

Lucia Joyce

Supplemental Material

[Home](#) | Chapter 7 Sections: [25](#) | [26](#) | [27](#) | [28](#) | [29](#) | [30](#) | [31](#) | [32](#) | [33](#) | [34](#) | [35](#)

Supplemental material:

[Shloss' Deletions](#) | [The Notebook Observations](#)

25. *"And vamp, vamp, vamp, the girls are merchand."*
(FW 246.22-23)

7

STUMBLING AND RECOVERY

PARIS 1928-31



25

I. LUCIA, SHAUN, AND THE "DANCEKERL"

In September 1928, Joyce suffered another bout of eye disease. As he wrote to Harriet Weaver, he had episcleritis, conjunctivitis, blepharitis, and a general nervous fatigue. He couldn't see print and was preoccupied with the Samuel Roth piracy case in America. His own miseries did not prevent him from understanding that his wife was unwell too, but Nora tried to ignore her own symptoms, claiming that one invalid was enough in the family. By November, she could no longer neglect herself. Dr. Thérèse Bertrand-Fontaine, a new family doctor recommended by Sylvia Beach, feared that Nora had uterine cancer.¹

All the Joyces and their circle of friends handled this crisis by withholding the serious nature of her condition from Nora herself. Consequently no one could persuade her to undergo surgery. Joyce went to Helen Fleischman at this time and asked if she could assist him in changing Nora's mind. It was, he said, a matter of life and death. She took Nora to her own gynecologist for a second opinion and was distressed to learn that he too suspected cancer.² Finally Nora consented to minor surgery to be followed by radium treatments, and she entered the hospital on 8 November. She recovered, only to relapse and to face a hysterectomy in February 1929.

For Lucia this illness brought a double displacement. Joyce decided

that he would not part with his wife, and despite Nora's grumbling, he moved into her clinic with books, notebooks, and all his writing paraphernalia. Their apartment on square Robiac was closed (Helen claimed for five months, from November to March 1929), and Lucia, along with Giorgio, went to stay with Helen at Helen's apartment in the rue Huysmans.³ Not only was Lucia afraid that her mother would die, but these circumstances forced her to confront the complicated nature of her feelings for her brother, his lover, and the sexual ethics they had chosen to live by. She was, we can imagine, lonely, jealous, resentful, full of rage, full of outrage, full of longing, and her feelings were explicitly sexual.

Helen later wrote about this period of time as one in which she was taking care of "the children" while Nora was in the hospital.⁴ But Lucia knew that Helen's presence in their lives marked the end of their childhood and of the special relationship she had shared with her brother.⁵ For her the fall and winter of 1928 were times of worry, of managing hospitals and illness, and of living with a brother who was "living in sin."

From the beginning, Giorgio and Helen's relationship was considered scandalous. Helen was eleven years older than Giorgio, Jewish, and married, but the disturbing emotional dynamics of the affair were even more complicated than many people knew. Myron Nutting remembered how he first learned about the couple: "On our return to Paris from one of our many short trips, Richard Wallace told me the James Joyces were running quite a temperature. Giorgio was discovered in an affair with Helen Fleischman. Richard Wallace's comment was that it was interesting that, for people supposed to be so unconventional, the Joyces' reaction was one of proper middle class distress. Nora may have confided in Helen Nutting, probably did, but I don't remember being even interested. Helen Fleischman was then seen at the Joyces and was always treated with kindness and courtesy so far as I could see. I always had a feeling of vague discomfort in her presence at the James Joyces as I could see little temperamentally in common between her and any of the Joyces."⁶ Nino Frank considered that Helen had set her sights on "Joyce père," that she was "really married to father not son." He also remembered that in 1926 and 1927 Helen was interested in neither the elder nor the younger Joyce but was being courted by Philippe Soupault.⁷ Giorgio thought he had met Helen in 1922, when he was seventeen,⁸ but Helen

26. "to take care of Giorgio and Lucia while she [Nora] was confined to the hospital," disingenuously referring to them as "the children."

Helen Fleischman Joyce, Unpublished Memoir, RE Papers.

put the date several years later, and at least in her unpublished memoir, she surrounded it with a drama of betrayal and deception.

There is no doubt that Helen's initial excitement about meeting the Joyces had to do with Joyce senior. The "We Meet" section of her memoir is not about meeting her new lover, future husband, and father of her next child but about meeting her future father-in-law. He told her

"in no uncertain terms" that he found her attractive, and she felt that her fate would "be inextricably woven with the destiny of the man I had met that night."⁹ Helen quickly became a member of an inner circle

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of the Joyce family, knowledgeable about their birthday rituals, intimate parties, and the gossip festivals that invariably followed these gatherings. She was in on the Bloomsday lunch that Adrienne Monnier and Sylvia Beach gave at the Hôtel Léopold to honor Joyce in June 1929 and the Bal de la purée (Ball of the Busted), which Joyce (whom she called "Babbo") invented as a response to the crash of the American stock market that October. Everyone was to come in rags. Instead of fearing shabbiness, the guests were to flaunt it. Eventually she recognized that it was Giorgio—and not his father—who would furnish the next chapter of her life.

