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Juni 2019

Science never solves a problem without creating ten more: Translating Ambrose

Parry's *The Way of All Flesh*

Final Version (July 8th 2019)

Abstract

This thesis revolves around an analysis and annotated translation of the novel *The Way of All Flesh* by author Ambrose Parry. The goal of this analysis is to examine the most desirable way to translate the novel in a successful manner, adhering to the use of language and characteristics of the source text. This thesis will also provide background information on the source text, the author, and the genre that it belongs to. This analysis focuses primarily on the problems a translator will encounter when translating this novel, as well as the possible and desirable solutions that can be found. Concluding the analysis a Dutch annotated translation is provided.

Key terms: *historical fiction, medical fiction, annotated translation, archaic language, medical translation, The Way of All Flesh, Ambrose Parry, medical historical thrillers*

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1. Thesis Introduction

The Way of All Flesh, a historical medical thriller written by Ambrose Parry, was released in October 2019. The novel revolves around the real discovery of chloroform as an anaesthetic, combined with a fictional thriller plot concerning a murder in the city of Edinburgh.

Due to the medical and historical nature of the novel, the translator will face two main translation problems when given the task of translating this novel into Dutch (or another language). One of these problems is that the novel contains plenty of time period specific elements that are of vital importance to the novel's setting and ambiance. The second is that the novel tackles true historical events that have changed the real world of medicine, such as Dr. James Simpson's discovery of the use of chloroform as an anaesthetic. The novel also makes use of the appropriate (historical) medical terminology, which means that the translator will have to take this into account and find appropriate translations in this specific field, as well.

However, there are more translation problems that show themselves when conducting an analysis of the text. For example, while the historical language and medical terminology are not to be underestimated, the setting is always seen through the eyes of one of the two focalisers, and as such belongs to either a young doctor or a clever, New Town maid. Because the backgrounds of the two focalisers are so different they will influence the manner in which the translator chooses to translate a specific term or action.

These problems make this novel an interesting case study for an annotated translation, as *The Way of All Flesh* gives the translator two vital questions to answer before being able to start translating in the most effective manner: what are the specific translation problems that are found in *The Way of all Flesh*, and which of the possible solutions that can solve these problems are desirable? Since the genre to which *The Way of All Flesh* belongs is rather specific, analysing the translation problems that are encountered while translating the genre can be of value for future translators.

Determining the translation problems of the source text requires extensive analysis of both the source text and the research that has already been done on the specific problems that a translator faces when working on translating medical historical thrillers. Therefore, chapter 2 will provide a thorough analysis of the text, focusing specifically on medical and historical terminology in the two chapters that will be translated, as well as the two focalisers that feature in these chapters. Chapter 3 discusses a variety of translation strategies and offers a reflection on which are possible and which are most desirable, after which chapter 4 will consist of the translated chapters from *The Way of All Flesh* including footnotes.

1.1. About Ambrose Parry

Ambrose Parry is the pseudonym for the collaboration between Chris Brookmyre, a Scottish author, and Marissa Haetzman, a consultant anaesthetist with a Master's degree in History of Medicine. Brookmyre is mostly known for his satirical detective novels, most of which are set in Scotland. His genre is sometimes referred to as "tartan noir" (Hannan 2017), a particular kind of Scottish crime fiction. *The Way of All Flesh* is Brookmyre's 25th novel, but Haetzman's first.

Haetzman is a scientist, first and foremost. Brookmyre and Haetzman have known each other for over 33 years, as they met when they were seventeen. She has been a doctor for 30 years. In an article published in *The Guardian* in August 2018, it is stated that "[Haetzman] worked for over 20 years as an anaesthetist, a profession that relies on meticulous precision, caution and control; now, she has launched herself into a writer's life of solitariness and uncertainty". Haetzman, however, says her husband encouraged her to take this "exercise in faith" (Gerard 2018). Haetzman wrote her dissertation on James Simpson and discovered his casebooks that dated back to 1847. Brookmyre was originally meant to write the novel on his own, whereas Haetzman would provide research and historical details. However, Brookmyre, in the interview, states that "Marisa had done all the

work [...] and she had perspectives [Brookmyre would] never be able to have.” As such, the couple chose their pseudonym, Ambrose Parry.

Ambrose Parry is not a name chosen without care. It is an English variation of Ambroise Paré. Paré was a French military surgeon who lived from 1510 to 1590. Although Paré does not play a role in the story, Brookmyre and Haetzman say that the name "evokes a past age".

1.2. About The Way of All Flesh

The Way of All Flesh is the first novel in a Neo-Victorian crime series. The subsequent novel will be called *The Art of Dying* and is awaiting publication in August 2019. As of now, *The Way of All Flesh* is available in English, Danish (*Al kødets gang*), and Italian (*Così muore la carne*). The publisher's website introduces the novel as "a vivid and gripping historical crime novel set in 19th century Edinburgh" (Canongate Books 2018).

The Way of All Flesh is told from the perspective of two focalisers, a young doctor called Will Raven, and a clever housemaid called Sarah Fischer. The novel showcases the dual nature of Edinburgh during the Victorian era by working with these two characters from two very different sides of the city. Raven lives and works in the city's Old Town and slums, amidst prostitutes and criminals, but holds the prestigious position of doctor, whereas Sarah lives in the New Town, surrounded by the rich, but serves only as a maid to James Simpson. Dr. James Newton Simpson was a real historical character that lived from 1811 to 1870. According to the Encyclopaedia Britannica he was a "Scottish obstetrician who was the first to use chloroform in obstetrics and the first in Britain to use ether" ("Sir James Young Simpson").

The Way of all Flesh features plenty of descriptions of the city's geography and history. It conveniently provides a map on the first pages of the book for those readers that are unfamiliar with the city, which emphasises the importance of location for the story.

The novel takes the historical element of the discovery of chloroform as an anaesthetic and uses this as the decor for a fictional story concerning the murder of young

prostitutes. Will Raven decides to find out what happened to these prostitutes and, on the way, meets with Sarah and Dr. James Simpson. The latter is on the verge of discovering the medical uses of chloroform. Although the novel is set up as a detective or crime story, it involves themes such as (medical) ethics and the proverbial abyss between those who live in prosperity and those who live in poverty.

2. Analysis

This chapter serves to analyse the source text in order to answer the questions that were asked in chapter one of this thesis. Upon reading the novel for the first time there seem to be two core translation difficulties that a translator will have to deal with in order to create a successful translation: the difference between the two focalisers because of their very different backgrounds and, subsequently, the perspective they offer to the reader in their respective chapters, as well the use of historical terminology and speech (including the references to medical matters) that helps to set the scene for the reader.

2.1. Narration

A great contrast exists between the chapters told from the perspective of Will Raven and those told from the perspective of Sarah Fischer. They both have their own distinct narrative style that will be analysed in the follow paragraphs. Although this chapter will consist of an in-depth analysis of chapter 40 and 45, the two chapters chosen to translate for this thesis, the rest of the novel cannot be dismissed: these two chapters are only a small part of the story and do not, for example, give the complete insight in focalisers Raven and Sarah. As a result, this chapter will also utilise examples from other chapters that serve to form a more complete view of their narrative role and qualities. I have chosen not to discuss the chapters separately but rather take various narrative aspects and compare them side by side in order to provide a clearer overview of the narrative differences between them.

The first thing that should be mentioned is that the novel's chapters are, despite focused on either Raven or Sarah, all still narrated by an omniscient narrator who sometimes chooses to address the reader directly, such as the very first sentence of the book, which reads “[n]o decent story ought to start with a dead prostitute and, for that, apologies” (Parry 1). The apology is directed towards the reader, the narrator extending these words before he or she continues with their story, stating that “It is not something upon which respectable persons would desire to dwell” (Parry 1), hence assuming the

reader to be one of those “respectable persons”. The narrative then shifts from present to past tense when beginning the story, stating that “[h]owever, it was the very assumption that the gentle folk of Edinburgh would shy from such a thing that set Will Raven upon his fateful path during the Winter of 1847” (Parry 1). This shift from omniscient narrative in the present tense, when the events have already occurred, to the past tense, where the reader meets Will Raven for the first time, often serves as an introduction at the very beginning of a chapter and rarely occurs in the middle of them.

An example of this construction can be found in chapter 45. The main marker by which the omniscient narrator can be recognised is the use of tense: while most of the novel is written in the past simple tense, it shifts to present when the reader is addressed directly making it seem as if the modern day reader is addressed while reflecting back on something that happened eras ago. The narrator at the beginning of chapter 45 states that “[t]he final outcome of any sequence of events can turn on many pivots: there is always a multiplicity of nodes, intersections in a fragile system of happenstance whereby the slightest divergence at one would have altered all”, only to continue that “[t]he fate of chloroform and the mystery of Evie’s death were intertwined in just such a system” (Parry 310) where the tense shifts back to the past simple. This small, temporary shift in narration briefly leads the reader away from the story before returning to the contents of the novel by reflecting upon what is happening in the light of that statement. The omniscient narrator provides a brief description of what happened without actually having to provide the scene from Raven’s perspective as a focaliser while still offering the reader the knowledge of what happened prior to the scene we are about to witness. The omniscient narrator then provides an introduction to the scene that will follow, stating that “[t]hough it was not ultimately crucial in terms of the information it imparted, Raven would have reason of his own to thank serendipity, given how easily a particular encounter that occurred shortly after this might never have taken place” (Parry 309), after which the perspective seems to shift to Raven entirely, applying free indirect discourse throughout the rest of the chapter. These sentences in the past unreal conditional are occasionally used, such as when it is later stated that “[h]ad Raven been delayed [...] by the previous patient, or had George Keith finished with

his but ten seconds sooner, Mitchell might have passed and been gone without Raven seeing him” (Parry 310).

