

# FW 315.21 – 316.1

## Pukkelsen (unveiled)

by  
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### Disclaimer

These are tentative annotations, liable to be adjusted, modified or discarded. Many of them are highly questionable, definitely far-fetched and a few on the verge of insanity. So use them at your own risk. My aim is trying to put together controversial data in order to build a possible system. The results may not be satisfactory, but I am convinced that the strategy is the right one. McHugh's Annotations and Fweet should be always at hand.

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315.21: -- Good marrams, sagd he, freshwatties and boasterdes all, as  
315.22: he put into bierhiven, nogeysokey first, cabootle segund, jilling  
315.23: to windwards, as he made straks for that oerasound the snarsty weg  
315.24: for Publin, so was his horenpipe lug in the lee off their mouths  
315.25: organs, with his tilt too taut for his tammy all a slaunter and his  
315.26: wigger on a wagger with its tag tucked. Up. With a good easter-  
315.27: ing and a good westering. And he asked from him how the hitch  
315.28: did do this my fand sulkers that mone met the Kidballacks which  
315.29: he suttonly remembered also where the hatch was he endnew  
315.30: strandweys he's that fond sutchenson, a penincular fraimd of  
315.31: mind, fordeed he was langseling to talka holt of hems, clown  
315.32: toff, tye hug fliorten. Cablen: Clifftop. Shelvling tobay oppe-  
315.33: long tomeadow. Ware cobbles. Posh.

315.34: -- Skibbereen has common inn, by pounautique, with poke-  
315.35: way paw, and sadder raven evermore, telled shinshanks lauwing  
315.36: frankish for his kicker who, through the medium of gallic  
316.1: -- Pukkelsen, tilltold.

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*An important remark as a prologue. Although the protagonist is obviously the Norwegian Captain, he is not known immediately. The one who enters is just a weird sailor (skipper) attired in a shapeless mass of absurd clothes. Only at the end he will be recognized by the Ship's Husband. The tailor himself is not named by the Captain. He is referred to only in general terms. The whole passage is indeed a parody of a theatrical "anagnorisis" (the recognition or discovery by the protagonist of the identity of some character). If I use "captain" and "tailor" it is just to avoid confusion in this quite confusing passage.*

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Having mimicked the entrance of the Captain, Porter continues his narration reporting the sailor's speech as he enters the inn.