Although some of her own relatives were unkind and spoke of Helen as sexually voracious (to her brother's wife, Ellen, "she was a sexual vampire, a bloodsucker"¹⁰) Helen reversed these roles, casting Giorgio as the one on the make.

In her memoir, she pictured him at the end of an evening party at square Robiac, standing beautifully erect, fixing her with an intense, knowing look, and singing an old Italian song, "Amaryllis," to the accompaniment of Arthur Laubenstein. She was charmed. "I knew, as his father knew, that he was in love with me." She returned his gaze with "equal intensity," sensing that a "new phase" of her life had begun. She was embarrassed but equally certain that all the guests could see that Giorgio was very taken with her.¹¹ In her memory, Joyce became "perhaps the *deus ex machine* [*sic*] that was then shaping our ends."¹² "It was the old game that I loved," Helen admitted. "But this boy was so young, so sweet. I did not want to hurt him."¹²

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In one passage after another, Helen's retrospective memoirs tried to make the "rough places smooth." She pictured Nora, whom she came to dislike before her marriage to Giorgio was over, as the model young

30

wife, charming and witty. Lucia was "sweet, pretty, slightly cross-eyed

- 27 "that he found [her] pleasant to look at. I felt happy," she wrote creating a scene of seduction that was as replete with the machinations of fate as any Harlequin romance: "I blushed like a school-girl. It was a happy night and nothing except perhaps a slight excited tingle around the region of my heart warned me that this evening was to be a turning point in my life...For all time [my fate] was to be inextricably woven with the destiny of the man I had met that night."

Helen Fleischman Joyce, "A Portrait of the Artist by his Daughter-in-Law." Unpublished typescript, HRC.

28. "Standing tall and straight and looking young and very beautiful, he fixed his dark blue eyes on mine with such intensity, I blushed and he began to sing a lovely old Italian song, 'Amaryllis.' I thought I had never heard anything more lovely in my life. All his young passionate soul rang out in the small room and stirred my senses and my heart. I knew, as his father knew, that he was in love with me. Accustomed to having young men as well as men nearer my own age attracted to me, still I was deeply moved. I gazed back with equal intensity into his lovely Irish eyes and a new phase of my life, unknown to me, had begun.

When his fresh young bass baritone voice had faded away into the soft dark shadows of the room, the last poignant 'Amaryllis' had been sung with so much passion, I was inwardly rather embarrassed. It was surely obvious to everyone as to me, that Giorgio was very much interested in me. I applauded loudly and went up to him to thank him for his lovely song. He flushed, and bowed in his comely and old fashioned, yet so charming way."

Helen Fleischman Joyce, Unpublished Memoir. RE Papers.

29. "perhaps the *deus ex machine* that was then shaping our ends. It was," Helen admitted, "the old game that I loved. But this boy was so young, so sweet. I did not want to hurt him. Loving him would only bring him pain. I hoped he would get over it but not heartily or sincerely. I really liked his passionate adoration."

Helen Fleischman Joyce, Unpublished Memoir. RE Papers.

30. "the epitome of lovely young wifehood and womanhood [with] great charm and wit."

Helen Fleischman Joyce, Unpublished Memoir. RE Papers.

31. "His wife, Lillian, was Canadian by birth I think [she was English] and I thought her very common. She spoke in a high pitched shrill voice with a sort of cockney accent, her thin tense rather horselike face, her blonde string hair, her big teeth, her too thin body. I found not at all attractive. Perhaps there was a reason for the antagonism I felt toward her. Dear Lillian had been Giorgio's first romance. I think she seduced him but perhaps that is unkind. Certainly I never had any trouble getting him away from her."

Helen Fleischman Joyce. "A Portrait of the Artist by His Daughter-in-Law," HRC.

. . . with warm, friendly eyes . . . and an adorable little accent when speaking English."

