

Translating Henry James's *The Ambassadors*

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Introduction

“To some an oppression, to others an obsession.”

(Virginia Woolf, qtd. in Haralson)

These words sum up how the works of Henry James have been received throughout the years. During his career, James developed a fascination with the workings of the mind and he utilized a writing style which brings the reader into the consciousness of the characters. He introduced a new way of portraying the lives of characters and he is also seen as the founder of psychological realism, which would have a great influence on modernist writers such as Virginia Woolf and James Joyce. Although he is considered a great writer, hardly any of his works have been translated into Dutch. James considered *The Ambassadors* his best work and his greatest achievement in his career. This novel offers a challenge, because, as Mary Cross points out, “[i]n the maze of James’s language, both readers and characters find themselves struggling to get their bearings somewhere in the sentences, trying to contain their constant flicker and spill of meaning” (1). The novel brings about a high level of disorientation, which James achieves through the use of several narratological and stylistic devices.

An approach to translation as suggested by Nord is conducting a translation-oriented text analysis (TOTA) to establish a translation strategy appropriate for the target culture (145). A TOTA can be applied to different text and genres and “should enable the translator to understand the function of the elements or features observed

in the content and structure of the source text” (1). However, she based her model on Vermeer’s *skopos* theory, which focuses on the purpose of the target text and puts emphasis on extra-textual factors such as sender, place, time, intention and motive (9). As Schäffner points out, this model is therefore “less applicable to literary translation than to other text types because of the special status of literary texts” (qtd. in Spies). Literary devices such as stylistics and narratology need to be taken into account as well, because those elements are what the novel make so special and sets it apart from other novels. A more suitable model for TOTA would then be to combine the extra-textual and the intra-textual influences and to carry out a stylistic and narratological analysis. This thesis therefore aims to answer the following question:

Which narratological and stylistic devices can be used in a Dutch translation of Henry James’s *The Ambassadors* to create a disorienting effect which is similar to that of the source text?

In **chapter one**, I will conduct contextual research on James and I will discuss the aspects of realism and psychological realism in order to find out which characteristics are applicable to the novel.

In **chapter two**, I will present the narratological and stylistic analysis of *The Ambassadors* on both macro- and micro-level, after which in **chapter three** a contrastive analysis of English and Dutch will be provided in which the translation

difficulties in *The Ambassadors* that were caused by the contrast between the source and target language will be discussed.

In **chapter four** I will present my translation, accompanied by annotations discussing translation difficulties that can be linked to the theoretical framework or other aspects that I found difficult to solve. The translation will be made following the guidelines of the model contract for translators as issued by the Vereniging van Letterkundigen. Finally, in the **conclusion** I will answer my research question by reflecting, in short, on the previous parts of this thesis.

1. Henry James

This chapter will provide information about James's life, his interests, opinions on writing and his techniques. A brief overview of realism will be given in order to establish the differences between realism and James's psychological realism in order to obtain more insight into James's writing techniques.

1.1 James's Life and Writing

Henry James was born in 1843 in New York City into a wealthy and educated family. His father Henry James Sr. was a theologian, his older brother William a philosopher and psychologist, and his sister Alice was a social commentator and diarist (Haralson). William introduced the idea of "stream of consciousness," which had a major influence on James's writing (Barrish 43). Education was of utmost importance to James's father, so he often took his family to the theatre and art shows and he encouraged his children to read (Eimers 278). He travelled with his family between America and Europe in order to seek the kind of education he wanted for his children. They were tutored by different teachers in venues such as Albany, Newport, Boston, Paris, Geneva and London (Haralson).

At the age of 19, James attended Harvard Law School, but he withdrew after only one semester to pursue a literary career. In 1864, his unsigned tale "The Tragedy of Error" was published in *Continental Monthly* and from 1865 onwards he wrote short stories and reviews for several cultural and literary magazines. At that time, James was still staying in America with his family, but he longed for Europe again because "the creation of meaningful artworks required a substantial accumulation of

cultural history, whereas the American landscape could boast only a ‘thin and impalpable deposit’” (Haralson). He made travels through Britain, France, Italy, Switzerland and Germany where he gathered more than enough impressions which he could later use in his literary work. He lived in Paris for a short period of time but he ultimately left to live in London because he felt like an outsider in the Parisian literary scene. During his lifetime, he met other great authors such as Charles Dickens, William Morris, George Elliot, Alfred Tennyson, Ivan Turgenev, Gustave Flaubert, Émile Zola and Guy de Maupassant (Eimers 281-284). His social connections also provided him with material which he could eventually include in his work, as he writes: “[m]y mind swarms with *effects* of all kinds – to be introduced in realistic novels yet unwritten” (qtd. in Eimers 281).

His own writing occasionally troubled him. In 1878, he got fed up with writing articles and he wished to “give myself up seriously to ‘creative’ writing. Then, and not till then, my real career will begin” (qtd. in Eimers 284). It would indeed not be long before he published *The Portrait of a Lady* and “Daisy Miller,” which were both well received. He also cherished the dream to become a playwright and in 1888 he was sent a proposal to develop a stage version of his novel *The American*. The play opened three years later and had a modest success, but the other plays that James wrote were not successful. In 1897, he bought a typewriter and started dictating to a stenographer. Many scholars have argued that this caused the

change of his writing style, which becomes most obvious in his novels of 1901 to 1904 (Eimers 288).

James was a productive writer and he wrote twenty-two novels, hundreds of short stories, fifteen plays, some travel writings and roughly three hundred pieces of criticism (Haralson). In addition, James made arrangements for a definite edition of his novels and stories, which would be called the New York Edition. It would only comprise of his major fiction and every story would have its own preface, “representing, in a manner, the history of the work or the group, representing more particularly, perhaps, a frank critical talk about its subject, its origin, its place in the whole artistic chain” (qtd. in Eimers 289). James became naturalised as a British subject in 1915 and he would continue to write up to the moment of his death in 1916 (Haralson).

1.2 Realism and Psychological Realism

The aim of literary realism was to offer a view of “life as it is” in simple and direct language in order to replace “the poetic elements of optative romanticism [and] the sentimental aspects of domestic novels and romances” (Thompson 25). Realism was especially prominent in France, Britain, Russia and the United States from about the mid-nineteenth century to the 1930s and 1940s, but it was not “a single undiversified idea or theoretical program or movement” (Thompson 25-26). In the preceding two centuries, there had been a rise of the middle-class and the realist novel would meet the interests of the bourgeois class “which venerated scientific and social innovation

and expected a literature to reflect their more enlightened age" (Reesman 42). The novels tend to be set in everyday and believable locales and the characters are usually middle-class. Realists made extensive use of dialogue which serves as a medium through which they convey information and develop a character (Barrish 49). The novels usually contain minor crises that lead to a major confrontation, which allows writers to describe the experiences of characters and the choices they have to make. Verisimilitude was important and the artistic vision of the writer was subordinate to the objective view of human nature (Reesman 44-45).

James argued that a novelist should write from experience and that his "characters must be real and such as might be met with in actual life" (Edel 12). For him, realism represented the things that every person will sooner or later encounter and he was more interested in a faithful rendition of a character in any given situation than in depicting all aspects of life. In the conclusion of his essay "The Art of Fiction," James states,

Experience is never limited and it is never complete; it is an immense sensibility, a kind of huge spider-web, of the finest silken threads, suspended in the chamber of consciousness and catching every air-borne particle in its tissue. It is the very atmosphere of the mind; and when the mind is imaginative--much more when it happens to be that of a man of genius--it takes to itself the faintest hints of life, it converts the very pulses of the air into revelations. (ibid.)

He believes that the infinite processes of the mind is what can be called “realistic” and he felt he could not report people’s experience without unravelling everything that take places in their consciousness. He transformed the realist novel into psychological realism and, as Cross points out, “[h]is experiments with syntax, point of view and interior monologue violated the current ideas of realism that was all about content” (13). In that sense, James was rather moving towards modernism, when writers started to experiment with form and content.

1.3 James on Writing

James employs a very elaborate writing style and sentences in a Jamesian novel are “disorienting, keeping things off balance by their delaying tactics, ambiguity of reference, and proliferating clause and phrase” (Cross 1). Throughout his life, James took a high interest in art and he argued that the art of the painter and the art of the novelist are closely connected (Edel 5). In the preface to *The Ambassadors* he points out that “[a]rt deals with what we see ... but is has no sooner done this than it has to take account of a *process*” (*The Ambassadors* 4). With reference to the story he states that “[t]he business of my tale, and the moral of my action, not to say the precious moral of everything, is just my demonstration of this process of vision” (*The Ambassadors* 2). As has been pointed out in chapter 1.2, James argued that the experience of a person was an important aspect of the human consciousness and in his novels he puts his characters in difficult situations in which they slowly find their way, so that he can describe all the perceptions and ponderings in their minds. As he

argues, "[w]ithout [bewilderment] there would be no question of an issue or of the fact of suspense, prime implications in any story" (Blackmur 64).

In his late novels, James attempts to recreate this process of experience, "with all its halts, hitches and contradictions, through the very language that he uses" (Haralson & Johnson 31) As a result, the sentences are complex in structure:

It kept Strether himself silent a little. "I've made it out for myself," he then went on; "I've really, within the last half-hour, got hold of it. I understand it in short at last; which at first-- when you originally spoke to me--I didn't. Nor when Chad originally spoke to me either. (*The Ambassadors* 166)

As can be seen in this excerpt, the sentences contain many subordinate clauses, commas and dashes which represent Strether's thinking process while he is speaking.

Some readers, like James's own brother William, wanted more straightforward language to save them from reading "innumerable sentences twice over to see what the dickens they could possibly mean" (qtd. in Haralson). James replied to this:

Take, meanwhile, pray, *The Ambassadors* very easily and gently: read five pages a day – be even as deliberate as that ... keep along with it step by step – and then the full charm will come out .. I find that the very most difficult thing in the art of the novelist to give the impression of the *real lapse of time, the quantity* of time, represented by our few poor phrases and pages, and all the

drawing-out the reader can contribute helps a little perhaps the production of that spell. (qtd. in Bell 327)

This means that James's writing style contributes to the effect he wanted to achieve in his novel and that this should therefore be highly held in regard. In chapter 2.4, James's writing techniques will be discussed in more detail.

2. *The Ambassadors*

This chapter will present a narratological and stylistical analysis on the macro and micro-level. Aspects such as the plot, focalisation and discourse, and themes and motifs will be explored. The stylistic analysis will be carried out on the semantic and the syntactical level and the suprasegmental features will be briefly explored as well.

2.1 Plot

The story of *The Ambassadors* starts *in medias res* when protagonist Lambert Strether arrives at a hotel in Chester where he will meet his old friend Waymarsh. There he learns that he has not arrived yet and in the meanwhile he meets a young American lady called Maria Gostrey with whom he spends his time until Waymarsh shows up. Later we find out that Lambert Strether is a middle-aged man from Woollett, Massachusetts, who is on his way to Paris because his fiancée, Mrs Newsome, has asked him to fetch her son Chad. The New Englanders think that Paris is a wicked city and Mrs Newsome fears that her son has an inappropriate relationship with a Parisian woman. She has asked Strether to go as her “ambassador” to convince Chad to come back to Woollett, where he is needed for the family business. If Strether succeeds, he will marry the wealthy Mrs Newsome. When Miss Gostrey hears that the two men are on their way to Paris, she suggests to come with them and guide them through the city because she has been living in Paris for years.

In Paris, Strether meets Chad and he is impressed how Chad has transformed now he has lived in Europe for many years. Chad wants to introduce Strether to Marie de Vionett and her exquisite daughter Jeanne. Strether is confused as to

whether Chad is more attracted to the mother or the daughter. Especially when a friend of Chad, Little Bilham, calls the relationship between Madame de Vionnet and Chad “a virtuous attachment,” which Strether interprets as referring to a non-sexual relationship (Barnett 224). The whole plot focuses on the crucial definition of the “virtuous attachment” between Chad and Madame de Vionnet.

In the meantime, Strether gradually succumbs to the charm of Europe and the Europeans, no longer judging them as immoral. Strether’s slowly changing perspective causes him to delay his mission to “rescue” Chad and he cables Mrs Newsome that he will remain in Paris a little longer. However, Chad suddenly informs Strether that he is ready to leave and Strether begs him to stay in Paris. Mrs Newsome, however, is tired of waiting and sends other ambassadors: her daughter, Sarah Pocock and her husband Jim, and Jim’s sister, Mamie Pocock. Mrs Newsome has determined that as soon as Chad is back in Woollett, he is to marry Mamie. Sarah insists that Chad returns immediately and since Strether has proved himself unworthy, his engagement to Mrs Newsome is to be terminated.

Before taking Chad home, the Pococks and Waymarsh go on a leisure trip to Switzerland. While the others are away, Strether goes on a day-trip to the French countryside. There, he coincidentally spots Chad and Madame de Vionnet in a small boat, and Strether immediately realises that their relationship is lacking in virtue. However, he still believes that her involvement has improved Chad as a person. Afterwards, Chad suddenly seems prepared to end his relationship with Madame de

Vionnet and he is convinced that he needs to return to the United States to improve the family business. Strether tries to convince Chad to stay in Paris where his life will be much more free and meaningful than back in America, but he is not able to convince him. He visits Miss Gostrey and her long-gestating love for him is made obvious. She makes what amounts to a marriage proposal to Strether, but he feels he cannot accept it. He would like to stay in Paris because his life in Woollett will be bland, but he feels that he is too old to start a new life. At the end of the novel, he turns his back to the charms of Europe and returns to repressive Woollett with mixed emotions.

2.2 Literary and Narrative Devices

In *The Ambassadors*, James deals extensively with the contrast between the American and European character and, according to Blackmur, this international theme is very typical in the novels of James (21). It is not surprising that James was so interested in this topic since he himself was an American living abroad. Almost all the characters in the novel are Americans living in Europe, except for Strether, Waymarsh and the Pococks. Every character reacts differently to the European culture and the main difference between the two cultures is that “Woollett, embod[ies] an austere business ethic which subordinates personal and aesthetic experience to work and moneymaking; and Paris, promot[es] a cultivation of art and life that allows greater individual autonomy” (Barnett 215). Waymarsh cannot adapt to the European culture and hates it immensely, while Strether appreciates the rich culture of the Old World and starts to compare the life in Paris to his life in Woollett. As a result, “*The*

Ambassadors is James's greatest study of a character whose life has seemingly failed to contain a degree of doing to match his intensity of being" (Bell 324). When Strether encounters the transformed Chad, he starts to evaluate on his own life and he realises that he has missed the opportunity to experience everything that life has to offer and that back in Woollett he will not be able to truly live his life. He also starts to lecture to the younger Little Bilham and tells him to "[l]ive all you can; it's a mistake not to. It doesn't so much matter what you do in particular so long as you have your life. If you haven't had that what *have* you had? I'm too old - too old at any rate for what I see" (*The Ambassadors* 132). The novel focuses on the "evolving realization within Strether's consciousness of the variety and intensity of life" (Haralson & Johnson 28).

In addition, the differences between the people from Woollett and Paris are further established in dialogue, because they speak languages that describe and interpret the world differently. Barnett notes that the people who speak the language of Paris "are verbally adventurous, more playful and speculative [and] they show themselves to be open to more possibilities than are dreamed of in the language of Woollett" (220). When Strether arrives in Europe, he needs to attach to this new verbal community and during the course of the story the speakers of Paris use their conversation to confound Strether's preconceptions and to provide him with new interpretations. This often results in miscommunication between the characters, because it takes time before Strether understands the language of Paris. As has been mentioned in chapter 2.1, Strether has a wrong interpretation of "the virtuous

attachment” because “[i]n Woollett’s inflexible terms an illicit bond could never be designed ‘virtuous’” (Barnett 224) and Strether is therefore convinced that Chad has a relationship with Mademoiselle de Vionnet instead of her mother, Madame de Vionnet. David Lodge points out that the Jamesian language is “a treacherous medium of communication, concealing as much as it reveals (197). The whole novel is actually build on speech and this is not surprising since James argued that “all life ... comes back to the question of our speech” (qtd. in Barnett 228).

The Ambassadors is steeped with water imagery, for example, in section three of my translation where Maria “was quite in the current now and floating by his side” (195) or when Strether says that a conversation with Waymarsh will “bridge the dark stream that has kept us so thoroughly apart” (*The Ambassadors* 193). Holder-Barrel argues that “Woollett appears as the place of safety, the shore, the secure ground, whereas Europe is pictured as the mighty stream with dangerous currents” (qtd. in Lodge 208). This could be ascribed to Strether’s remark about Waymarsh because he sticks to his American beliefs while he is in Europe, while Strether adapts the Parisian norms. It is also closely connected to the climax of the novel, when Strether sees Chad and Madame de Vionnet in a boat on the river and learns the true meaning of their relationship.

2.3 Discourse Situation

In *The Ambassadors*, James wanted to focus on the consciousness of Lambert Strether while avoiding the “terrible *fluidity* of self-revelation” that comes with first-person

narrative (*The Ambassadors* 11). He therefore uses free indirect discourse (FID), a narrative form which combines the direct speech of a character and the indirect report of the narrator. Characteristic of FID is that the third-person and the past tense are used and that the reported clause is omitted (Leech & Short 261). In *The Ambassadors* the story is told by the omniscient narrator and with Strether acting as focalizer. In the case of FID, there is a swift change between character focalisation, in which all events are described as perceived by one particular character, and narrator focalisation, in which events, scenes or characters are described as perceived by a narrator (Rigney 184). James was not the first to experiment with this technique since it had already been introduced in the works of Jane Austen. However, Haralson & Johnson point out that *The Ambassadors* is often seen as “the first English novel to present a consistently limited point of view through the eyes of one character” (28). Ian Watt points out that if the first sentence, “Strether’s first question, when he reached the hotel, was about his friend,” would be in direct speech it would have been: “when Strether reached the hotel he first asked “Has Mr. Waymarsh arrived yet?” (256). This example clearly illustrates the effect of FID: The first sentence gives the impression of a mental continuum of the character, which the second does not because it is interrupted by the report of direct speech.

