

Maintaining the Foreign, the Ugly and the Pretty:

Translating Scott Westerfeld's *Uglies*

Abstract:

This thesis discusses a number of the translation problems in Scott Westerfeld's Young Adult novel *Uglies* and what the likely solutions to these problems would be, were this novel to be translated for Dutch publisher Van Goor. Prior to discussing this translation is an introduction about Young Adult Literature and its relevance, especially that of Science Fiction novels, as *Uglies* is written in a dystopian setting. The research question is: what are the translation problems in Westerfeld's *Uglies* and what are the possible and most desirable solutions to these translation issues?

Monica Bootsma

5490804

BA Thesis English Language and Culture, Utrecht University

Supervisor: Anniek Kool

Second Reader: Onno Kusters

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Research

Introduction

In this thesis, translation problems that occur in the novel *Uglies* by Scott Westerfeld are investigated and discussed, along with the possible solutions to these problems if this novel were to be translated for publisher Van Goor. Van Goor, which is part of Unieboek | Het Spectrum, has published the Dutch translations of *The Hunger Games* and *Divergent*, among many others, and is quite likely to publish this type of YAL. Van Goor is an imprint from publishing company Unieboek | Het Spectrum. Their focus lies on children's literature, ranging from infant readers to adolescents. On their website, Van Goor defines Young Adult as reading material for ages fifteen and up (*Young Adult*).

Young adult literature (YAL) has existed for quite some time, but in recent years it has grown and become one of the most popular genres (Hazeleger 1). Book series such as *Harry Potter*, *Twilight*, and *The Hunger Games* and their accompanying film adaptations have been very popular among adolescents and even adults. Even though YAL is originally seen as a division of children's literature, its multilayered storytelling makes it interesting for teenagers as well adults and as the text allows for various ways of interpretation (Rurvin and Orlati 159, qtd. in Alla 16). Many translators realise that the original work as well as their possible translation is not exclusively for children (Lathey 5). This may have possible consequences for their translation strategies, as is the case with Westerfeld's *Uglies*.

Despite its broad audience, YAL is often viewed as inferior to other literature by critics, as they are of the opinion that it is merely "a reflection of what teenagers enjoy to read" (Daniels 78; Hunt 6, qtd. in Hazeleger 4). Even though YAL may originally have a reputation of being secondary to adult literature, it is often also seen as a stepping stone which supports young readers in their transition from children's literature to this adult literature (Coats 316). The genre is not only read for amusement purposes, but also contributes to the

young reader's development. As the popularity and supply of YAL grows, so does its prestige among readers and educators. In return, its reputation of being inferior decreases (Alsup 1).

As they grow up, teenagers experience their adolescence as a time in which they rediscover themselves and develop their identity. Young readers often identify with the character they are reading about and use this as an opportunity to learn about themselves and let it stimulate their personal growth. According to Alsup, it is critical for teenagers to be able to relate to these narratives, but it is also important they understand the differences between the story and their lives. Therefore she suggests that books that "create some dissonance in the teenage world" (11), including science fiction and fantasy novels, would be a better choice as they clearly define the gap between reality and fiction. In *Uglies*, Westerfeld has created a very relatable narrative by telling the story of the teenager Tally Youngblood, but has placed this narrative in a dystopian setting which creates an obvious dissonance with the real world.

Through YAL, science fiction (SF) has become a popular genre among teenagers as well, with dystopia as its even more popular subgenre. SF, by its very definition, refers to fiction which is "based on imagined future scientific or technological advances and major social or environmental changes [...]" ("Science Fiction"). The subgenre dystopia focuses mainly on the futuristic images in which the world is a troublesome place, often in a post-apocalyptic environment or ruled by a dictatorial government ("Dystopia"). *Uglies* is an example of such a novel. In an interview, Westerfeld said that he enjoys writing such fiction for younger readers because of the way teenagers question the world around them: "They can imagine, in the way 'mundane' adult readers do not, the world being utterly different. Being a teenager is a fundamentally alien experience" (Stone).

Translating Youth Literature and Science Fiction

Despite the fact that YAL has often been subject to various kinds of translation, the fact remains that children's literature itself has often been an overlooked field (O'Connell 208). This mainly stems from the fact that many think it is a genre that is difficult to define and is mainly classified by its readers (209). The genre is very broad and can be divided into children's literature, which is read by younger children, and YAL, which is read by adolescents and adults (O'Connell 209). As Lathey previously stated, it is the adults in this case who decide on "the boundaries of childhood" (5). She then elaborates on this by saying it is adults who, in many cases, set the standards. O'Connell agrees, saying that the adults have a larger influence on what literature is published and discussed than the children who read it (209). This is important for writers and translators to realise, as they also play an important role in setting these standards. In the context of writing and translating, there is also a difference between an author of youth literature and its translator. Authors of children's literature wholeheartedly make the decision to write for a younger audience, whereas translators may have a different understanding of the adolescent reading audience (Lathey 5). Translators need to reinterpret who the target audience will be and need to estimate what is important to maintain in the target text. In combination with the aforementioned duality of the source text and its audience, it is the translator's responsibility to translate the text into something that is of course adequate, but even more importantly, acceptable, as they will need to make up for the children's deficiency of background knowledge without simplifying the content too much (Ztolze 209, qtd. in Alla 17). There are many theories as to what the best approach in translating children's literature would be. However, many agree that – regardless of the strategy the translator uses – the target text should still contain the foreign features while also being acceptable and accessible for young readers without underestimating their prior knowledge, even though this may differ from the adult reader's prior knowledge (18).

Whereas children's literature is often written in a utopian setting, a large number of the currently popular young adult novels are written in a dystopian setting, which falls under the science fiction (SF) genre. SF is a genre that makes use of a fictional hypothesis and cultivates it into a full-grown, scientifically substantiated story world (Suvin 374). Because of this, SF novels create a dissonance with the real world. Novels from the SF genre are popular among all ages, but particularly among young adults as they take a particular interest into books that distinctly present the contrast between reality and fiction (Alsup 11).