According to Helen, she was not Giorgio's first lover, and their ability to share stories about their previous erotic experiences formed the foundation of their later intimacy.¹³ She claimed that Giorgio's sexual initiation had been with Lillian Wallace, Richard Wallace's wife, who had first come on the scene as the Christmas benefactor of Lucia and Giorgio in 1920.¹⁴ Wallace, she said, was an attractive, cultured man, but Lillian she found common. She characterized her as having a harsh voice, a "tense rather horselike face," scruffy hair, and big teeth. But she acknowledged a reason for her animosity. "Dear Lillian had been Giorgio's first romance. I think she seduced him but perhaps that is unkind." Helen easily got him away from her.¹⁵

31

This rather vindictive account is contradicted by Myron Nutting, who saw Lillian Wallace as "slender and quite chic looking." He remembered that she was English, the daughter of an Anglican parson, and that Richard Wallace had met her in Paris when she was performing with a theatrical troupe: "She was good-looking, dressed smartly and tastefully. She was good company, jolly, but shallow. Lillian always called James Joyce 'Jim.' I can't be sure but don't think even Richard Wallace used his first name. I had an idea from Nora that Joyce got several ideas from Lillian Wallace, but aside from the 'yes' of Molly's reverie, I don't recognize anything."¹⁶

And Helen's manuscript recollections differ from the well-groomed pages that she eventually typed and edited to form a coherent memoir. Its distinctiveness comes from the press of sentiment. It seems to be composed of unedited flows that capture the sting of raw, unprocessed emotion. It is self-aggrandizing and melodramatic. Her dislike of Lillian Wallace was real, and she later would explain her crucifixion upon the cross of gossip during 1926 and 1927—years when she was shunned by the elder Joyces in public—as due in part to Wallace's desire for revenge.

The Joyces, as Helen remembered them, were accustomed to combining teacups with intellectual scalpels. Their evening parties were always served up a second time for "cruel analysis" at tea the next day, when "we would figuratively wipe the blood of our victims off our mouths and hands . . . on dainty napkins." When she was included as a commentator in these postmortems, Helen considered herself one of the

elect and this the best part of the fun. Nora would start by disparaging the behavior and looks of the women guests: " 'Did you see' . . . and so on down the list with hardly a kind word for anyone."¹⁷ **32**

When she had to imagine herself as the dissected "corpse," Helen collapsed in misery until, in one remarkable intellectual move, she recognized that Joyce used his family's gossip fests in *Finnegans Wake*. "O tell me all about Anna Livia! I want to hear all about Anna Livia. Well, you know Anna Livia?" (*FW* 196.1-4). Helen concluded that she herself was the heroine of Joyce's novel. "Babbo," she thought, had transcribed her life in *Finnegans Wake* in the character of Anna Livia Plurabelle, just as Nora's penchant for criticizing her guests was transformed into the gossiping washerwomen "eagerly ripping me apart and washing their own dirty linen." In Helen's imagination Joyce became H.C.E., "trying to catch my slim young form which was chasing after Giorgio," all the while himself fearing that "love and life . . . youth and beauty" were passing him by.¹⁸ **33**

Helen apparently worked on this memoir after her separation from Giorgio in the late 1930s, and she no doubt needed to recapture a happy world that had disappeared. But her narrative does show us a young woman who is actively aware of intergenerational sexual currents, and it gives us some new information: Giorgio was already accustomed to adulterous assignations. **34**

Did the other Joyces know about Lillian Wallace's reputed relationship with Giorgio? It is difficult to imagine that Nora, who became upset with Helen Fleischman, would have continued to be Lillian's friend if she had known. If Joyce knew, he did not tell anyone, and Lucia's unsullied memory of Lillian lasted a lifetime. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, she remembered her simply as a family friend—significantly identified as "a Yorkshire girl"—who had treated her "like a princess." Of course this need not mean that she had no contemporary sense of the onset of her brother's erotic life.¹⁹

Lucia's assessment of his relationship with Helen was instant and unsparring. Giorgio was now a "gigolo."²⁰ This recognizable type was newly popular because of the movies and lifestyle of the Hollywood film star Rudolph Valentino, who began his career as a professional dancing partner at Maxim's. Both on and off the screen his erotic good looks seemed to symbolize "everything wild and wonderful and illicit in nature." In

32. "This was usually the best part of the party. Certainly the most illuminating. Mrs. Joyce would begin by criticizing how all the other women looked and behaved. Did you see...and so on down the list with hardly a kind word for anyone."

Helen Fleischman Joyce, *Ibid*.

33. "Babbo has my unconscious Calvary immortalized in the part of *Finnegans Wake* known as "Anna Livia Plurabelle" and the washerwomen gossiping by the river are indubitably Nora and some friends of hers, eagerly ripping me apart and washing their own dirty linen in the river while I (as Anna) swim happily and unconsciously downstream followed by H.C. Earwicker. Babbo never told me and I stupidly never suspected that I was the heroine of this masterpiece of prose and that he as H.C.E. was trying to catch my slim young form which was chasing after Giorgio who in the book is the twin brothers...Dear Dirty Dublin is passionately in the manner of a middle-aged man feeling love and life slipping through his fingers, pursuing youth and beauty in the person of Anna."