Chapter 20, in which the reader witnesses the events from the perspective of Sarah as a focaliser, does not contain an omniscient interruption such as the one in chapter 45. Instead, the author solely makes use of free indirect discourse, the entire chapter written as though the narrator of the chapter was actually Sarah. As such, the reader is eased into the novel in an entirely different manner. Rather than provided with background information, they are allowed to see everything through Sarah’s eyes, which is where we find one of the novel’s main differences where the two focalisers are concerned: their narrative focus. Sarah is a maid in the house of Dr. James Simpson and has a serving role. However, from former chapters the reader has already learned that she has an inquisitive spirit, as the lady of the house that tells her to “refrain from giving voice to her every thought”, stating that “opinions, unless specifically requested, should be kept to [one]self”, even if the lady admits that she might have done Sarah a disservice by being “indulgent” of the behaviour when she first arrived (Parry 26). However, later, when asked about something related to a housemaid of another family, Sarah is “ever aware that duty obliged her to give a neutral answer” (Parry 29), as such showcasing that, despite her urge to express herself, she is not a new and unruly housemaid that still has to learn the ropes. Sarah’s narrative role builds on her role as a servant and a background character, because what she mostly does is observe. There is relatively little dialogue present in this chapter, and Sarah is involved in even less. Instead, the novel gives the reader insight in the situation by providing elaborate descriptions of everything that is happening and everyone that is included, although often coloured by Sarah’s own opinion through using the aforementioned free indirect discourse. As such, she describes Captain James Petrie as “a man of intrepid spirit” (Parry 285), while his daughter is labelled as “a plump and rather giddy creature, who did not strike Sarah as blessed with the highest level of intelligence” but she adds that “at least this did not mean another fine female mind condemned to atrophy through disuse” (Parry 286). Much of chapter 20 is dedicated to describing the ongoing situation from a distance: Sarah rarely takes the lead in the scenes she describes, and it is only when she notices Raven has arrived that her role shifts from that of the quiet observer to being part of the ongoing conversation, when she is

the first to speak directly to Raven after he has come in, telling him “you've been running” (Parry 287) rather than inquiring why this is the case. She is the one that supplies crucial information about a bottle on the table that Raven believes to hold toxic content, knowing about its origins. It is then implied that she also knows what has happened to the apparently lethal substance that caused Raven to run over to Dr. Simpson's house, but aside from mentioning it in thought, she does not speak up about having “misaid” (Parry 289) one of the potentially harmful bottles. The rest of the chapter does not specifically feature Sarah, yet describes the second, witnessed chloroform experiment, in a very detailed manner. Sarah's observations are those of a doctor observing patient behaviour or symptoms, giving the overall chapter the air of a medical document.

This is contrary to Raven, who presents the reader with thoughts and dialogue rather than detailed descriptions of his surroundings. Whereas Sarah was described as an onlooker in her scenes (minus her conversation with Raven) Raven is usually actively involved in the conversations that are present in the chapter. In fact, almost all important information is given to the reader by means of dialogue whereas in chapter 20, all was given during description. There are three conversational partners that Raven is faced with: Mitchell, Miss Nadia, and Mairi. The conversation with Mitchell is not specifically interesting from a translator's perspective, but the dialogue that takes place in the brothel is one of the main reasons I have chosen to translate this chapter for my thesis. The brothel scene places Raven opposite two characters that are, in status, below him, yet very different in nature. Although the English language has no variation between the formal and informal use of ‘you’, Dutch translators are offered a choice between using “jij” en “u” here. Raven is first forced to speak to the madam, whom he describes as “intimidatingly ugly” (Parry 312). She is not at all impressed by his desire to speak to one of the prostitutes in her care and asks him to see “the colour of his money” (Parry 312), which is another idiom I will discuss in 2.2.1. However, Raven uses his status as a doctor, saying he has treated one of her prostitutes, to get access anyway, although the madam first disrespects him by saying that he “didn't treat her very well” (Parry 313). However, Raven no longer lets himself to be intimidated by her because he has learned not to show any weakness to women who deal in “counterfeit emotions” (Parry 313), after which the madam allows him to speak to the girl

he desired to see. The general mood of the scene shifts immediately from a situation in which the madam has the high ground despite Raven's desire not to show any weakness, to a situation in which he is obviously the superior in the room. Mairi, the prostitute he meets, is "sitting on the bed with an anxious look" (Parry 313). She is obviously described as a nervous girl, unsure about his presence in the room. Raven has to coax the answers out of her, and her manner of speech is obviously more simple compared to that of Raven, often making use of conversational deletion in sentences such as "Worked in the service of queens and contessas" or "Broke her heart to part with it" (Parry 314). This interaction provides a more detailed look at the difference between them: not only their class (Sarah's dialogue does not involve conversational deletion) but also in their level of intelligence.

Although Sarah is not involved in much dialogue in chapter 20, it is still necessary to analyse the use of formal speech in this chapter. While her dialogue does not involve conversational deletion, she does make use of contraction, using "you've" and "isn't" whereas the dialogue of other characters in chapter 20 does not seem to involve any contractions at all. For example, one of the wealthier ladies states "I wonder how many times we have sat through him telling that story" (Parry 286), using "we have" rather than "we've", and Captain Petrie uses "it is a sin to waste good food" (Parry 286) rather than "it's". In fact, the only other character in the chapter that seems to use contractions is Agnes Petrie, who was described earlier as being not exceptionally clever.

Chapter 45 does contain more contractions than chapter 20, but due to the fact that all characters involved in chapter 45 (with the exception of Raven) are lower class, it does not provide as much conversational contrast as it does in chapter 20.

The blurb of the novel provides an excellent summary of the relationship between Raven and Sarah, stating that "Will Raven is a medical student, apprenticing for the brilliant and renowned Dr. Simpson. Sarah Fischer is Simpson's housemaid, and has all of Raven's intelligence but none of his privileges". Due to their different backgrounds, their points of view as a focaliser are different. However, this does not specifically seem to create a translation problem due to the fact that, because of their equal intelligence, their narrative voices are not that different textually. The difference is more in what they describe and discuss than how they do it, which this is something to be aware of as a translator due to

the fact that, while the narrative voices are, perhaps, textually close, there are small nuances that are easy to forget. It are those small nuances that give the characters their distinctive voice. Where Sarah provides the reader with her view on the outside world, Raven provides them with his inner turmoil. Although both descriptive, there is a grave difference in the way they use language. Sarah's chapters rely on the past simple tense, venturing away from this only when discussing something that happened even before, such as noticing that "[Mina's] habits had been more abstemious in recent times" (Parry 286). Raven's chapters, however, frequently make use of the past unreal conditional, presenting a whole array of what-if sequences such as "[i]f Chloroform had been administered, it would have been blamed" (Parry 310). On top of that, there is the presence of the omniscient narrator and the author's use of free indirect discourse.

This is, perhaps, the most important factor of the text to keep in mind when translating the text. According to Ida Klitgard, in her essay "Dual Voice and Dual Style: Translating Free Indirect Discourse in *Ulysses*", states that "[it] is used to explore viewpoints, expose certain character traits or achieve varying effects of irony, parody or sympathy" (Klitgard 319). Therefore, it is very beneficial to analyse the narrative structure before translating, since the translator will have to make various choices concerning how to translate the voice of the omniscient narrator versus the free indirect discourse concerning Sarah and Raven, seeing that it provides information on these characters that is crucial to the novel on a whole.

2.2. Terminology and Style

Unlike analysing the focalisers, terminology is something that can be analysed in its own right rather than specifically needing the context of the entirety of the novel.

A translation problem that is present in the novel but that I will not discuss in depth because of its absence in the chapters that this thesis focuses on is the presence of predominantly Scottish words that are used by the author. This could however be ground for future research.

2.2.1. General Use of Language

The Way of All Flesh makes continuous use of words that could be called old-fashioned, or archaic. On the first page of chapter 40 alone we find words such as “tray of fancies”, “bounteous meal”, “she fell upon such treats” and “abstemious” (Parry 285). Although all of these words could technically still be used in common day conversation, they all have their more modern synonyms. For example, in iWeb, an English corpus that searches over 20 million web pages for word frequencies, words like “restrained”, with an online frequency of 33927, or “sober”, with an online frequency of 50774, are much more common than “abstemious”, with a frequency of only 367. The same goes for “sweets”, with a frequency of 52632 as opposed to “fancies”, with a frequency of 8031.

The fact that these specific words were chosen by the author increases the translation difficulty of the text, since the translator will have to determine the specific meaning of the word in question, after which they have to make sure that their choice of translation will have the same archaic feeling in Dutch as the original word had in the source text. The words that are used have to invoke the reader's suspension of disbelief, meaning that the reader is willing to believe that the characters of the novel would have spoken in the manner that is described regardless of whether this is historically accurate or not. The question whether it would have been believable for a setting in 18th century Scotland, however, can be ignored in the target text due to the fact that the target language would not have been spoken there at that time anyway. The possible and desirable solutions to this problem will be discussed in chapter 4, whereas this paragraph will now attempt to further analyse some of the language that is used in chapter 40 and chapter 45.