Since James is so concerned with consciousness, we find many instances of free indirect thought (FIT) in the novel. In the opening scene we find a clear example of FIT:

They would dine together at the worst, and, with all respect to **dear old Waymarsh**--if not even, for that matter, to himself--there was little fear that in the sequel they shouldn't see enough of each other. **The principle I have just mentioned as operating had been, with the most newly disembarked of the two men, wholly instinctive**--the fruit of a sharp sense that, delightful as it would be to find himself looking, after so much separation, into his comrade's face, his business would be a trifle bungled should he simply arrange for this countenance to present itself to the nearing steamer as the first "note," of Europe. (*The Ambassadors* 17 [emphasis added])

The adding of "dear" in the first sentence is probably a remark from Strether, because the narrator only comments on Strether's actions and calls him "poor Strether". The other instance is clearly a remark from the narrator because of the "I" and especially because of the phrase "most newly disembarked of the two men" where "the two men" refers to Waymarsh and Strether. Lexical elements such as colloquialism, dialect or slang or idiomatic phrases and exclamations are clear indications of character focalisation (Van de Wardt 14). This means that the following sentence should be focalised by Strether, because of the colloquial *bungled*.

The use of FID is not particularly problematic because it only involves the narrator and Strether whose speech is quite similar, so it does not cause any translation problems because the translator does not have to be aware of things such as dialect. The only problem that I encountered was when translating the

construction of “the principle I have just mentioned” because it proved to be difficult to keep a fluent construction while maintaining the “I” aspect.

2.4 James’s Writing Techniques

In this section, the stylistic devices that James employs will be discussed. First the semantic level will be explored and aspects such as psychological nominalization, deictic elements, elegant variation and negation will be discussed. Then I will move on to the syntactical level where matters such as parallel structures, periodic sentence structures and word order will be explored. Finally, some suprasegmental features such as omission of commas and the use of quotation marks will be discussed. Since James’s sentences often prove to be difficult to understand, the published German translation by Helmut M. Braem and Elisabeth Kaiser from 1956 will be consulted during the translation process in order to provide other interpretations which can be compared with my own.

2.4.1 Lexis

One of James’s favourite devices is what Seymour Chatman refers to as “psychological nominalization,” which means that a human actor is replaced by an abstract entity (22). See, for example, these sentences from the original and the revision of *Roderick Hudson*:

“She was very delicately shaped, and Roderick had come honestly by his physical slimness and elegance” (qtd. in Chatman 8).

“Her marked refinement of line and surface seemed to tell how her son had come by his elegance, his physical finish” (ibid.).

“She was very delicately shaped” is changed into the more abstract “her marked refinement of line and surface.” What James does is transforming a phrase such as “John observed X” into “John’s observation was X” and this transformation of psychological verbs into abstract nouns gives an impression of thought (23). The conversion of mental acts into entities gave James the opportunity to explore the mind “even to the limit of consciousness, where a character can stand back and watch a parade of mental objects march before him” (ibid.). In addition, adjectives can be converted to abstract nouns as well: “aware” becomes “awareness” and “vague” becomes “vagueness” (40). James disliked adjectives and nominalising the adjectives is an easy way to avoid them. Chatman argues that it is not surprising that James rejected adjectives and was more in favour of (manner) adverbs since he is interested in how people do things instead of what they do (50). Instead of the more obvious adjective-noun construction, we find a construction with the nominalised adjective, followed by “of” and the noun. We are not told that Strether’s fancy was candid but that he “had a candour of fancy” and Little Bilham did not stand on a private perch but on a “perched privacy” (50-51).

James’s favourite construction contains the word “sense” as in the second section I have translated where Strether has “a sighing sense of fullness” (*The Ambassadors* 165). These kind of constructions are problematic because James combines them with abstract words and, as in this case, you first need to unravel what it could mean before you can search for a valid translation. Translating this

word for word would result in “een zuchtend gevoel van volheid” which does not mean anything in Dutch. I decided to interpret this as “copiousness or exhaustiveness (of knowledge, statement, or expression) (*OED*) and translate it thus as “merkte Strether zuchtend op door al die verschillende perspectieven,” which meant that I had to let go of this typical Jamesian structure. Sometimes James’s favour of abstractions goes so far that the construction almost becomes a personification in which the actor is an abstract noun instead of a human. When Strether sees Miss Gostrey, for example, we read: “For a moment they stood confronted; then the moment placed her” (*The Ambassadors* 18) instead of “he remembered where he had seen her before.” The problem here is that I would translate the first part as “voor even stonden zij tegen over elkaar,” but “even” is an adverb which cannot be personified, which forces me to translate the second part as “en hij herrinerde waar hij haar van kende.” There will be instances when the personifications can be maintained, but in other cases the translator needs to settle with different constructions in order to bring about the meaning of the phrase.

A second characteristic of James’s style is his to use deictic nouns and pronouns which refer backward or forward to other words and which are used to replace whole clauses and sentences. The main difficulty is to follow the references and interpret the text correctly. James, for example, often confuses the reader by using “he” or “she” when two men or women are present in the same scene (Chatman 57). Personal determiners are often replaced by neutral ones, as in the

opening paragraph where we find “the secret principle” and “this happier device” instead of “my secret principle” and “Strether’s happier device.” It is interesting that the translators of the published German translation often decided not to copy this characteristic by turning the article into a demonstrative: “seinem glücklichen Einfall” (*Die Gesandten* 7) which makes the reference to Strether more explicit. In addition, Chatman points out the use of “appositive deixis” which means that a pronoun is given first and the anticipated subject follows in apposition: “They formed a qualified draught of Europe, an afternoon and evening on the banks of the Mersey” (*The Ambassadors* 18). This sentence is disorienting because one would expect that the structure would have been: “an afternoon and evening on the banks of the Mersey formed a qualified draught of Europe.”

The use of elegant variation is frequent in *The Ambassadors* as well and its effect is quite similar to that of deixis discussed above. As a reader you need your full attention in order to follow “the various changes in appellation [and] in seeing the unity among the terms” (Chatman 85). In the opening scene, for example, Strether has a “secret principle” and it is a “fruit” of a “sharp sense” and a “happier device.” It takes quite some effort to figure out that all these terms refer to the same thing and it does not help that the abstract “principle” is not explained at all. It could refer to Strether’s feeling of not wanting to meet Waymarsh, but another reading would be that it refers to his mission to bring Chad back to Woollett, which is the reason why he has travelled to Europe in the first place. James often withholds any kind of

information that would help explain things and usually you first need to read on in order to understand what has been said before. This is of course an important part of his technique since the novel aims to portray Strether's search for the right meanings and therefore we cannot know any more than Strether does. However, this uncertainty about the reference makes it harder to come up with a valid translation.

Ian Watt has also pointed out the use of negation and near-negation in the novel (255). In the first paragraph alone, we find words such as "without disappointment; "at the worst;" "there was little fear;" and "not wholly." Watt notes that the abundance of negatives has several functions. In the first place, it reflects "Strether's tendency to hesitation and qualification," but it also has the "effect of subordinating concrete events to their mental reflection" (259). Moreover, Chatman indicates that the negation "reflects Strether's initial innocence abroad: [it is] a stylistic affirmation of the content, namely Strether's ignorance, his need for a sentimental education" (18). A phrase such as "Waymarsh was not to arrive till evening" implies an expectation that Strether had in his mind and which was not fulfilled when he arrived in Chester. We also read that "there was little fear that in the sequel they shouldn't see enough of each other" which basically means that Strether did not want to see Waymarsh at all, but "social decorum and Strether's own loyalties demand that the outrage of the open statement be veiled in the obscurity of formal negation" (Watt 265).

2.4.2 Syntax

In his earlier stories, James used simpler sentences, but the compound sentence was already one of his favourites. This type of sentence “with its underlying parallelism provided a structure on which James could play any number of oppositions, ‘bringing out’ the differences of meaning in which his later style would revel” (Cross 31):

“She was continually wondering, but she never inquired” (qtd. in Cross 31).

“Mrs Littlefield was a willing listener; but it seemed to her that she had come in at the second act of the play” (ibid.).

In each of these sets, the final clause contains a word or a set of phrases that revises what has gone before. These compound sentences can often be found in *The Ambassadors* as they are a useful device to report Strether’s reseeing of words and phrases. The first half of the sentence presents a certain vision and in the second half we find a restatement or a reprocessing of the first part that may contradict it (Cross 116-117). Many sentences in *The Ambassadors* are actually parallel in structure as can be seen in the following example:

“He was Lambert Strether because he was on the cover, whereas it should have been, for anything like glory, that he was on the cover because he was Lambert Strether” (*The Ambassadors* 84).

Such a structure shows Strether’s revision of his experiences and perceptions and gives the impression of his mind going forward and backward in order to grasp the

meanings. Another form that is often used is one in which the second part of the sentence is slightly different from the preceding one, which results in the following:

“The sign would be that – though it was her own affair – he understood;

The sign would be that – though it was her own affair – she was free to clutch”

(*The Ambassadors* 11).

Cross argues that the slight alteration in the second phrase reflects that Strether has registered a new meaning. This parallelism allows Strether to organise the data and the different meanings while we track down his progress towards understanding.

Such structures can usually be translated without any problem, but it is important to be aware of such syntactic structures. The repetition of certain structures is typical in dialogue as well when characters literally repeat what their partner has said or when they repeat only a part of the phrase for their answer. As discussed in chapter 2.2, the characters in the novel come from different verbal communities and repeating words is a way for them to follow the conversation, but it can also be an indication that they have not understood each other. The translator will be tempted to adapt spoken words into more natural Dutch to make it more fitting for dialogue, but as a result risks losing the uniformity of the repetitions.

Another characteristic is the sometimes unconventional organisation of the sentences:

“But you can’t,” his companion suggested, “stay here always. I wish you could” (*The Ambassadors* 192).

The first parts of the sentence are straightforward, but a more conventional rendering of the last part would move “always” to the front of the phrase: “always stay here.”

This arrangement stresses “always” more than in the conventional arrangement. The German translation reads “‘Aber Sie können doch nicht für immer hierbleiben’ hielt ihm seine Begleiterin vor” (*Die Gesandten* 238). The German translators have chosen to naturalise the word order and also to turn this into a full sentence, instead of retaining the breaking point in the middle and thus losing the suspension of information. However, Short notes that instead of emphasising nouns or active verbs, James puts emphasis on “humbler words of connection” (78). He does this by italicising words which other authors would probably not stress: “... he should have been there with him, and as it might have been said, *for* Chad (*The Ambassadors* 78). This shows that the use of unconventional word order is a way for James “to secure emphasis upon words denoting relationship” (Short 78) and therefore it is important to retain this aspect in the translation. The translation of a conventional rendering would have been: “Maar u kunt niet,” stelde zijn metgezel voor, “voor altijd hier blijven” while following James, it would be: “Maar u kunt niet,” stelde zijn metgezel voor, “hier blijven voor altijd” which may sound awkward but is not ungrammatical.

The syntactic order of the sentence makes the reader linger at the last word of this sentence and it stresses the fact that Miss Gostrey wants Strether to stay forever. So, the structure can be adhered in translation to create the same effect.

Another favourite structure of James is the periodic sentence, which is a sentence that saves its main clause to the end. Leech & Short point out that it is an unusual form in English (18). In the following sentence,

“At the end of the ten minutes he was to spend with her his impression – with all it had thrown off and all it had taken in – was complete” (*The Ambassadors* 155).

The final word ‘complete’ determines the meaning of the whole sentence. We cannot interpret the rest of the sentence until we reach ‘complete’ nor can we understand the full implications of complete until we have understood the rest of the sentence. Leech & Short indicate that James avoids a direct statement of the facts and that we are not told about them, but that we are rather led into these facts (80). By doing so, James made it possible for us to follow the form of Strether’s thought, which “moves through a series of qualifying, expanding, revised propositions, ending finally with the particular word or phrase that the processing sentence has produced” (Cross 120). In sentences such as the one above, this structure can be retained because the verbs are placed at the end of the sentence and this how sentences in Dutch are structured as well. Occasionally, it will prove to be difficult to retain the suspension of

information because Dutch and English sentences are organised differently, as in the following sentence:

“After the young woman in the glass cage had held up to him across her counter the pale-pink leaflet bearing his friend’s name [...]” (*The Ambassadors* 19).

It is impossible in Dutch to retain the last clause at the end of the sentence because we first get the object (“the pale-pink leaflet bearing his friend’s name”) followed by the verb, which means that I need to switch these clauses in my translation which then reads “Nadat de jonge vrouw in de glazen kooi het zachtroze blaadje met daarop de naam van zijn vriend, die ze keurig uitsprak, voor hem omhoog had gehouden boven haar balie.”

James’s syntactical structures can sometimes be rather complex when he embeds clause after clause:

The principle I have just mentioned as operating had been, with the most newly embarked of the two men, wholly instinctive – the fruit of a sharp sense that, delightful as it would be to find himself looking, after so much separation, into his comrade’s face, his business would be a trifle bungled should he simple arrange for this countenance to present itself to the nearest steamer as the first “note,” of Europe. (*The Ambassadors* 17)

This sentence is full of parenthetical clauses and it is quite difficult for the reader to store up all this syntactic information. Leech & Short indicate that this can be brought into relation with James's concern of psychological realism and that "a whole psychological scenario is elaborated" in these sentences (81). These sentences are closely connected to the periodic sentence discussed above, where we have also seen James's delay of clarification at work. Leech & Short point out that "the role of delaying syntax is to postpone the interpretation of one structure until another has been taken in, so that they ultimately make sense as a whole" (82). Sometimes it can be hard to maintain all these clauses in Dutch. In some cases, the heavy use of subordinate clauses may become unnatural in a Dutch sentence because of the differences in the syntactical structure. In a sentence such as the following:

"Mixed with everything was the apprehension, already, on Strether's part, that it would, at best, throughout, prove the note of Europe in quite a sufficient degree" (*The Ambassadors* 17).

Adverbs such as "already" and "throughout" cannot be set apart in a different clause as in English, but they have to be part of the first clause. In English, the verb is positioned earlier in the sentence, while in Dutch it has to be put at the end of the sentence which resulted in the following translation: "Verweven met dit alles was reeds het voorgevoel, wat Strether betreft, dat het, in het gunstigste geval, het kenmerk van Europa in een zekere toereikende mate volledig op de proef zou stellen." It will often be problematic to translate similar complex sentences because of

the difference in word order and because sentences in Dutch tend to be longer than English ones, which makes it harder for the reader to follow what is going on. This might even have the consequence that the translator needs to consider to break up the sentence in two separate ones, which is not preferable since the long, complex sentences mimic the slowly emerging realizations or musings in Strether's consciousness.

2.4.3 Suprasegmental Features

Nord points out that the suprasegmental features of a text, such as italics, quotation marks, dashes and parentheses, frame the specific tone of a text and can be used as a stylistic feature (120-125). A recurrent device in *The Ambassadors* is the omission of commas: "She's a tremendously clever brilliant capable woman" (*The Ambassadors* 166). Lodge argues that James does this "to abolish any logical order or variation of emphasis in the series, and to suggest a complex but instantaneous response" (193). This can be true in this case because Strether sums up all the good qualities of Mademoiselle de Vionnet and it seems as if he is evaluating the situation while he is speaking. At the end of his talk he concludes that having a friendship with Mademoiselle de Vionnet has its benefits. The omission of the commas certainly creates the effect of rapid speech and this is therefore an important aspect to retain in the translation.

James frequently italicises words to emphasise them, as has been mentioned in chapter 2.4.2. In addition, quotation marks are used to stress certain words and,

according to Knox, this is James's "attempt to draw off all the possible meaning within a particular context and still not destroy the potential of that expression or word in a future one" (297). In his article, Knox sets about five different categories of use:

I. In a situation when a character uses a certain expression, for which he wants to excuse himself (293). This is usually the case when a character uses a colloquialism: "the violence of their having 'cut' him, out there in the eye of nature on the assumption that he wouldn't know it" (*The Ambassadors* 311).

II. An indication of emphasis in interior monologue (297): "Sarah's answer came so straight, so 'pat,' as might have been said, that he felt on the instant its origin" (*The Ambassadors* 344). The stress could either come from Strether himself, but there is also a possibility that these words are uttered by the omniscient narrator.

III. A specification of a mood or the concretization of an "idea" which in preceding conversation or meditations has been implicit (297).

IV. A "notation for class identity or cultural 'presences'" (294). An example of this is the phrase "it hadn't been "Europe" at Liverpool no" (*The Ambassadors* 25) where the quotation indicates that Strether has a certain view of Europe which is most likely a negative one. Quotation marks are also used for certain social relations, such as "being met" in the first section of my translation.

V. For “designed ambiguity for sake of symbolic depth” (295). Sometimes the quotation marks are necessary to expand the metaphorical context of a word. An example is “come out,” which means telling the truth but it in the phrase “when Strether ‘first came out’” it means that he left America to travel to Europe (297).

The use of quotation marks adds another layer of meaning to the narrative, but sometimes James only emphasises one word which in translation turns into a whole phrase. An example of this is when Strether says that Waymarsh has been “unbeknown” to him which has been translated as “zonder dat ik het wist.” The problem is then which word needs to be emphasised or if one should emphasise the whole phrase. I decided in the end to omit the quotation marks in this case, because there was not a certain word which could be emphasised and stressing the whole phrase sounded unnatural.

3. Contrastive Analysis

What makes translation so difficult is the difference between the source and the target language. While a certain language allows for certain structures, another one does not, and the translator faces a challenge in creating a similar effect. It is therefore important to conduct contrastive studies between languages. However, there is not yet a methodology available for contrastive analysis of English and Dutch when it comes to translating. In this chapter, the translation problems will be explored and possible translation will be proposed.

3.1 Progressive –ing Forms

The use of the present participle or the imperfect tense is a feature that poses a problem in every translation from English into Dutch. A similar form does exist in Dutch, but its use can be rather out-dated. The Dutch participle is nowadays mostly used “in set expressions like ‘al doende leert men’ and may have an alienating effect on the reader when it is used in a different context” (Van de Wardt 61). An example of this is when “he was playing” is translated as “hij was spelende” instead of “hij was aan het spelen.” In English, the progressive is generally used “to express duration (limited, in progress, or incomplete), temporary habits, irritation, iteration, or some cases of future reference” (ibid.). In addition to the earlier option, Dutch offers several other possibilities to translate this form while still adhering to the progressive aspect:

1. The “[to be] + aan het + infinitive” construction

He was laughing.

Hij **was aan het lachen**.

2. The “te + infinitive” construction, which usually needs verbs expressing position such as “staan,” “zitten” or “liggen.” In addition, this strategy cannot be used for future reference.

He **was laughing**.

Hij **stond te lachen**.

3. “[to be] + bezig met + gerund” or “to be + bezig + infinitive”

She **was cooking**.

Ze **was bezig met eten koken**.

Ze **was bezig eten te koken**.

4. “terwijl + simple present/past”

Opening the door, he announced his arrival

Terwijl hij de deur open deed, kondigde hij zijn aankomst aan.