Helen Fleischman Joyce, *Ibid*.

34. "If Joyce's art followed life, then the life of his son followed art. "Do as I write, not as I do." Ulysses was not only a fact in Giorgio's life; it was a script. He had found a precursor in Blazes Boylan, even if the parent who had created the jaunty adulterer was scandalized by his behavior. He had 'vicereversed' his father's use of Lillian Wallace as one of the models for Molly Bloom."

Carol Shloss. James Joyce.

critical essays about *Work in Progress*, a book with the whimsical title *Our Exagmination Round His Factification for Incamination of "Work in Progress."* Not only did Joyce "choreograph" each of the twelve essays in the book, but he also commandeered more essays for the future. In addition, he was arranging for Harry and Caresse Crosby to bring out a limited edition of *Tales Told of Shem and Shaun* at their Black Sun Press.⁴⁷ And along with all these projects, Sylvia Beach and Adrienne Monnier conspired to hold a *Déjeuner Ulysse* to celebrate the publication of the French translation of *Ulysses*. On 27 June these two inimitable ladies chartered a bus to take all their guests to the town of Les Vaux-de-Cernay where they would all dine together at the aptly named Hôtel Léopold.

Helen Fleischman remembered this as a marvelous party. She, Giorgio, Samuel Beckett, and Tom MacGreevy were together in the bus, and the young men she met at the party were "very attractive." She flirted, drank copiously, and had "a perfectly wonderful time."⁴⁸ But to Lucia it was yet another detour from her own life and from the six hours a day that she was now working with Madame Egorova, her new ballet teacher.⁴⁹ If she looked dejected or abstracted in the photograph taken to commemorate the occasion, there was reason. Her position in the photo speaks for itself. She was in the back row on the side—obviously an unimportant person to whoever arranged the photograph. And Helen, who is leaning her weight on the shoulders of Philippe Soupault, displaces her quite directly and even physically.

Lucia probably experienced the family trip to Torquay, a seaside resort in southwestern England, later in the summer as a similar disruption. Joyce was using the trip as an occasion for research as well as pleasure. He visited Kent's Cavern to see prehistoric remains that would fit into his fictional portrait of H.C.E. as a giant lying beneath the earth dreaming of the course of human history. He also collected a "series of strange newspapers and magazines: *The Baker and Confectioner*, *Boy's Cinema*, *The Furniture Record*, *Poppy's Paper*, *The Schoolgirls' Own*, *Woman*, *Woman's Friend*, *Justice of the Peace*, *The Hairdressers' Weekly*,"⁵⁰ which he planned to use in the second section of *Work in Progress*, devoted to children. But to the children at his side he paid scant attention. In England, according to Gilbert, "the Great Man interested as usual in himself only. Pleased to have two secretaries, Mrs. Fleischman and

35. "very attractive and brilliant young French writers and I flirted and ate and drank a lot of good wine and had a perfectly wonderful time."

Helen Fleischman Joyce. "Luncheon at Café Leopold." Unpublished Memoir, RE Papers.

Lucia Joyce

Supplemental Material

[Home](#) > [Chapter 7 Sections](#) > Shloss' Deletions

These are quotations of my own language that were deleted before publication.

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2. But these biases do not preclude all truthfulness, and they do not necessarily mean that we shouldn't credit her account of Giorgio's sexual experience before they met.

elect and this the best part of the fun. Nora would start by disparaging the behavior and looks of the women guests: " 'Did you see' . . . and so on down the list with hardly a kind word for anyone."¹⁷

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3. "Aside from its sad narcissism, Helen's story offers a glimpse of a family dealing with the erotic life of a child. It is, in fact, hard to imagine that the Joyces would not have dissected the lives of Helen and Giorgio in the way that she imagines. The text also shows us a young woman who is actively aware of inter-generation sexual currents---she imagines herself as the object of Joyce's desire--while she pictures her husband as 'pursuing lazily nothing and no one in particular'"
4. If Joyce's art followed life, then the life of his son followed art. "Do as I write, not as I do." Ulysses was not only a fact in Giorgio's life; it was a script. He had found a precursor in Blazes Boylan, even if the parent who had created the jaunty adulterer was scandalized by his behavior. He had "vicereversed" his father's use of Lillian Wallace as one of the models for Molly Bloom"