Even though not much research has been done on YAL in the past, what little research has been done mainly focuses on how readers respond to literature in a classroom setting and how this type of literature aids them in the search for an identity of their own (Arizpe and Styles 83). YAL is targeted at these readers specifically and peaks their interest so much because "YA fiction is organized around the same sorts of tensions [...]: tensions [...] between an impulsive individualism and a generative ethics of interconnectedness" (Coats 316).

Katharina Reiss states that fiction and fantasy texts, as represented in youth literature, all belong to the expressive kind of texts, and that the most important goal in these texts to maintain the artistic aspects of it (qtd. in Puurtinen 61). Puurtinen argues that even though expressive elements are of significance to the narrative, the plot and story content are just as important. In addition, the role of the translation is not automatically the same as that of the source text and because of this, the translation does not always have to be performed in a similar manner (Reiss and Vermeer, qtd. in Puurtinen 61).

In *Uglies*, identification and the search of self among a foreign type of society play an important role. It is a novel which gives readers a relatable storyline in which the emphasis lies on bodily development (Gough 9). Thus it is significant that the translator pays attention to certain elements, such as Tally's search for her own identity, and ensures these play an equally important role in the target text.

Analysis of Source Text

Uglies sketches a dystopian world where teenagers undergo an operation imposed by the government. There are several population groups in the novel: littlies, uglies, pretties, specials and extras. Each group is defined by either their age or appearance (littlies, uglies, pretties), or another function in society (specials, extras). The littlies and uglies live an isolated life, away from the rest of society, who are all pretties, specials or extras. It is not until they have undergone the surgery at the age of sixteen and are turned into a pretty that they are acknowledged as a proper part of society. This includes the protagonist, Tally Youngblood, who is first introduced as an ugly just a few months before her sixteenth birthday. Her friend Peris, who is a few months older than her, has already been turned into a pretty and without him, life in Uglyville seems quite lonely to Tally. While she is anxiously awaiting her sixteenth birthday by herself, she decides to spend her remaining days in Uglyville making illegal espionage trips to New Pretty Town and places outside of the city that were thought to be uninhabited. Eventually she finds a whole new kind of society that consists of people that have never been turned pretty. This does not only change her perspective on the society as she knows it, but ultimately gets her into trouble with the authorities and causes her operation to be delayed.

Among the many dystopian young adult novels that have been published during the last decade, *Uglies* is definitely relevant for young readers as Tally's development throughout the novel provides a relatable narrative in a setting that is both familiar and foreign at the same time. The story's set-up is very symbolic to the hierarchy among teenagers, in which following the status quo is the norm and everyone who does not fit in is chastised. This concept is enlarged by the dystopian setting of the novel, taking it to extremes by including the mandatory operations and strict government policies. Secondly, identity and the search of

a sense of self play a central role in this novel (Gough 4). Even though their place in society is largely determined by their age and population group, the characters in *Uglies* are still looking for their place among the hierarchy as the story develops.

The transition from the ugly to the pretty lifestyle does not only come forward by the characters' outward appearances. Westerfeld has also made it noticeable in his writing style and use of wordplay. When Tally is still living in Uglyville, the descriptions of her surroundings are very detailed and carefully worded: "The scudding clouds did look a bit fishy, rippled into scales by a high-altitude wind. As the light faded, deep blue gaps of night peered through like an upside down ocean, bottomless and cold" (Westerfeld 3). As soon as Tally crosses over to pretty territory in New Pretty Town, the way in which the descriptions are worded seems to be simplified, as if they are supposed to match the shallow way of thinking that Pretties seem to do: "But now Tally was headed into the center of the island, where floats and revelers populated the bright streets all night. Brand-new pretties like Peris always lived where the fun was most frantic" (6).

As mentioned in the previous part, it is important that this translation of the novel *Uglies* does not lose its original function. *Uglies* criticises the technological utopia because authors want their adolescent audience to consider what popular culture makes them forget to think about (Ostry 102). Popular culture focuses on the short-term (Anderson 273, qtd. in Ostry 102). This is no different in *Uglies*, where Tally is told that the city she lives in is a safe wonderland that provides for her (Westerfeld 106). Tally's friend Shay is the independent thinker and counterweight in this situation, saying that the city keeps children dependent (278). In addition, Ostry compares the city to to parents shielding their children from awful truths, preventing them from realising how dystopian their environment is (102). In the search of identity and capacity to think for oneself, this underlying message to the reader, that the

influence of your surroundings should not overrule your independent thinking, is significant and should be maintained in the translation for the same target audience.

Translating *Uglies*

Establishing translation strategy

As SF novels are based on a world that contains elements that might possibly come to exist in the future, but do not exist in the current time, they often contain a number of newly introduced terms that the audience might not be familiar with yet. This is also the case in *Uglies*. As this gives the novel a somewhat exotic feel, like the reader is being introduced to something foreign, it is important to preserve this feeling in the translation. For that reason, the best approach for this text would be to exoticise. This is often done by either holding on to the original English term, or finding a Dutch equivalent that is equally as foreign to Dutch readers as the original term would be for English readers. A combination of these two methods will be used for this translation of *Uglies*.

Another important stylistic feature of this text is Westerfeld's extensive and almost poetic way of describing surroundings, characters, and the way the society within the *Uglies* world functions. In these descriptions, Westerfeld makes a lot of use of wordplay and structures sentences in a creatively ambiguous manner. This ambiguity mostly stems from the fact that he uses words that have double meanings and can be interpreted both ways in the sentence. Therefore younger readers can just enjoy the story, but for older readers this leaves more room for interpretation in some situations. In order for the Dutch reader to have the same reading experience as the English reader, it is important to preserve this wordplay and ambiguity. In cases where this is not possible, the sentence structure can be altered slightly by using a unit shift (Chesterman 93). Another option is to change the trope (101).