5. Various conjugations, depending on the context, which may lead to “simple past/present, an infinitive verb form, perfect tense, or an interpretation of the meaning through nouns, adjectives or description” (Van de Wardt 61).

An example of the progressive aspect can be found in the following passage:

“Strether, **lounging** on his divan and still charmed by the young girl, whose eyes had consciously strayed to him, he fancied, with a vague smile--Strether, **enjoying** the whole occasion as with dormant pulses at last awake and in spite

of new material thrust upon him, thought over his companion's words" (*The Ambassadors* 164 [emphasis added]).

In this excerpt, "lounging" expresses a continuous action in the present because he sits there for a longer amount of time. However, a construction with "aan het" does not work well in this sentence, and I would rather go for simple past tense: "die ontspannen op de sofa zat." "Enjoying" is an action which happens at the same time as him sitting there and therefore a "terwijl" - construction is the first thing that comes to mind, but a simple past tense construction seems to work better here as well, to keep the sentence more fluent. "Enjoying" is therefore translated as "die genoot."

3.2 Deixis

As has been discussed in chapter 2.4.1, the use of deictic words which refer backward or forward to other words is also an interesting aspect in the writing of James. One of the words which occurs regularly is "it" which will be discussed more thoroughly in the next section. Deictic nouns and pronoun show up frequently and especially "thing" (including "something," "anything" and "nothing") is one of James's favourites. The use of "things" contributes to the typical vague Jamesian language and may even be "a kind of lazy society verbalism" (Chatman 54). In many instances, it poses no problems in Dutch and it can be translated as "dingen" or "zaken," as in the following sentence: "She paused while our friend took in these things ..." (*The Ambassadors* 19) which in Dutch becomes: "Ze stopte even terwijl onze vriend deze

dingen in zich opnam ...” Sometimes, translations such as “dingen” or “zaken” do not fit in the context and it may be necessary to use more variation in the target text. Strether calls Mademoiselle de Vionett “the sweetest little thing” but something in the sense of “het liefste kleine ding” is not what anyone would say of a girl in Dutch. The German translators faced the same problem and they have translated this as “das süßeste Geschöpf¹” (*Die Gesandten* 203). Braem and Kaiser have settled to translate this as “girl” or “child” and this is the translation I would go for in Dutch as well, so I would translate this phrase as “het liefste kleine meisje.” Little Bilham answers Strether that she is “the real thing” and Braem and Kaiser have chosen to translate this as “ist sie einfach göttlich²” (ibid.) and thus to imply that she has godlike features in order to emphasise why she is more special than other girls. According to Oxford Dictionaries, “the real thing” is something that is absolutely genuine or authentic and one way of saying that of a girl could be “zij is de ware” or “er is niemand zoals zij.” In this conversation he stresses how wonderful she is by comparing her to a beautiful flower and he seems truly in love with her, so I think “zij is de ware” is a fitting translation in this context.

In the target text it will often not be possible to retain the repetition of “thing” and I will have to settle with other translations that fit into the context. James deliberately uses the same deictic words so that a reader needs to pay attention in

¹ Back-translation: the sweetest girl/child.

² They have actually chosen to combine the previous sentence with this one: “She’s certainly immense. I mean she’s the real thing” has become in the German translation: “Natürlich ist sie wunderbar, ist sie einfach göttlich.” Back-translation: Of course she is wonderful, she is just divine.

order to follow the story. This effect will be reduced in the translation when the same words cannot be repeated which makes the novel more accessible to the reader.

3.3 It

The Ambassadors is also excessively rich in the pronoun *it* which refers back or forward to other abstractions and there is no mercy for the reader who cannot remember what “it” is. The neuter pronoun *it* has several functions in English, but the most important ones are deictic and expletive. *It* is deictic when “it stands for something in the nearer or farther environment. The reference may be to a specific word or words, or, as frequently in James, it may be vague – a whole phrase or sentence or paragraph or even a more or less implicit idea” (Chatman 55). The expletive *it*, on the other hand, can also be used as a grammatical subject when one says “it’s a nice day,” rather than “the day is nice.” Chatman argues that “James’s heavy use of both deictic and expletive *it* is frequently a reflection of his preoccupation with intangibles – relation, aspects, conditions” (55). However, the neuter pronoun sometimes disappears completely in the translation, because we use a different construction in Dutch:

[..] that had prompted Strether not absolutely to desire Waymarsh’s presence at the dock, that had led him thus to postpone for a few hours, his enjoyment of **it**, now operated [..] (*The Ambassadors* 17, [my emphasis])

In this sentence, it is impossible to translate “it” with “het” because the phrase “zijn vreugde van het” is ungrammatical. A better translation is “om zijn vreugde **erover**

voor een paar uur uit te stellen” and using “erover” is actually a translation I had to use several times. In the following:

“That’s just the beauty of it. Isn’t it very much the kind of beauty you had in mind [...]” (*The Ambassadors* 165).

The first instance of “it” needs to be translated as “ervan:” “Maar dat is nu net het mooie ervan.” In the second sentence, there are two possible options: “it” could be translated with the neutral pronoun or it could be translated with the demonstrative pronoun “dit.” The German translators have chosen for the first option and the translation reads thus as “Das ist ja gerade das Schöne daran. Ist es nicht genau die Schönheit, an die Sie dachten” (*Die Gesandten* 203). Initially, I would have settled with “dit” because it sounds the most natural to me, but knowing that James wanted to confuse his reader, “het” seems a valid option here because one needs to wonder what “it” was again and so I decided in the end to translate this as “Is het niet de soort schoonheid die u in gedachten had.”

The translation will often be more concrete in Dutch because we often need to use other pronouns. On the one hand this is a good thing, because the text becomes more accessible for the reader, but on the hand it is a downside because James wanted a reader who paid attention in order to follow the relations between words and sentences, but for the Dutch reader these relations will become more explicit.

4. Annotated Translations

In this chapter, the three translated sections are presented and specific problems will be highlighted by annotations. For my translation, I followed the guidelines of the model contract as issued by the Vereniging van Letterkundigen. According to this contract, a translator must deliver a flawless Dutch translation straight from the original work that is faithful to the original in both content and style (VvL).

I have chosen to translate three different sections from *The Ambassadors*. The first section is the opening scene in which the reader is plunged into Strether's consciousness. This scene contains many complex sentences and ambiguous words and references because the information is delayed. In addition, the focalisation switches between Strether and the omniscient narrator, but the narrative also switches between past and present, so you need your full attention in order to follow what is going on. The other two sections mostly contain dialogue, which offered the challenge to create a fluent conversation in Dutch, while also trying to incorporate the complex sentence structures of James.

4.1 Section One: Opening Scene; Strether and Miss Gostrey (p17 - 20)

Strethers eerste vraag, toen hij het hotel bereikte, ging over zijn vriend; maar toen hij vernam dat Waymarsh waarschijnlijk niet voor de avond zou arriveren was hij niet volledig verontrust. Zijn met antwoord betaalde telegram³ om een kamer te reserveren, “alleen als deze niet gehorig is,” werd getoond aan de vragensteller op het kantoor, zodat de afspraak dat zij elkaar in Chester in plaats van in Liverpool zouden treffen onveranderd bleef. Hetzelfde geheime beginsel echter, dat Strether had bewogen om niet helemaal te verlangen naar de aanwezigheid van Waymarsh bij de haven en dat hem ertoe had geleid om zijn vreugde erover voor een paar uur uit te stellen, leidde er nu toe dat hij het gevoel had dat hij nog wel kon wachten zonder teleurgesteld te zijn. In het ergste geval zouden ze samen dineren, en, met alle respect voor die beste oude Waymarsh – en eigenlijk gold dit ook voor hemzelf – bestond er nauwelijks de vrees dat ze later niet genoeg tijd met elkaar zouden doorbrengen. Het werkzame beginsel dat ik zojuist genoemd heb⁴, was samen met het aan wal gaan van één van de mannen⁵, volledig instinctief – het was ontstaan uit

³ In the source text, “reply paid” is a separate clause and so I first tried to retain this by translating this as “alleen als deze niet gehorig is, antwoord betaald.” However, this resulted in a post-modifying verb clause, which is ungrammatical in Dutch. After searching through Dutch texts from the same period on the DBNL website, I frequently found the phrase “met antwoord betaalde telegram.”

⁴ This phrase was quite troubling to translate because of the progressive -ing form. My first translation had been “Het beginsel dat ik zojuist genoemd heb dat in werking was, was” which contained an annoying repetition of the same verb. My other reasoning was to turn it into a passive and translate it thus as “Het zojuist genoemde werkzame principe was” which is a structure that the German translators have used: “Der soeben erwähnte Beweggrund” (*Die Gesandten* 7). However, by using this translation I would lose the “I,” which marks the presence of an omniscient narrator, who comments and analyses the actions of Strether and that is an important aspect of James’s narrative technique (see chapter 2.3). This structure could easily be changed into one which did contain the “I” aspect and by adding the verb “was” to the next clause, I was able to keep the sentence as fluent as the original.

⁵ The word order in this phrase was a bit puzzling at first. Watt notes that “most newly disembarked” means something different from “more newly disembarked.” He further argues that James did not

een beklemmend gevoel dat, hoe heerlijk het ook zou zijn om na zo'n lange periode van afzondering in de ogen van zijn kameraad te kijken, het zijn taak ietwat zou beïnvloeden als hij overeengekomen was dat dit gezicht⁶ zich zou vertonen bij het naderende stoomschip als het eerste "teken"⁷ van Europa. Verweven met dit alles was reeds het voorgevoel, wat Strether betreft, dat het, in het gunstigste geval, het teken van Europa in een zekere toereikende mate volledig zou aantonen.

Dat teken had ondertussen – sinds gistermiddag, dankzij deze voorspoedige gedachte⁸ – een enorm gevoel van persoonlijke vrijheid in hem opgeroepen zoals hij dat al in jaren niet meer had gevoeld; hij was doordrongen met een gevoel van

want to compare the recency of the arrival of the two men, but that he wants to inform the reader that Strether's arrival was very or "most" recent (262). I think this phrase refers to Strether, who is one of the two men who has arrived, while Waymarsh will arrive later. Earlier in this scene, the secret principle is ascribed to Strether, so then it should refer to him now as well. In my reading, the principle as well as the disembarkment of Strether is what is referred to as wholly instinctive. I tried several translations in which I retained "the two men" part, but it always seemed as if the narrator was referring to both men instead of one of them.

⁶ The problem with James's syntax is that a sentence sometimes does not seem to make sense, especially when translated. In the case of this sentence, you need to be aware of the clauses which are connected to each other so that the sentence stays fluent and makes sense. The translation of "the fruit of a sharp sense" is based on the German interpretation: "aus dem bedrängenden Gefühl geboren" (*Die Gesandten* 7). I think that "this countenance" refers to Waymarsh, since we are already informed that Strether was glad that Waymarsh was not present at the dock. The German translators have made the reference clearer by using a possessive pronoun instead of a demonstrative pronoun, but I will use a demonstrative as well since this is an important aspect of James's style (see chapter 2.4.1).

⁷ In chapter 2.4.3, I discussed that quotation marks are a way of stressing a word, but that it can also add another layer of meaning to a word. Bradbury points out that in an earlier edition of *The Ambassadors* this phrase reads: "the first 'note,' for him, of Europe." She argues that the previous version "dramatizes Strether's conjectural, hesitant mindset on the verge of his great adventure" (146). Her explanation seems valid, since Strether points out that he is not the right man for the job, but I also get the impression that he does not look forward to go to Europe. At the start of the story, Strether has an American mindset and it takes time before he adapts to the European culture. Therefore, I have decided to translate this as "teken," which both refers to a certain spot (Strether who sees Europe when he is still standing on the ship) and it also indicates his feeling towards his mission and Europe.

⁸ I have followed the German translation where this is translated as "glücklichen Einfall" (*Die Gesandten* 7).

verandering en het gevoel⁹ dat hij bovenal vooralsnog met niets of niemand rekening hoefde te houden, zoals reeds beloofd, als overhaaste hoop niet te dwaas zou zijn om zijn avontuur succesvol te beïnvloeden. Er waren mensen op het schip met wie hij zich zonder moeite had aangesloten – zover als ongedwongenheid tot nu toe aan hem kon worden toegeschreven -- en van wie de meesten direct in de stroom doken die dreef¹⁰ vanaf de aanlegplaats naar Londen; anderen hadden hem uitgenodigd bij het hotel en zelfs zijn hulp ingeroepen voor het “bezichtigen” van de schoonheden van Liverpool; maar hij was er heimelijk vandoor gegaan, had zich aan geen enkele afspraak gehouden en geen nieuwe kennissen opgedaan, was ongevoelig voor de hoeveelheid personen die, in tegenstelling tot hemzelf, blij waren dat ze werden “opgehaald ” en zonder zich te vertonen en louter door er stilletjes tussenuit te knijpen, had hij zelfs zijn middag en avond helemaal alleen doorgebracht¹¹. Ze vormden een geschikte manier om van Europa te proeven, een middag en avond bij de zandbanken van de Mersey¹², maar onder deze omstandigheden dronk hij zijn gifbeker tot op de bodem leeg. Om de waarheid te zeggen, huiverde hij een beetje bij de gedachte dat Waymarsh misschien al in Chester was; hij bedacht dat, mocht hij dan moeten verklaren waarom hij zo vroeg was “aangekomen,” het niet gemakkelijk

⁹ I am not satisfied that I have used “gevoel” so many times here since James is so fond of elegant variation (see chapter 2.4.1),, but since all my other options made the sentence ungrammatical, I decided to leave it this way.

¹⁰ This is an example of the water imagery that James uses in the novel and therefore I have interpreted “set” as “drijven.”

¹¹ This was one of the sentences where I just was not able to translate it properly. I am aware that I have now left out the “independently, unsociably, alone” part, but I could not find a way to incorporate this into my sentence.

¹² I decided to retain the suspension of this sentence since this is what James does more often (as discussed in chapter 2.4.1).

zou worden om net te doen alsof het met enthousiasme te maken had; maar hij was een man die, terwijl hij opgetogen meer geld in zijn zak aantreft dan gewoonlijk, er een tijdje aan voelt en het laat rinkelen voordat hij zich toelegt op het spenderen ervan. Dat hij bereid was om onduidelijk te zijn tegen Waymarsh over de tijd dat het schip aanmeerde, en dat hij er zowel naar uitkeek om hem weer te zien als dat hij genoten had genoten van de duur van het uitstel – dit alles, zo moet het worden opgevat, waren vroege signalen in hem dat zijn betrekking tot zijn eigenlijke doel niet eenvoudig zou zijn. Hij was belast, die arme Strether – het kon beter vanaf het begin al worden toegegeven – met de eigenaardigheid van een dubbel bewustzijn. Er was terughoudendheid in zijn ijver en nieuwsgierigheid in zijn onverschilligheid.

Nadat de jonge vrouw in de glazen kooi het zachtroze blaadje met daarop de naam van zijn vriend, die ze keurig uitsprak, voor hem omhoog had gehouden boven haar balie, ging hij weg en stond hij in de hal plotseling tegenover een dame die hem vastberaden in de ogen keek, en wier gelaatstrekken – niet meer bijster jong, niet uitgesproken mooi, maar in harmonie op elkaar afgestemd – hem zo bekend voorkwamen alsof ze pas nog een in droom waren verschenen. Voor even stonden zij tegenover elkaar; toen wist hij waar hij haar van kende¹³: hij had haar een dag eerder gezien, had haar gezien in zijn vorige hotel, waar – weer in de hal – zij zich

¹³ Unfortunately I cannot retain the repetition in the TT and form an abstract structure in the second clause. In Dutch we would use something like “voor even” as a translation for “for a moment,” which cannot be repeated in the next clause.

kortstondig had beziggehouden met wat mensen van zijn scheepsmaatschappij. Er was niets tussen hen gebeurd en hij was nauwelijks in staat om aan te geven wat voor uitdrukking zij op haar gezicht had gehad bij dat eerste voorval of om de reden te noemen voor zijn huidige herkenning. Herkenning bleek in ieder geval aan haar kant ook de overhand te krijgen – wat alleen maar zou hebben bijgedragen aan het mysterie. Ze zei alleen maar tegen hem dat ze zijn vraag gehoord had en dat ze geneigd was om te vragen, met zijn instemming, of ze het toevallig hadden over Mr Waymarsh¹⁴ uit Milrose in Connecticut– Mr. Waymarsh, de Amerikaanse advocaat.

“O ja,” antwoordde hij, “mijn goede vriend. Hij komt vanuit Malvern, we zouden elkaar hier treffen en ik nam aan dat hij al gearriveerd zou zijn. Maar hij komt wat later en ik ben opgelucht dat ik hem niet heb opgehouden. Kent u hem dan?” zei Strether afsluitend. Pas nadat hij had gesproken werd hij zich ervan bewust hoezeer hij onder de indruk was; toen de klank van haar eigen repliek, net als de krachtige beweging in haar gezicht – dat wil zeggen dat het sterker was dan het¹⁵ ogenschijnlijke gewoonlijke onrustige licht – hem leek te informeren. “Ik heb hem in Milrose ontmoet – waar ik vroeger, een hele poos geleden, wel eens verbleef; ik had

¹⁴ I decided to treat this as a title, as has been done in the latest translation of *Mrs Dalloway*. The woman Strether is encountering here is Miss Gostrey and “miss” of course points out that she is unmarried. In Paris, Strether meets Madame and Mademoiselle de Vionnet which is also an indication that we are dealing with a married woman and an unmarried lady. The fact that Madame de Vionnet is married, convinces Strether at first that Chad cannot have a relationship with her. Of course James has used these forms of address to contribute to the colour locale, because the readers know if they are dealing with a (partly) French or an American woman.