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Supplemental Material

[Home](#) > [Chapter 7 Sections](#) > From The Notebook Observations

The Notebook Observations; the Early Drafts¹

1929

VI.B.28.064 ⊥

VI.B.28.140

VI.B.28.151

VI.B.28.152

VI.B.28.169 ⊥

VI.B.28.171

February-March 1929

VI.B.29.017

VI.B.29.066

February- March 1930

May 1930-October 1930

VI.B.32.flyleaf verso ⊥

VI.B.32.008 ⊥

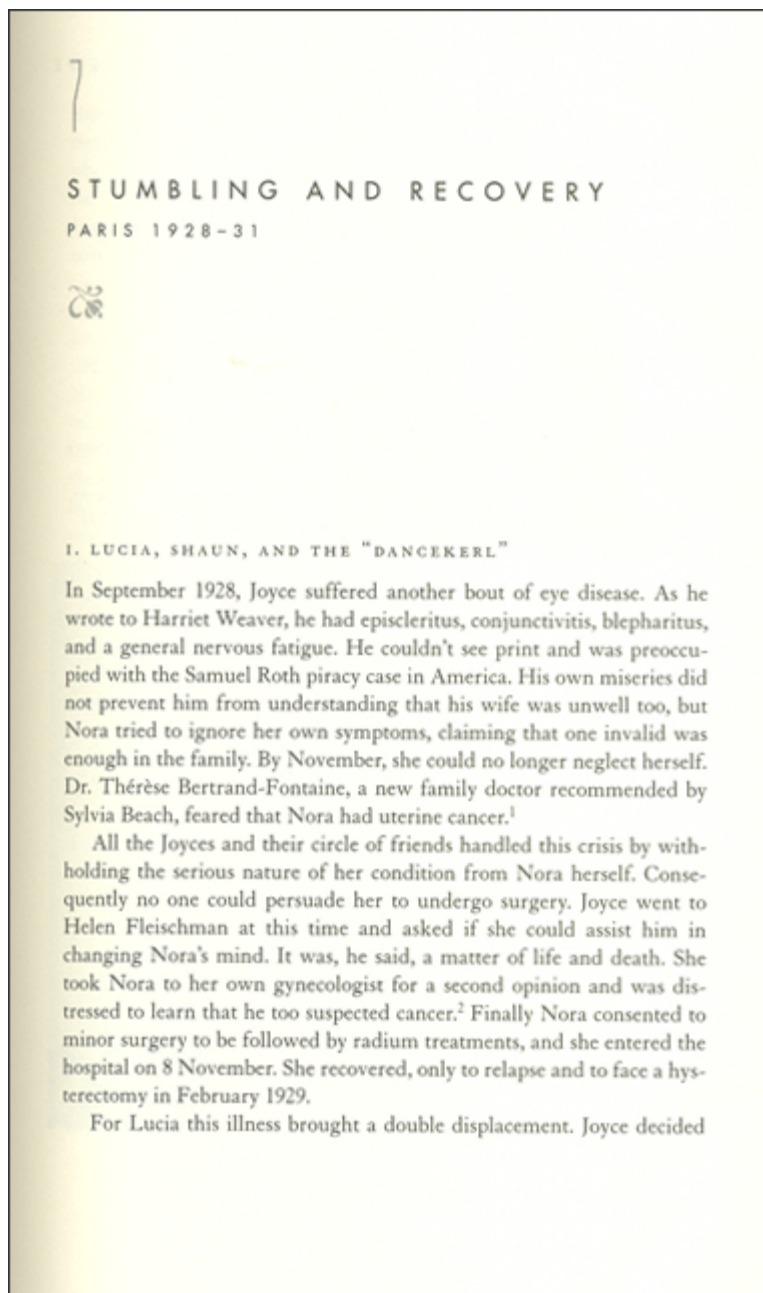
VI.B.32.014 ⊥

VI.B.32.015 ⊥

VI.B.32.019 ⊥ (facing left)

VI.B.32.020

VI.B.32.040 ⊥ & ⊤



VI.B.32.050

VI.B.32.084

VI.B.32.105 ⊥ (facing left)

VI.B.32.122 ⊥

VI.B.32.138 Chapell d'Izzied

Note: Chapell d'Izzied. At this time Joyce was planning to publish a version of II.1 under this title, with its clear echoes of Chapelizod, Issy and 'dizzy'. In a letter dated 22 December 1930 he wrote to Miss Weaver: I am also trying to explain to Miss Monnier's sister who knows no English the text of Chappelle D'Izzied (the next fragment) for which she is to do a hieroglyph preface.

