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As Well Him as Another

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As Well Him as Another

My name is Molly. I read that odd book one full month because her name was Molly and she was as strange as I know I am, read it on new beds, coffee breaks, damp grass. I felt I got to know her, every nook and cranny of her mind, the mad folly of marrying a dullard, the grand dam of her emotions bursting like a mass.

I wanted to phone her, to say to her, I would find the words; you don’t have to lose, to bear, to settle, life comes in stages, you are a gift, a moment, a flower, can make each night a day when you can choose to have a life that isn’t trapped in pages.

My name is Leopold. I read the Joyce only because my name is Leopold and I’m a Dublin Jew, and I must say he got it mostly right, the feel, the look, I mean at times I swear I heard a voice a bit like mine, although of course too old for me, not really me, I mean the way he talked was only talking in a book.

And now I’m done with that, I have to ask if that is how it is, if a writer can ever know a man who isn’t him or is it all a terrible mask to fend off life, a girl when you meet her, all those who want to say; How are ye, Jim?
My name is James A. Joyce. I have a pub in Castlecomer, near the Dublin road. Because you asked, I took a look at this, this big important book with all the places as I knew were there, or at least they were. He seems to take his time, he wants to rub it in with some of them, to dump a load of bricks on some of them, and I'll say this, I hear their tears, I cannot see their faces.

He got the words all right, he missed the song, I think because of their big city ways in their own time and day, he had the sound and fury, and though I think he got it wrong the way it will be will be the way he says now that it's written, now that it's written down.