¹⁵ In the source text, a possessive pronoun is used: “its face.” If I were to use a possessive pronoun in Dutch as well, it would have been “in zijn gezicht” which in this sentence is vague and ambiguous because the masculine pronoun seems to refer to Strether instead of Miss Gostrey’s face. Since the possessive pronoun makes the sentence unnecessarily difficult, I decided to use a demonstrative instead.

vrienden daar die ook vrienden van hem waren, en ik ben bij hem thuis geweest. Ik kan niet met zekerheid zeggen of hij zich mij kan herinneren,” vervolgde de nieuwe kennis van Strether; “maar het zou me een waar genoegen zijn om hem weer eens te zien. “Wellicht”, voegde ze er aan toe, “doe ik dat ook wel¹⁶ – want ik verblijf hier.” Ze hield stil terwijl onze vriend dit allemaal in zich opnam en het was alsof ze al geruime tijd met elkaar hadden staan praten. Ze glimlachten allebei zelfs een beetje en Strether merkte op dit moment op dat het ongetwijfeld gemakkelijk zou zijn om een ontmoeting met Mr Waymarsh te regelen. Dit leek de dame echter aan te grijpen alsof ze misschien te ver was gegaan. Ze leek over geen enkele reserves te beschikken. “O,” zei ze, “dat maakt hem niets uit!” – en daarna merkte ze onmiddellijk op dat ze dacht dat Strether de familie Munster kende; dat waren de mensen met wie hij haar had gezien in Liverpool. Maar hij kende, zoals het geval was, de familie Munster niet goed genoeg om het gesprek gaande te houden; en zo stonden ze daar samen als voor een conversatie gedekte, maar lege tafel. Haar benoeming van de connectie had eerder een gerecht verwijderd dan toegevoegd en er scheen niets anders over te zijn om te serveren. Hun houding bleef, desalniettemin, om het tafelen niet op te geven; en achtereenvolgens zorgde dit ervoor dat ze de indruk kregen dat ze elkaar zonder enige voorbereidingen volkomen hadden geaccepteerd¹⁷.

¹⁶ In the source text there is a repetition of the same verb “should” and “shall.” In Dutch it in this case is impossible to use a form of “zou,” so I decided to go for a natural sounding answer.

¹⁷ The word order of this sentence confused me at first, but a way of reading this is as follows: “and the effect of this in turn was practically complete.”

Ze liepen samen door de hal en Strethers metgezel zei plotseling dat het hotel het voordeel had over een tuin te beschikken. Hij was zich tegen die tijd bewust van zijn eigenaardige inconsequentie: hij had zich op het stoomschip onttrokken aan iedere innige omgang en had de ontzetting over Waymarsh bewust verdrongen, en nu realiseerde hij zich dat hij plotseling verstoken was van vermijding en voorzichtig gedrag. Hij kwam, onder het toezicht van deze ongevraagde bescherming en voordat hij ook maar naar zijn kamer was geweest, terecht in de tuin van het hotel en had er mee ingestemd om elkaar daar na tien minuten weer te ontmoeten, zodra hij zich even had opgefrist, iets wat hem zeker zelfvertrouwen gaf. Hij wilde een kijkje nemen in de stad en ze zouden dat meteen samen gaan doen. Het was bijna alsof zij de leiding had en hem ontving als een gast. Haar vertrouwdheid met de plek zorgde ervoor dat ze een soort gastvrouw was en Strether wierp een treurige blik naar de dame in de glazen kooi. Het was alsof deze persoon zichzelf onmiddellijk opzijgezet had zien worden.

4.2 Section Two: Strether and Little Bilham (p164 - 167)

Ze zaten even later samen in de hoek van de kamer schuin tegenover de plek waar Gloriani¹⁸ nog steeds in gesprek was met Jeanne de Vionnet, waar zij in de eerste plaats en in complete stilte hun aandacht aan schonken. “Ik kan me echt niet voorstellen,” had Strether toen opgemerkt, “hoe een jongeman met enige levenslust – zoals die van jou¹⁹ bijvoorbeeld – deze jongedame kan aanschouwen zonder zwaar getroffen te zijn. Waarom ga je niet naar binnen, kleine Bilham²⁰?” Hij herinnerde zich hoe hij zijn binnenste bloot had gegeven op de tuinbank op de bijeenkomst van de beeldhouwer²¹ en dit maakte het wellicht goed doordat het heel wat gepaster was om te zeggen tegen een jongeman die het waard is om elk soort advies te geven.

“Dan *zou* er wel een reden moeten zijn.”

“Een reden waarvoor?”

¹⁸ In the source text, it says that the two men were seated “at the angle of the room opposite the corner,” but this is problematic in Dutch since “angle” and “corner” are both translated as “hoek.” I solved this by only translating “angle” as “hoek,” which at least gives the impression that they are observing the other two characters.

¹⁹ In every translation from English to Dutch, the translation of “you” is problematic. The personal pronoun “you” can be used in English for formal and informal address and for a plural. In Dutch, however, one needs to decide between the informal “you” and the formal “u” and “jullie” for a plural form. From the beginning, Strether regards Little Bilham as his friend and he trusts him rather completely, so I decided that he would address him with “jij.” Little Bilham is probably in his late twenties while Strether is fifty-five, and in the conversations it is often suggested that Little Bilham looks up to Strether. Therefore, I think that it is fitting that Little Bilham addresses Strether with “u” in order to show respect.

²⁰ His full name is “John Little Bilham” and since he is not so tall, he has decided to use that part of his name as well. “Little” is a common last name in English, but the Dutch “kleine” occurs frequently as a last name as well.

²¹ This refers back to the moment that Strether gives a speech to Little Bilham and tells him to live his life to the fullest while he still can. Strether admitted that he has thrown away his life, but that he is too old now to do the things he wants to do. One of the definitions the OED gives for “betray” is the following: “To reveal, disclose or show incidentally; to exhibit, show signs of, to show (a thing which there is no attempt to keep secret).” This definition supports the German interpretation so I decided to follow that.

“Nou, dat je toch hier blijft.”

“Om mijn hand en fortuin te geven aan Mademoiselle de Vionet?”

“Nou,” vroeg Strether, “aan welke lieftalligere verschijning *zou* je ze kunnen geven?

Zij is het liefste kleine meisje dat ik ooit heb gezien.”

“Ze is zeker fantastisch. Zij is de ware, bedoel ik. Ik geloof dat de lichtroze bloemblaadjes nog zijn gesloten en wachten op een wonderlijke periode van bloei; om open te gaan, bedoel ik, voor een grote gouden zon. Ik ben helaas maar een kleine simpele kaars²². Hoeveel kans bestaat er in zo’n geval voor een arme kleine schilder?”

“Oh, je bent goed genoeg,” merkte Strether op.

“Natuurlijk ben ik goed genoeg. Wij, nous autres²³, zijn denk ik overal goed genoeg voor. Maar zij is té goed. Dat is nu net het verschil. Ze gunnen me nog geen blik waardig.”

Strether, die ontspannen op zijn sofa zat en nog steeds gecharmeerd was van het jonge meisje, wier ogen bewust naar hem afdwaalden, zo beeldde hij zich in, met een vage glimlach – Strether genoot van de hele gebeurtenis en het leek wel of slapende

²² “Farthing” is a quarter of a penny, which means that this candle costs a farthing. I was not able to find something similar in Dutch and therefore decided to translate this with “simpel.”

²³ “We.” Throughout the novel, the characters that live in Paris occasionally use French words or phrases. The characters that use these phrases often need to explain to Strether what they mean. In addition, Strether starts to use some French words as well, so I decided to maintain the French words. I also had to change the structure of this sentence in order to retain the repetition of “we/nous autres” and to keep it fluent.

emoties eindelijk waren ontwaakt. Ondanks de nieuwe informatie die hem werd toevertrouwd, dacht hij na over de woorden van zijn kameraad²⁴. “Wie bedoel je met “ze”? Zij en haar moeder?”

“Zij en haar moeder. En ze heeft ook een vader, die, wat hij daarnaast ook moge zijn, zeker niet ongevoelig kan zijn voor de mogelijkheden die ze biedt. En dan is Chad er ook nog.”

Strether zweeg een poosje. “Ah maar hij geeft niets om haar – niet, bedoel ik, zo blijkt per slot van rekening, in de zin zoals ik dat bedoel. Hij is niet verliefd op haar.”

“Nee – maar hij is haar beste vriend; na haar moeder. Hij is erg op haar gesteld. Hij heeft zo zijn ideeën over haar toekomst²⁵.”

“Nou ja, het is maar vreemd!” merkte Strether zuchtend op²⁶ door al die verschillende perspectieven.

“Het is inderdaad zeer vreemd. Maar dat is nu net het mooie eraan. Is dit nu niet net de soort schoonheid die u in gedachten had,” ging kleine Bilham verder, “toen u

²⁴ This is another example of a sentence which makes perfect sense to me in English, but became ungrammatical when translated into Dutch. It proved to be difficult because of the progressive aspect in the last part of the sentence and various options proved to be ungrammatical. It pains me to split this up into two sentences, but in that way it is at least grammatical.

²⁵ Strether and little Bilham are clearly discussing whom Mademoiselle de Vionett could marry, since they also discuss that she represents certain possibilities. Therefore I have followed the German translation: “Und er hat auch seine Ideen “über ihre Zukunft” (*Die Gesandten* 203).

²⁶ The construction “sense of (something)” is a favourite of James, but is impossible to maintain that here because we do not have a single word in Dutch that encompasses the same meaning as fullness. With “fullness” is probably meant “Copiousness or exhaustiveness (of knowledge, statement, or expression) (OED) since the situation between Mademoiselle de Vionett and Chad is so complicated and it takes a long time for him to grasp what is going on. Braem and Kaiser used “Gesichtspunkte” (*Die Gesandten* 203) and I think that interpretation is suitable in this context.

onlangs zo wonderbaarlijk en zo inspirerend tegen me sprak? Smeekte u me niet, met een manier van spreken die ik nooit zal vergeten, om alles, als ik de kans heb, te zien? – en écht te zien, alleen dat kan het toch zijn geweest wat u ermee bedoelde. Nou, u heeft me een enorme dienst bewezen ik doe mijn best. Ik probeer te achterhalen hoe het allemaal zit²⁷.

“Dat doe ik ook!” ging Strether na een poosje verder. Maar vervolgens kwam hij met een onbeduidende vraag. “Hoe komt het eigenlijk dat Chad er zo in verwickeld is?”

“Ah, ah, ah!” - en kleine Bilham liet zich in de kussens vallen.

Dit herinnerde onze vriend aan Miss Barrace en hij voelde opnieuw dat hij zich in een doolhof van mystiek gesloten zinspelingen bewoog²⁸. Maar hij liet de draad niet los. “Ik begrijp het volkomen; alleen de hele transformatie doet me regelmatig naar adem snakken. Dat Chad zoveel inspraak heeft in de totstandkoming van de toekomst van een jonge gravin – nee,” verklaarde hij, “het heeft meer tijd nodig! Jij zegt bovendien,” zo ging hij verder, “dat mensen zoals jij en ik, hoogstwaarschijnlijk niet van de juiste afkomst zijn²⁹. Het blijft opmerkelijk dat dit bij Chad niet het geval

²⁷ I just cannot pin down what this phrase exactly means. “I do make out the situation” would have meant that he understands what is going on, but it says “I do make it out a situation.” Braem and Kaiser have interpreted this as: “Verlassen Sie sich darauf: ich nehme die Gelegenheit wahr!” (back-translation: Trust me, I seize the opportunity!) (*Die Gesandten* 203). I do not think that is logical in this context and that it rather means something like “I do make it out as a situation” because the whole thing between Chad and Jeanne is so complicated.

²⁸ I am aware that I have left out “the brush of his sense” but when I tried to incorporate this in my translation it just sounded vague.

²⁹ I followed the German “nicht im Rennen lagen” (back-translation: not have a good position) (*Die Gesandten* 204) but changed “geode positie hebben” into “van de juiste afkomst zijn.” Earlier in this scene, Bilham says that he does not make a chance because he is a painter and Strether is only an editor for a review.

is. De situatie laat het niet toe, maar onder andere omstandigheden zou hij haar kunnen krijgen als hij dat zou willen.

“Ja, maar dat is alleen maar omdat hij rijk is en omdat er een mogelijkheid voor hem bestaat om nog rijker te worden. Ze denken aan niets anders dan een goede naam of een enorm fortuin.”

“Nou ja,” zei Strether, “hij zal met *deze* aanpak geen enorm fortuin vergaren. Hij moet er vaart achter zetten.

“Is dat,” vroeg kleine Bilham, “wat u tegen Madame de Vionnet hebt gezegd?”

“Nee – Ik zeg niet zoveel tegen haar. Natuurlijk.” ging Strether verder, “hij kan offers brengen als hij dat zou willen.”

Kleine Bilham wachtte even. “Oh hij is niet bereid om offers te brengen; al denkt hij waarschijnlijk dat hij er al genoeg gebracht heeft.”

“Nou ja, het *is* deugdzaam,” stelde zijn kameraad nadrukkelijk vast.

“Dat is precies,” zei de jongeman na een tijdje, “wat ik bedoel.”

Het zorgde ervoor dat Strether zelf een poosje stil bleef. “Het is me nu helemaal duidelijk,” ging hij toen verder; “Ik heb er echt, binnen het afgelopen half uur, vat op

gekregen. Kortgezegd, ik begrijp het nu eindelijk; wat ik eerst – toen je eerder tegen me sprak – niet begreep. Noch toen Chad dat deed³⁰.”

“Oh,” zei kleine Bilham,” Ik dacht toen niet dat u me geloofde.”

“Dat deed ik wel; en ik geloofde Chad ook. Het zou weerzinwekkend en ongemanierd zijn geweest – en ook vrij eigenzinnig – als ik dat niet had gedaan. Welke redenen heb je om mij voor te liegen?”

De jongeman zocht naar een uitvlucht. “Welke redenen ik heb?”

“Ja. Chad heeft die wellicht. Maar jij?”

“Ah, ah, ah!” riep kleine Bilham.

Het zou, bij herhaling, als een mystificatie, onze vriend een beetje hebben geïrriteerd, maar hij wist, nogmaals, zoals we hebben gezien, hoe hij ervoor stond, en zijn bewijs tegen alles was alleen maar een extra bevestiging dat hij hier moest blijven. “Ik zou het me niet realiseren zonder mijn eigen indrukken. Ze is een enorm slimme briljante bekwame vrouw³¹ en met een uitzonderlijke charme bovendien – de charme waarvan we zeker allemaal na deze avond weten wat we er van moeten vinden. Het is niet zo dat iedere slimme briljante bekwame vrouw die heeft. Het is in feite zeldzaam bij elke vrouw. Zie je wel, “ging Strether verder al was het niet alleen in het voordeel van kleine Bilham. “Ik begrijp wat een relatie met een dergelijke vrouw – wat een

³⁰ First I had translated this as “noch toen Chad dat eerder tegen me deed” but this did not sound like a correct and natural answer in Dutch. Therefore I have dropped the repetition here.

³¹ As has been discussed in chapter 2.4.3, James often omits the commas between adverbs and I decided to retain this aspect in the translation because it gives the effect of rapid speech.

dergelijke waardevolle vriendschap – zou kunnen zijn. Het mag niet vulgair of platvloers zijn, maar goed – dat is nu juist het punt.”

“Ja, dat is nu juist het punt,” zei kleine Bilham. “Het mag niet vulgair of platvloers zijn. En God zij geprezen, dat *is* het niet! Het is, op mijn erewoord, de mooiste vriendschap die ik ooit in mijn leven gezien heb, en de meest kenmerkende.”

Strether, die gelijktijdig met hem naar achteren leunde, wierp hem een zijdelingse blik toe die een korte pauze opvulde en waar hij geen kennisgeving van nam. Hij keek alleen maar voor zich uit met een diepe belangstelling. “Wat het natuurlijk het voor hem gedaan heeft,” vervolgde Strether, “natuurlijk wat het voor hem heeft gedaan – dat wil zeggen *hoe* het zo wonderbaarlijk is gelukt – is niet iets dat ik probeer te begrijpen. Ik moet het nemen zoals ik het aantref. Zo is het.”

“Zo is het!” herhaalde kleine Bilham. “En het komt daadwerkelijk door haar. Ik begrijp het ook niet, ondanks dat ik het langer gadeslagen heb. Maar ik ben zoals u,” voegde hij eraan toe; “ik kan iets aanbidden en me ergens op verheugen ook al moet ik een beetje in het duister tasten. Weet u, ik heb het zo’n drie jaar aangekeken, en zeker dit afgelopen jaar. Hij was daarvoor zo slecht niet zoals ik denk dat u dacht -”

“Oh maar ik denk nu helemaal niets!” onderbrak Strether hem ongeduldig: “dat is alleen maar wat ik wél denk! Ik bedoel dat oorspronkelijk, dat zij om hem heeft gegeven -”

“Moet er iets in hem zijn geweest? Oh ja, er was zeker iets, en ik durf te stellen dat er veel meer was dan er thuis ooit te zien is geweest. Nog steeds, weet u, ” verklaarde de jongeman in alle eerlijkheid, “was er een plaats vrij voor haar en op die manier kwam ze naar binnen. Ze zag haar kans en ze pakte hem. Dat vond ik nou zo fantastisch aan haar. Maar natuurlijk,” beëindigde hij zijn verhaal, “hij vond haar als eerst leuk.”

“Uiteraard,” zei Strether.

“Ik bedoel dat ze elkaar ergens op de een of andere manier hebben ontmoet – Ik geloof in een of ander Amerikaans huis – en zij, zonder dat ook maar van plan te zijn, maakte indruk. Toen met wat tijd en mogelijkheid maakte hij die van hem; en *daarna* was ze net zo slecht als hij.

Strether nam het vaagjes op. “Net zo ‘slecht’?”

“Ze begon, bedoel ik, om hem te geven – zeer om hem te geven. Alleen, en in haar beroerde positie, vond ze het, toen ze eenmaal begon, interessant. Het was, het is, een interesse, en het deed – en het doet nog steeds – ook een hoop voor haarzelf. Dus ze geeft nog steeds om hem. Ze geeft in feite,” zei kleine Bilham nadenkend “meer” om hem.

Strethers theorie dat deze zaken hem niet aangingen, was op de een of andere manier niet aangetast door de manier waarop hij dit opvatte. “Je bedoelt, meer dan hij?” Zijn

metgezel keek vervolgens naar hem om en voor even ontmoetten hun ogen elkaar.

“Meer dan hij?” herhaalde hij.

Kleine Bilham gaf niet meteen antwoord. “Zult u het aan nooit tegen iemand vertellen?”

Strether dacht na. “Tegen wie zou ik het moeten vertellen?”

“Nou ik dacht dat u regelmatig verslag uitbrengt –”

“Aan de mensen thuis?” Strether nam hem op. “Nou, ik zal ze dit niet vertellen.”

De jongeman keek eindelijk weg. “Ze geeft nu dus meer om hem dan hij om haar.”

“Oh!” riep Strether vreemd uit.

4.3 Section Three: Strether and Miss Gostrey (p192 – 196)

Om vier uur 's middags had hij hem nog steeds niet gesproken, maar hij was op dat moment, om het te compenseren, verweekt in een gesprek over hem met Miss Gostrey. Strether was heel de dag van huis weggebleven, had zichzelf overgegeven aan de stad en aan zijn gedachten, hij had rondgedoeld en nagedacht, was tegelijkertijd onrustig en geheel in beslag genomen – en dat alles met het huidige vooruitzicht van een hartelijk welkom in de Quartier Marbeouf. “Waymarsh heeft, zonder dat ik het wist, daar ben ik van overtuigd” – want Miss Gostrey had ernaar gevraagd – “contact gehad met Woollett: het gevolg daarvan was dat er gisteravond een enorm beroep op mij werd gedaan.”