At all times, the target audience should also be taken into consideration when translating this novel. The novel is categorised as Young Adult, and the translation will be made with the reading audience of publisher Van Goor in mind. Van Goor defines YAL as reading material for ages fifteen and up and so it can be concluded that the target audience for this translation would be adolescents, approximately between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five. Because of the broad range in age, the readers are often able to understand most of the aforementioned foreign terms and complex grammatical structures, even if only to a certain degree. Therefore it is significant, of course, that the terms and structures used stay roughly the same as in the source text and are not simplified or made more difficult. It is crucial, in the writing process as well as in translating, that this is kept in mind. As Lathey states in her work, the relationship between a writer of children's literature and its reader is unequal, as it is the adult who essentially decides on the limits of adolescence (5). In this case, it means that Westerfeld himself is in charge of how adolescence is shaped in the world of *Uglies* and how simple or complex this is. With that in mind, it is important that the translator stays true to Westerfeld's original level of difficulty.

So in brief, these are three points that could form guidelines for translating this text: 1. maintaining foreign terms as much as possible, with the exception of partially translating some terms where possible in order to stay true to the SF content. 2. preserve as much of the wordplay and ambiguity as possible, and attempt to get as much of the meaning across by using extra words or clauses where needed so the Dutch reader acquires the same reading experience as a reader of the original text. 3. uphold the complexity of the text with relation to use of terms and grammatical structures in order to preserve the duality of the text, keeping it suitable and accessible for all of the target audience, teenagers as well as adults. These guidelines may not be completely applicable for the whole text and they are not exhaustive, but will at least provide a frame to work in.

Translation problems and solutions

Because of its dystopian setting and great use of wordplay, translating a novel like *Uglies* is of course no simple task. Due to its fantasy setting, the translation problems that occur in this text are mainly text specific and interlingual problems and there are not as many intercultural and pragmatic problems (Nord 60). In both of the translated passages, a large number of translation problems are present. Some of these translation problems will be elaborated on in footnotes in the translation itself, but the most significant ones are discussed below within the frame of the guidelines mentioned previously.

Text Specific Translation Problems

Many of the text specific problems stem from the fact that there are many new, foreign terms introduced that belong to the SF setting of the novel. The very first and perhaps even most important example of this is the title of the book, *Uglies*. In this case, the word “Uglies” is more than just a mere noun, as it refers to a population group in the novel. The word “uglies” does not only function as a descriptive term, but also determine a status among these population groups. One option would be to translate “uglies” to the Dutch noun “lelijkerds”, but this has a more condescending connotation in Dutch than it has in English. Even though “uglies” refers a certain group in the hierarchic society, the Dutch translation should not be more or less demeaning than the original. A better option is to translate the English noun “ugly” into the Dutch adjective “lelijk”, which is a transposition (Chesterman 93). The same applies to other similar words, such as “pretties” and “littlies”. “pretties” was been translated into the adjective “knap”, in the same way that “uglies” was. In order to have consistency throughout the book and keep the terminology clear, “littlies” should be translated in the same way and was translated with the adjective “klein” instead of the noun “kleintje”. By transposing all these nouns into adjectives, it could be argued that the text loses some of its

original meaning as the nouns stand for a more pronounced kind of status symbol. However, as long as it is done consistently, the way the Dutch reader perceives and experiences the story should not differ too much.

Another kind of term that is introduced in the novel is the use of the word “hover” in combination with items that, in the present-day world, would usually not hover, but do in the *Uglies* universe. Words such as “hoverstruts” and “hoverbounce” appear to be completely normal in this world and do not require explanation, as it is nearly expected of the reader to figure out the meaning of the word through the context. To hold onto the foreign feeling of the word, the decision was made to translate these words only partially (Chesterman 108). “hoverstruts” becomes “hoverbalken” and “hoverbounce” becomes “hoverstuiteren”. It has been done this way because the word “hovercraft” is already a part of the Dutch vocabulary (“Hovercraft”, Van Dale), therefore the average Dutch person has – at least to some extent – knowledge of what “hover” might mean. Even though this now becomes a half Dutch and half English word and that might be estranging for the reader, it could work in this SF setting as it is already dissonant with reality. There are more of these terms and because they might already be interpreted as estranging in English, they have been translated into a similarly estranging term in Dutch, such as the word “house minder”, which has been translated into “huisoppas.” The next text specific problem occurs in the sentence “The scudding clouds did look a bit fishy, rippled into scales by a high-altitude wind” (Westerfeld 3). The problem in this phrase is the double meaning of the word “fishy”, as the clouds could look suspicious or look like fish, because of the word “scales” that follows. There is not one word in Dutch that covers both of these meanings, so the wordplay in this sentence cannot be translated in the same way. Another possibility, which is the one that was used in the translation below, is to have both the meanings of the word “fishy” in the Dutch sentence. In this case, they are loosely interpreted as “onheilspellend” and “vissen”.

Interlingual Translation Problems

One of the interlingual translation problems that occurs on regular basis is the personification of objects in the novel. One example of this is “A few hot air balloons pulled at their tethers [...]” (Westerfeld 4). Another is example is “[...] the old bridge couldn’t talk – or report trespassers [...]” (5). According to translator Paul Claes, a non-animated noun can serve as a subject to an animated verb in English, but this is often not acceptable in Dutch (37). However, because this is a futuristic SF novel in which there is often made use of more advanced technology than is known in the present day, this might play into the reader’s suspension of disbelief. In some cases it may thus be acceptable to maintain this personification to Dutch and may even add to the foreign feeling of the SF setting. My translation strategy is to figure out whether the personification in English carries out a SF function or not. If so, as with technological personifications that imply the increased intelligence of a machine, the personification is maintained. If not, as with the aforementioned hot air balloons, the personification is omitted. Even though many things in the world of *Uglies* appear to consist of advanced technology, these air balloons are not described as such and so the personification was left out in the Dutch translation. Another personification occurs in the case of the old bridge. The original phrase is: “Unlike the other bridges in New Pretty Town, the old bridge couldn’t talk – or report trespassers, more importantly” (Westerfeld 5). Here the personification has to do with the technological advancements that allow bridges to gather and share information, so in this case it seemed acceptable to keep this personification in Dutch rather than leaving it out. However, as it is implied that what this bridge can do is share information rather than perform the actual act of speaking, the level of abstraction was changed (Chesterman 100). Thus the Dutch word “communiceren” was used instead of the literal translation “praten”.

