where else would he look if he can’t bear to look at the man who has somehow managed to captivate his very own wife along with all the other women who somehow “see” how fascinating the worst man in Dublin can be? And where else can he look if he suspects that every other man in that carriage knows about Boylan’s designs on his wife? Just sit there and study his nails until the slow moving carriage leaves Boylan behind. Just now that’s all our Mr. Bloom can do.

But now let’s see how those nails of his get coded. In the previous chapter (Homerically titled “Lotus Eaters”), Bloom wanders curiously into a Roman Catholic Mass and with the aid of what he’s learned from Molly, who was raised a Catholic, he tries to figure out what he’s seeing on the back of the priest:

> Letters on his back: I.N.R.I? No: I.H.S. Molly told me one time I asked her. I have sinned: or no: I have suffered, it is. And the other one? Iron nails ran in.

As often happens, Bloom gets things muddled because his knowledge of Christian liturgy is even shakier than his command of Jewish tradition (at one point in Chapter 7 he thinks of Moses leading his people "out of the land of Egypt and *into the house of bondage*" [emphasis mine]). So while IHS are actually the first three Greek letters for JESUS, and while INRI stands for *Jesus Nazarenus Rex Judaeorum* (Jesus of Nazarus King of the Jews), which the Roman authorities contemptuously labelled him, Bloom just makes his best guess: INRI is all about *nails* running into the body of Christ, which means that the thought of nails—precisely as instruments of torture—is now running through Bloom's own head Which also helps to explain why he may well feel so crucified by the very sight of Boylan two chapters later that all he can do is look down at the nails of both hands.

Does this suddenly make him no longer Ulysses or a wandering Jew but rather a Christ figure? He implicitly makes this claim in Chapter 12 (Homerically titled "Cyclops") when he daringly tells the rabidly anti-Semitic Citizen (even more rabid than Mary's colonel) that "Your God was a jew. Christ was a jew like me." But in the very *next* chapter (Chapter 13, Homeric "Nausicaa"), our newly anointed Christ figure is aroused by the sight of what seems to be a lovely young

girl sitting on a beach and facing him from a distance, and though she herself is so smitten by his matinee idol looks (surprise! up to now you thought he was a shlub, right?) that she imagines him "a man of inflexible honour to his fingertips," we soon learn just what those fingertips are doing inside Bloom's pockets as he gazes at the "awfully pretty stitchery" of the young girl's "undies." What? Our dry Morse-coded Christ figure is getting his own undies wet? Bloom is a *masturbator*? Oh yes indeed, Mary, and give him a break, please, because he's had a very rough day by the time he sees that girl on the beach, and he never even tries to approach her while seeking just a bit of purely (!) covert "relief" inside his pockets. So to conclude: Mr, Bloom is not only coded and fully natural*ized* as Ulysses but also coded and naturalized as a Christ figure and a jerkoff as well as, of course, an ad canvasser, father, husband, target of anti-Semitic rants, nail-tormented cuckold, and . . . you name it! Near the end of Chapter 13, Bloom tries and fails to name himself, writing with a stick in the sand, "I .. . . AM A" and then throwing away the stick. How can such a character ever be classified as *either* a natural symbol or a coded stick figure?

Hail Mary, full of wit and verve, blessed art thou among authors: can you forgive this antic pedantic twit for presuming to give *you* of all people a tutorial on Joyce, whose *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* you must have read years before I did, since it surely inspired your very own *Memories of a Catholic*

Girlhood (1957)? Let me assure you that I remain a fervent fan of your ever-invigorating prose as well as of *almost* everything you write about literature. In fact, even though you told your anti-Semitic colonel that you "did not believe in God" ("Settling" 74), I'm betting that your writing alone will get you a pass through those pearly gates, and I'd like to think you're up there right now re-Joycing with the one and only Jimmy himself over endless cups of Jameson neat. And if you'll spare me a cup of that lovely stuff when I get up there, I'll be only too happy to sit at your four transfigured feet and bask forever in the reflected light of your eternal, word-drunk glory.