“Bedoel je³² een brief dat je terug moet keren?”

“Nee – een telegram, dat ik op dit moment in mijn zak heb: ‘neem het eerste schip terug.’”

De gastvrouw van Strether, zo mag het worden omschreven, ontging er maar net aan om van kleur te verschieten. Een reactie kwam maar net op tijd en zorgde voor een voorlopige geruststelling. Het kwam wellicht daardoor wat haar in staat stelde om vals te zeggen: “En je gaat -?”

“Je verdient het bijna als je me zo in de steek laat.”

³² By this time, Strether and Miss Gostrey have become close friends. He trusts her completely and he informs her about everything regarding Chad, so I think informal address is suitable in this case.

Ze schudde haar hoofd alsof dit het niet waard was om tegenin te gaan. “Mijn afwezigheid heeft je goed gedaan – ik hoef alleen maar een blik op je te werpen om dat te zien. Zo was mijn voorspelling en ik heb gelijk gekregen. Je bent niet meer op het punt waar je eerst stond. En het was voor mij zaak,” ze glimlachte, “om daar ook niet bij te zijn. Je kunt het heel goed alleen af.”

“Oh, maar ik voel vandaag,” verklaarde hij op zijn gemak, “dat ik je nog nodig zal hebben.”

Ze nam hem nog eens helemaal in haar op. “Nou, ik beloof je dat ik niet nogmaals je verlaat³³, maar dat zal alleen zijn zodat ik je in de gaten kan houden. Je hebt je kans gehad en je kunt nu op eigen benen staan³⁴.”

Hij was zo verstandig om dit te in te zien. “Ja – ik neem aan dat ik nu op eigen benen kan staan. Het is juist het vooruitzicht hiervan dat Waymarsh zo van streek heeft gemaakt. Hij kan het – als Waymarsh reageert op de manier zoals ik denk – niet langer verdragen. Dat is het enige toppunt van zijn oorspronkelijke gevoel. Hij wil dat ik ermee stop; en hij moet naar Woollett hebben geschreven dat ik gevaar loop ten onder te gaan.”

“Ah, mooi!” mompelde ze. “Maar is dit alleen jouw vermoeden?”

³³ This is another example of James’s unconventional word order, which I have retained in the translation (see chapter 2.4.2).

³⁴ “Toddle alone” sounds very childish, like Miss Gostrey constantly needs to hold Strether’s hand. I think that “op eigen benen staan” has a similar connotation because it means that he needs to do it on his own now.

“Ik voel het– het is een verklaring.”

“Dus hij ontkent? – of heb je het hem niet gevraagd?”

“Ik heb er nog geen tijd voor gehad,” zei Strether; “Ik heb het gisterenavond pas ontrafeld door verscheidene dingen met elkaar in verband te brengen en ik ben hem sindsdien nog niet onder ogen gekomen.”

Ze dacht na. “Omdat het je zo tegen de borst stuit? Omdat je jezelf niet vertrouwd?”

Hij duwde zijn bril terug op zijn neus. “Zie ik eruit alsof ik helemaal gek geworden ben?”

“Je ziet er fantastisch uit!”

“Er is niets,” ging hij verder, “om kwaad over te zijn. Integendeel, hij heeft me een dienst gedaan.”

Ze begreep het. “Door de zaak aan het rollen te brengen?³⁵”

“Wat snapt u het toch goed!” bromde hij bijna. “Waymarsh zal het niet in het minste geval, tenminste, zodra ik hem ermee confronteer, ontkennen of goedpraten. Hij heeft vanuit de diepste overtuiging gehandeld, met een zuiver geweten en na slapeloze nachten. Hij zal erkennen dat hij volledig verantwoordelijk is en zal van mening zijn dat hij bijzonder veel succes geboekt heeft; zodat enig gesprek dat we misschien hebben ons weer enigszins bij elkaar zal brengen – een brug zal slaan over

³⁵ I have followed the German translation in this: “weil er den Stein ins Rollen brachte” (*Die Gesandten* 236).

de donkere stroom die ons zo lang uit elkaar heeft gehouden. We zullen eindelijk, als gevolg van zijn daad, zeker iets hebben waarover we kunnen praten.”

Ze was een beetje stil. “Wat neem je het toch goed op!”³⁶ Maar je bent altijd verbazingwekkend.”

Hij zweeg ook even; toen had hij, met een toepasselijke opgewektheid, een volledige erkenning. “Je hebt helemaal gelijk. Ik ben ontzettend verbazingwekkend op dit moment. Ik durf zelfs te stellen dat ik best buitengewoon ben en ik zou niet helemaal verbaasd zijn als ik kwaad was.”

“Vertel het me dan!” dwong ze vurig aan. Terwijl hij echter voorlopig niet antwoordde, haar alleen diezelfde blik wierp waarmee ze naar hem keek, ging zij zo zitten zodat het makkelijker was voor hem om haar onder ogen te komen. “Wat zou Mr Waymarsh precies gedaan hebben?”

“Simpelweg een brief hebben geschreven. Eén zal waarschijnlijk wel genoeg zijn geweest. Hij heeft ze verteld dat ik toezicht wil hebben.”

“En *wil* je dat ook?” – ze was zeer nieuwsgierig.

“Natuurlijk! En ik zal het krijgen ook.”

“Waarmee je bedoelt dat je je niet zult verroeren?”

³⁶ The word “wonderful” is frequently used in the novel, but this is a word which can be used in different contexts in English, where in Dutch we have sometimes more options. In this case I think this is ideological in Dutch.

“Ik zal me niet verroeren.”

“Je hebt een telegram verstuurd?”

“Nee – dat heb ik aan Chad overgelaten.”

“Dat je weigert terug te gaan?”

“Dat *hij* weigert. We hadden het er vanmorgen over en ik heb hem omgepraat. Nog voordat ik naar mijn kamer had verlaten, was hij gekomen om te vertellen dat hij gereed was -

Hij was gekomen, voordat ik beneden was, om te vertellen dat hij gereed was – gereed, bedoel ik, om te terug te gaan. En nadat hij tien minuten met hij gesproken had, ging hij weg om te schrijven dat hij niet zou gaan.”

Miss Gostrey was een en al oor. “Dus je hebt hem *tegengehouden*?”

Strether liet zich nog eens in de stoel zakken. “Ik heb hem tegengehouden. Voorlopig in ieder geval. Dat – zei hij nog wat duidelijker tegen haar – is hoe ik ervoor sta.”

“Ik begrijp het, ik begrijp het. Maar waar is Mr Newsome? Hij was gereed,” vroeg ze, “om te gaan?”

“Helemaal gereed.”

“En geloofde oprecht – dat *jij* dat ook zou zijn?”

“Volslagen, denk ik; daarom was hij verbaasd dat de hand die ik op hem had gelegd om hem terug te trekken plotseling was omgeslagen in een instrument om hem stil te houden.”

Het was een verslag van de zaak die Miss Gostrey kon afwegen. “Denkt hij dat het een onverwacht gesprek was?”

“Nou ja,” zei Strether, “Ik weet niet geheel zeker wat hij denkt. Ik ben niet zeker over alles wat hem aangaat, behalve dat des te meer ik van hem gezien heb, des te minder hij is zoals ik in eerste instantie had verwacht. Hij is onduidelijk en daarom ben ik aan het wachten.”

Ze dacht na. “Maar waarop precies dan?”

“Op het antwoord van zijn telegram?”

“En wat stond er in zijn telegram?”

“Dat weet ik niet,” antwoordde Strether; “voordat hij wegging hadden we afgesproken dat hij zelf moest bepalen wat hij erin wilde zetten. Ik zei simpelweg tegen hem: ‘Ik wil hier blijven en de enige manier waarop ik dat kan doen, is als jij ook blijft.’ Dat ik wilde blijven leek hem te interesseren en hij liet zich daardoor leiden.”

Miss Gostrey draaide de zaak om. “Hij wil dus zelf blijven.”

Deels. Daarmee bedoel ik dat een deel van hem wil blijven en een deel wil gaan. Mijn oorspronkelijke verzoek heeft tot zover een effect op hem gehad. Desalniettemin,” ging Strether verder, “hij zal niet gaan. Niet zolang ik hier nog ben in ieder geval.”

“Maar je kunt niet,” stelde zijn metgezel voor, “hier blijven voor altijd³⁷. Ik zou willen dat je dat kon.”

“In geen geval. Maar toch wil ik hem nog een tijdje gadeslaan. Hij is niet in het minste geval zoals ik had verwacht, hij is heel anders. En daardoor ben ik zo in hem geïnteresseerd.” Het leek bijna alsof onze vriend de kwestie zo doelbewust en helder verwoordde om het voor zichzelf duidelijk te maken³⁸. “Ik wil hem nog niet opgeven.”

Miss Gostrey wilde het maar al te graag voor hem ophelderen. Ze moest echter voorzichtig en tactisch te werk gaan. “Opgeven, je bedoelt – a – aan zijn moeder?”

“Nou, ik denk momenteel niet aan zijn moeder. Ik denk aan het plan waarvan ik de woordvoerder was, wat ik, zodra we elkaar ontmoetten, zo overtuigend mogelijk aan hem heb voorgelegd, en aan wat er, als het ware, in volledige onwetendheid van alles, in deze laatste lange periode, met hem is gebeurd³⁹. Het⁴⁰ nam de indruk die ik

³⁷ As has been discussed in chapter 2.4.2, this is an example of James’s unconventional word order which I have retained.

³⁸ It pains me to change the structure of this sentence in such a fluent one, but otherwise it did not make sense.

³⁹ This is another instance of a very complex sentence where you need to be aware of the clauses which are connected. The sentence starts with “I’m thinking of” which is connected with the final clause “has been happening to him.” In the source text, the “what was happening to him” part feels very strange, as though that clause does not belong there. In my translation, instead of “en wat” in the middle of the

hier onmiddelijk op deze plek van hem moest krijgen niet in aanmerking – indrukken, waarvan ik zeker weet dat ik daar nog lang niet de laatste van heb gehad.”

Miss Gostrey lachte welwillend. “Dus jouw idee is – min of meer – om uit nieuwsgierigheid te blijven?”

“Noem het zoals je wilt! Het kan me niets schelen hoe het wordt genoemd –”

“Zo lang als je toch blijft?” Onder geen beding dan. Ik noem het, toch, immens plezier,” verklaarde Maria Gostrey; “en jou dat zien uit te werken, zal een van de sensaties uit mijn leven zijn. Het is duidelijk dat je op eigen benen kan staan!”

Hij ontving deze blijk van waardering zonder opgetogenheid. “Ik zal niet alleen zijn als de familie Pocock hierheen komt.”

Ze trok haar wenkbrauwen op. “De familie Pocock komt hiernaartoe?”

“Dat, bedoel ik, is wat er zal gebeuren – en zo spoedig mogelijk zal gebeuren – als gevolg van Chads telegram. Ze zullen zich er simpelweg mee inlaten. Sarah zal komen om namens haar moeder te spreken – dat een heel ander effect zal hebben dan die warboel van *mij*.”

“Miss Gostrey verbaasde zich. “*Zij* zal hem dan mee terug nemen?”

sentence, “is translated as “en aan wat” so that the first and final clause can be connected: “en aan wat er met hem is gebeurd.”

⁴⁰ “Het” may sound somewhat strange here, but “it” refers to “the plan” in the previous sentence.

“Zeer waarschijnlijk – en we zullen het wel zien. Ze moet in ieder geval de kans krijgen en ze wordt wellicht vertrouwd om alles te doen wat binnen haar bereik ligt.”

“En *wil* je dat?”

“Natuurlijk,” zei Strether, “Ik wil het. Ik wil eerlijk spelen.”

Maar voor eventjes was ze de draad kwijt. “Als het afhangt van de familie Pocock, waarom blijf je dan?”

“Gewoon om te zien dat ik *inderdaad* eerlijk speel – en een beetje, zondermeer, om te zien dat zij dat ook doen.” Strether was duidelijk zoals hij nog nooit was geweest. “Ik heb nieuwe feiten ontdekt – feiten waarvan ik ervaar dat ze steeds minder op onze oorspronkelijke redenen passen. De zaak is simpel. Nieuwe redenen – redenen die net zo nieuw als de feiten zelf – zijn gewild; en hiervan zijn onze vrienden in Woollett – die van Chad en mij – zeker vanaf het begin af aan op de hoogte gesteld. Als ze al te vervaardigen zijn, dan zal Mrs Pocock ze vervaardigen; ze zal de volledige meute meebrengen. Ze zullen,” voegde hij er met een zwaarmoedige lach aan toe “een onderdeel zijn van het “plezier” waar je over sprak.”

Ze was nu ook in de stroom en dreef aan zijn zijde. “Het is Mamie – zover ik het van je gehoord heb – die hun beste troef zal zijn.” En toen zijn stilte geen ontkennen bleek voegde ze daaraan toe: “Ik denk dat ik medelijden met haar heb.”

“Anders ik wel!⁴¹” – en Strether sprong op, bewoog een beetje terwijl haar ogen hem volgden. “Maar het is niet anders.”

“Je bedoelt het feit dat ze hiernaartoe komt?”

Hij legde na nog een omloop uit wat hij bedoelde. “De enige reden waardoor ze niet zal komen is als ik naar huis ga – zoals ik denk dat ik het hier ter plekke zou kunnen voorkomen. Maar het probleem daarvan is wanneer ik dan toch naar huis ga –”

“Ik begrijp het, ik begrijp het” - ze had het meteen begrepen. “Mr Newsome zal dan hetzelfde doen en daar mag niet” – vervolgde ze nu lachend – “aan gedacht worden.”

Strether lachte niet; hij had slechts een zwijgzame vergelijkbare kalme blik die hem misschien had laten zien als bewijs tegen spot. “Vreemd, is het niet?”

Ze waren, in de kwestie die hen zo zeer interesseerde, zo ver gekomen zonder een andere naam te noemen – hun huidige korte stilte was vol van een geweten. Strethers vraag was een gevolg van de last die zwaarder was geworden tijdens de afwezigheid van zijn gastvrouw; en alleen om die reden zou een eenmalig gebaar van haar kant een duidelijk antwoord voor hem kunnen zijn. Maar hij kreeg een nog beter antwoord toen zij opeens zei: “Zal Mr Newsome zijn zus voorstellen aan-?”

⁴¹ This is one of the cases in which the repetition of speech cannot be maintained, because a natural responding answer in Dutch would be something like this instead of “ik denk dat ik ook medelijden met haar heb!”

“Madame de Vionett?” Strether sprak de naam eindelijk uit. “Het zou me ontzettend verbazen als hij dat niet zou doen.”

Ze leek na te denken over de mogelijkheid. “Je bedoelt dat je erover na hebt gedacht en dat je er klaar voor bent?”

“Ik heb erover nagedacht en ik ben er klaar voor.”

Ze richtte het gesprek nu weer toe op naar haar gast. “Bon!⁴² Je bént indrukwekkend!”

⁴² James does not use any dialect to distinguish the speech of his characters, but the characters do speak some French once in a while. The use of French contributes to the difference of speech between the characters of Woollett and Paris and many phrases or words are explained to Strether, like “femme du monde.” I have chosen to maintain this French word in my translation since it is a particular aspect of the novel and I think it contributes to the colour locale.

Conclusion

The aim of this thesis is to uncover what stylistic and narratological devices can be used in a Dutch translation of Henry James's *The Ambassadors* to retain the disorienting effect of the original. The aspects on the macro-level, such as focalisation and the discourse situation did not provide any problems and could easily be adapted into the translation. Some devices on the micro-level could also be copied into the translation, such as elegant variation, parallel sentences and the omission of commas and the use of quotation marks. However, especially the constructions which make his language so abstract, like psychological nominalization, were difficult to maintain and in many instances my translation became more explicit than the source text. Translating the complex sentence structures and maintaining all the clauses was also not always possible due to the differences between English and Dutch. This meant that part of the effect of James's writing got lost and some of its elements were dismissed.

The main difficulty when translating a novel by James is unravelling all the meanings he puts into his work and finding the right words to create the same effect in the translation. Even after reading some sentences over and over, I was still not able to decipher the meaning and I finally had to settle with something that would make sense in the context. The German translation was often helpful, but it was noticeable that the translators were not always aware of the devices that James employs or that they were also not able to understand James's logic.

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Appendices

Section One: Opening Scene; Strether and Miss Gostrey (p17 - 20)

Strether's first question, when he reached the hotel, was about his friend; yet on his learning that Waymarsh was apparently not to arrive till evening he was not wholly disconcerted. A telegram from him bespeaking a room "only if not noisy," reply paid, was produced for the enquirer at the office, so that the understanding they should meet at Chester rather than at Liverpool remained to that extent sound. The same secret principle, however, that had prompted Strether not absolutely to desire Waymarsh's presence at the dock, that had led him thus to postpone for a few hours his enjoyment of it, now operated to make him feel he could still wait without disappointment. They would dine together at the worst, and, with all respect to dear old Waymarsh--if not even, for that matter, to himself--there was little fear that in the sequel they shouldn't see enough of each other. The principle I have just mentioned as operating had been, with the most newly disembarked of the two men, wholly instinctive--the fruit of a sharp sense that, delightful as it would be to find himself looking, after so much separation, into his comrade's face, his business would be a trifle bungled should he simply arrange for this countenance to present itself to the nearing steamer as the first "note," of Europe. Mixed with everything was the apprehension, already, on Strether's part, that it would, at best, throughout, prove the note of Europe in quite a sufficient degree.

That note had been meanwhile--since the previous afternoon, thanks to this happier device--such a consciousness of personal freedom as he hadn't known for years; such a deep taste of change and of having above all for the moment nobody and nothing to consider, as promised already, if headlong hope were not too foolish, to colour his adventure with cool success. There were people on the ship with whom he had easily consorted--so far as ease could up to now be imputed to him--and who for the most part plunged straight into the current that set from the landing-stage to London; there were others who had invited him to a tryst at the inn and had even invoked his aid for a "look round" at the beauties of Liverpool; but he had stolen away from every one alike, had kept no appointment and renewed no acquaintance, had been indifferently aware of the number of persons who esteemed themselves fortunate in being, unlike himself, "met," and had even independently, unsociably, alone, without encounter or relapse and by mere quiet evasion, given his afternoon and evening to the immediate and the sensible. They formed a qualified draught of Europe, an afternoon and an evening on the banks of the Mersey, but such as it was he took his potion at least undiluted. He winced a little, truly, at the thought that Waymarsh might be already at Chester; he reflected that, should he have to describe himself there as having "got in" so early, it would be difficult to make the interval look particularly eager; but he was like a man who, elatedly finding in his pocket more money than usual, handles it a while and idly and pleasantly chinks it before addressing himself to the business of spending. That he was prepared to be vague to Waymarsh about the hour of the ship's touching, and that he both wanted extremely

to see him and enjoyed extremely the duration of delay--these things, it is to be conceived, were early signs in him that his relation to his actual errand might prove none of the simplest. He was burdened, poor Strether--it had better be confessed at the outset-- with the oddity of a double consciousness. There was detachment in his zeal and curiosity in his indifference.