(*Letters III*, 209)

VI.B.32.157

VI.B.32.210

(facing left)

VI.B.32. back flyleaf verso Lucia Joyce

September - November 1930

II, i "The Twilight Games" (plan on MS 47482, 2; FW 222-236)

¹The following discussion of James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* notebook observations supplements the summary chapter about the *Wake* at the end of my published biography of Lucia Joyce (chapter 16). In this supplementary material, the "sigla" for the daughter figure from Joyce's notebooks forms a kind of additional infrastructure of the biography, arranged chronologically and placed next to the actual events of Lucia's life. They show what Joyce observed about Lucia as she grew and they indicate her consistent influence on the final text of *Finnegans Wake*. They also indicate the composite nature of the daughter figure in the *Wake*, as Joyce merges experiential observations with notes from other sources about adolescent girls emerging into womanhood, figures like Alice Liddell from *Alice in Wonderland*, Isa Bowman, "Peaches" Browning, Isolde from *Tristan and Isolde*, Edith Thompson from the *Trial of Frederic Bywaters and Edith Thompson*, Lot's daughters, and so forth. In the early notebooks, the daughter is indicated by the nickname "Is" or "Issy" or "Isabeale" or some variation of the name "Isolde." Later, she, like all of the other major characters, acquired a symbol, \perp , which could also appear on its side, facing either left or right. When used in combination with the symbol \top , Joyce was usually referring to some aspect of the love triangle in *Tristan and Isolde*.

As Joyce moved from observations of Lucia to the final construction of *Finnegans Wake*, he went through numerous drafts. Following these drafts lets us see, in a way that is rarely available to scholars, the transposition of life into art. As Joyce progressed from watching his adolescent daughter, he joined her, in his imagination, with the situation of other young women entering into life for the first time. He shows them learning about the nature of human intimacy, the anatomy of sex, the secrecy, suspicions and possibilities for betrayal that can accompany sex, and the complexities and ambiguities of human emotional attachments. Of particular interest to me, was Joyce's propensity to align Lucia with "triangles" and with close brother-sister relationships in history and literature. That is, one of his basic instincts led him to figure her as (for example) Isolde in the the story of *Tristan, King Mark and Isolde*, where, interestingly, the triangle is transposed to Shaun, Earwicker and Issy, that is, to the Wakean characters associated, in familial terms, with Giorgio, Joyce and Lucia. This triangular pattern and the brother-sister attachment pattern are insistent in Joyce's notebooks, in his drafts and in the final version of *Finnegans Wake*. The triangular pattern is also insistent in my biography of Lucia, as published, but, with the addition of this notebook and draft evidence, the assertion of these heavily weighted familial relationships is even more compelling than in the published version made available to scholars and reviewers. In fact, given the consistency of Joyce's evidence, a biographer would have been irresponsible to create a narrative without these emotional constellations.

Here you will find an additional infrastructure for my biography, given in the form of citations from the notebooks, for scholars who

are interested in tracing most of Joyce's observations of the Lucia/Issy character. Also included are several examples of the transformational use of such material that I did not include in the final version of the book; that is, in the published book, I used only material from *Finnegans Wake* and not the genetic material leading up to it, the material that shows Joyce's chronological observation of Lucia and his transformational use of it.

Lucia Joyce

Supplemental Material

[Home](#) | Chapter 8 Sections: [36](#) | [37](#)

Supplemental material:

[Shloss' Deletions](#) | [The Notebook Observations](#)

36. "Exceedingly nice girls can strike exceedingly bad times."
(FW 246.22-23)



STEPPING OUT

PARIS 1931-32



36

1. LUCIA, SAMUEL BECKETT, AND THE MIRROR

By the end of the 1920s, the circle around Joyce and his family had begun to shift, as old friends like the Nuttings left Paris and others, keen to play their own special roles in the creation of modernist literature, arrived and introduced themselves. On New Year's Eve 1929 Stuart Gilbert, who kept a diary, noted that the "inner circle" now included Helen Fleischman (whom he referred to as "Mrs. Butcher"), Mr. and Mrs. Huddleston, and Padraic and Mary Colum. His writing also shows us that Joyce's eyes were not the only ones fixed on Lucia in these years.

In effect, Gilbert made Lucia into his model of the young flapper, seeing her as an avatar of a postwar urban generation of women or, as he put it, "the typical girl left to herself and developing in all her selfishness."¹ In his journal, he noticed major events in Lucia's life, like Giorgio's marriage in December 1930, Lucia's hostility toward Helen (which he read as a form of anti-Semitism), and the elder Joyces' reconciliation with Helen, symbolized by their agreement to have Christmas dinner at her home that December. He knew about Lucia's increasing worry about the strabismus in her eye² and wrote down the conversation he had with Joyce when he learned about a "domestic battle" over Lucia's eye and a small scar on her chin.³ A few days later he remembered seeing her with a bandage on her eye, the result of corrective surgery. She was understandably anxious about both her vision and her looks.⁴

