Chapter 3

This is a key chapter so it is important you answer the questions below in as much detail as possible and keep your notes safely so you can come back to them for revision.

1. What parenting advice is offered in the extract from the HMSO Authorised Childcare Handbook at the beginning of this chapter? What themes in the novel does this reflect?

2. Describe how Stephen’s marriage continues to deteriorate after Stephen’s stay with the Darkes (52-55).

3. Discuss Stephen’s thoughts about Julie on page 54.

4. Summarise Stephen’s views about the differences between men and women. (54-55)

5. Discuss Stephen’s vision described on pages 55-60 in detail.

6. Explain what happens between Stephen and Julie at her house. How do their feelings change between Stephen’s arrival and his departure?

7. What happens to Stephen and Julie’s relationship after he leaves her house? How does Stephen look back on this encounter with Julie and his subsequent lack of contact with her?

8. Try to find the quotes below and then discuss their significance:
   a) ‘They were travelling from the past into the present’
   b) ‘How rapidly a home perishes through neglect, and how indefinably’
   c) ‘..indulged the books of his adolescence, reading of unencumbered, solitary men whose troubles were the world’s’
   d) ‘Being together heightened their sense of loss.’
   e) ‘it was not a divorce, of course, nor a separation, but “a time apart” ’
   f) ‘For a moment they felt elated, released.’
   g) ‘He did not want to get left behind, he did not want to lose his place in her story.’
   h) ‘women upheld some other principle of selfhood in which being surpassed doing.’
   i) ‘A sudden movement could dispel this delicate reconstruction of another time.’
   j) ‘He was looking into the eyes of the woman, and he knew who she was.’
   k) ‘The air he moved through was dark and wet, he was light, made of nothing.’
   l) ‘Their hesitation was brief, delicious before the forking paths.’
   m) ‘he did not doubt that what was happening, now, and what would happen as a consequence of now, was not separate from what he had experienced earlier that day.’
   n) ‘Time was redeemed, time assumed purpose all over again because it was the medium for the fulfilment of desire.’

9. What do you think is particularly significant about this chapter? You should add to your response when you have finished reading the novel.