After the young woman in the glass cage had held up to him across her counter the pale-pink leaflet bearing his friend's name, which she neatly pronounced, he turned away to find himself, in the hall, facing a lady who met his eyes as with an intention suddenly determined, and whose features--not freshly young, not markedly fine, but on happy terms with each other--came back to him as from a recent vision. For a moment they stood confronted; then the moment placed her: he had noticed her the day before, noticed her at his previous inn, where--again in the hall--she had been briefly engaged with some people of his own ship's company. Nothing had actually passed between them, and he would as little have been able to say what had been the sign of her face for him on the first occasion as to name the ground of his present recognition. Recognition at any rate appeared to prevail on her own side as well--which would only have added to the mystery. All she now began by saying to him nevertheless was that, having chanced to catch his enquiry, she was moved to ask, by his leave, if it were possibly a question of Mr. Waymarsh of Milrose Connecticut--Mr. Waymarsh the American lawyer.

"Oh yes," he replied, "my very well-known friend. He's to meet me here, coming up from Malvern, and I supposed he'd already have arrived. But he doesn't come till later, and I'm relieved not to have kept him. Do you know him?" Strether wound up.

It wasn't till after he had spoken that he became aware of how much there had been in him of response; when the tone of her own rejoinder, as well as the play of something more in her face-- something more, that is, than its apparently usual restless light-- seemed to notify him. "I've met him at Milrose--where I used sometimes, a good while ago, to stay; I had friends there who were friends of his, and I've been at his house. I won't answer for it that he would know me," Strether's new acquaintance pursued; "but I should be delighted to see him. Perhaps," she added, "I shall--for I'm staying over." She paused while our friend took in these things, and it was as if a good deal of talk had already passed. They even vaguely smiled at it, and Strether presently observed that Mr. Waymarsh would, no doubt, be easily to be seen. This, however, appeared to affect the lady as if she might have advanced too far. She appeared to have no reserves about anything. "Oh," she said, "he won't care!"--and she immediately thereupon remarked that she believed Strether knew the Munsters; the Munsters being the people he had seen her with at Liverpool.

But he didn't, it happened, know the Munsters well enough to give the case much of a lift; so that they were left together as if over the mere laid table of conversation. Her qualification of the mentioned connexion had rather removed than placed a dish, and there seemed nothing else to serve. Their attitude remained, none the less, that of not

forsaking the board; and the effect of this in turn was to give them the appearance of having accepted each other with an absence of preliminaries practically complete.

They moved along the hall together, and Strether's companion threw off that the hotel had the advantage of a garden. He was aware by this time of his strange inconsequence: he had shirked the intimacies of the steamer and had muffled the shock of Waymarsh only to find himself forsaken, in this sudden case, both of avoidance and of caution. He passed, under this unsought protection and before he had so much as gone up to his room, into the garden of the hotel, and at the end of ten minutes had agreed to meet there again, as soon as he should have made himself tidy, the dispenser of such good assurances. He wanted to look at the town, and they would forthwith look together. It was almost as if she had been in possession and received him as a guest. Her acquaintance with the place presented her in a manner as a hostess, and Strether had a rueful glance for the lady in the glass cage. It was as if this personage had seen herself instantly superseded.

Section Two: Strether and Little Bilham (p164 - 167)

He hadn't detached, he had more closely connected himself, and his eyes, as he considered with some intensity this circumstance, met another pair which had just come within their range and which struck him as reflecting his sense of what he had done. He recognised them at the same moment as those of little Bilham, who had apparently drawn near on purpose to speak to him, and little Bilham wasn't, in the conditions, the person to whom his heart would be most closed. They were seated together a minute later at the angle of the room obliquely opposite the corner in which Gloriani was still engaged with Jeanne de Vionnet, to whom at first and in silence their attention had been benevolently given. "I can't see for my life," Strether had then observed, "how a young fellow of any spirit--such a one as you for instance--can be admitted to the sight of that young lady without being hard hit. Why don't you go in, little Bilham?" He remembered the tone into which he had been betrayed on the garden-bench at the sculptor's reception, and this might make up for that by being much more the right sort of thing to say to a young man worthy of any advice at all. "There *would* be some reason."

"Some reason for what?"

"Why for hanging on here."

"To offer my hand and fortune to Mademoiselle de Vionnet?"

"Well," Strether asked, "to what lovelier apparition *could* you offer them? She's the sweetest little thing I've ever seen."

"She's certainly immense. I mean she's the real thing. I believe the pale pink petals are folded up there for some wondrous efflorescence in time; to open, that is, to some great golden sun. I'M unfortunately but a small farthing candle. What chance in such a field for a poor little painter-man?"

"Oh you're good enough," Strether threw out.

"Certainly I'm good enough. We're good enough, I consider, nous autres, for anything. But she's *too* good. There's the difference. They wouldn't look at me."

Strether, lounging on his divan and still charmed by the young girl, whose eyes had consciously strayed to him, he fancied, with a vague smile--Strether, enjoying the whole occasion as with dormant pulses at last awake and in spite of new material thrust upon him, thought over his companion's words. "Whom do you mean by 'they'? She and her mother?"

"She and her mother. And she has a father too, who, whatever else he may be, certainly can't be indifferent to the possibilities she represents. Besides, there's Chad."

Strether was silent a little. "Ah but he doesn't care for her--not, I mean, it appears, after all, in the sense I'm speaking of. He's *not* in love with her."

"No--but he's her best friend; after her mother. He's very fond of her. He has his ideas about what can be done for her."

"Well, it's very strange!" Strether presently remarked with a sighing sense of fulness.

"Very strange indeed. That's just the beauty of it. Isn't it very much the kind of beauty you had in mind," little Bilham went on, "when you were so wonderful and so inspiring to me the other day? Didn't you adjure me, in accents I shall never forget, to see, while I've a chance, everything I can?--and *really* to see, for it must have been that only you meant. Well, you did me no end of good, and I'm doing my best. I *do* make it out a situation."

"So do I!" Strether went on after a moment. But he had the next minute an inconsequent question. "How comes Chad so mixed up, anyway?"

"Ah, ah, ah!"--and little Bilham fell back on his cushions.

It reminded our friend of Miss Barrace, and he felt again the brush of his sense of moving in a maze of mystic closed allusions. Yet he kept hold of his thread. "Of course I understand really; only the general transformation makes me occasionally gasp. Chad with such a voice in the settlement of the future of a little countess--no," he declared, "it takes more time! You say moreover," he resumed, "that we're inevitably, people like you and me, out of the running. The curious fact remains that Chad himself isn't. The situation doesn't make for it, but in a different one he could have her if he would."

"Yes, but that's only because he's rich and because there's a possibility of his being richer. They won't think of anything but a great name or a great fortune."

"Well," said Strether, "he'll have no great fortune on *these* lines. He must stir his stumps."

"Is that," little Bilham enquired, "what you were saying to Madame de Vionnet?"

"No--I don't say much to her. Of course, however," Strether continued, "he can make sacrifices if he likes."

Little Bilham had a pause. "Oh he's not keen for sacrifices; or thinks, that is, possibly, that he has made enough."

"Well, it *is* virtuous," his companion observed with some decision.

"That's exactly," the young man dropped after a moment, "what I mean."

It kept Strether himself silent a little. "I've made it out for myself," he then went on; "I've really, within the last half-hour, got hold of it. I understand it in short at last; which at first-- when you originally spoke to me--I didn't. Nor when Chad originally spoke to me either."

"Oh," said little Bilham, "I don't think that at that time you believed me."

"Yes--I did; and I believed Chad too. It would have been odious and unmannerly--as well as quite perverse--if I hadn't. What interest have you in deceiving me?"

The young man cast about. "What interest have I?"

"Yes. Chad *might* have. But you?"

"Ah, ah, ah!" little Bilham exclaimed.

It might, on repetition, as a mystification, have irritated our friend a little, but he knew, once more, as we have seen, where he was, and his being proof against everything was only another attestation that he meant to stay there. "I couldn't, without my own impression, realise. She's a tremendously clever brilliant capable woman, and with an extraordinary charm on top of it all-- the charm we surely all of us this evening know what to think of. It isn't every clever brilliant capable woman that has it. In fact it's rare with any woman. So there you are," Strether proceeded as if not for little Bilham's benefit alone. "I understand what a relation with such a woman--what such a high fine friendship-- may be. It can't be vulgar or coarse, anyway--and that's the point."

"Yes, that's the point," said little Bilham. "It can't be vulgar or coarse. And, bless us and save us, it *isn't*! It's, upon my word, the very finest thing I ever saw in my life, and the most distinguished."

Strether, from beside him and leaning back with him as he leaned, dropped on him a momentary look which filled a short interval and of which he took no notice. He only gazed before him with intent participation. "Of course what it has done for him," Strether at all events presently pursued, "of course what it has done for him-- that is as to *how* it has so wonderfully worked--isn't a thing I pretend to understand. I've to take it as I find it. There he is."

"There he is!" little Bilham echoed. "And it's really and truly she. I don't understand either, even with my longer and closer opportunity. But I'm like you," he added; "I can admire and rejoice even when I'm a little in the dark. You see I've watched it for some three years, and especially for this last. He wasn't so bad before it as I seem to have made out that you think--"

"Oh I don't think anything now!" Strether impatiently broke in: "that is but what I *do* think! I mean that originally, for her to have cared for him--"

"There must have been stuff in him? Oh yes, there was stuff indeed, and much more of it than ever showed, I dare say, at home. Still, you know," the young man in all fairness developed, "there was room for her, and that's where she came in. She saw her chance and took it. That's what strikes me as having been so fine. But of course," he wound up, "he liked her first."

"Naturally," said Strether.

"I mean that they first met somehow and somewhere--I believe in some American house--and she, without in the least then intending it, made her impression. Then with time and opportunity he made his; and after *that* she was as bad as he."

Strether vaguely took it up. "As 'bad'?"

"She began, that is, to care--to care very much. Alone, and in her horrid position, she found it, when once she had started, an interest. It was, it is, an interest, and it did--it

continues to do--a lot for herself as well. So she still cares. She cares in fact," said little Bilham thoughtfully "more."

Strether's theory that it was none of his business was somehow not damaged by the way he took this. "More, you mean, than he?" On which his companion looked round at him, and now for an instant their eyes met. "More than he?" he repeated.

Little Bilham, for as long, hung fire. "Will you never tell any one?"

Strether thought. "Whom should I tell?"

"Why I supposed you reported regularly--"

"To people at home?"--Strether took him up. "Well, I won't tell them this."

The young man at last looked away. "Then she does now care more than he."

"Oh!" Strether oddly exclaimed.

But his companion immediately met it. "Haven't you after all had your impression of it? That's how you've got hold of him."

"Ah but I haven't got hold of him!"

"Oh I say!" But it was all little Bilham said.

Section Three: Strether and Miss Gostrey (p192 – 196)

At four o'clock that afternoon he had still not seen him, but he was then, as to make up for this, engaged in talk about him with Miss Gostrey. Strether had kept away from home all day, given himself up to the town and to his thoughts, wandered and mused, been at once restless and absorbed--and all with the present climax of a rich little welcome in the Quartier Marboeuf. "Waymarsh has been, 'unbeknown' to me, I'm convinced"--for Miss Gostrey had enquired--"in communication with Woollett: the consequence of which was, last night, the loudest possible call for me."

"Do you mean a letter to bring you home?"

"No--a cable, which I have at this moment in my pocket: a 'Come back by the first ship.'"

Strether's hostess, it might have been made out, just escaped changing colour.

Reflexion arrived but in time and established a provisional serenity. It was perhaps exactly this that enabled her to say with duplicity: "And you're going--?"

"You almost deserve it when you abandon me so."

She shook her head as if this were not worth taking up. "My absence has helped you--as I've only to look at you to see. It was my calculation, and I'm justified. You're not where you were. And the thing," she smiled, "was for me not to be there either. You can go of yourself."

"Oh but I feel to-day," he comfortably declared, "that I shall want you yet."

She took him all in again. "Well, I promise you not again to leave you, but it will only be to follow you. You've got your momentum and can toddle alone."

He intelligently accepted it. "Yes--I suppose I can toddle. It's the sight of that in fact that has upset Waymarsh. He can bear it-- the way I strike him as going--no longer. That's only the climax of his original feeling. He wants me to quit; and he must have written to Woollett that I'm in peril of perdition."

"Ah good!" she murmured. "But is it only your supposition?"

"I make it out--it explains."

"Then he denies?--or you haven't asked him?"

"I've not had time," Strether said; "I made it out but last night, putting various things together, and I've not been since then face to face with him."

She wondered. "Because you're too disgusted? You can't trust yourself?"

He settled his glasses on his nose. "Do I look in a great rage?"

"You look divine!"

"There's nothing," he went on, "to be angry about. He has done me on the contrary a service."

She made it out. "By bringing things to a head?"

"How well you understand!" he almost groaned. "Waymarsh won't in the least, at any rate, when I have it out with him, deny or extenuate. He has acted from the deepest conviction, with the best conscience and after wakeful nights. He'll recognise that he's fully responsible, and will consider that he has been highly successful; so that any discussion we may have will bring us quite together again--bridge the dark stream that has kept us so thoroughly apart. We shall have at last, in the consequences of his act, something we can definitely talk about."

She was silent a little. "How wonderfully you take it! But you're always wonderful."

He had a pause that matched her own; then he had, with an adequate spirit, a complete admission. "It's quite true. I'm extremely wonderful just now. I dare say in fact I'm quite fantastic, and I shouldn't be at all surprised if I were mad."

"Then tell me!" she earnestly pressed. As he, however, for the time answered nothing, only returning the look with which she watched him, she presented herself where it was easier to meet her. "What will Mr. Waymarsh exactly have done?"

"Simply have written a letter. One will have been quite enough. He has told them I want looking after."

"And *do* you?"--she was all interest.

"Immensely. And I shall get it."

"By which you mean you don't budge?"

"I don't budge."

"You've cabled?"

"No--I've made Chad do it."

"That you decline to come?"

"That *he* declines. We had it out this morning and I brought him round. He had come in, before I was down, to tell me he was ready-- ready, I mean, to return. And he went off, after ten minutes with me, to say he wouldn't."

Miss Gostrey followed with intensity. "Then you've *stopped* him?"

Strether settled himself afresh in his chair. "I've stopped him. That is for the time.

That"--he gave it to her more vividly--"is where I am."

"I see, I see. But where's Mr. Newsome? He was ready," she asked, "to go?"

"All ready."

"And sincerely--believing *you'd* be?"

"Perfectly, I think; so that he was amazed to find the hand I had laid on him to pull him over suddenly converted into an engine for keeping him still."

It was an account of the matter Miss Gostrey could weigh. "Does he think the conversion sudden?"

"Well," said Strether, "I'm not altogether sure what he thinks. I'm not sure of anything that concerns him, except that the more I've seen of him the less I've found him what I originally expected. He's obscure, and that's why I'm waiting."

She wondered. "But for what in particular?"

"For the answer to his cable."

"And what was his cable?"

"I don't know," Strether replied; "it was to be, when he left me, according to his own taste. I simply said to him: 'I want to stay, and the only way for me to do so is for you to.' That I wanted to stay seemed to interest him, and he acted on that."

Miss Gostrey turned it over. "He wants then himself to stay."

"He half wants it. That is he half wants to go. My original appeal has to that extent worked in him. Nevertheless," Strether pursued, "he won't go. Not, at least, so long as I'm here."

"But you can't," his companion suggested, "stay here always. I wish you could."

"By no means. Still, I want to see him a little further. He's not in the least the case I supposed, he's quite another case. And it's as such that he interests me." It was almost as if for his own intelligence that, deliberate and lucid, our friend thus expressed the matter. "I don't want to give him up."

Miss Gostrey but desired to help his lucidity. She had however to be light and tactful.

"Up, you mean--a--to his mother?"

"Well, I'm not thinking of his mother now. I'm thinking of the plan of which I was the mouthpiece, which, as soon as we met, I put before him as persuasively as I knew how, and which was drawn up, as it were, in complete ignorance of all that, in this last long period, has been happening to him. It took no account whatever of the impression I was here on the spot immediately to begin to receive from him--impressions of which I feel sure I'm far from having had the last."

Miss Gostrey had a smile of the most genial criticism. "So your idea is--more or less--to stay out of curiosity?"

"Call it what you like! I don't care what it's called--"

"So long as you do stay? Certainly not then. I call it, all the same, immense fun," Maria Gostrey declared; "and to see you work it out will be one of the sensations of my life. It IS clear you can toddle alone!"

He received this tribute without elation. "I shan't be alone when the Pococks have come."

Her eyebrows went up. "The Pococks are coming?"

"That, I mean, is what will happen--and happen as quickly as possible--in consequence of Chad's cable. They'll simply embark. Sarah will come to speak for her mother--with an effect different from *my* muddle."

Miss Gostrey more gravely wondered. "*She* then will take him back?"

"Very possibly--and we shall see. She must at any rate have the chance, and she may be trusted to do all she can."

"And do you *want* that?"

"Of course," said Strether, "I want it. I want to play fair."

But she had lost for a moment the thread. "If it devolves on the Pococks why do you stay?"

"Just to see that I *do* play fair--and a little also, no doubt, that they do." Strether was luminous as he had never been. "I came out to find myself in presence of new facts--facts that have kept striking me as less and less met by our old reasons. The matter's perfectly simple. New reasons--reasons as new as the facts themselves--are wanted; and of this our friends at Woollett--Chad's and mine--were at the earliest moment definitely notified. If any are producible Mrs. Pocock will produce them; she'll bring over the whole collection. They'll be," he added with a pensive smile "a part of the 'fun' you speak of."

She was quite in the current now and floating by his side. "It's Mamie--so far as I've had it from you--who'll be their great card." And then as his contemplative silence wasn't a denial she significantly added: "I think I'm sorry for her."