196

THE DANCE OF LIFE

II. MORE DANCING PARTNERS

37 Beckett returned to Dublin to take up a position as a lecturer in French at Trinity College at the end of summer in 1931. By this time Lucia had begun to change the entire focus of her life. No longer dancing in a sustained way, she had begun halfheartedly to study design and to run with a fast crowd of visual artists. Helen Kastor Joyce remembered these years as painful ones for Lucia, whose depression and aimlessness were palpable: suddenly she was adrift "without an occupation or a career," and it seemed that nothing could take the place of dancing.⁷⁶

Stella Steyn, a young Irish artist who knew Lucia, also noticed the change in her between 1926, when they first met, and 1929, when she encountered Lucia again. "Lucia was a young girl about a year older than me," she wrote of her first visit to Paris in 1926.⁷⁷ "Pretty, with a fresh complexion, elegant and more sophisticated than a young art student. Joyce encouraged a friendship between us, as we were of an age. Lucia was a dancer and had been studying since the age of sixteen and seemed to be [as] absorbed in dancing as I was in art." Joyce also suggested a kind of barter between the girls: Lucia's fluent French in exchange for visits to the Louvre and discussions of pictures. Stella visited square Robiac several times a week, but neither the language lessons nor the art appreciation plan worked out: "I don't think Lucia had much interest in art at all."⁷⁸

When Steyn returned for a second period of study in 1929, she expanded her repertoire to include market and street scenes. These were such a success that *Paris Montparnasse* published an article on her work. It was perhaps for this reason that Joyce asked her to do a few illustrations for *Finnegans Wake*. She was, according to her own admission, "a bit alarmed about this as I was young and was always rather afraid of Joyce." But when he read the passages of his book aloud to her, explaining what to listen to, she understood enough to make three drawings, which appeared in *transition* in the fall of 1929: "Anna Livia with her Baudeloire Maids," "The Ondt's Funeral," and "Anna Livia Legging a Jig."⁷⁹

Later in the year Lucia came to visit Stella in Montparnasse and told her that her father had advised her to give up dancing as a career and to take up something more akin to what Stella was doing. The young

37. "Lucia was very upset and depressed; she was suddenly left without an occupation or a career, and nothing seemed to take its place."

Helen Flesichman Joyce. Notes to Richard Ellmann re mistakes in his biography of James Joyce, RE Papers.

Lucia Joyce

Supplemental Material

[Home](#) > [Chapter 8 Sections](#) > Shloss' Deletions

These are quotations of my own language that were deleted before publication.

1. "By the late 1920s, she seems also to be aware of the erotic dimension of this looking back and forth... But when she came to relate to other men as possible suitors, they, too, noticed her propensity to model, to primp and to think of herself in terms of her own impression."

As Gilbert watched her, he found himself regarding a young woman who was increasingly preoccupied with her own sexual attractiveness. Where once she had stood at the ballet barre, using the mirror to study her dancing body, watching herself perfect the grace and precision of her own movements, she now began to consider her body as a mirror, capable of reflecting back to others the nature of their own desire. **1**

Gilbert was quite critical of Lucia. In 1932 he wrote, "Only her conceit and idleness prevented her from trying for either of the things she wanted, becoming another Pavlova or making a good match. . . . She cultivates her father's imperious airs and spells of silence. And few young men in these times of free and facile conjugation would put up with that. Illiterate in three languages, professing the feminist desire to 'work' and having the feminine aversion for any work that is not directly exhibitionist or concerned with embellishing her body—'work' as she sees it, meaning a well-warmed and elegant office where she, the Worker, shines like a jewel before the admiring gaze of employer."⁵

Although "the Girl" of the Parisian 1920s provided him with categories for seeing the longings and desires of his friend's young daughter,⁶ Gilbert caught Lucia at a shifting and yet singularly important moment in her life. Where Gilbert generalized, seeing exhibitionism as a typically "feminine" trait, and the desire to work for admiring men as a "feminist" one, Lucia's posing for "the gaze" of men magnified and focused the behaviors of a lifetime spent as an artist's child. Her father captured these tendencies in the book he was writing, where the daughter becomes "Show 'm the Posed" (*FW* 92.13) and then "the dotter of [her father's] eyes" (*FW* 372.03). The girl who once delighted in herself as a center of energy, organizing her own forces of creativity and finding an authentic way of being in the dance, has begun to slip away. She is becoming a girl aware of herself dancing, thinking instead about how the dance looks to the observer.⁷ Her father saw this, too. Issy, the fictional daughter, "smiled over herself like the beauty of the image of the pose of the daughter" (*FW* 157.34–35). By the late 1920s Lucia seemed to be aware of the erotic dimension of this looking back and forth. She was beginning to pay attention to eyes other than her father's "fishy eyes" (*FW* 75.13) and "fathomglasses" (*FW* 389.26–28) and "deepseapeepers" (*FW* 386.16–17) even though these were the eyes that had watched her grow from childhood into a woman who could re-create herself as a beguiling,

at a loss. Thus they never, or rarely, make friends.¹¹⁷ On 28 April 1930, he paused to ask himself what Léon's interest in the Joyces was. "After Lucia?" he wondered, before reminding himself that Léon was already married.¹¹⁸