**-- Good marrams, sagd he, freshwatties and boasterdes all**

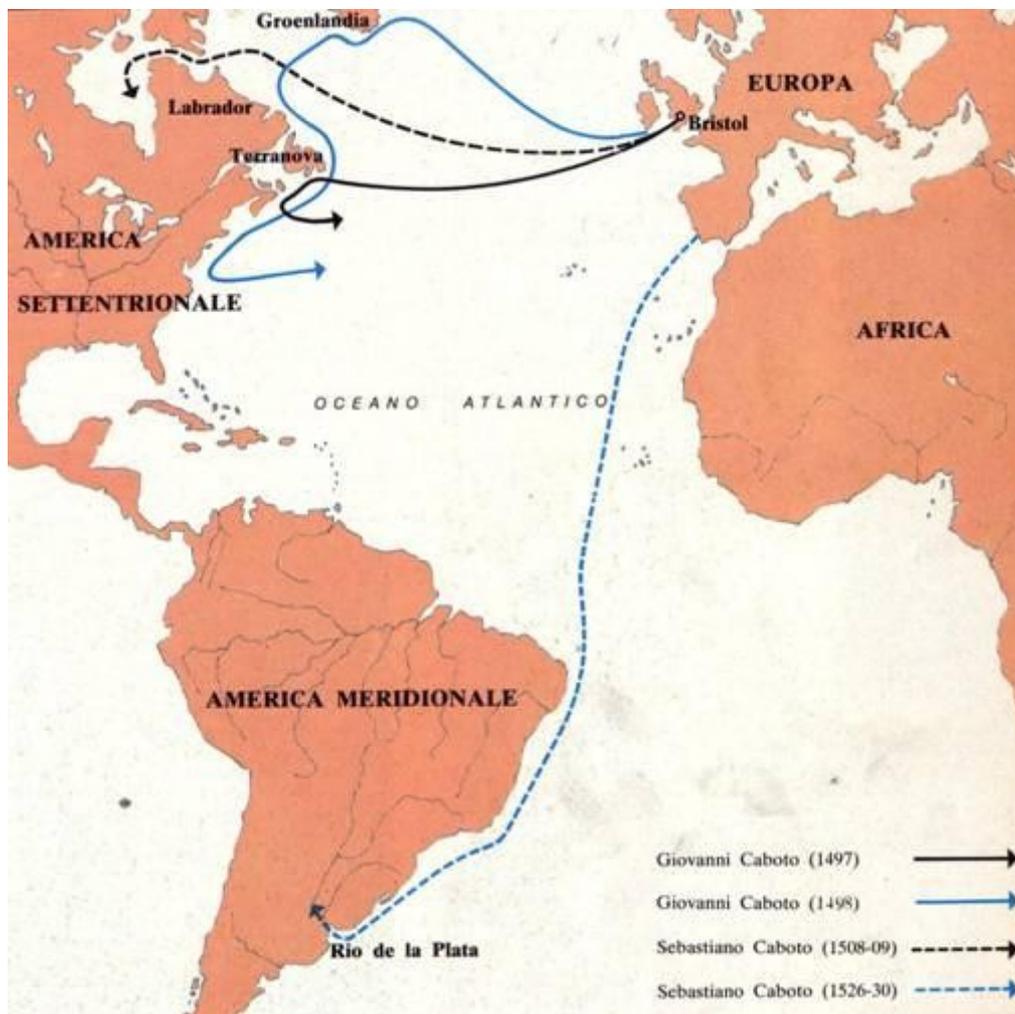
The Captain's greeting is indeed sarcastic, since he calls the clients "*faggots, unskilled sailors and boasting bastards*". Why faggots? Because "**marrams**" hints both at "*madams*" and at "*marram grass*", its Latin name being "*ammophila*", a not so vague homophony with "*homophile*". *Unskilled sailors* because they are "**freshwatties**": not only *freshwater sailors*, accustomed to sailing in inland waters only, but because they do not really "sail", but go on steam boats (Watt → steam engine). Boasting bastards (**boasterdes**) don't need further elucidations. Nonetheless the Captain says "good evening" to them, using the Portuguese form "*boa tarde*". But in doing that probably he keeps insulting the clients, since a "*Portuguese*", in Italian theatrical slang means "*one who enters (legally) without paying the ticket*", a sort of "*parasite*". This is the way the Captain introduces himself as he enters the buzzing inn (*bee-hive*),

**as he put into bierhiven**

which is a port (*beer Haven*), a paradise (*beer Heaven*) and a place that will cause death, a propaedeutic cemetery (*bier/coffin hive*). His appearance is somewhat weird:

### **nogeysokey first, cabootle segund**

The obvious reference to Nagasaki is puzzling. It could hint at the fact that the sailor is coming from a sea voyage Eastwards (Japan). He is a sort of another (*second*) famous explorer: *Giovanni Caboto (cabootle)*, who discovered Nova Scotia and Canada and was the one who continued Colombo's work,



which probably justifies the Spanish “**segund**”. Unless “second” refers to Giovanni's son *Sebastiano*, he himself a famous explorer. The Captain would then be one of the “*cabootle*” family. But I'd rather focus the attention on the meaning of Nagasaki, namely “*long peninsula*” or “*long*

*cape*". That would be more proper to the general context. Later on we'll find a "penincular" with obvious sexual allusions, similar to our "peninsula". That would mean that his "dick" comes first; and that reminds of an Italian vulgar idiomatic form "*andare a cazzo ritto/dritto*". Literally it is "*to go with upright dick*": its real meaning: "*to go without hesitation / surely*". Thus **nogeysokey first** would point to the Captain's determined approach. But the sentence could in fact describe his physical appearance: first his head (*cape*) and then all the rest (*the whole caboodle*), in a sort of shapeless mass, which will be better defined very soon after.