"I think I am!"--and Strether sprang up, moving about a little as her eyes followed him. "But it can't be helped."

"You mean her coming out can't be?"

He explained after another turn what he meant. "The only way for her not to come is for me to go home--as I believe that on the spot I could prevent it. But the difficulty as to that is that if I do go home--"

"I see, I see"--she had easily understood. "Mr. Newsome will do the same, and that's not"--she laughed out now--"to be thought of."

Strether had no laugh; he had only a quiet comparatively placid look that might have shown him as proof against ridicule. "Strange, isn't it?"

They had, in the matter that so much interested them, come so far as this without sounding another name--to which however their present momentary silence was full of a conscious reference. Strether's question was a sufficient implication of the weight it had gained with him during the absence of his hostess; and just for that reason a single gesture from her could pass for him as a vivid answer. Yet he was answered still better when she said in a moment: "Will Mr. Newsome introduce his sister--?"

"To Madame de Vionnet?" Strether spoke the name at last. "I shall be greatly surprised if he doesn't."

She seemed to gaze at the possibility. "You mean you've thought of it and you're prepared."

"I've thought of it and I'm prepared."

It was to her visitor now that she applied her consideration. "Bon! You *are* magnificent!"

German Translation

1

STRETHERS erste Frage nach der Ankunft im Hotel galt seinem Freund; als er jedoch erfuhr, daß Waymarsh wahrscheinlich nicht vor Abend eintreffen werde, beunruhigte ihn dies keineswegs. An der Empfangsloge zeigte man dem Fragesteller ein Telegramm mit bezahlter Rückantwort, durch das ein Zimmer, »aber nur in ruhiger Lage«, bestellt worden war, und somit blieb unter dieser Bedingung die Verabredung aufrechterhalten, sich lieber in Chester als in Liverpool zu treffen. Der gleiche dunkle Beweggrund jedoch, der Strether bewogen hatte, Waymarshs Anwesenheit am Pier nicht unbedingt zu wünschen und dieses Vergnügen lieber für ein paar Stunden zu verschieben, rief jetzt in ihm das Empfinden hervor, er könne gut noch länger warten, ohne enttäuscht zu sein. Immerhin würden sie miteinander zu Abend essen, und bei aller Verehrung für den guten Waymarsh – um nicht zu sagen: natürlich auch für sich selbst – bestand kein Anlaß zu befürchten, sie könnten künftig nicht oft genug zusammensein. Der soeben erwähnte Beweggrund des gerade an Land Gegangenen war ein ganz instinktiver – aus dem bedrängenden Gefühl geboren, es wäre bei aller Freude, nach so langer Trennung das Gesicht des Gefährten wiederzusehen, von diesem ein wenig stümperhaft, ganz einfach sein Antlitz dem sich nähernden Schiff als die erste persönliche »Note« Europas zu präsentieren. Schon mischte sich in all diese Empfindungen Strethers die Befürchtung, es werde die Note Europas noch hinreichend genug darstellen.

Diese Note hatte seit dem vergangenen Nachmittag – dank seinem glücklichen Einfall – ein solches Bewußtsein persönlicher Freiheit in ihm erweckt, wie er es seit Jahren nicht gekannt hatte; durchdringend spürte er den Wechsel und daß er im Augenblick nichts und niemand in Betracht zu ziehen brauchte, das oder der – wie man ihm, falls solch ungestüme Hoffnung nicht zu töricht war, bereits verheißen hatte – sein Abenteuer erfolgreich beeinträchtigen könnte. Auf dem Schiff war er Leuten begegnet, denen er sich mühelos angeschlossen hatte – soweit man bei ihm bis dahin von mühelos reden konnte – und von denen sich die meisten sofort in den Strom stürzten, der

vom Landungssteg nach London trieb; von den anderen hatten ihn einige ins Gasthaus eingeladen und sogar um seine Führung bei einer »Besichtigung« der Sehenswürdigkeiten Liverpool gebeten; aber er hatte sich von ihnen allen weggeschlichen, keine Verabredung eingehalten und keine Bekanntschaft erneuert, hatte gleichgültig wahrgenommen, wie viele Leute, im Gegensatz zu ihm, glücklich darüber waren, »abgeholt« zu werden, und er hatte auch den Nachmittag und Abend für das gerettet, was sich seinen Sinnen unmittelbar darbot – unabhängig, reserviert, allein: ohne auf Widerstand zu stoßen und ohne Rückfall, nur durch einfache, gelassene Ausflüchte. So ein Nachmittag und ein Abend an den Ufern des Mersey spendeten zwar nur einen winzigen Schluck Europa, aber unter diesen Umständen konnte er den Trank wenigstens unvermischt zu sich nehmen. Um die Wahrheit zu sagen, er erschrak ein wenig vor dem Gedanken, Waymarsh könne bereits in Chester sein; er überlegte, daß es nicht leicht sein würde, die Unterbrechung als eine Zeit der Ungeduld darzustellen, wenn er gestehen müßte, daß er schon so früh an Land gegangen war; aber er benahm sich wie ein Mann, der zu seiner Überraschung in der Tasche mehr Geld findet als sonst und erst eine Weile müßig und vergnügt damit herumspielt und es klimpern läßt, ehe er darangeht, es auszugeben. Daß er sich vornahm, Waymarsh über die Ankunftszeit des Schiffes im unklaren zu lassen, und daß er sich ebenso außerordentlich danach sehnte, ihn wiederzusehen, wie er die Verzögerung außerordentlich genoß: all dies, was wohl klar auf der Hand liegen dürfte, waren bereits Anzeichen dafür, wie zwiespältig er seinem augenblicklichen Auftrag gegenüberstand. Der arme Strether war – es ist besser, dies schon jetzt zu gestehen – mit dem Phänomen eines doppelten Bewußtseins geschlagen. In seinem Eifer lag Gleichgültigkeit – und Neugier in seiner Indifferenz.

Nachdem die junge Frau in dem Glaskasten ihm über den Schalter weg das blaßrosa Papier mit des Freundes Namen, den sie höchst akkurat aussprach, gereicht hatte, wandte er sich der Halle zu und sah sich plötzlich einer Dame gegenüber, die ihm entschlossen in die Augen blickte und deren Züge – nicht mehr ganz jugendfrisch, nicht ausgesprochen schön, aber harmonisch aufeinander abgestimmt – ihm so bekannt vorkamen, als wäre sie ihm erst vor kurzem im Traum erschienen.

Einen Augenblick standen sie einander gegenüber; dieser Augenblick genügte ihm jedoch, sie in seinem Gedächtnis unterzubringen: er hatte sie schon am Tag zuvor gesehen, gesehen in seinem Hotel, wo sie – ebenfalls in der Halle – kurz mit ein paar Passagieren seines Schiffes zusammengewesen war. Nicht das geringste hatte sich zwischen ihnen ereignet, und er hätte ebensowenig den Eindruck, den ihr Gesicht bei der ersten Begegnung auf ihn gemacht hatte, schildern können, wie er sich des Grundes dieses augenblicklichen Wiedererkennens bewußt war. Jedenfalls schien auch sie ihn wiederzuerkennen – was die Sache nur noch mysteriöser machte. Alles, was sie jetzt jedoch sagte, war, sie habe seine Frage gehört und möchte höflich um Aufschluß bitten, ob es sich hier um Mr. Waymarsh aus Milrose in Connecticut handle – Mr. Waymarsh, den amerikanischen Anwalt.

»Ja«, antwortete er, »er ist ein sehr guter Freund von mir. Er kommt aus Malvern, wir haben uns hier verabredet, und ich hatte geglaubt, er sei bereits eingetroffen. Aber er kommt erst später, und ich bin erleichtert, daß ich ihn nicht habe warten lassen. Kennen Sie ihn denn?« schloß Strether.

Erst als er schwieg, wurde ihm bewußt, wie ausführlich er ihr geantwortet hatte. Er merkte es am Ton ihrer Entgegnung und an einer stärkeren Bewegung in ihrem Gesicht – stärker als ihr offenbar immer unstetes Mienenspiel. »Ich lernte ihn in Milrose kennen, wo ich mich früher hin und wieder aufhielt; ich hatte dort Freunde, die zugleich seine Freunde waren, und habe auch in seinem Hause verkehrt. Ich möchte nicht behaupten, daß er sich meiner erinnert«, fuhr Strethers neue Bekannte fort, »aber ich wäre entzückt, ihn wiederzusehen. Vielleicht«, fügte sie hinzu, »wer weiß? Ich bleibe ja noch.« Sie hielt inne, während unser Freund all dies in sich aufnahm, und man konnte meinen, sie hätten sich bereits lange unterhalten. Sie lächelten einander sogar zurückhaltend zu, und dann bemerkte Strether, eine Begegnung mit Mr. Waymarsh würde, ohne Zweifel, leicht zu arrangieren sein. Dies jedoch schien die Dame glauben zu lassen, sie sei zu weit gegangen. Aber offenbar war ihr jede Zurückhaltung fremd. Denn sie sagte geradeheraus: »Oh, er dürfte wohl kaum Wert darauf legen!« – und fragte dann unvermittelt, Strether kenne doch sicher die Munsters; die Munsters waren jene Leute, mit denen er sie in Liverpool gesehen hatte. Leider jedoch kannte er die Munsters nicht gut genug, um das

Gespräch beleben zu können, und so verharrten sie wie an einem für die Konversation gedeckten, aber leeren Tisch. Dadurch, daß sie die erwähnte Bekanntschaft vorausgesetzt hatte, war eher eine Platte weggenommen als aufgetischt worden, und offenbar gab es jetzt nichts mehr zu servieren. Dennoch verblieben sie in einer Haltung, als dächten sie nicht daran, die Tafel aufzuheben; daraus ergab sich wiederum, daß der Anschein erweckt wurde, sie anerkannten einander so gut wie vollkommen – ohne alle Präliminarien. Sie durchquerten zusammen die Halle, und Strethers Begleiterin erwähnte beiläufig, das Hotel besitze den Vorzug, einen Garten zu haben. Strether war sich bereits seiner unerklärlichen Inkonsequenz bewußt: er war an Bord allen Vertraulichkeiten ausgewichen, hatte sogar die Bestürzung, in die er durch Waymarsh versetzt worden war, geflissentlich verdrängt, und nun ließ er plötzlich jede Zurückhaltung und Vorsicht außer acht. Noch ehe er überhaupt auf sein Zimmer gegangen war, wandelte er schon mit der keineswegs bestellten Führerin durch den Hotelgarten und war nach weiteren zehn Minuten damit einverstanden, sich dort mit ihr, die ihn von vornherein jeder verbindlichen Zusage entband, wieder zu treffen, sobald er sich frisch gemacht habe. Er hätte sich gerne die Stadt angesehen, und sogleich wollten sie dies zusammen tun. Man hätte fast glauben können, sie sei hier die Besitzerin und empfangen ihn als Besuch. Ihre Ortskenntnis machte gewissermaßen eine Gastgeberin aus ihr, und Strether hatte für die Dame im Glaskasten jetzt nur noch einen mitleidigen Blick. Es wollte ihm scheinen, als wäre diese Person unversehens in ihrer Stellung abgelöst worden.

Eine Minute später saßen sie beieinander – der Ecke gegenüber, in der Gloriani noch immer mit Jeanne de Vionnet saß, deren Anblick sie vorerst wortlos und wohlwollend genossen.

»Ich verstehe einfach nicht«, hatte Strether bemerkt, »wie ein temperamentvoller junger Mensch – so einer wie Sie – diese junge Dame betrachten kann, ohne tief getroffen zu sein. Warum packen Sie nicht zu, kleiner Bilham?« Dabei fiel ihm ein, wie er damals auf der Gartenbank beim Empfang des Bildhauers sein Innerstes entblößt hatte, und dadurch empfand er das soeben Gesagte als weit passender für einen jungen Mann, sofern er eines Rats überhaupt wert war. »Das muß doch einen Grund haben.«

»Was muß einen Grund haben?«

»Daß Sie sich überhaupt noch besinnen.«

»Meine Hand und mein Vermögen Mlle. de Vionnet anzubieten?«

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»Aber ja«, meinte Strether, »denn welch lieblicherem Wesen könnten Sie sie schon anbieten? Sie ist das süßeste Geschöpf, das ich je gesehen habe.«

»Natürlich ist sie wunderbar, ist sie einfach göttlich. Eines Tages werden sich ihre rosaroten, jetzt noch geschlossenen Blütenblätter zu einer zauberhaften Blüte entfalten, werden sich einer großen goldenen Sonne öffnen. Aber ich habe nun mal das Pech, nur eine Küchenkerze zu sein. Was für eine Chance hat hier schon ein armer kleiner Künstler?«

»Aber hören Sie, Sie sind doch gut genug für sie!« rief Strether.

»Natürlich bin ich gut genug. Wir, *nous autres*, sind wahrscheinlich für alles gut genug. Aber sie ist *zu* gut. Darin liegt der Unterschied. Man würde mich gar nicht erst in Betracht ziehen.«

Strether, der sich auf dem Sofa räkelt, immer noch fasziniert von dem jungen Mädchen, dessen Blick ihn, wie er sich einbildete, mit einem undeutbaren Lächeln gestreift hatte – Strether, der alles dies genoß, als wäre seine seit langem schlummernde Vitalität trotz der neuen ihm aufgebürdeten Rätsel endlich erwacht, dachte über die Worte seines Gefährten nach. »Wer ist ›man‹? Sie und ihre Mutter?«

»Sie und ihre Mutter. Und schließlich hat sie ja auch noch einen Vater, dem – mag er sein wie er will – ihre Chancen unmöglich gleichgültig sein können. Und überdies ist da noch Chad.« Strether schwieg eine Weile. »Aber er will sie ja gar nicht – wenigstens nicht in dem Sinne, von dem ich spreche. Er liebt sie nicht.«

»Das nicht – aber er ist ihr bester Freund; er kommt gleich nach ihrer Mutter. Er hat sie sehr gern. Und er hat auch seine Ideen über ihre Zukunft.«

»Das ist alles recht seltsam«, meinte Strether auf einmal seufzend ob so vieler Gesichtspunkte.

»Allerdings, recht seltsam. Das ist ja gerade das Schöne daran. Ist es nicht genau die Schönheit, an die Sie dachten«, fragte der kleine Bilham weiter, »als Sie neulich so herrlich und anfeuernd mit mir sprachen? Haben Sie mich nicht beschworen – mit Worten beschworen, die ich nie vergessen werde –, sowie ich nur eine Chance hätte, alles zu sehen, was ich zu sehen vermöge? Und zwar wirklich zu sehen; denn das haben Sie doch wohl gemeint. Sie haben mir einen ungeheuren Dienst erwiesen, und ich tue bestimmt mein Bestes. Verlassen Sie sich darauf: ich nehme die Gelegenheit wahr!«

»Ich auch!« bestätigte Strether. Aber gleich danach stellte er eine völlig zusammenhanglose Frage. »Dennoch – wie kommt es, daß Chad so gefesselt ist?«
 »Oha, oha, oha!« Der kleine Bilham ließ sich in die Kissen zurückfallen.

Das erinnerte unseren Freund an Miß Barrace, und wieder vermeinte er, sich in einem Irrgarten geheimnisvoller, dunkler Andeutungen zu bewegen. Doch er hielt an seinem Faden fest. »Natürlich, ich verstehe es schon; nur diese allgemeine Verwandlung ist es, die mich immer wieder verblüfft. Daß Chad so großen Einfluß auf die Festlegung der Zukunft einer kleinen Komteß haben soll – nein«, erklärte er, »das kann ich nicht von heute auf morgen verdauen! Überdies sagten Sie«, wie er sich entsann, »daß Leute wie Sie und ich nun einmal nicht im Rennen lägen. Aber es bleibt doch eine recht kuriose Tatsache, daß Chad im Rennen ist. Die Situation ist eben nicht dazu angetan – unter anderen Umständen jedoch hätte er sie ohne weiteres haben können.«

»Ja, aber nur, weil er reich ist und die Möglichkeit hat, noch reicher zu werden. Man würde für sie nur einen großen Namen oder ein großes Vermögen in Betracht ziehen.«

»Gewiß, gewiß«, sagte Strether, »doch nach deren Begriffen wird er kein großes Vermögen haben. Er wird sich nämlich tüchtig tummeln müssen.«

»Haben Sie das etwa«, fragte der kleine Bilham, »Mme. de Vionnet gesagt?«

»Nein – so viel sage ich ihr nicht. Aber natürlich«, fuhr Strether fort, »wenn er Opfer bringen will, ist das seine Sache.«

Der kleine Bilham dachte nach. »Er ist nicht erpicht auf Opfer; zumindest wird er finden, daß er genug Opfer gebracht hat.«

»Dann ist es also wirklich ehrbar«, stellte Strether nachdrücklich fest.

»Genau das«, warf der junge Mann ein, »genau das habe ich gemeint.«

Strether verstummte für eine Weile. »Ich habe das selbst gemerkt«, sagte er dann; »ich habe mich in der letzten halben Stunde wirklich davon überzeugt. Kurz: ich verstehe es jetzt endlich; anfangs, als Sie mir davon erzählten, verstand ich es nämlich nicht. Ebensowenig, als Chad mir davon erzählte.«

»Jaja«, sagte der kleine Bilham, »Sie haben mir damals nicht geglaubt.«

»Doch; und bestimmt auch Chad. Es wäre erbärmlich und ungebildet, ja geradezu unnatürlich gewesen, wenn ich es nicht getan hätte. Was könnte Ihnen auch daran liegen, mich zu täuschen?«

Der junge Mann stockte. »Was mir daran liegen könnte?«

»Ja, Ihnen. Chad könnte etwas daran liegen. Aber Ihnen?«

»Oha, oha, oha!« rief der kleine Bilham.