Another interlingual translation problem is found later on when Peris tells Tally to leave. He first says “Just go!”, which, after a brief, interrupted response from Tally, is followed by “Go!”, as to emphasise the first time he said it (Westerfeld 19). If these phrases were to be literally translated, they would become something in the order of “Ga nou maar!” and “Ga!”. In Dutch, however, “Ga!” is not a commonly used phrase, or something that would be typically said. For this reason, “Go!” was translated into “Wegwezen!”, which essentially has the same meaning and a similar manner of emphasis, and is more commonly used by speakers of Dutch.

Other Translation Problems

In the passages that have been selected for this translation, there was only one translation problem that could be marked as pragmatic, which is “This party is white tie!” (20). White tie, in the English language, refers to a certain dress code that requires guests to show up in formal clothing (“White-tie”). This could be translated to the Dutch “gala”, however, this does not have the same connotation as white tie. In English, a distinction is made between white tie and black tie and although they can both be referred to as “gala”, they mean two different things in English, whereas Dutch does not have such a distinction. The sentence was translated into “Dit feestje heeft een dresscode!” where “gala” is replaced by the more general “dresscode”. In this sentence, the level of abstraction was changed (Chesterman 100). This is an acceptable choice because in both cases, it is made clear that Tally does not adhere to the dress code as it is pointed out to her repeatedly.

Translated Passages

Translated Text and Annotations

Fragment 1: pp. 1-6

Lelijk.

Een wereld waarin iedereen lelijk is.

En daarna niet meer.

Net¹ Knap Stad

De vroege zomerlucht² had de lucht de kleur van kattenkots³.

Om precies die kleur roze te krijgen, zou je dan natuurlijk wel je kat een tijdje alleen maar kattenvoer met zalm moeten geven, dacht Tally. De onheilspellende stapelwolken leken een beetje op vissen die hun schubben verkregen door de sterke wind op die hoogte. Het daglicht maakte geleidelijk plaats voor donkerblauwe gaten vol nacht, die leken op een ondersteboven gekeerde oceaan, bodemloos en kil.

Een zonsondergang als deze zou elke andere zomer prachtig zijn geweest, maar alles had zijn schoonheid verloren sinds Peris knap was gemaakt. Het is rot om je beste vriend kwijt te raken, al is het maar voor drie maanden en twee dagen.

Tally Youngblood wachtte op het donker.

Door haar open raam kon ze Net Knap Stad zien liggen. De feeststorens waren al verlicht en brandende fakkels wierpen flikkerende schaduwen op de paden van de siertuinen. Een aantal heteluchtballonnen werden door kabels op hun plek gehouden in de verduisterende

¹ G3: “New” is not literally translated into “Nieuw”, but into “Net” as it says more about the amount of time that has passed since the uglies have become pretties.

² G1: Source text is ambiguous. Because it is not yet clear whether they mean early in the morning or early in the summer, it was translated literally and by doing so, the translation was kept ambiguous as well so the reader can interpret it both ways.

³ There is alliteration in the source text (colour of cat). As alliterations occur often in this text and are part of Westerfeld’s writing style, they are maintained wherever possible.

roze lucht. De luchtballonvaarders schoten vuurwerk⁴ naar andere ballonnen en passerende parasailers. Gelach en muziek kaatsten over het water als kiezels die precies vanuit de juiste hoek gegooid werden. De geluiden weerkaatsten net zo scherp als de uiteinden van de kiezels, en werkten net zo scherp op Tally's zenuwen.

In de buitenwijken van de stad, aan de overkant van de zwarte rivier die de stad omcirkelde, was alles in duisternis gehuld. Iedereen die lelijk was lag nu al op bed.

Tally deed haar interface ring af en zei: 'Welterusten.'

'Slaap lekker Tally,' zei de kamer.

Ze kauwde op een tandenpoetspil, gaf een mep op haar kussen, en schoof een oud kacheltje, dat ongeveer net zoveel warmte produceerde als een slapend mens van Tally's formaat, onder de dekens.

Daarna klom ze uit het raam.

Eenmaal buiten, waar de nacht eindelijk pikzwart werd boven haar hoofd, voelde Tally zich meteen beter. Misschien was dit een idioot plan, maar alles was beter dan weer een nacht wakker liggen door zelfmedelijden. Op het vertrouwde, groene pad richting de waterkant kon ze zich makkelijk inbeelden dat Peris stilletjes achter haar aanliep terwijl hij een lach onderdrukte, klaar om een nieuwe nacht de jongeren te bespieden die net knap waren gemaakt⁵. Toen ze twaalf waren, hadden ze een manier gevonden om de huisoppas voor de gek te houden. Toen⁶ leek het nog alsof de drie maanden verschil in leeftijd nooit zoveel zouden voorstellen.

'Beste vrienden voor altijd' mompelde Tally, terwijl ze met haar vinger over het kleine litteken op haar rechterhandpalm ging.

⁴ S5: The mention of the specific type of firework was omitted, as the context already makes it clear that the characters are shooting it at each other for amusement purposes and that the firework itself is of a harmless kind.

⁵ G3: The noun "pretties" was changed into a more descriptive clause rather than just the adjective "knap". This is done because in this case, more explanation was required in order to make clear that there is referred to a specific group of pretties, as the new pretties show a different behavioural pattern than their older, more responsible peers.

⁶ G4: Sentence was split up for the purpose of emphasis.

Tussen de bomen door glinsterde het water, en ze hoorde golfjes tegen de oever slaan die in het spoor van een langsvarende pont waren achtergebleven. Ze verstopte zich in het riet. De zomer was de beste tijd van het jaar voor spionage avonturen. Er stond hoog gras, het was nooit koud, en je hoefde de volgende dag je aandacht er niet bij te houden op school.

Peris kon nu natuurlijk zo lang uitslapen als hij wilde. Dat was slechts een van de voordelen van knap zijn.

De oude brug oogde massief boven het water, de ijzeren onderbouw was zwart als de nacht. De brug was zo lang geleden gebouwd dat hij nog door middel van pijlers zijn eigen gewicht omhooghield, zonder ondersteuning van hoverbalken. Wanneer de rest van de stad over een miljoen jaar was vergaan, zou deze brug er waarschijnlijk nog staan, als het bot van een fossiel.