**jilling to windwards,**

He moves around (**jilling**) in the direction of the wind (**windwards**), figuratively : where people talk, blowing their wind,

**as he made straks for that oerasound the snarsty weg for Publin,**

as when, following the overflowing sounds (**oerasound** : oversound) he heard, he went directly (**straks**: Norwegian "*straight*") to the Dublin pub (**Publin**) through the quickest (Norwegian "*snarest*"), though most "*snary*" way (**snarsty weg**);

**so was his horenpipe lug in the lee off their mouths organs**

his ear, used to the rhythms of the sailor's hornpipe

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hfJ9QLIYIXU>

(I'm wondering whether there might be also a hint at *Popeye the Sailor Man* : the hornpipe present in the first part of the opening credits theme ), following the muffled sounds (**in the lee off** ) of their voices (**mouths organs**). As a matter of fact "*in the lee of*" means "*the side away from the direction from which the wind blows*", in other words "sheltered". But "*off*" being "*farther*" and "*removed*" the sentence suggests that he is not repaired from the sounds, but able to catch their mouth organs which are playing the music of the sailor's hornpipe, figuratively the gossips about him.

**with his tilt too taut for his tammy all a slaunter  
and his wigger on a wagger with its tag tucked. Up.**

So he enters, just like the devil in the famous song,

*Did you ever see the devil  
With the wooden spade and shovel  
Digging praties for his supper  
And his tail cocked up?*

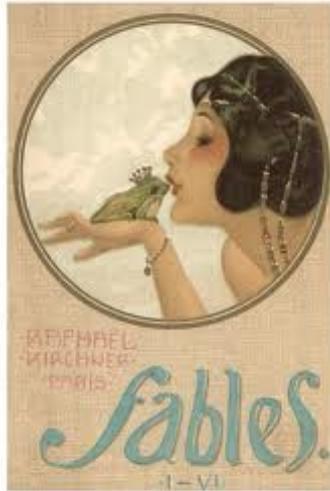
wearing the not fitting suit that the tailor sewed for him. A suit which is indeed a “**tilt**”, its earlier meaning being “*covering of coarse cloth*”, too taut on the belly (*tummy*), somewhat askew (**slaunter** : slant + **unter** : German *under*), like a “**tammy**” (*tam-o'-shanter*).



And then we have a repetition of the above seen shapeless mass. His head (**wigger**: what carries the wig) directly appended to his bottom (**wagger** : what wags) and his upright (**tucked. Up.**) penis (**tag**) – figuratively “pissed off” (Italian “*incazzato*”). I can't help seeing in this shapeless mass a frog



with possible references to the German fable : *Der Froschkönig* (The Frog Prince),



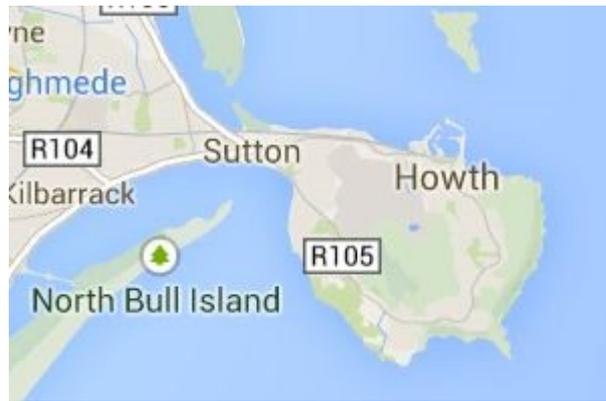
since this second part of the tale deals mostly with the love affair of the Captain with the tailor's daughter.

**With a good easter-ing and a good westering.**

He gives a good look around, right and left (possible references to the satirical Elizabethan plays "*Eastwards, ho!*" and "*Westwards, ho!*"), somewhat straying (*erring*) until he locates the Ship's Husband (he too addressed with a generic "**him**").