Chapter 40 includes a remarkable amount of old-fashioned adjectives and adverbs. I have already mentioned “bounteous” and “abstemious” (Parry 285) but within the same five pages we also encounter, amongst others, “voluble” (Parry 286), “gallant and colourful” (Parry 286), “intrepid spirit” (Parry 285), “rather giddy” (Parry 286), “reciprocally transfixed” (Parry 287), “upturned” (Parry 288), “affronted” (Parry 288) and “assent” (Parry

289). The choice of which adjectives and adverbs are used does not seem to be linked to either focaliser and can instead be contributed to the ominous narrator. However, the frequency of adverbs and adjectives is higher in chapter 40 due to the descriptive nature of the chapter. In this case, it could be argued that, due to the fact that the chapters with Sarah as a focaliser are more descriptive, the amount of times that adjectives and adverbs are used can be linked to the focaliser rather than the ominous narrator.

This does not only happen to adjectives and adverbs, as the narrator also seems to prefer more exotic verbs to the ones one would expect from more common day language. Some examples of this are “commence the professor’s preferred after-dinner pursuit” (Parry 285), “permitted to consider” (Parry 286), “hastened” and “endeavoured” (Parry 287).

Chapter 45, although displaying the same choices concerning words, is less descriptive than chapter 40 and, as such, does not seem to include the same amount of adjectives and adverbs. However, the general tone remains the same, this chapter does offer another interesting translation problem: English idioms. These provide a particular challenge because it is impossible to translate them literally, since idioms are abstract formulations of which the literal meaning does not relate to the actual meaning. According to Paul Claes in his book *Gouden Vertaalregels* (Golden rules for translation), English uses more abstract formulations than Dutch does, especially in writing. He states that abstraction is part of English idiomatic language, but translating it too literally often results in sentences that are too severe or formal (Claes 68). In chapter 45, the text even includes an idiom that proves a challenge not because of its mere abstract nature, but because of the way it is embedded in the ongoing dialog. The owner of the “bawdy house” that Raven visits says she’ll be “wanting to see the colour of his money, first”, on which Raven reflects that if his “finances had a colour, it would be deadly pale” (Parry 312). The other idiom that is present is the aforementioned “flea in his ear” (Parry 311). Although this idiom is not as embedded in the dialog as the first one was, the historicity of the idiom is one to keep in mind. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the idiom’s first recorded appearance hails from a 1577 translation of F. de *L’Isle’s Legendarie*, making it a possibly period-accurate idiom to use within the novel’s setting (“Flea”).

2.2.2 Medical

The last predominantly present translation problem in the novel is that of medical terminology. Raven and Sarah share a love for medical knowledge and this is shown in both the story and their use of language. Although it never becomes overly complicated for the reader there are a few instances in which the translator has to be well aware of the research that needs to be done due to the importance of the subject for the novel. I will discuss three different occurrences of medical terms here since especially chapter 40 revolves around a very important scene in the novel, which describes the Dr. James Simpson discovering that chloroform can be used as an anaesthetic.

The first occurrence of a medical term I wish to discuss is Sarah's use of the word "atrophy" (Parry 286) as a metaphor in chapter 40. Although this has more of a narrative function than a medical one, I firmly believe that the authors deliberately chose to let Sarah speak from her intelligent perspective (the metaphor is used when she describes Agnes Petrie as "a plump and rather giddy creature" with a subpar level of intelligence. She then refers to the fact this does at least mean that this at least does not condemn "a fine female mind to atrophy [...] to atrophy through disuse" (Parry 286)) by using a medical reference. The word serves to remind the reader of her medical knowledge.

The second instance medical terminology that needs some closer inspection is the use of "perchloride of formyle" as opposed to "chloroform" (Parry 289). "Perchloride of formyle" is a less commonly used or known name for chloroform. In fact, the term can be traced back to actual historical documents that involve Dr. James Simpson. One of the footnotes of Simpson's account of the discovery of chloroform, "Account of a New Anaesthetic Agent as a Substitute for Sulphuric Ether in Surgery and Midwifery", states that "Waldie had mentioned the perchloride of formyle (chloroform) among others as worthy of a trial." (Simpson 148). The fact that this term was used by the authors is more than simple knowledge on their part: it is an explicit nod to the source material on which their novel is based.

The last medical term that I wish to refer to is “strangulated hernia” (Perry 309) and the paragraph in which it is mentioned. Although the solution to this problem is seemingly straightforward, the term “hernia” here can cause confusion, because the way in which the word “hernia” is commonly understood in the Dutch language is not the same as its meaning in the medical world. This means a translator will have to take extra care (and possibly call in the help of a professional) in order to determine the absolute accurate translation of the affliction.

2.2.3. Conclusion

In 2.1 it can be read that the narrators distinguish themselves by their perspective as a focaliser. In 2.2.1, we see that the authors make use of a very specific style of vocabulary (for example by using a plethora of more archaic adverbs and adjectives) in order to feign authenticity to the reader: the words that are used, both in dialogue and in descriptive narration, might not all be entirely historically accurate, but do invite the reader to believe in the narrative world that the reader sets foot in. The same goes for the medical descriptions: rather than using simplified metaphors and terms, the authors choose real references to medical conditions in a very clever manner. At times, it almost feels as if the characters are more intelligent than the reader due to their understanding and use of complex terminology. However, it is always used in such a manner that it does not interfere with the reader’s understanding of the novel, finding the balance between showing the wit required to understand the subject without actually making the novel tiring to read for the audience without, for example, a medical background.

3. Reflection

This chapter will serve to discuss a variety of solutions for the translation problems that were presented in my analysis of chapter two, after which I will decide on the most desirable solutions and implement them in my own translation of chapters 40 and 45 from *The Way of All Flesh*. For this chapter I will mainly make use of Andrew Chesterman's *Memes of Translation*, and then specifically chapter 4, "Translation Strategies".

A translation is always created with a certain view in mind, meaning that various translators can make various decisions on how to translate the same problem based on their own view and the assignment they have been given. For this thesis I will be using the translation assignment as can be found in the *Modelcontract Literaire Vertaling* (Standard Contract Literary Translation) as provided by the Dutch Auteursbond (Author's Association), which is the model assignment for any Dutch translator that is working on a literary translation. This contract formulates the translation assignment of translating a literary work as creating a stylistically and substantively faithful translation of the original text in impeccable Dutch¹ (Modelcontract 1). To that I will add my own view of desiring to stay true to the novel's textual setting, even if that means deviate from the source text on a textual level. In short, I value what is said over how it is said.

Chesterman lists a classification of translation strategies and their uses. He mentions various syntactical, semantical and pragmatic strategies and clearly states that all of the theories he discusses are production strategies focused on "the way in which a translator manipulates language in order to create a satisfying target text" (Chesterman 86).

Chesterman sees translation strategies as "changes" (86) that a translator makes when he is not content with the first (literal) option that comes to mind. He also states that a translator's discontent with their own solution can point out a translation problem, but also acknowledges that, in this manner, different translators will face different translation

¹ Originally "[...] het leveren van een naar inhoud en stijl getrouwe en onberispelijke Nederlandse vertaling rechtstreeks uit het oorspronkelijke werk", translated by me due to the absence of an English version.

problems. The source offers a heuristic classification that works in both theory and practice. He states that he has deliberately chosen for easily accessible terminology, a variety of differentiation, and flexibility, meaning that there is space to supplement the classification if desired. Chesterman's classification also shows that syntactical, semantical and pragmatic strategies can overlap.

3.1. Possible and Desirable Solutions

First, I will discuss possible solutions I have found and considered while translating the source text. I will only discuss a few examples of each problem in this chapter as the other translation choices I have made will be discussed in the footnotes that I have added to my translation. Afterwards, I will present the most desirable solution along with an explanation of why I have chosen for this specific solution to the translation problem.

3.1.1 Narration

On the whole, the narrative style in *The Way of All Flesh* does not specifically create a translation problem as it creates a subjective translation difficulty. Nord distinguishes between subjective and objective translation difficulties, wherein subjective difficulties are those caused by the translator's competence and the situation at the moment of translation (Nord 146). It could be stated that awareness of the character background and thorough analysis of their manners could solve this difficulty without having to adhere to one of Chesterman's strategies. However, that only takes character style into account, and not some of the other translation problems that we have encountered when analysing both Sarah and Raven in chapter 2.

For example, there is a specific scene in chapter 40 where Sarah's role seems to shift: the entire chapter has focused on the work she does, featuring descriptions of her what she observes in the people around her, but she starts engaging in dialogue when Raven arrives. Her character momentarily shifts from the background to the front and this is

shown in her dialog with Raven. When speaking to another member of the household, she uses the formal "What occurs?" (Parry 287), although this can also be counted as an attempt to add historicity to the novel's speech. However, when speaking to Raven, she speaks to him from the perspective of, perhaps, a friend, telling him "[y]ou've been running" (Parry 287). This little sentence already offers us two different translation problems that have to be solved: the use of the contraction of "you have" and the use of "you" informal versus informal settings. I will discuss the example of the use of "you" extensively in the next paragraph so with this example I will focus on the contraction. The use of contraction implies informal speech rather than formal speech, especially because the other characters do not seem to use contractions in their sentences. However, in Dutch, there is no such thing as contraction and as such, a translator cannot make this distinction in writing, except for when they would choose to use idiolect. This means there are only two possible solutions for this problem: the translator will have to omit it or use idiolect. Although omitting it does mean some of the original text gets lost in translation, the alternative is undesirable because it would stray too far from the rest of the source text.