In tegenstelling tot de andere bruggen naar Net Knap Stad kon deze brug niet communiceren, of nog belangrijker: indringers aangeven. Maar hoewel hij zweeg, had Tally altijd gedacht dat de brug erg wijs was, kalm en alwetend als een eeuwenoude boom.

Haar ogen waren nu volledig gewend aan de duisternis, en het kostte haar maar een paar seconden om de vislijn te vinden die aan de gebruikelijke rots vastgebonden zat. Ze gaf er een ruk aan en hoorde verderop een plons waar het touw van zijn verstopplek in het water⁷ viel, tussen de pijlers van de brug. Ze bleef aan de vislijn trekken totdat de natte kluwen touw tevoorschijn kwam. Het andere uiteinde zat nog vastgeknoopt aan de ijzeren onderbouw van de brug. Tally spande het touw strak en maakte het vast aan de gebruikelijke boom.

Ze moest zich nog een keer in het gras verstoppen terwijl een andere pont langsvaarde. De dansende passagiers op het dek zagen niet eens dat er een touw vanaf de brug naar de oever gespannen was. Ze zagen het nooit. Jongeren die net knap waren, hielden zich niet

⁷ PR3: "in het water" was added for the purpose of clarification for the target audience.

bezig met kleine dingen die ergens niet thuis hoorden. Ze waren altijd te druk met lol trappen om het op te merken.

Toen de lichten van de pont uit het zicht waren, testte Tally of het touw haar gewicht hield. Eén keer was het touw losgeraakt van de boom en waren zij en Peris heen en weer geslingerd boven het midden van de rivier, voordat ze in het koude water vielen. Ze glimlachte bij de herinnering en realiseerde zich dat ze veel liever dit soort avonturen zou beleven. Ze zou liever drijfkrat met Peris in het koude water zitten, dan dat ze vanavond warm en droog ergens anders was, maar helemaal alleen.

Terwijl ze ondersteboven aan het touw hing, met haar handen en knieën om de knopen in het touw heen geklemd, klom Tally omhoog totdat ze het donkere onderstel van de brug bereikte. Vervolgens klom ze door het ijzeren geraamte heen en stak ze het water over richting Net Knap Stad.

Peris had sinds dat hij knap was gemaakt maar één keer de moeite genomen om Tally een berichtje te sturen, maar daardoor wist ze wel waar hij woonde. Hij had er geen adres bij gezet, maar Tally wist hoe je de willekeurig lijkende nummers onderaan een ping moest ontcijferen. Ze leidden naar een gebouw⁸ genaamd Villa Garbo in het heuvelachtige gedeelte van de stad.

Fragment 2: pp. 18-21

Het litteken, wat ze samen hadden gemaakt, was weg.

‘Ze hebben hem weggehaald.’

‘Natuurlijk hebben ze dat gedaan, Schele. Mijn huid is helemaal vernieuwd.’

Tally knipperde. Daar had ze niet aan gedacht.

⁸ S5: the English word “place” was not literally translated into “plaats”, but rather into what type of place was implied here: a building. This was done for the purpose of clarification.

Hij schudde met zijn hoofd. ‘Je bent nog zo’n jonkie’

‘De lift is geroepen,’ zei de lift⁹. ‘Naar boven of naar beneden?’

Tally schrok van de elektronische stem.

‘Wacht alsjeblieft’ zei Peris rustig.

Tally slikte en balde haar hand in een vuist. ‘Maar ze hebben je bloed niet veranderd.

Dat hebben we gedeeld, wat er ook gebeurt.’

Peris keek haar eindelijk recht in haar gezicht aan en kromp niet in elkaar, zoals ze had gevreesd. Hij glimlachte prachtig. ‘Nee, dat hebben ze niet gedaan. Nieuwe huid, wat maakt het uit¹⁰. En over drie maanden kunnen we hierom lachen. Tenzij...’

‘Tenzij wat?’ Ze keek omhoog in zijn grote, bruine ogen, die zo vol bezorgdheid stonden.

‘Beloof me nu maar dat je niet nog meer stomme acties uithaalt,’ zei Peris, ‘Zoals hierheen komen. Iets waardoor je in de problemen komt. Ik wil weten hoe je eruit ziet als je knap bent.’

‘Natuurlijk.’

‘Dus beloof het me.’

Peris was maar drie maanden ouder dan Tally, maar terwijl ze haar ogen naar de grond richtte, voelde ze zich weer klein. ‘Vooruit, ik beloof het. Geen stomme dingen. En vanavond zullen me ze ook niet betrappen.’

‘Oké, pak je masker en...’ zijn stem stierf weg.

Ze keek naar de plek waar het masker was gevallen. Nadat het was weggegooid, was het masker zichzelf gaan recyclen en veranderde in een roze poeder, wat door het tapijt in de lift al werd weggefilterd.

⁹ Personification maintained as this emphasises the use of intelligent technology in the narrative and the elevator fulfils a science fiction function in this case.

¹⁰ G10: Rhyme added to improve readability and add emphasis to Peris’ indifference to the situation, as opposed to Tally’s feelings.

De twee staarden elkaar aan in stilte.

‘De lift is geroepen,’ drong de machine aan. ‘Naar boven of naar beneden?’

‘Peris, ik beloof je dat ik niet betrapt word. Niemand die knap is kan zo hard rennen als ik. Laten we gewoon naar beneden g-‘

Peris schudde zijn hoofd. ‘Naar boven alsjeblieft. Naar het dak.’

De lift kwam in beweging.

‘Naar boven? Peris, hoe ga ik-‘

‘Naar buiten en dan rechtdoor, in een groot rek. Bungeepakken. Er zijn er een heleboel voor in het geval van brand.’

‘Je bedoelt springen?’ Tally slikte. Haar maag maakte een salto terwijl de lift tot stilstand kwam.

Peris haalde zijn schouders op. ‘Ik doe het zo vaak, Schele.’ Hij knipoogde. ‘Je zult het geweldig vinden.’

Door zijn gezichtsuitdrukking straalde zijn knappe gezicht nog meer. Tally sprong naar voren en sloeg haar armen om hem heen. Hij voelde tenminste nog steeds hetzelfde aan, al leek hij misschien langer en dunner. Maar hij was warm en stevig, en nog steeds Peris.