**And he asked from him how the hitch did do this  
my fand sulkers  
that mone met the Kidballacks  
which he suttonly remembered**

He shows **him** (Ship's Husband) the unwearable suit (**this**) and asks how that stupid (Triestine "*mona*") man (**mone**), without balls (having the balls of a kid : **Kidballacks**) - and the Ship's Husband certainly (**suttonly**) knows whom he is talking about – could sew a thing like that. There is a possible irony in "**suttonly**", since "Sutton" is "the neck" which ties Howth to the mainland



but, as we have seen, the Captain seems to have “no neck” (his head attached directly to his bottom). In order to have more proofs the Captain calls to witness the clients, who are looking at him with an evil (**fand** : Norwegian *fanden* : devil) and sulky attitude (**sulkers**) and whom he calls “bloody (Danish *fanden*) suckers” and “seasick freshwater sailors” (**freshwatties**). This needs an explanation. McHugh suggests “Norwegian *sjöulker* : old salts”. But I think that is an error. That seems a compound word resulting from “*sjö* : sea” and “*ulker* : ulcer”, thus “seasick”, which would not apply to “old salts”. They would be “*sjöulver*”, where “*ulver*” is the plural of “*ulv*” (wolf): thus “sea wolves, old salts”. Of course *sjöulker* could be a further Norwegian sarcastic pun: seasick (*sjöulker*) sea wolves (*sjöulver*). Karl Reisman suggests that “**ulk**” may refer to a Swedish fish: *Gymnocanthus tricuspis*, of the *scorpaeniformes* order, of *Scorpaenidae* family: *scorpion-fish*, particularly ugly.



That would be indeed a further offence to the hostile customers of the pub.

**also where the hatch was he  
endnew strandweys**

The Captain asks where he can find on the spot (Irish **endnew** : today) someone (e.g. the tailor) who has hidden himself (**hatch**) somewhere along the strand (**strandweys**), and no beating around the bush (*and no strange ways*), since he wants to know straight away.

**he's that fond sutchenson, a penincular fraimd of mind,**

Here we plunge into dirty waters. Apparently the Captain is referring to a “Mr *such-and-such*” (**sutchenson**), a particular friend of his, whom he does not mention by name. (Would that be a debasing attitude? The tailor not even worth naming?) But “**penincular**” hides an Italian “*incular*” (to sodomize); and if pen “*pen is*” than we get someone who has been “*framed*” (**fraimd**) and “*buggered*” (according to the point of vantage: either the sailor or the tailor). With “**fraimd of mind**” which could be both “*out of his mind*” (German “*fremd*” : foreign, alien), or “*framed of mind*”, namely one whose intent is to play foul (*frame*) on others.

**fordeed he was langseling to talka holt of hems,  
clown toff, tye hug fliorten.**

**Cablen: Clifftop.**

**Shelving tobay oppe- long tomeadow.**

**Ware cobbles.**

**Posh.**

Now the Captain manifests all his aggressiveness. He is longing (**langseling** : Norwegian *længsel*: yearning, longing) and has sailed a lot (*long sailing*) in order to give him a telling off, a hot talk (**talka holt**); grab him in his hands (**talka holt of hems**) and teach him a lesson in an open confrontation like the one which took place in Clontarf (**clown toff**) in 1014 (**tye hug fliorten** : Danish *ti og fjorten*: ten and fourteen). But, contrary to what happened in the famous battle that in fact marked the end of Viking supremacy in Ireland, the Captain threatens that sugary (**toff**) clown, who exudes an air of superiority (**toff**), in fact a thief (*Taffy was a Welshman, Taffy was a thief*), to tie him (**tye**), to squeeze him (**hug**), give him a good (sarcastic) rub (**fliorten** : Dutch *flirten* : Norwegian *flørte* : German *flirten* : flirting); and then hang him (**Cablen** : cable, rope) on top of the cliff (**Clifftop**), with a vague hint at the Roman *Rupes Tarpeia* (the steep cliff used as an execution site) : the news being broadcast (*cablen*) by the antenna on the cliff top. And the hanged shall stay on the scaffold

(**Shelving**) there above (Norwegian **oppe**), so that he be seen from the bay (**tobay**) and from the plain (**tomeadow**), all the day long, from that moment (*today*) until the next day (*tomorrow*). Hanged and *stoned* as well (**Ware cobbles**). The gallows on the cliff top being the most excellent place (**Posh**) that the tailor deserves. (“**tye hug fliorten**” may hide though an allusion to what the Captain will do to the tailor's daughter. In seducing her, he will scorn his enemy.)