Another interesting narrative translation problem can be found in the conversations that Raven has with the madam of the bawdy house and Mairi, one of her whores. Because of the absence of variation between the formal and informal use of 'you' in the English language, this is choice the translator is forced to make, and it will influence the way the reader experiences the end of the chapter. However, the translator will of course have other ways of interpreting the communicative methods between the narrators and various characters that will aid them in their choice. There are three different solutions that can be identified: the translator can choose to only use *jij*, to only use *u*, or to use both in order to emphasise the difference between the two conversations. Chesterman refers to this as "Interpersonal change" (Chesterman 106).

For my translation, I have chosen to use the third option due to the characterisation of Raven that I discussed during my analysis in chapter 2. The novel gives the reader ample communicative cues: the conversations with the madam and the prostitute are vastly different in tone and Raven shifts from the more submissive to the more dominant role

between the two. For example, the madam tells Raven that he "Didn't treat her very well, did you?" (Parry 313). If we would choose a formal approach here, and have the madam say "Dan heeft u haar niet echt goed behandeld, of wel soms?", this could have two different effects. The use of formal speech (u) in a remark like this can possibly be read as sarcasm, making the madam use politeness in mockery. However, it would also emphasise her inferior status when compared to Raven, whereas during the entire conversation, she is the one in charge. That is why I chose to not let the madam, but Raven use u, highlighting his attempt at grovelling to get information from her.

However, his conversation with Mairi is entirely different. Raven's role shifts from politeness in order to gain information to familiarity in order to comfort the nervous girl, whereas the prostitute assumes a submissive role in the conversation, and Raven has to coax her out. This is why I chose to shift around the use of formal *jij* and *u* in this conversation, having Mairi refer to Raven as u and Raven to Mairi as *jij*.

3.1.2 Use of (archaic) language

In her essay on "Translating a Genre", Lucinda Byatt discusses translating historical fiction and its importance, stating that "language is key to discovering other countries and communities and sharing their lives in the present, not to say centuries ago". She then argues that reading historical novels can be beneficial, but only if the reader is able to truly "read its language". Because so many historical novels are written in English, without translation there "will inevitably be aspects of that society that remain elusive. This is where translated historical novels can prove so valuable – if the translation lives up to expectations" (Byatt).

What these expectations are is formulated by Ian Reed. In his blog on writing historical fiction, the author states that "the challenge of creating a language that achieves verisimilitude – the semblance of reality" is very important. He continues that "it's no easy matter to persuade your readers that your narrative medium is rendering accurately how people spoke and wrote in your chosen period and place" (Reed 2014). In the same text,

however, Reed also argues that "it needs to be done in a manner that avoids weighing down the story and slowing down the reader" (Reed 2014). This makes the translation problem of using archaic language one of the most difficult ones that a translator will encounter while translating this text.

In order to discuss the use of historical or archaic language in *The Way of All Flesh*, it is beneficial to keep in mind the sub-genre to which the novel belongs. In the introduction, it was already mentioned that it is a neo-Victorian novel. Neo-Victorianism is a genre that focuses on reinterpreting, reproducing and rewriting Victorian culture. Novels that belong to the genre are, amongst others, *Wide Sargasso Sea* by Jean Rhys, *Tipping the Velvet* by Sarah Waters and *The Crimson Petal and the White* by Michel Faber. Relatively little research has been done on translating Neo-Victorian novels, which is, according to Antonija Primorac in her essay "Other Neo-Victorians: Neo-Victorianism, Translation and Global Literature" partly to blame on the fact that translations of these novels are not valued for what they are. She states that "[t]hey disregard the fact that, thanks both to translation and to the current global dominance of English, Anglophone cultural products – especially literary and screen texts – are disseminated widely across the globe, with impact beyond the borders of the former British Empire" (Primorac). This is a shame, especially when we take the importance of translating historical novels as described by Lucinda Byatt into account.

In order to translate these neo-Victorian novels, it is important that they remain faithful to the neo-Victorian genre, use of language included. Because of the lack of sources that consider this topic, I have chosen to look at sources that consider the use of language while writing historical fiction combined with literature that discusses translating historical or archaic use of language.

There are various authors that have written about their difficulties when writing historical fiction, such as the aforementioned Ian Reed, and Lynn Shepherd, who offers the following question to fellow writers: "Do you opt for a style that conveys some notion of the period, or take the view that your characters would have spoken the 'ordinary English' of their time, so allow them to use 'ordinary English' as spoken now?" (Shepherd 2012). As

valuable as this question can be for those aspiring to write historical fiction, it is just as valuable for the translator during the translation process: the possible solution to this problem is either to omit every old-fashioned word in the source text, or to find Dutch words that convey the same style? If you choose the former, you risk losing some of the historic authentic, or as Shepherd says, “make the task of creating that elusive ‘atmosphere’ all the harder” (2012). However, when choosing the latter, one has to be very wary to not interfere with the readability of the text. The translator has to make sure that the translation not only adequate, but also acceptable to the reader of the target text, because an (overly) adequate translation could become unacceptable if the translator chooses to adhere to the source text despite norms set by the target culture.

Opinions on how to solve translation problems that arise when translating archaic language seem to differ greatly. In his article “Translating Dialect Literature,” Luigi Bonaffi discusses a variety of strategies that deal with, amongst others, translating archaic language. For example, he states that Norman Mosley Penzer “decided to employ modern rather than archaic Chaucerian or Elizabethan English, which might be supposed to be the equivalent of seventeenth-century Neapolitan” because he theorised that “the modern reader in reading modern English will obtain a much better idea of what the Neapolitan book meant to the Seventeenth-Century reader than if I attempted to preserve a mock-archaic atmosphere by dragging in early English words and phrases” (Bonaffi 284). However, this article also discusses how translators of a specific dialect use archaic language to show the difference between (in this case) modern day Italian and the source text. Bonaffi states that “the strength of dialect, in fact, lies in its essential “otherness,” in its position of eccentricity with respect to the national language” (Bonaffi 279). In a way, it can be stated that this is why Ambrose Parry chooses to use archaic language in the first place and why, in turn, the translator may use archaic language in his translation. The novel wishes to showcase this “otherness” in its own way, although the difference here is not between normal speech and dialect, but between historical and modern use of language.

I am convinced that there is not one desirable solution to the entire problem because, in fact, the use of archaic language can be seen as a collection of small translation problems, each with their own solution that serves the target text. In this case, it will not do

to follow Penzer in only employing modern rather than archaic use of language because the translation goal is not to create a modern day equivalent to an old text. In fact, much like Lynn Shepherd questions, it needs to be decided in which cases the use of archaic language adds to the reader's experience rather than making the target text incomprehensible. Some words might have an equally understandable archaic equivalent in Dutch to set it apart from modern day Dutch, others might not, in which case the translator will have to decide whether omitting it does not damage the text's general atmosphere. Because it is impossible to list all the words and their respective solutions in this chapter, I will make extensive use of the footnotes in order to explain the process of translating each of them in a brief and comprehensive manner.

3.1.2 Medical Terms

In the analysis of chapter 2 I have highlighted three different instances in which medical terms created translation problems while translating *The Way of All Flesh*. In this subchapter, I will briefly discuss all three of these aforementioned problems.

Although there has been done plenty of research into medical translation itself, research on medical terms in literature is hard to find. In fact, it seems as such there has been done no research on how to apply medical translation in the literary field, although research into medical subtitling does exist. Because of this, I will be making use of literature that focuses solely on translating medical terminology, after which I will apply this knowledge to the literary field.

In their study "Translating medical terminologies through word alignment in parallel text corpora", Deléger, Merkel and Zweigenbaum discuss terminology as one of medical translation's biggest challenges. In their research they differentiate between local and standardised terminologies. While these standardised terminologies, "such as ICD-10 or SNOMED CT" will not cause any translation problems because they are terms that can be used in any language, the local terminologies "are not interoperable and can only be used within a certain framework" (Deléger 2009)

Diego Alfaro, in his "Difficulties in Translating Medical Texts", describes the problem of translating these local terminologies for two various target groups: "doctor-reader[s]" and "laymen" or "students", stating that "the use of terms in foreign languages — especially English — is so common that if we wanted to substitute [for example] *round* for its Portuguese equivalent "ronda," [...] we would force the doctor-reader to "untranslate" a fair part of the text to be able to understand it", whereas "keeping these terms in their original language may render the text unintelligible to the layman, to students who are starting their course, or anybody else who has little knowledge of the foreign language". It is important to keep in mind that, while this translation surely aims to be true to its source text, the target audience does not consist of solely people with medical experience. However, at the same time, the novel will undoubtedly be picked up by readers with an interest in medical history due to its subject matter. In fact, one of the authors has extensive medical knowledge. As such, for the target audience, it seems of utmost importance to keep the right balance: it must be understood by the common reader but not be oversimplified due to the damage this would do to the credibility of the story.