During this disruptive time, we can catch only dark glimpses of Lucia. We see her in fleeting images that accost the mind but do not cohere in a sustained narrative. Zdenka Podhajsky remembered that Lucia was on the sexual prowl. In the way that girlfriends share news of their exploits with the opposite sex, Lucia had told her about secret meetings with a sailor at the Eiffel Tower, and when Zdenka had asked her what the attraction was, she replied, "Il est tellement naïf." His naïveté made her own shyness more bearable. She told Zdenka about coming on to Liam O'Flaherty at one of her father's parties;¹¹⁹ and then, to Zdenka's surprise, she greeted her return from a trip with a passionate kiss—announcing that she had now become a lesbian.¹²⁰ In an interview with Richard Ellmann in 1953, Maria Jolas mentioned that "Lucia had evidently stopped [taking] dope." Had Lucia participated in smoking some of the opium that was so much a part of the lives of people like Harry and Caresse Crosby?¹²¹ Mary Colum remembered, "We heard of her coming into a party and having been offered a drink, saying that instead of a glass of sherry she would have half a cocktail, as that would enable her to face going home."¹²²

It is a strained, dissonant mosaic of experiences, but Nora reduced it to what she called her daughter's "nonsense." Her favorite jibe was, "why can't you be more like Kitten Neel? She has lots of boy friends." And "why don't you stop dancing since it makes you too nervous?" Or "why do you hang on your father's every word—he did x and y in Trieste."¹²³ These, at least, were Helen Kastor Joyce's memories, admittedly influenced by her own difficulties within the family. But the general drift was confirmed by Lucia in 1935 when she said very simply to her cousin, Bozena Berta: "my mother doesn't approve of me."¹²⁴

Clearly trouble was brewing, and in light of it the larger pattern of Joyce's general preoccupation in these years, his Wakean comedy of the sleeping giant, takes on a darker, almost prescient tone akin to Karl Marx's troping of Western capitalism as a sleeping giant. Both men used the structure and language of fairy tale to identify a dormant menace of an entirely different order. When we think of the building tensions and

2. "And she [Nora] would also continue to taunt Lucia trying to drive a wedge between her children and Joyce. These, at least, were Helen Fleischman Joyce's memories of the dynamic between the Joyce children and their mother during these years."

Lucia Joyce

Supplemental Material

[Home](#) > [Chapter 8 Sections](#) > From The Notebook Observations

The Notebook Observations; the Early Drafts¹

Mid February - late April 1931

VI.B.33.071 ⊥ (facing right)

VI.B.33.073 ⊥ (facing right)

VI.B.33.097 ⊥ (facing left)

VI.B.33.120 ⊥ (facing right)

⊥ (facing left)

VI.B.33.121 ⊥ (facing left)

VI.B.33.134

VI.B.33.135

⊥ (facing left)

⊥ (facing left)

⊥ (facing left)

VI.B.33.138 ⊥ (facing left)

⊥ (facing left)

VI.B.33.139 ⊥ (facing left)

⊥ (facing left)

VI.B.33.144

VI.B.33.148



STEPPING OUT

PARIS 1931-32



I. LUCIA, SAMUEL BECKETT, AND THE MIRROR

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VI.B.33.151

VI.B.33.152

VI.B.33.153

VI.B.33.157

VI.B.33.163

VI.B.33.164

VI.B.33.165

┌ (facing left)

VI.B.33.167

VI.B.33.168 ┌ (facing left)

VI.B.33.165

VI.B.33.169

VI.B.33.171 ┌ (facing left) VI.B.33.173 a major operation

VI.B.33.174

VI.B.33.178

VI.B.33.183

VI.B.33.184

VI.B.33.185

VI.B.33.188 ES shows gir/ her angel in a mirror

Life of Emanuel Swedenborg 305. [A Swedish girl repeatedly asked Swedenborg to show her an angel] "At last he consented, and leading her to summer-house in his garden, he placed her before a curtain that had been lowered, and then said, 'Now you shall see an angel'; and as he spoke, he drew up the curtain, when the maiden beheld herself reflected in a mirror."

VI.B.33. back flyleaf verso ~~Zenen~~ Zdenka Podhayska/ 72 rue de Verdun/ Meudon/ Malostranska/ 15/ Prague

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