‘Tally!’

Ze strompelde naar achteren terwijl de deuren open gingen. Ze had allemaal modder op zijn witte gilet achtergelaten. ‘Oh nee! Het-‘

‘Ga nou maar!’

Doordat hij zo verdrietig was, wilde Tally hem het liefst nog een knuffel geven. Ze wilde blijven en Peris helpen om zijn kleren weer schoon te krijgen. Ze wilde ervoor zorgen dat hij er perfect uitzag voor het feestje. Ze stak een hand naar hem uit. ‘Ik-‘

‘Wegwezen!’

‘Maar we zijn beste vrienden, toch?’

Hij slaakte een zucht terwijl hij een bruine vlek probeerde weg te deppen. ‘Tuurlijk, voor altijd. Over drie maanden.’

Ze draaide zich om en rende weg, terwijl de deuren zich achter haar sloten.

In eerste instantie merkte niemand daarboven¹¹ haar op. Ze keken allemaal naar beneden. Het was er donker, met uitzondering van de sporadische flits van een sterretje.

Tally vond het rek met de bungeepakken en probeerde er een uit te halen¹². Hij zat vast aan het rek. Ze frunnikte met haar vingers aan het pak, in de hoop een sluiting te vinden. Ze wenste dat ze haar interface ring bij zich had om haar van instructies te voorzien.

Toen zag ze de knop: BRANDALARM.

‘Oh, verdorie,’ zei ze.

Haar schaduw kronkelde en krioelde. Twee knappe jongeren kwamen op haar af gelopen met sterretjes in hun handen.

‘Wie is dat? En wat heeft ze aan?’

‘Hé, jij daar! Dit feestje heeft een dresscode!’

‘Kijk eens naar haar gezicht...’

‘Oh, verdorie,’ zei Tally weer.

En drukte op de knop.

Het geluid van een oorverdovende sirene overspoelde alles, en het bungeepak leek vanaf het rek in haar hand te springen. Ze trok het pak aan en draaide zich om richting de twee knappe jongeren. Deze deinsden terug alsof ze in een weerwolf veranderd was. Een van hen liet zijn sterretje vallen en deze doofde meteen.

‘Brandoefening,’ zei Tally, en rende naar de rand van het dak.

¹¹ Alternative: “merkte niemand op het dak haar op”, but since it is already clear she is on the roof, it was changed into “daarboven” to improve readability and avoid double use of the word “op”.

¹² PR2: Instead of literally translating “pulled at” into “trok aan”, it was translated into the more explicit “probeerde er een uit te halen” as that was what the source text already implied.

Toen ze het pak eenmaal over haar schouders had getrokken, leek het alsof de riemen en ritsen om haar heen kronkelden als slangen totdat het pak strak om haar taille en dijen zat. Een groen lampje knipperde in de kraag, precies op de plek waar ze het niet kon missen.

‘Braaf pak,’ zei ze.

Het pak was blijkbaar niet slim genoeg om antwoord te geven.

De knappe jongeren op het dak¹³ waren allemaal stil en struinden rond, terwijl ze zich afvroegen of er wel echt brand was. Ze wezen naar haar en Tally hoorde het woord ‘lelijk’ vallen.

Ze vroeg zich af wat er erger zou zijn in Net Knap Stad. Brand in je villa, of een lelijkerd¹⁴ die je feestje binnenvalt?

Tally bereikte de rand van het dak, klom op de railing en wankelde daar even. Beneden begonnen alle knappe jongeren in Villa Garbo zich naar buiten te begeven en liepen over het gazon van de heuvel af. Ze keken terug naar boven, op zoek naar rook of vlammen. Ze zagen alleen haar.

Het was een heel eind naar beneden, en Tally’s maag voelde aan alsof die de val al aan het maken was. Maar ze was ook opgewonden. De gillende sirene, de horde mensen die naar haar op keek, de lichten van Net Knap Stad die zich uitspreidden als een miljoen waxinelichtjes.

Tally haalde diep adem, boog haar knieën, en bereidde zichzelf voor om te springen.

Een halve seconde vroeg ze zich of het pak wel zou werken omdat ze haar interface ring niet om had. Zou het hoverstuiten voor niemand? Of zou ze te pletter vallen?

¹³ Because the word “knap” is used as an adjective in the target text, the descriptive verb “playing” was left out. In the preceding context it was already made clear repeatedly that the pretties are having fun and for that reason it is acceptable to omit the verb, even though it formed alliteration with “pretties”.

¹⁴ In most of the story, the decision was made to use the adjective “lelijk” rather than the noun “lelijkerd”, but in this particular phrase it seemed fitting to use the noun as it has a more demeaning connotation and is used mockingly.

Maar ze had Peris beloofd dat ze niet betrap zou worden. Het pak was tenslotte bedoeld voor noodgevallen, én het groene lampje knipperde...

‘Van onderen!’ riep Tally.

En sprong.

Conclusion

Even though YAL is a genre that is not often held in high esteem, it has become an emerging field of research in recent years. It plays a significant role in the lives of teenagers as it provides them with a relatable story in a setting that is dissonant with the real world. The translation of a text does not necessarily need to have the same function as its source text, but in YAL it is important that this function is maintained, considering the role it plays in adolescent's lives. Especially in SF, where the reader is abundantly introduced to the foreign, it is up to the translator to ensure that the reader experiences the foreign in a similar manner.

If Westerfeld's novel *Uglies* were to be translated for a publisher familiar with the YAL genre, such as Van Goor, this feeling of exploring the unknown should be preserved in the translation. The wordplay that Westerfeld makes use of in his novel is a main cause for many text specific and interlingual problems, along with the many newly introduced terms that are used due to the SF setting. The most desirable way of translating this is by maintaining as much of it as possible. However, in some cases, changes and transpositions need to be made in order to improve the readability.