The part starting from “**fordeed he was langseling**” and ending with “**Posh**” was in fact a reported speech: it was Porter who summarized the Captain's words. Now he plays again the role of the sailor, with a direct speech:

-- **Skibbereen has common inn,  
by pounautique,  
with poke-way paw,  
and sadder raven evermore**

I assert this because the speech is assigned to “**shinshanks**”, which is an obvious reference to “*crossbones*”, shins and shanks being “*tibiae*”.



The direct speech enhances the Captain's belligerence. He points out that the one who has just come in, even if he follows the rhythm of “*sumer is ycumen in*”, is no “*sumer*” (a possible side hint punning with Italian “*somaro*” : ass – I'd exclude “*Sumerian*”, although a Gilgamesh “*hugging*”

two human headed bulls, in our case, wouldn't be so out of context),



but a real skipper (**Skibbereen**). “**pounautique**” is tricky. We find in it French “*pou*” (louse) and “*nautique*” (nautical), thus a “lousy vessel”, which would be unfit. Would the Captain call his ship a lousy vessel? But the fact is that the Captain is using a language, French (**frankish**), which he confuses with a “**gallic Gaelic**” and that he knows only approximately, ironically balancing the Ship's Husband's approximate knowledge of his “**norjankeltian (311.22)**”. So the “lousy vessel” may be just an oversight. Unless the Captain means that he has come in a ship which will be somewhat *lousy* to the native Irish. But “**pounautique**” hides a maritime term generally unknown: Old French “*panatique*” (Italian “*panatica / panatiche*”) : the food (or the equivalent in money) which is due to the crew of a mercantile ship. In our case the Captain states that he has come to pay his due to the tailor (ironically: to give him a lesson) and to have his payment (to get satisfaction at the tailor's expenses). His attitude, as already noted, is *pugnacious* (Latin *pugnus* : fist): exemplified by his nail-tailed poking *paw* (**poke-way paw**) : opening its way like Jean Baptiste Charcot's ship “*Pourquoi pas?*” in its Antarctic and Arctic explorations. But, notwithstanding his belligerence, the sailor confesses to be somewhat depressed, sadder than ever before “**sadder raven evermore**”, gloomy (**raven** : black),



sad to death, if we take into account the allusion to death in Poe's (**paw**) poem "The Raven". From this perspective both "**pounautique**" and "**poke-way paw**" would assume a different aspect. It is a lousy (**pou**) voyage in order to ask, to beg even (the extended hand/paw), a due reward (*panatique* and *panacée* : panacea : pana-sea : pan-acean : *pan-ocean*) : a possible allusion to the fate of the *Flying Dutchman* in search of a faithful wife (here: the tailor's daughter) who will release him from his curse (his never-ending sailings).

**telled shinshanks lauwering frankish for his kicker**

This is in fact the sad confession of the pirate (**shinshanks**), a "*sottovoce*" statement (**lauwering**). He humiliates himself (**lauwering** : lower), using what he considers a base language (**frankish**) and lowers his voice so that only one person may hear him, namely "**his kicker**". This needs some elucidations. McHugh suggests that Dutch "*kijker*" is "*spectator*"; it is also "*eye*" and "*binoculars*", perhaps opera glasses through which the spectator is viewing the Flying Dutchman's drama.



There is, though, a Dutch “*kikker*” (frog) as well, which alludes to the above mentioned tale of *The Frog Prince*. But “**kicker**” is primarily the Ship's Husband, who should push (kick) the jumping frog-prince towards his goal, who should now play on his behalf, having been the one who *kicked* him first into the unpleasant affair with the tailor.

**who, through the medium of gallic  
-- Pukkelsen, tiltold.**

And the Ship's Husband, morphing “**frankish**” into “**gallic**” into “*Gaelic*” finally recognizes in the **Skibbereen** the Norwegian Captain and addresses him (**tilltold**: Norwegian “*tiltal*”) by his own nickname “**Pukkelsen**” (*son of a hump*). Isn't that quite a

**“coup de théâtre”?**