However, unlike archaic language, it seems like the reader's ability to understand medical terms might not always be true in literature. Much of the research done on medical translation, including that of Deléger, Merkel and Zweigenbaum, is focused on creating a corpus that provides an overview of comparative local translations in various languages. This would, of course, solve plenty of medical translation problems in which the text was only to be read by a person with medical knowledge that belonged to the target audience. However, in literature, this solution is not as straightforward. In his essay on medical fiction, author John Collee states that this genre "should be accurate, but needs not be didactic". Collee discusses the use of medical language in fiction, stating that "[t]he fact that [the reader] do[es]n't understand the medical process makes [them] more appreciative of its complexity" (Collee 1999). In this case, it could be argued that by using complex medical terminology, the translator will please both the doctor-reader and the layman, if referring back to Alfaro's terms, because the doctor will not feel objection to any wrongly translated terminology whereas the reader without medical knowledge will enjoy the suspension of

disbelief created by the fact they do not, entirely, understand, yet believe that the intelligent characters do.

One of the cases in which the aforementioned solution of keeping the medical term for the benefit of keeping things “deliberately vague” (Collee 1999), is the use of the sentence “condemned to atrophy” (Parry 286) in order to state that the fact a woman is not allowed to do anything clever is, perhaps, less of a waste if the woman in question was already dumb to begin with. Sarah herself is stuck in a servant’s role while her mind is that of a keen surgeon, and as such there are a variety of translation options that can be considered. There have been three options which I considered: literal translation, changing the abstraction level, or changing tropes (Chesterman 154). This has to do with the fact that atrophy is relatively easy to translate literally while keeping the same metaphor in place without deviating far from the source text. However, I have considered to substitute the Dutch word *atrofie* by a more descriptive term: *afsterven* (senescence), which is a symptom and descriptive verb rather than the name of a medical condition. Although this omits part of the medical terminology it still stays true to the meaning of “atrophy”. The third choice would be to substitute the entire term with another metaphor that is more commonly used in the Dutch language. However, due to the fact I wanted to keep the medical element to this specific metaphor because of its importance to Sarah’s character I did not consider this an option for this specific translation. Although something can be said for both other options I have eventually decided that the most desirable solution is to simply hold on to the literal translation of “atrophy”. Not only is this the most adequate when compared to the source material, it also forces the reader back into the medical mindset while still remaining acceptable. That aside, the use of this specific medical term is something the readers of the source text also encountered, and it might even inspire the reader to perform a quick google search. The use of “atrophy” here also shows Sarah’s medical knowledge due to the fact that it is not term people would commonly use to describe a scene such as this, whereas senescence would be more descriptive and less linked to the medical field, as it can be used without its medical connotation of being a symptom.

The second medical translation problem I discussed in my analysis was the use of “perchloride of formyle” (Parry 288) as opposed to “chloroform”. The problem stems mostly

from the fact that “perchloride of formyle” is only used in works from Dr. James Simpson and further not commonly known or used. This gives us the option to either not translate the entire term or find a logical substitute from another, however Dutch, source. Since Simpson’s document (“Account of a New Anaesthetic Agent as a Substitute for Sulphuric Ether in Surgery and Midwifery”) has not been translated, I have chosen to not consider any other translations, since the medicine was very quickly renamed to chloroform. In this case I am confident that readers will accept “perchloride of formyle” as a medical term and understand that this is the original name of chloroform from the context in which the term is used. As such, I will not be translating or substituting this term. I do believe this scene is one of those described by Collee in which the reader might not entirely understand what is going on in terminology while at the same time the context provides elaborate explanation.

The last medical translation problem was the use of “strangulated hernia” (Parry 309). While this is a general medical term in English, the translation process to Dutch created an extra translation problem due to the Dutch vernacular use of the term “hernia”. The *Etymologisch Woordenboek* states that in Dutch colloquial language, the word “hernia” is only used to refer to a hernia nuclei pulposi (slipped disk in English). It is indeed true that a hernia, according to the Van Dale, can refer to problems with the back (“Slipped disk”) (Van Dale). However, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, a hernia is “a tumour formed by the displacement and resulting protrusion of a part of an organ through an aperture, natural or accidental, in the walls of its containing cavity” (“hernia”) and as such more than mere back problems, and can be life threatening. Due to the fact that we later read that the person that suffered from this affliction has died, we can assume that, in this case, the hernia does not refer to the back pain that is commonly known under that term in The Netherlands, but to the more severe condition that we would call an ingewandbreuk, or simply breuk. In the *Van Dale*, the translation given for “incarcerated hernia” (incarcerated and strangulated can both be used for the same condition according to the *Pinkhof Medisch Woordenboek*), is “beknelde breuk”. However, although this is an umbrella term like “strangulated hernia” I chose to change the abstraction level and choose *beknelde*

navelbreuk in order to clarify that it is, in fact, a hernia, and not simply a broken leg, which could cause confusion in Dutch.

3.2. Conclusion

Nord distinguishes between subjective and objective translation difficulties, wherein subjective difficulties are those caused by the translator's competence and the situation at the moment of translation (Nord 146). An example of a possible subjective difficulty is the difference between the authors of the source and target texts. The authors of the source text are not merely authors: one of them also has extensive medical knowledge. This is a trait that literary translators do not always possess. However, Nord also states that translation difficulties might disappear with increased competence, meaning that if a translator is given enough time to research the subject and increasing their medical knowledge (or inquire with more knowledgeable sources), this difficulty will not necessarily have a negative effect on the quality of the translation as a whole. However, terminology will always remain an objective translation problem as the translator has to deal with the different terminological systems in both source and target text.

The other translation problems I have discussed were largely objective and, as it turned out, not always easy to solve. Chesterman's theory of "manipulat[ing] language in order to create a satisfying target text" might just be the key to achieving the best translation possible. In my translation, I have kept myself to his way of thinking: change something. However, this was, of course, easier after the thorough analysis of chapter 2. The greatest challenge offered by this text is to remain true to the atmosphere even though the language that is used no longer immediately adheres to the setting, whereas medical and narrative translation problems proved to be much easier to analyse and solve.

4. Translation with Footnotes

This chapter contains the Dutch translations of both chapter forty and forty-five. The source text from the novel can be found in appendix I. I have chosen to translate these two particular chapters because of their rich cast of (historical) characters, the use of chloroform and the time period related terminology as analysed earlier, in chapter 3.

4.1. Chapter 40 (Veertig)

Op het dienblad dat Sarah de salon² in droeg stonden een pot thee, drie kopjes en een schoteltje met friandises³. Ze had niet gedacht dat iemand van hen nog honger kon hebben na de copieuze⁴ maaltijd die ze hen had zien verorberen, maar toch voelde ze hoe de ogen van Agnes Petrie de tocht van de kleine cakejes vanaf de deur tot aan de tafel volgde. Mina beweerde vaak dat ze een 'tweede maag voor zoetigheid' had, als excuus voor de manier waarop ze zich na een royale maaltijd op zulke lekkernijen stortte, hoewel Sarah de laatste tijd had gemerkt dat die gewoonte enigszins gematigd⁵ was, vooral sinds Dr. Beattie interesse in haar was gaan tonen.

De dames hadden zich boven in de salon teruggetrokken terwijl de mannen aan de eettafel bleven zitten om zich aan de favoriete natafelactiviteit⁶ van de professor te wagen: het effect van

² **Drawing room:** another option here would be *zitkamer* but due to the rather upperclass setting I found *salon* to be the most fitting solution.

³ **Friandises:** I had to find an equally formal word for this in Dutch. Although the dictionary (Van Dale EN-NL) gives *gebakjes* as the translation, I found that word too common for the setting, which is why I chose a more formal alternative.

⁴ **Bounteous:** I was doubting between a variety of options here, amongst which the seemingly logical Dutch equivalent of *genereuze*. However, the sentence contains a certain underlying sense of sarcasm due to the fact that Sarah states she “did not think anyone could still feel hungry after [...] (Parry x). Therefore I think that *overvloedige* fits better.

⁵ **Abstemious:** although my first idea here was to translate this word as *minder* I decided on *gematigd* due to the more formal nature of that word, believing it would fit better when concerning the matter of historical use of language as was previously discussed.

⁶ After-dinner pursuit: one of the most difficult terms to translate from this chapter, partly because of the absence of a real, definable translation problem. There simply is no real equivalent for this term in Dutch. Therefore, I formed my my own, combining the concept of *natafelen* with a loose interpretation of the word *pursuit* (since *activiteit* does not mean exactly the same).

ether⁷ als versuffende siroop verbeteren door het op nieuwe kandidaten te testen. Captain⁸ James Petrie was bij doctores⁹ Simpson, Keith en Duncan aangeschoven, en hoewel Petrie een leek op het gebied was, beschreef hij zichzelf als 'een man met een onverschrokken¹⁰ karakter', waardoor hij het geen probleem vond om de medici te helpen bij hun baanbrekende zoektocht.

Captain Petrie was de zwager van Mrs.¹¹ Simpson en Mina, daar hij voor de dood van hun zus met haar getrouwd was geweest. Hij was een spraakzame man die eruitzag alsof hij niet echt thuishoorde binnen de huiselijke kring van de hogere klasse¹². Hij was echter wel vriendelijk en beleefd jegens het personeel geweest. Toen Sarah na de maaltijd af kwam ruimen¹³ had hij haar gevraagd om zijn complimenten aan Mrs. Lyndsey te geven omdat hij zo genoten had van de maaltijd. Achteraf was echter wel duidelijk geworden dat dit voor hem vooral als bruggetje had gediend om te vertellen over 'de enige maaltijd waar hij van mocht zeggen dat hij er nog meer van genoten had'.