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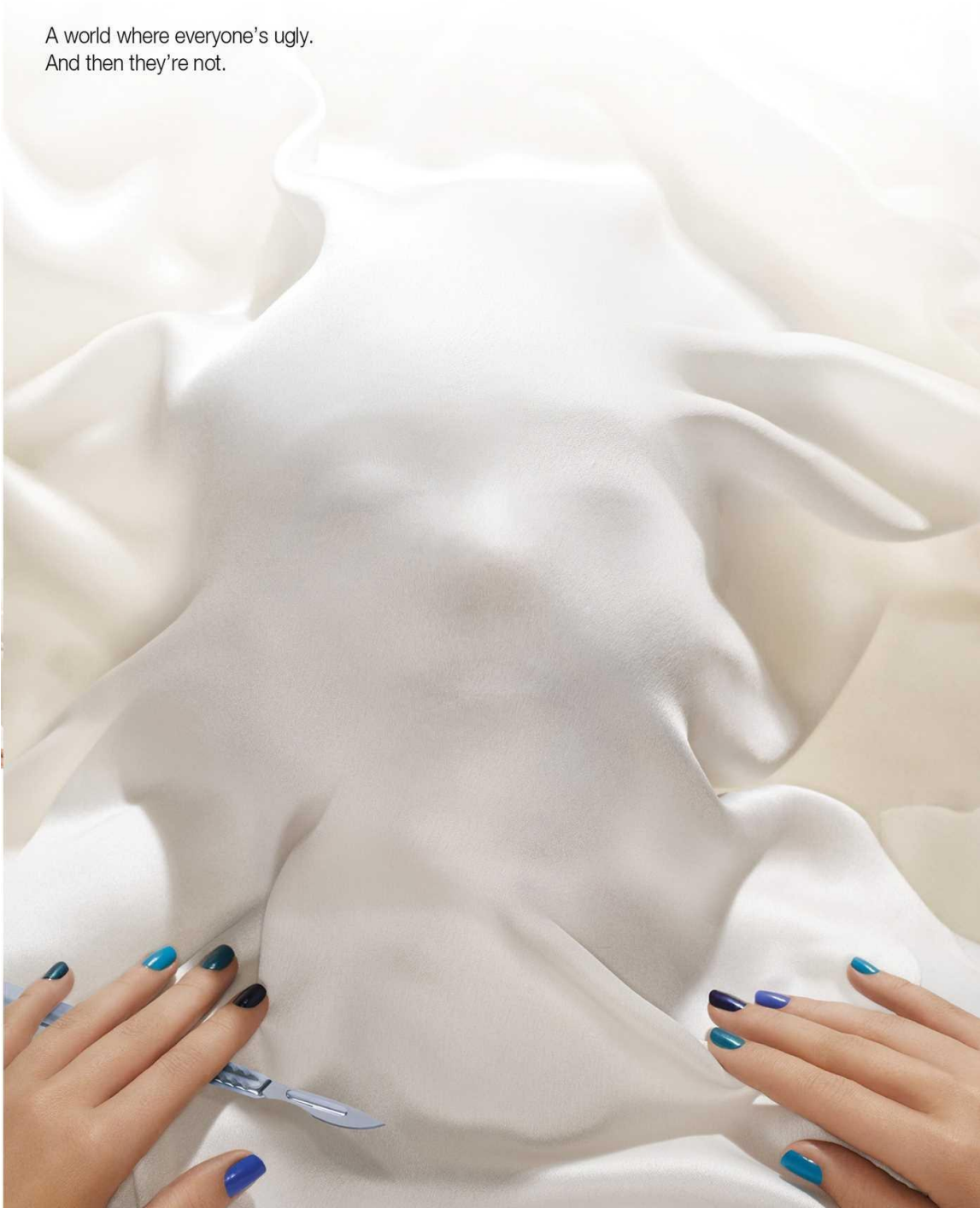
Appendix: Source Text

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING SERIES

SCOTT WESTERFELD

uglies prettiness special extras

A world where everyone's ugly.
And then they're not.



NEW PRETTY TOWN

The early summer sky was the color of cat vomit.

Of course, Tally thought, you'd have to feed your cat only salmon-flavored cat food for a while, to get the pinks right. The scudding clouds did look a bit fishy, rippled into scales by a high-altitude wind. As the light faded, deep blue gaps of night peered through like an upside-down ocean, bottomless and cold.

Any other summer, a sunset like this would have been beautiful. But nothing had been beautiful since Peris turned pretty. Losing your best friend sucks, even if it's only for three months and two days.

Tally Youngblood was waiting for darkness.

She could see New Pretty Town through her open window. The

party towers were already lit up, and snakes of burning torches marked flickering pathways through the pleasure gardens. A few hot-air balloons pulled at their tethers against the darkening pink sky, their passengers shooting safety fireworks at other balloons and passing parasailers. Laughter and music skipped across the water like rocks thrown with just the right spin, their edges just as sharp against Tally's nerves.

Around the outskirts of the city, cut off from town by the black oval of the river, everything was in darkness. Everyone ugly was in bed by now.

Tally took off her interface ring and said, "Good night."

"Sweet dreams, Tally," said the room.

She chewed up a toothbrush pill, punched her pillows, and shoved an old portable heater—one that produced about as much warmth as a sleeping, Tally-size human being—under the covers.

Then she crawled out the window.

Outside, with the night finally turning coal black above her head, Tally instantly felt better. Maybe this was a stupid plan, but anything was better than another night awake in bed feeling sorry for herself. On the familiar leafy path down to the water's edge, it was easy to imagine Peris stealing silently behind her, stifling laughter, ready for a night of spying on the new pretties. Together. She and Peris had figured out how to trick the house minder back when they were twelve, when the three-month difference in their ages seemed like it would never matter.

"Best friends for life," Tally muttered, fingering the tiny scar on her right palm.

The water glistened through the trees, and she could hear the wavelets of a passing river skimmer's wake slapping at the shore. She ducked, hiding in the reeds. Summer was always the best time for spying expeditions. The grass was high, it was never cold, and you didn't have to stay awake through school the next day.

Of course, Peris could sleep as late as he wanted now. Just one of the advantages of being pretty.

The old bridge stretched massively across the water, its huge iron frame as black as the sky. It had been built so long ago that it held up its own weight, without any support from hoverstruts. A million years from now, when the rest of the city had crumbled, the bridge would probably remain like a fossilized bone.

