

Chapter 3: Proteus

The action: Stick with it! Don't get discouraged! Stephen is walking on the beach--Sandymount Strand--as he approaches Dublin after getting off work at school. It's 11 am. The complexity, of course, comes from the fact that we're almost entirely in Stephen's mind--almost any view you have of the world is only as it impinges on Stephen's consciousness. He's thinking about aesthetics in the beginning, and about church philosophy, etc. A lot of esoteric stuff. Look for the set piece that is Stephen's memory of living in Paris--his meeting with Kevin Egan especially.



Sandymount Strand, with the Pigeon House power station in the background; in the far background, you can see the Hill of Howth across Dublin Bay

Another important section is when Stephen is composing his poem about the vampire--pay careful attention there as he tries to write down a line of poetry.



Odyssey parallel: Proteus was a god of the sea. Menelaus (Helen's husband), when returning from Troy to Sparta, was delayed at an Egyptian island. He took hold of Proteus in order to get info on how to get back home; Proteus took many forms hoping to scare Menelaus off, but the Greek held on till the god told him what he needed to know, plus the whereabouts of Odysseus as an extra. Menelaus tells this story to Telemachus. Menelaus supposedly corresponds to Kevin Egan, which leads to the question, who is Helen, Menelaus's wife?