Vervolgens vertelde hij uitgebreid over de heldendaden die hij had verricht toen hij de Britse eer verdedigde tijdens de Amerikaanse Oorlog, en vertelde dat hij in 1814, na de overwinning in de

⁷ The Ether that is referred to here is, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, a "sweet-smelling, volatile, flammable liquid made by distilling ethanol with sulphuric acid and used as a solvent, as an intermediate in chemical synthesis, and (esp. formerly) as a general anaesthetic" ("Ether"). It is also called *diethyl ether*. The source text states that it is used as a "drowsy sirup". I chose to use a rather literal translation in order to not have to make the word "ether" more explicit while still clarifying what type of ether is meant.

⁸ I chose to not translate the titles into Dutch in order to create an exotic effect for the Dutch reader, reminding them of the setting in Edinburgh. I fear that using Dutch terms such as *mevrouw* or *dokter* might alter the text world in such a manner that it is hard to retain the Scottish/English atmosphere of the novel. Not translating these titles does not interfere with the readability and as such I see no reason to translate them.

⁹ Although I wished to keep all titles untranslated in order to remind the readers of the Scottish setting, due to the nature of Dr. in Dutch, this was impossible. That is why I have chosen "doctores".

¹⁰ **Intrepid spirit:** the use of "intrepid" here required me to find an equally formal word and, as such, *dapper* was quickly sidelined. Instead I chose the more heroic *onverschrokken*, which did mean that the more abstract "spirit" was replaced with the more down-to-earth *karakter*.

¹¹ Much like with the use of "captain" I chose to not translate the titles in order to remind the reader of the novel's setting.

¹² **Amidst domestic gentility:** I deliberately chose to change the sentence structure a little bit in order to keep readability. I also opted for "huiselijke kring" rather than "huishouden" because the latter could also refer to servants and staff.

¹³ **Waited:** although it is not made explicit, it is clear that Sarah is there to pick up their plates (rather than *serveren*) because she is asked convey his compliments.

slag om Bladensburg, met zijn compagnie¹⁴ was opgerukt naar Washington: ‘we veroverden de stad zo snel en gedurfd dat James Madisons avondeten nog warm op tafel stond toen we zijn huis bestormden en het in brand staken. Ik greep een in leer gebonden dichtbundel uit een kast in de bibliotheek en streek even neer om de achtergelaten maaltijd te nuttigen voordat de vlammen zich eraan konden vergrijpen. Het is immers een zonde om goed voedsel verloren te laten gaan.’

Sarah was erg onder de indruk van dit verhaal. Captain Petrie klonk als een hoffelijke, kleurrijke man, en veel interessanter dan de grijze medici die hier in het verleden hadden gedineerd. Pas toen ze de trap beklommen hoorde ze Mrs. Simpson iets tegen Mina zeggen: ‘Ik vraag me af hoe veel keer we hem dat verhaal inmiddels wel niet hebben horen vertellen.’

‘Ongeveer even veel als dat er soldaten zijn die beweren dat ze van die maaltijd hebben gegeten,’ antwoordde Mina. ‘Het moet wel een heel vol bord zijn geweest.’

Deze conversatie vond natuurlijk plaats buiten gehoorsafstand van Agnes Petrie, de dochter van de *captain* en het nichtje van Mrs. Simpson. Agnes was een mollig en nogal frivool meisje, en Sarah vermoedde dat ze niet ontzettend intelligent was, maar dat betekende in ieder geval dat er niet nog een capabel vrouwelijk brein gedoemd was tot atrofie¹⁵ omdat het nooit mocht worden gebruikt.

Sarah was bezig met het inschenken van de thee toen het hele huis werd opgeschud door de voordeur die open sloeg tegen de muur, gevolgd door een donderend geluid: iemand stormde met zoveel haast en kracht door de hal dat ze de planken onder haar voeten voelde trillen

‘Wat is dat in hemelsnaam?’ vroeg Mrs Simpson.

Sarah ging haastig op onderzoek uit terwijl de dames achter haar opstonden. Ze keek over de trapleuning en zag Jarvis met een verontwaardigde blik in zijn ogen met zijn rug tegen de muur staan.

¹⁴ The original term refers to a company of about 100 men. There are two Dutch equivalents to this troop size: *vendel* or *compagnie*. Although *vendel* is the historical term, I chose to use the more well known *compagnie* in order to prevent readers from not understanding this relatively unimportant historical term.

¹⁵ I chose to keep the medical term ‘atrophy’ that is used here due to the fact it is connected to the novel’s overall theme. Although it might require the reader to think about the sentence a little longer, I would hope it helps setting the scene of the novel. At the same time, keeping the medical term shows something vital about Sarah’s character: she has the medical knowledge to use the word atrophy as such. This is elaborated upon in Chapter 3.

‘Wat gebeurt er?’¹⁶

‘Mr Raven stormde net naar binnen alsof de duivel hem op de hielen zat,’ zei hij.

Sarah haastte zich naar de eetkamer beneden. Ze zag hoe Raven over Dr Simpson, die met zijn gezicht tegen de vloer lag, heen gebogen zat. De lichamen van Dr Keith en Captain Petrie lagen bewegingsloos naast hem. Raven rolde Dr Simpson op zijn rug en hield zijn oor tegen de zijn borstkast.

‘Hij ademt,’ stelde hij hijgend van inspanning vast, en zijn stem klonk huilerig van de zenuwen. Hij was doorweekt, zijn haren plakten tegen zijn door inspanning rood geworden gezicht.

‘Je¹⁷ hebt gerend.’

‘Ik heb me hier naartoe gehaast vanuit Gregory’s lab,’ zei Raven, die nog altijd op adem moest komen. ‘Het drankje dat Duncan besteld heeft is giftig. Twee konijnen raakten buiten bewustzijn en overleden niet veel later. Ik ben bang dat het hier hetzelfde kan aanrichten.’

Sarah zag dat er een flesje op tafel stond. Dr Duncan lag ernaast, zijn armen uitgestrekt alsof hij er naar reikte. Ze herkende het handschrift op het label.

‘Maar dit flesje komt helemaal niet van Professor Gregory. Het komt van Duncan & Flockhart. Perchloride of formyle¹⁸,’ las ze voor.

Toen ze zag hoe Raven ongeduldig zijn hand naar haar uitstak gaf ze hem het flesje. Hij las het label, verward, en terwijl hij dat deed opende Dr Simpson zijn ogen.

Sarah dacht aan eerder die dag, toen ze hier kwam om de eetkamer voor te bereiden en de tafel te dekken. Ze had een slordige rij van een stuk of twaalf flesjes op het dressoir zien staan. Andere flesjes lagen, klaarblijkelijk niet langer nodig, op de vloer. Terwijl ze het dressoir probeerde op te ruimen had ze per ongeluk een van de flesjes omgestoten, zodat het naar achteren was gerold en daar tussen de muur en de kast was beland.

¹⁶ What occurs: although it is a shame, it is very hard to keep the formality that is used in “what occurs” intact in the Dutch translation. The alternative would be *wat is er loos* which in my opinion would test acceptability of the text.

¹⁷ I have chosen to let Sarah refer to Raven by using *jij* due to the friendly manner in which they converse. Raven acknowledges Sarah as his equal and in the urgent light of the situation I do not think they would needlessly fall into class-related roles. She speaks to Raven in contracted speech already, which would in its own right not be formal.

¹⁸ I have chosen to not translate this term, as elaborated upon in Chapter 3, partly because of the fact it is a medical term and partly because of the fact it is a term that Sarah is reading from a bottle, which would hold the English terminology due to the novel's setting.

Ze was niet sterk genoeg om het dressoir zelf te verplaatsen, en daarnaast was juist op dat moment Dr Duncan binnengekomen. Hij had haar berispt voor het feit dat ze zich ermee bemoeide. Daarom had ze besloten dat het wellicht beter was om niet te vertellen dat ze net een van zijn flesjes was kwijtgeraakt¹⁹.

Dr Simpson probeerde rechttop te gaan zitten, maar ging vervolgens weer liggen. Hij knipperde een aantal keer met zijn ogen en keek naar zijn omgeving alsof niets daarvan hem ook maar enigszins bekend voorkwam. Sarah haalde een kussen om onder zijn hoofd te leggen. Mrs Simpson en Mina verschenen in de deuropening.

‘Oh hemel, wat is hier gebeurd?’ vroeg Mina.

Mrs. Simpson rolde haar ogen. Het was kennelijk niet de eerste keer dat ze een situatie als deze aantrof.

De professor focuste op zijn vrouw en leunde op zijn elleboog. Hij keek naar de bezorgde gezichten die boven hem zweefden en glimlachte.

‘Dit is veel effectiever en sterker dan ether²⁰,’ zei hij.

Dr Keith was de volgende die begon te bewegen, maar hij werd lang niet zo rustig wakker. Hij begon te woelen en schopte tegen de tafel alsof hij probeerde de laatste nog staande items daarop probeerde om te werpen. Dit alles werd ondersteund door het luide gesnurk van Dr Duncan.