Diese Wiederholung hätte unser Freund als Fopperei empfinden und sich darüber ärgern können; aber wie wir gesehen haben, wußte er genau, wo er stand, und daß er gegen alles so gefeit war, bewies nur, daß er sich von diesem Platz nicht verdrängen lassen wollte. »Ich konnte es mir bloß nicht vorstellen, ohne mich davon überzeugt zu haben. Sie ist eine bestechend geschelte, glänzende, gewandte Frau, die überdies mit einem unglaublichen Charme begabt ist – einem Charme, über den wir uns gerade heute abend wohl alle einig sind. Nicht jede geschelte, glänzende, gewandte Frau hat so viel Charme. Aber er ist ja auch sonst höchst selten. Ja, so ist das nun«, sagte Strether, als wendete er sich nicht nur an den kleinen Bilham. »Ich begreife sehr wohl, was eine Beziehung zu einer solchen Frau, was solch eine ernste, edle Freundschaft bedeuten kann. Sie wird niemals primitiv oder vulgär sein – und darum geht es.«

»Jawohl, darum geht es«, sagte der kleine Bilham. »Sie kann nicht primitiv oder vulgär sein. Und, Gott sei Lob und Dank, sie ist es auch nicht. Glauben Sie mir, es ist die schönste Freundschaft, die ich im Leben je gesehen habe – die schönste und erhabenste.«

Strether, der gleich dem kleinen Bilham zurückgelehnt saß, warf ihm von der Seite einen Blick zu, der zwar eine gewisse Zeitspanne füllte, von dem Bilham aber keine Notiz nahm. Er starrte lediglich mit gespannter Teilnahme vor sich hin. »Das, was er dabei gewonnen hat«, fuhr Strether dessenungeachtet fort, »das, was er dabei gewonnen hat – wenigstens wie er es gewonnen hat –, möchte ich nicht behaupten zu verstehen. Ich muß es nehmen, wie ich es sehe. Er ist eben so.«

»Er ist eben so!« echote der kleine Bilham. »Und es steht wirklich und wahrhaftig sie dahinter. Ich verstehe es auch nicht, obwohl ich sie länger und näher kenne. Aber da bin ich wie Sie«, setzte er hinzu; »ich kann etwas bewundern und mich sogar daran freuen, auch wenn ich im dunkeln tappe. Sehen Sie, ich

habe drei Jahre lang zugeschaut, vor allem das letzte Jahr. Er war vorher nicht so schlecht, wie Sie offenbar denken –«

»Aber ich denke ja gar nichts mehr!« warf Strether ungeduldig ein, »– bis auf das, was ich denke! Ich meine, es müßte doch, da sie sich seiner so angenommen hat –«

»Etwas in ihm gesteckt haben? Allerdings, es hat etwas in ihm gesteckt, vermutlich mehr, als man zu Hause je von ihm erwartet hätte. Wissen Sie«, erläuterte der junge Mann aufrichtig, »er hatte Raum für sie, und so trat sie ein. Sie sah ihre Chance und ergriff sie. Dies vor allem finde ich so großartig an ihr. Aber natürlich«, schloß er, »war er es, der als erster eine Neigung faßte.«

»Verständlich«, sagte Strether.

»Sie trafen sich erstmals irgendwie und irgendwo – ich glaube, bei irgendeiner amerikanischen Familie –, und sie beeindruckte ihn sofort, ohne es im mindesten zu beabsichtigen. Mit der Zeit und bei passender Gelegenheit beeindruckte er dann sie; und von da an wurde es mit ihr genauso schlimm wie mit ihm.«

»Genauso ›schlimm‹?« fragte Strether verständnislos.

»Nun ja, sie fing an, ihn zu schätzen – sehr zu schätzen. In ihrer schrecklichen Lage und ganz auf sich selbst gestellt, fand sie, als sie erst einmal angefangen hatte, eine Aufgabe darin. Ja, es war, es ist eine Aufgabe; und auch sie hat eine Menge dadurch gewonnen – und gewinnt immer noch. Und so schätzt sie ihn nach wie vor. Sie schätzt ihn tatsächlich mehr«, sagte der kleine Bilham nachdenklich.

Strethers Theorie, daß ihn diese Sache nichts angehe, wurde von der Art, wie er dies aufnahm, nicht angetastet. »Sie meinen, mehr als er sie?« Daraufhin wandte ihm sein Gefährte das Gesicht zu, und ihre Blicke begegneten sich. »Mehr als er sie?« wiederholte er.

Der kleine Bilham ließ sich Zeit. »Werden Sie es auch nie jemand erzählen?«

»Wem sollte ich es schon erzählen?« fragte Strether erstaunt.

»Aber ich dachte, Sie berichteten regelmäßig –«

»Denen zu Hause?« vollendete Strether. »Na gut, ich werde es ihnen nicht erzählen.«

Schließlich blickte der junge Mann wieder weg. »Also: sie schätzt ihn jetzt mehr als er sie.«

»Ach!« machte Strether nicht gerade geistvoll.

Sein Gefährte antwortete nicht.

III

UM vier Uhr nachmittags hatte er ihn immer noch nicht getroffen; er unterhielt sich jedoch um diese Zeit, wie zum Ausgleich dafür, lebhaft mit Miß Gostrey über ihn. Strether war den ganzen Tag nicht im Hotel gewesen, sondern hatte sich ganz der Stadt und seinen Gedanken überlassen, war umhergewandert und hatte gegrübelt, war versunken und ruhelos zugleich gewesen – und all dem war mit dem augenblicklichen üppigen Willkomm im Quartier Marboeuf der Höhepunkt gefolgt. »Ich bin überzeugt, Waymarsh hat sich ohne mein Wissen mit Woollett in Verbindung gesetzt«, erzählte er auf Miß Gostreys Frage. »Das Ergebnis war, daß ich gestern abend den energischsten Befehl bekam, den man sich denken kann.«

»Sie meinen einen Brief, der Sie heimrufen sollte?«

»Nein – ein Kabel, das ich hier in der Tasche habe: ›Mit dem nächsten Schiff zurückkommen‹.«

Strethers Gastgeberin entging nur mit Mühe der Gefahr, zu erblassen. Sie faßte sich jedoch noch rechtzeitig und brachte immerhin eine erzwungene Heiterkeit zustande. Wahrscheinlich war es ihr nur so möglich, scheinheilig zu fragen: »Und werden Sie fahren –?«

»Sie hätten es fast verdient, weil Sie mich im Stich gelassen haben.« Sie schüttelte den Kopf, als lohnte es sich nicht, darauf einzugehen. »Meine Abwesenheit hat Ihnen nur gut getan – das habe ich auf den ersten Blick gesehen. Ich hatte damit gerechnet und bin nicht enttäuscht worden. Sie stehen nicht mehr dort, wo Sie gestanden haben. Und für mich«, meinte sie lächelnd, »hieß es, ebenfalls nicht länger dort stehenzubleiben. Sie können jetzt allein gehen.«

»Das schon, aber heute habe ich das Gefühl«, tröstete er, »daß ich Sie noch brauchen werde.«

Wieder widmete sie sich ihm ganz. »Ich verspreche Ihnen, Sie nie mehr zu verlassen, aber nur, wenn ich Ihnen bloß zu folgen brauche. Sie haben jetzt Ihre eigene Schwungkraft und können allein laufen.«

Er erkannte dies verständnisvoll an. »Ja – ich denke auch, daß ich nun allein laufen kann. Gerade das hat Waymarsh ja so aufgeregt. Er kann es nicht länger ertragen, wie ich seiner Meinung nach vorgehe. Das ist jetzt nur der Gipfel seiner längst gehegten Einstellung. Er will, daß ich abreise; und vermutlich hat er nach Woollett geschrieben, daß ich in Gefahr sei, der ewigen Verdammnis anheimzufallen.«

»Oho!« murmelte sie. »Aber Sie vermuten es doch nur, nicht wahr!«

»Ich fühle es – und nicht ohne Grund.«

»Leugnet er es denn? – oder haben Sie ihn gar nicht gefragt?«

»Ich fand bis jetzt keine Gelegenheit dazu«, sagte Strether; »ich bin erst gestern abend darauf gekommen, als ich mir verschiedenes zusammenreimte; und seither habe ich ihn nicht mehr getroffen.«

Sie war erstaunt. »Sind Sie davon so angewidert, daß Sie sich nicht mehr trauen?«

Er setzte die Brille auf. »Wirke ich so wutentbrannt?«

»Sie wirken göttlich!«

»Es besteht keinerlei Anlaß«, fuhr er fort, »wütend zu sein. Im Gegenteil, er hat mir einen Dienst erwiesen.«

Sie begriff. »Weil er den Stein ins Rollen brachte?«

»Wie gut Sie mich verstehen!« seufzte er fast. »Jedenfalls würde Waymarsh, wenn ich mit ihm darüber spräche, es bestimmt nicht zu leugnen oder zu beschönigen versuchen. Er hat aus tiefster Überzeugung gehandelt, mit bestem Gewissen und nach vielen schlaflosen Nächten. Er wird die volle Verantwortung dafür übernehmen und glauben, daß er Erfolg gehabt habe; jede Diskussion, die wir darüber führen könnten, würde uns einander nur näherbringen – würde den dunklen Strom überbrücken, der uns so lange getrennt hat. Durch das, was er getan hat, werden wir endlich wieder etwas haben, worüber wir reden können.«

Sie schwieg eine Weile. »Wie wunderbar Sie es hinnehmen! Aber Sie sind ja immer wunderbar.«

Nun machte auch er eine Pause; dann pflichtete er ihr in völligem Einverständnis bei. »Sie haben ganz recht. Ich bin im Moment so wunderbar wie noch nie. Ich möchte es geradezu phantastisch nennen, und es würde mich nicht einmal erstaunen, wenn ich verrückt wäre.«

»Nun erzählen Sie schon!« drängte sie begierig. Als er jedoch nichts sagte und lediglich den Blick zurückgab, mit dem sie ihn beobachtet hatte, wollte sie es ihm erleichtern, ihr zu antworten.

»Was glauben Sie, wie Mr. Waymarsh es angestellt hat?«

»Wahrscheinlich hat er nur einen Brief geschrieben. Einer dürfte genügt haben. Er hat sicherlich behauptet, daß man sich um mich kümmern müsse.«

»Und muß man das?« – sie war sehr gespannt.

»Und wie! Ich werde es ihnen schon ermöglichen.«

»Sie meinen damit, daß Sie sich nicht vom Fleck rühren werden?«

»Ich werde mich nicht vom Fleck rühren.«

»Haben Sie schon gekabelt?«

»Nein – Chad hat es für mich getan.«

»Daß Sie sich weigern abzureisen?«

»Daß er sich weigert. Wir haben heute morgen die Sache besprochen, und es gelang mir, ihn zu überreden. Noch bevor ich mein Zimmer verlassen hatte, war er gekommen, um mir zu sagen, daß er bereit sei – ich meine, bereit zur Heimkehr. Schon nach zehn Minuten verließ er mit mir das Hotel, um ihnen mitzuteilen, daß er nicht bereit sei.«

Miß Gostrey war ganz Ohr. »Dann haben Sie ihn also daran gehindert?«

Strether setzte sich im Stuhl zurecht. »Ich habe ihn daran gehindert. Wenigstens vorläufig. Ja, so steht es nun«, sagte er lebhaft.

»Aha. Aber was ist jetzt mit Mr. Newsome?« fragte sie. »Er war also bereit zu fahren?«

»Ehrlich bereit.«

»Und ganz im Ernst? Glaubte er es auch von Ihnen?«

»Ich denke schon; er war erstaunt, daß die Hand, die ihn hatte hinüberziehen wollen, sich plötzlich in ein ihn zurückhaltendes Instrument verwandelt hatte.«

Miß Gostrey erwog diese Darstellung des Sachverhalts. »Nimmt er an, daß diese Verwandlung gleichsam über Nacht gekommen ist?«

»Tja«, meinte Strether, »ich bin mir nicht so ganz sicher, was er annimmt. Ich bin mir überhaupt in nichts sicher, was ihn angeht – außer in dem einen: je mehr ich ihn kennenlerne, desto weniger finde ich in ihm das, was ich ursprünglich angenommen hatte. Er ist unergründlich – und darum warte ich.«

Sie dachte nach. »Aber worauf denn?«

»Auf die Reaktion, die sein Kabel auslöst.«

»Und wie lautete sein Kabel?«

»Ich weiß es nicht«, antwortete Strether. »Als wir uns trennten, machten wir aus, daß er es so aufsetzen solle, wie er es für richtig halte. Ich habe einfach zu ihm gesagt: ›Ich will hierbleiben, und das kann ich nur, wenn Sie auch bleiben.‹ Er fand es offensichtlich erstaunlich, daß ich bleiben wollte, schloß sich mir dann aber an.«

Miß Gostrey bedachte es. »So, dann will er also auch bleiben.«

»Halb und halb. Ich meine, halb möchte er bleiben, halb möchte er abfahren. Soweit haben meine einstigen Vorhaltungen immerhin gewirkt. Doch er wird nicht fahren«, endete Strether, »wenigstens nicht, solange ich noch hier bin.«

»Aber Sie können doch nicht für immer hierbleiben«, hielt ihm seine Begleiterin vor. »Schön wäre es ja.«

»Das geht unter keinen Umständen. Ich möchte ihn jedoch noch eine Weile beobachten. Er ist überhaupt nicht so, wie ich vermutet hatte; er ist völlig anders. Und darum interessiert er mich.« Es hörte sich beinahe an, als erklärte unser Freund dies deswegen so bedächtig, um es sich selber klarzumachen. »Ich möchte ihn nicht aufgeben.«

Miß Gostrey wollte ihm nur helfen, sich selber klarzuwerden, mußte dabei jedoch sehr taktvoll vorgehen. »Meinen Sie – hm, seiner Mutter zuliebe nicht aufgeben?«

»Ich dachte jetzt eigentlich nicht an seine Mutter. Ich dachte nur an den mir erteilten Auftrag, den ich ihm, sobald wir uns sahen, so überzeugend als möglich dargelegt habe und der mir in völliger Unkenntnis dessen, was Chad in dieser langen Zeit erlebt hatte, erteilt worden war. Dieser Auftrag hatte all den Eindrücken, die ich hier sofort erhalten würde, nicht im geringsten Rechnung getragen – Eindrücke, von denen ich bestimmt noch längst nicht den letzten erhalten habe.«

Miß Gostrey lächelte voll wohlwollender Kritik. »So beabsichtigen Sie also – mehr oder weniger –, aus Neugierde zu bleiben?«

»Nennen Sie es, wie Sie wollen! Mir ist es gleich, wie man es nennt –«

»Solange Sie nur bleiben können? Allerdings. Jedenfalls möchte ich es als einen Mordsspaß bezeichnen«, erklärte Maria Gostrey.

»Es wird eine der Sensationen meines Lebens sein, zu beobachten, wie Sie das arrangieren. Es läßt sich nicht leugnen: Sie können allein laufen.«

Er nahm dieses Lob ungerührt entgegen. »Wenn die Pococks kommen, werde ich aber nicht mehr allein sein.«

Sie zog die Augenbrauen hoch. »Die Pococks kommen?«

»Dies dürfte wohl – und zwar sehr schnell – die Folge von Chads Kabel sein. Sie werden sich einfach einschiffen. Sarah wird statt ihrer Mutter hier erscheinen – und sie richtet bestimmt nicht so ein Kuddelmuddel an wie ich.«

Miß Gostrey dachte ernsthaft nach. »Sie wird ihn also zurückbringen?«

»Höchstwahrscheinlich – wir werden ja sehen. Jedenfalls muß man ihr die Chance bieten, und man darf sich darauf verlassen: sie tut, was sie kann!«

»Und Sie sind damit einverstanden?«

»Natürlich«, sagte Strether, »bin ich damit einverstanden. Ich bin für faires Spiel.«

Sie hatte für einen Augenblick den Faden verloren. »Wenn damit aber die Pococks die Angelegenheit in die Hand nehmen, warum bleiben Sie dann?«

»Nur um mir zu beweisen, daß ich fair spiele – und natürlich auch ein bißchen, daß sie es tun.« Strether glänzte wie noch nie.

»Als ich herüberkam, fand ich mich plötzlich vor neue Tatsachen gestellt – Tatsachen, die unseren alten Begründungen immer weniger entsprachen. Die Sache ist also ganz einfach. Wir brauchen neue Begründungen – so neu wie die Tatsachen; davon wurden unsere Freunde in Woollett – Chads Freunde

und meine also – so früh wie möglich eindringlich benachrichtigt. Wenn es überhaupt welche gibt, dann wird Mrs. Pocock sie schon finden; sie wird eine ganze Kollektion davon mit herüberbringen. Sie werden«, fügte er mit nachdenklichem Lächeln hinzu, »zu dem ›Mordsspaß‹ beitragen, von dem Sie sprachen.«

Sie schwamm jetzt mitten im Strom und dicht an seiner Seite.

»Wenn ich Sie recht verstanden habe, ist Mamie ihre letzte Karte.« Und als sein bedächtiges Schweigen dies nicht leugnete, fügte sie bedeutsam hinzu: »Ich glaube fast, sie tut mir leid.«

»Ich glaube fast, *mir* tut sie leid!« Strether sprang auf und lief ein paar Schritte auf und ab, während ihm ihre Blicke folgten.
»Aber daran ist nichts zu ändern.«

»Sie meinen, daß sie mitkommt?«

Nach einer erneuten Kehrtwendung erklärte er ihr, was er meinte. »Es gibt für sie nur eine Möglichkeit, nicht mitzukommen: ich müßte hinüberfahren – wenigstens bin ich davon überzeugt, daß ich es so verhindern könnte. Aber die Schwierigkeit ist die: wenn ich hinüberfahre –«

»Ich weiß, ich weiß« – sie hatte sofort verstanden. »Dann würde auch Mr. Newsome hinüberfahren, und das« – sie lachte laut auf – »geht nun einmal nicht.«

Strether lachte nicht; er schien ruhig und verhältnismäßig gelassen, was hätte beweisen können, daß er gegen Lächerlichkeit immun sei. »Verrückt, was?«

Sie waren in dieser sie so sehr beschäftigenden Sache miteinander so vertraut geworden, daß sie gar keinen Namen mehr zu nennen brauchten – den Namen nämlich, auf den ihr augenblickliches Schweigen fast hörbar anspielte. Strethers Frage bewies eindeutig, welches Gewicht dieser Name für ihn während der Abwesenheit seiner Gastgeberin bekommen hatte; und darum genügte eine einzige Geste von ihr als hinreichend verständliche Antwort. Doch er erhielt eine noch viel bessere Antwort, als sie gleich darauf sagte: »Wird Mr. Newsome seine Schwester mit ihr bekanntmachen?«

»Mit Mme. de Vionnet?« Endlich sprach Strether den Namen aus. »Es würde mich sehr überraschen, wenn er es nicht täte.«

Sie schien diese Möglichkeit zu erwägen. »Sie haben also auch schon daran gedacht und sind darauf vorbereitet?«

»Ich habe daran gedacht und bin darauf vorbereitet.«

Sie lenkte das Gespräch jetzt wieder auf ihren Gast. »Bon! Sie sind großartig!«

»Tja«, antwortete er kurz darauf ein wenig müde, doch immer noch voll den Blick auf sie gerichtet, »tja, genau das ist es, was ich wenigstens einmal in meinem langweiligen Leben gewesen sein möchte!«