Unlike the other bridges into New Pretty Town, the old bridge couldn't talk—or report trespassers, more importantly. But even silent, the bridge had always seemed very wise to Tally, as quietly knowing as some ancient tree.

Her eyes were fully adjusted to the darkness now, and it took only seconds to find the fishing line tied to its usual rock. She yanked it, and heard the splash of the rope tumbling from where it had been hidden among the bridge supports. She kept pulling until the invisible fishing line turned into wet, knotted cord. The other end was still tied to the iron framework of the bridge. Tally pulled the rope taut and lashed it to the usual tree.

She had to duck into the grass once more as another river skimmer passed. The people dancing on its deck didn't spot the rope stretched from bridge to shore. They never did. New pretties were always having too much fun to notice little things out of place.

When the skimmer's lights had faded, Tally tested the rope with her whole weight. One time it had pulled loose from the tree, and both she and Peris had swung downward, then up and out over the middle of the river before falling off, tumbling into the cold water. She smiled at the memory, realizing she would rather be on that expedition—soaking wet in the cold with Peris—than dry and warm tonight, but alone.

Hanging upside down, hands and knees clutching the knots along the rope, Tally pulled herself up into the dark framework of the bridge, then stole through its iron skeleton and across to New Pretty Town.

She knew where Peris lived from the one message he had bothered to send since turning pretty. Peris hadn't given an address, but Tally knew the trick for decoding the random-looking numbers at the bottom of a ping. They led to someplace called Garbo Mansion in the hilly part of town.

The scar that they had made together was gone.

“They took it away.”

“Of course they did, Squint. All my skin’s new.”

Tally blinked. She hadn’t thought of that.

He shook his head. “You’re such a kid still.”

“Elevator requested,” said the elevator. “Up or down?”

Tally jumped at the machine voice.

“Hold, please,” Peris said calmly.

Tally swallowed and closed her hand into a fist. “But they didn’t change your blood. We shared that, no matter what.”

Peris finally looked directly at her face, not flinching as she had feared he would. He smiled beautifully. “No, they didn’t. New skin, big deal. And in three months we can laugh about this. Unless . . .”

“Unless what?” She looked up into his big brown eyes, so full of concern.

“Just promise me that you won’t do any more stupid tricks,” Peris said. “Like coming here. Something that’ll get you into trouble. I want to see you pretty.”

“Of course.”

“So promise me.”

Peris was only three months older than Tally, but, dropping her eyes to the floor, she felt like a little again. “All right, I promise. Nothing stupid. And they won’t catch me tonight, either.”

“Okay, get your mask and . . .” His voice trailed off.

She turned her gaze to where it had fallen. Discarded, the

plastic mask had recycled itself, turning into pink dust, which the carpet in the elevator was already filtering away.

The two stared at each other in silence.

“Elevator requested,” the machine insisted. “Up or down?”

“Peris, I promise they won’t catch me. No pretty can run as fast as me. Just take me down to the—”

Peris shook his head. “Up, please. Roof.”

The elevator moved.

“Up? Peris, how am I going to—”

“Straight out the door, in a big rack—bungee jackets. There’s a whole bunch in case of a fire.”

“You mean jump?” Tally swallowed. Her stomach did a back-flip as the elevator came to a halt.

Peris shrugged. “I do it all the time, Squint.” He winked. “You’ll love it.”

His expression made his pretty face glow even more, and Tally leaped forward to wrap her arms around him. He still felt the same, at least, maybe a bit taller and thinner. But he was warm and solid, and still Peris.

“Tally!”

She stumbled back as the doors opened. She’d left mud all over his white vest. “Oh, no! I’m—”

“Just go!”

His distress just made Tally want to hug him again. She wanted to stay and clean Peris up, make sure he looked perfect for the party. She reached out a hand. “I—”

“Go!”

“But we’re best friends, right?”

He sighed, dabbing at a brown stain. “Sure, forever. In three months.”

She turned and ran, the doors closing behind her.

At first no one noticed her on the roof. They were all looking down. It was dark except for the occasional flare of a safety sparkler.

Tally found the rack of bungee jackets and pulled at one. It was clipped to the rack. Her fingers fumbled, looking for a clasp. She wished she had her interface ring to give her instructions.

Then she saw the button: PRESS IN CASE OF FIRE.

“Oh, crap,” she said.

Her shadow jumped and jittered. Two pretties were coming toward her, carrying sparklers.

“Who’s that? What’s she wearing?”

“Hey, you! This party is white tie!”

“Look at her face. . . .”

“Oh, crap,” Tally repeated.

And pressed the button.

An ear-shattering siren split the air, and the bungee jacket seemed to jump from the rack into her hand. She slid into the harness, turning to face the two pretties. They leaped back as if she’d transformed into a werewolf. One dropped the sparkler, and it extinguished itself instantly.

“Fire drill,” Tally said, and ran toward the edge of the roof.

Once she had the jacket around her shoulders, the strap and

zippers seemed to wind around her like snakes until the plastic was snug around her waist and thighs. A green light flashed on the collar, right where she couldn't help but see it.

"Good jacket," she said.

It wasn't smart enough to answer, apparently.

The pretties playing on the roof had all gone silent and were milling around, wondering if there really was a fire. They pointed at her, and Tally heard the word "ugly" on their lips.

What was worse in New Pretty Town, she wondered? Your mansion burning down, or an ugly crashing your party?

Tally reached the edge of the roof, vaulted up onto the rail, and teetered for a moment. Below her, pretties were starting to spill out of Garbo Mansion onto the lawn and down the hill. They were looking back up, searching for smoke or flames. All they saw was her.

It was a long way down, and Tally's stomach already seemed to be in free fall. But she was thrilled, too. The shrieking siren, the crowd gazing up at her, the lights of New Pretty Town all spread out below like a million candles.

Tally took a deep breath and bent her knees, readying herself to jump.

For a split second, she wondered if the jacket would work since she wasn't wearing an interface ring. Would it hover-bounce for a nobody? Or would she just splat?

But she had promised Peris she wouldn't get caught. And the jacket was for emergencies, and there *was* a green light on. . . .

"Heads up!" Tally shouted.

And jumped.