

ZOUKI'S LITERARY CHALLENGE 1.0

In between composing marvellous tunes (which I realize with some sadness will become hugely popular 70 or 80 years after my death), I re-read James Joyce's wonderful "Dubliners". Each one of these stories is a gem that shines brighter and shows more sparkling facets every time I encounter it. God rest you kindly, Jemser!

It should come as little or no surprise to many of you that Zouki has himself dabbled in the short story from time to time. The following (from 2002) are examples of what appeared to be hopeful beginnings that, sadly, never got very much further. If you can do anything with them, please accept them as a token of my undying love and esteem (and a cut on any royalties or movie rights would be a nice gesture).

=====

The wind blew softly over Farmer Dwelkin's pig pen as the Dawn began to massage Orion with her pinky-purple fingers. From the middle distance came the sounds of a man coughing, followed by a baby crying and eventually a lonely wolf howl . . . Genevieve tried to recall the last time she had heard a wolf howl. But there had been no wolves in the Bronx, had never been wolves in the Bronx. Larry had told her that. How sleepy she was!

=====

"The sex life of the wombat is not a subject we care to discuss over dinner, Bradley," said Mrs. Argnockle crisply.

=====

The Shurdleys, in spite of being staunch Methodists, always managed to glut themselves with pecan pralines around religious holidays. Doyle, their eldest son, had not surprisingly the worst case of acne ever seen in town. But it was the Siamese twins, Elissa and Letitia, who always attracted the most attention.

ZOUKI'S LITERARY CHALLENGE 1.0

=====

Never was there a woman as beautiful as Sheila was the night that she ran screaming into the foaming sea at Inch Strand. Her horse stood placidly, horsily, listening to her splashing about, crying to the unheeding waves all the details of Tadhg's unkindness. The horse grew tired and hungry and hoped for a quick return to the stable, ignoring in the clamor of his equine stomach Sheila's drunken imprecations to the stars.

=====

The rain fell with such a fury that it seemed to want to break the cottage windows and reach inside. Mick sighed and threw another turf in the direction of the dying fire. . .how long had it been since Eileen had left? Did she take one cow or two? Suddenly there was a loud crash: somebody had thrown a bowling ball through the half-door. Oh God, not again, sobbed Mick as hot tears sprang to his bright blue eyes.

=====

"It was only a splinter," thought Barbara as she gazed in amazement at her entire arm covered with blood. "I'd better do something about this." Suddenly her reverie was interrupted by Lou's cellphone ringing. But Lou was away on business, in Nebraska or was it Iowa? Why didn't he bring his phone with him? And who had ordered that half-consumed pepperoni-and-sardine pizza she noticed for the first time as it lay congealing on the table?

=====

Those damned Forest-Dwellers of Thirvap 6 are all alike, thought Murphy as he rotated his plasmobile closer to the PanGal Pub. Screw them all. I need a drink. And to hell with that octopoid Sharlessa, he said half-aloud to himself. Cute but a tease. Hug you with four arms and pick your pockets with the other four. I really need a drink.

ZOUKI'S LITERARY CHALLENGE 1.0

=====

Once upon a time there was a transgendered Leprechaun who had a bad gambling habit and drove a fourth-hand Ferrari. He had never really liked broccoli and refused steadfastly to recommend it to his friends. He usually spent winters in the south of France but one January decided to visit an uncle in Minneapolis, a decision he often had cause to regret in later years.

=====

Good luck - and don't forget the cut on the royalties. Thank you.

- o o o -