Na een paar minuten werd Dr Duncan langzaam wakker. George Keith, wiens semi-bewuste woede-uitbarsting voorbij leek te zijn, ging op zijn knieën zitten. Hij hield zichzelf vast aan de tafel en het enige wat over de rand te zien was, waren zijn ogen. Hij staarde voor zich uit zonder echt ergens naar te kijken, en zijn blik was angstaanjagend leeg. Het was alsof zijn ziel hem gewoonweg had verlaten. Om de een of andere reden richtte hij deze ijzingwekkende blik op Mina, die op haar beurt - en onder de indruk - terug staarde. Ze leek doodsbang voor wat ze zag, en terwijl iedereen ofwel bijkwam, ofwel zichzelf herwon, leek het er even op dat zij juist het bewustzijn zou verliezen. Een

¹⁹ Mislplaced: sadly there is no Dutch equivalent that holds the same connotation as “mislplaced” does (since in this sentence, using *mislplaatst* is incorrect, which is why have chosen the more neutral *kwijtgeraakt*).

²⁰ Ether is a chemical term. Although I have considered omitting it due to the fact I am not sure whether Dutch target readers immediately understand (and, for example replace it with *wat we hiervoor gebruikte*), I decided against this. Ether is not an uncommon term and the people that are speaking have a medical/chemist profession, and as such their vocabulary should show this. See earlier note on ether.

omvergeworpen stoel werd voor haar overeind gezet, en Sarah werd op pad gestuurd voor een waaier en een glas water.

Dr. Simpson kwam overeind met behulp van zijn vrouw.

‘Waldie had gelijk,’ verkondigde hij, zijn stem vol blijdschap. ‘Dit is verreweg het meest veelbelovende experiment tot nu toe.’ Hij keek vol verwachting rond. ‘Waar is het? Is er nog iets over?’

De nog altijd doorweekte Raven wilde hem het flesje aanreiken, maar Mrs Simpson stak daar een stokje voor.

‘Ik denk dat we allemaal genoeg opwinding te verduren hebben gehad vanavond.’

De professor liet het er niet bij zitten. ‘Maar dit is pas het begin. We hebben misschien wel precies gevonden waar we naar zochten. Wie wil het nog meer proberen?’

Mina was de eerste die iets wist uit te brengen, al was het niet bevestigend. ‘Ik ben in ieder geval niet van plan om mezelf zo tentoon te stellen. Hoe Dr Keith zojuist keek zal me de rest van mijn leven achtervolgen.’

‘Och, kom op, Mina. Het is je grote kans om deel uit te maken van de geschiedenis.’

Dr Simpson greep het flesje uit Ravens hand, trok de kurk eruit en zwaaide het richting Mina. Met een verschrikte blik stond ze op uit haar stoel in een poging uit zijn buurt te blijven. De professor achtervolgde haar rond de tafel terwijl zij gillend haar ongenoegen uitte.

De achtervolging was van korte duur omdat Dr Simpson de slappe lach kreeg en op moest geven. Raven redde het flesje voordat de inhoud onbedoeld op het tapijt zou belanden.

‘Ik wil het wel proberen,’ zei een stem, die toe bleek te behoren aan Agnes Petrie. Ze had al die tijd in de deuropening gestaan maar stapte nu de kamer binnen. ‘Oh, geef me alsjeblieft een beetje.’

Dr Simpson keek naar haar vader, die toestemmend knikte. Sarah vermoedde dat hij weinig verzoeken van zijn dochter afkeurde.

Agnes wurmde²¹ zichzelf op een eetkamerstoel en inhaleerde boven het schoteltje dat voor haar met vloeistof was volgegoten. Binnen luttele seconden knipperde ze met haar ogen en

²¹ Squeezed herself: I wanted to keep the mental image of a rather plump girl trying to squeeze herself into a chair, which is why I eventually chose *wurmen* as a translation. It gives the same idea of having to put effort into getting onto the chair comfortably.

verkondigde ze dat ze lichter dan lucht was. Dat was extra opvallend als je haar omvang in gedachten hield. Toen begon ze 'Ik ben een engel, ik ben een engel,' te schreeuwen, waarna ze geheel on-engelachtig op de grond belandde. Daar bleef ze een volle vijf minuten vreedzaam buiten westen liggen.

Dr Simpson, die de bezorgde blikken van zijn vrouw wist te negeren, besloot dat hij het zelf nog een keer te proberen. Dr Duncan voegde zich bij hem en Dr Keith haalde zijn zakhorloge tevoorschijn om de duur van het effect van het middel te bepalen.

'Perchloride of formule,' zei Keith, terwijl hij iets noteerde. 'Een beetje een mondvul als je het vergelijkt met ether. Kunnen we het geen kortere naam geven?'

Dr Simpson bracht het glas naar zijn neus, maar pauzeerde. 'Ik geloof dat Waldie zei dat het ook bekend staat als chloroform.'

4.2. Chapter 45 (Vijfenveertig)

Het uiteindelijke resultaat van welke opeenvolging van gebeurtenissen ook hangt af van vele factoren. Er is altijd sprake van een grote hoeveelheid knoop- en kruispunten in een fragiel systeem van toevalligheden waarin de kleinste afwijking op een van die punten alles had kunnen veranderen. Het lot van chloroform en het mysterie van Evie's dood waren verweven in een dergelijk systeem en beiden hadden makkelijk op een dood spoor kunnen raken door ook maar de geringste gril van het lot.

Zo was Professor Miller bijvoorbeeld net zo enthousiast over de ontdekking van zijn burens in Queen Street en wilde hij graag een van de eerste zijn die het tijdens een operatie gebruikte. De dag na de zaak Carstairs had een boodschapper aangeklopt bij nummer 52, met de vraag of Dr. Simpson chloroform wilde komen toedienen aan een patiënt die in het ziekenhuis lag met een beknelde navelbreuk²². De professor was echter helaas niet thuis en niemand wist waar hij wel was, waardoor Raven andermaal de afwezigheid van een afsprakenboek betreurde, waarbij hij zich afvroeg of de weigering om er een bij te houden een weloverwogen tactiek van de professor was om zijn meer heimelijke afspraken te verbergen. Een aantal studenten, waaronder Raven, werden op pad gestuurd om hem te vinden, maar zonder resultaat. Sarah stelde voor dat Raven misschien wel in kon vallen voor de professor en hoewel hij deed alsof hij dat een belachelijk voorstel vond was hij heimelijk blij dat zij hem voor zoiets capabel genoeg achtte.

Professor Miller moest gedwongen zonder verdoving verder daar de operatie niet kon wachten. Na de eerste snee verloor de patiënt het bewustzijn. Hij kwam niet meer bij en stierf, de operatie onvoltooid. Als chloroform wel was toegediend, had het middel

²² Strangulated hernia is a medical term. I acquired this translation by asking my GP and various medical translators what they thought would be the most appropriate and understandable translation in the light of a historical novel.

waarschijnlijk de schuld gekregen. Als Raven het had toegediend, had diezelfde blaam²³ ook hem getroffen.

Dr Simpson veronderstelde dat het maar beter was dat hij in dat bepaalde geval niet gevonden was. De schade die zo'n geval zou berokkenen aan de reputatie van chloroform terwijl het pas net was ontdekt was waarschijnlijk onherstelbaar geweest. Raven voelde zich verplicht om op te merken dat dit toch zeker geen argument was om geen afsprakenboek bij te houden.

Hoewel het uiteindelijk niet cruciaal bleek wat betreft de informatie die het opleverde, zou Raven uiteindelijk zijn eigen redenen hebben om het toeval te bedanken. Anders had een bepaalde ontmoeting na dit hele gebeuren wellicht helemaal nooit plaatsgevonden.

Er heerste chaos in de ochtendklinik, die alsmaar beter bezocht werd naar mate het buiten kouder werd. Raven stapte uit zijn spreekkamer om zijn volgende patiënt naar binnen te roepen en stond plotseling recht tegenover Mitchell, de zwaarlijvige man die arme Kitty in zijn armen had gehouden maar verder zonder iets te zeggen was betrokken. Als Raven vertraging had opgelopen door zijn vorige patiënt, of als George Keith ook maar tien seconden eerder klaar was geweest, was Mitchell misschien wel voorbij gekomen en verdwenen zonder dat Raven hem had gezien.

De tijd die verstreken was sinds de nacht dat ze elkaar voor het laatst hadden gezien was hectisch maar opwindend geweest. Die nacht was tenslotte ook de nacht geweest waarin Dr Simpson het effect van chloroform had ontdekt. Er waren weinig momenten dat Raven niet aan Kitty's dood dacht, maar hij had maar weinig kans²⁴ gehad om verder onderzoek te doen. Het was niet alleen lastig om vrije tijd te krijgen. De belangrijkste factor was meer dat Raven niet graag door Old Town reisde als het niet in Simpson's veilige koets was. Hij wist dat Flints mannen hem tegenwoordig twee keer zo graag wilde vinden, en

²³ Although the source text uses the word "blamed" earlier in the sentence, in Dutch it is impossible to use it as a verb. However, the word *blaam* has exactly that more formal connotation, so I still wished to use it. Therefore I chose the more common *de schuld gekregen* in combination with *blaam*, when referring to Raven.

²⁴ Although the source text uses "opportunities" rather than "chances" I deliberately chose for the dutch *kans* rather than *mogelijkheid* since the latter sounds more like a literal translation to me than an idiomatic sentence.

sommige van hen waren waarschijnlijk uit op wraak. Het leek hem verstandig om te vrezen dat Flint hem wellicht als voorbeeld wilde gebruiken.

Raven was Peggy nog eens tegengekomen, die samen met Evie een kamer in het huis van Ms Peake had gedeeld. Hij had haar gevraagd of ze iets had gehoord over een meisje dat Kitty heette. Peggy had hem echter met scherpe woorden weggestuurd toen hij had uitgelegd dat ze hetzelfde beroep hadden. 'We kennen elkaar niet allemaal,' had ze hem verwijtend toegebeten. 'We zijn niet allemaal vriendinnen, of een soort van hoerenzusterschap²⁵.'

Mitchell hield zijn pet in zijn handen en stond ongeveer in dezelfde houding als de vorige keer. Toen hij opkeek verried zijn uitdrukking dat hij Raven herkende. De verwarring die volgde gaf echter ook aan dat hij waarschijnlijk niet meer wist waarvan.

Raven nam hem mee naar een afgezonderd deel van de spreekkamer en liet hem zijn klacht beschrijven, maar had aan zijn oncomfortabele gehobbel al gezien wat het probleem moest zijn.

Mitchell rolde zijn broekspijp op en toonde Raven een lange snee, licht opgezwollen en druipend van het pus. 'Ik heb mezelf een week geleden aan een versplinterde plank opengehaald²⁶. Ik dacht dat het gewoon even tijd nodig had om te helen, maar het begon als een korstje en nu ziet het er zo uit.

Raven dacht onmiddellijk aan het preparaat dat Sarah hem voor zijn gezicht gegeven had toen hij voor het eerst langs was gegaan op Queen Street. Daar zei hij verder echter nog niets over.

'Mr Mitchell, ik werk ook bij het Maternity Hospital. Was u niet de man die recentelijk een gewonde vrouw bij ons naar binnen droeg? Ze heette, volgens u, Kitty.'

Hij leek op zijn hoede. 'Ja. Ik vermoed dat het niet goed afgelopen is.'

²⁵ **Sisterhood of hoors:** although I would have liked to keep the distinctive historical Scottish word "hoors" (rather than "whores"), I was forced to omit this. Not translating the word is not an option for Dutch readers and I do not, for example, wish to shift to a Dutch accent (such as the one spoken in Amsterdam or The Hague).

²⁶ The source text here uses the word "cut" which could be translated as *gesneden*. However, this brings the connotation of a knife in Dutch while in this scene, it is wood that he has cut himself on. Therefore I chose the more abstract *opengehaald*.

‘Nee, we konden helaas niets meer voor haar doen. Ik moet weten wie ze was en waar ze woonde. Kunt u me vertellen waar u haar vandaan gedragen heeft? Of de naam van het meisje waar u mee was, zodat ik haar kan vinden?’

Mitchell leunde achterover in zijn stoel en vouwde zijn armen over elkaar. Raven had dit wel verwacht. Het was één ding om op het moment zelf een bepaalde actie te ondernemen, maar praten over de hoertjes waarmee men omging was iets heel anders.

‘Ik weet niet zeker of ik me de details van die nacht nog voor de geest kan halen,’ zei Mitchell, ‘en eigenlijk heb ik daar ook helemaal geen zin in.’

Raven knikte, alsof hij het begreep. ‘Jammer. Net als dat ik me het precieze recept voor de zalf die deze wond zeker zou genezen niet meer precies voor de geest kan halen.’

Een paar uur later stond Raven in een vervallen gebouw op Calton Road. Tegenover hem stond de vrouw voor wie Mitchell hem had gewaarschuwd. Hij was langsgedaan terwijl hij onderweg was naar Maternity Hospital en had besloten dat het niet alleen makkelijker was om de Wezel en Gargantua²⁷ in het daglicht te herkennen, maar ook dat ze hem waarschijnlijk niet zo snel aan zouden vallen terwijl iedereen op de drukke weg het kon zien.

De madam van het bordeel²⁸ waar Mitchell hem naartoe geweest had was een nogal dikke en overweldigend lelijke vrouw die Miss Nadia genoemd werd. Raven kon zich niet voorstellen dat zij ooit op haar rug gewerkt had, maar ze leek hem wel erg geschikt voor de rol die ze nu vervulde. Als klanten haar eenmaal hadden gezien zou elk meisje dat hun toegeschoven werd op Venus lijken.

‘Ik ben op zoek naar een vrouw die Mairi heet,’ verkondigde hij. ‘Ik heb gehoord dat ze hier werkt.’

²⁷ The Gargantua is (presumably) a reference to the 16th century novel *Gargantua and Pantagruel* by Francois Rabelais, and although Dutch readers may not be familiar with this novel at first, its name is the name in Dutch. Therefore I chose not to change anything.

²⁸ ‘Bawdy house’ can be translated in a variety of ways, amongst which, for example, hoerenhuis. However, despite the situation and the location in the Old Town, I decided the more formal bordeel would fit better with Raven’s narrative.

Miss Nadia schonk hem een kille glimlach. ‘Dat klopt. Ik kan wel even vragen of ze beschikbaar is, maar ik wil eerst zien of je wel een rooie cent op zak hebt²⁹.’

Als Raven zijn geld een kleur zou moeten geven was dat waarschijnlijk lijkwit. Zijn moeder had hem zijn gewoonlijke toelage, zoals toegestaan door zijn verschrikkelijke oom, wel gestuurd, maar dat was bijna drie maanden geleden. Hij was jaloers op types als Beattie, bij uitstek een van die medestudenten die de rijkdom van hun familie konden gebruiken om hun levensonderhoud te financieren terwijl zij hun beroep leerden. Zijn oom had nog veel meer om te geven, en zijn moeder zou waarschijnlijk tot het uiterste gaan om het te krijgen als hij erom zou vragen, maar Raven weigerde om haar nog meer te laten kleineren. Zodra hij echt begon met geld verdienen zou hij haar bevrijden. Ze zou nooit meer om geld van Malcom hoeven vragen. Nu zou hij echter een ander betaalmiddel moeten verzinnen.

‘Ik werk als dokter in Milton House. Ik heb recentelijk een meisje dat Kitty heette behandeld. Die werkte ook bij dit etablissement.’

‘Dan heb je haar niet echt goed behandeld, of wel soms? Ze is nooit teruggekomen van Milton House. Wil je geld voor de diensten die je hebt verricht? Want dat is niet hoe het werkt.’

Raven gaf haar dezelfde blik die hij ook aan Mr Gallagher had gegeven. Zijn ervaringen met Effie Peake hadden hem geleerd dat hij beter geen zwakte kon tonen. Dit soort vrouwen handelden in schijnemotie, en op een plek als deze loonde eerlijkheid eigenlijk nooit.

‘De politie lijkt geïnteresseerd in de precieze oorzaak van Kitty’s aandoening. Dus tenzij u wil dat James McLevy en zijn mannen hier binnenkort voor deur staan zou ik u aanraden om even wat coulance te tonen.’

Miss Nadia leek dit even te overwegen en gebod hem toen om haar te volgen. Ze betraden een kamer op de tweede verdieping. Mairi was lang, en haar lengte werd nog eens extra benadrukt door het feit dat ze ondervoed was. Haar olijfkleurige huid deed hem

²⁹ The colour of your money: I have already discussed this in chapter 3. In this case, the idiom is embedded in the dialogue since Raven replies to the question about colour, mentally. I wanted to keep the reference to colour and used the Dutch idiom (*geen rooie cent hebben*).

vermoeden dat ze uit een exotischer oord kwam dan de meeste hoertjes hier, maar jammer genoeg kwam het waarschijnlijk gewoon door een vader die zo'n twintig jaar geleden even aan wal was gekomen van een schip uit Spanje of Italië.

'Geef hem wat hij wil,' zei Nadia. 'En daarmee doel ik op het beantwoorden van zijn vragen. Al het andere kost gewoon de gebruikelijke prijzen.'

Raven deed de deur dicht. Mairi zat op bed met een ongeruste blik in haar ogen. Ze had door dat dit niet de gebruikelijke omstandigheden waren.

'Ik heb Kitty behandeld in Milton House,' legde hij uit. 'Je klant heeft haar naar ons toe gebracht, maar we konden niets doen om haar te redden. Ik zat bij haar tot het einde.'

Mairi beet op haar lip, ze keek onmiddellijk verdrietig. 'Bedankt daarvoor,' zei ze.

'Ik denk dat ik wel weet wat haar pijn veroorzaakte. Ze was in verwachting, of niet soms?'

Haar gezichtsuitdrukking verried dat Mairi dat wist. Meer zelfs.

'Ik denk dat ze probeerde om er vanaf te komen en ik denk dat jij dat ook weet.'

'Daar weet ik niets van,' zei ze, een beetje te snel.

'Laten we het dan hebben over iets waarvan ik denk dat je het wel weet. Als je zelf zwanger was, dan zou je waarschijnlijk weten met wie je het moest hebben over de mogelijkheid om er van af te komen, toch? Met wie heeft Kitty gepraat?'

Mairi zei niets, maar haar grote ogen verrieden dat ze iets specifiek voor hem achterhield.

'Je hoeft niet bang te zijn, ik wil niemand in de problemen brengen. Maar ik ben een medicus en ik moet weten wat er gebeurd is. Kitty is niet de eerste die op deze manier is overleden en ik wil er graag voor zorgen dat er niet meer vrouwen dit lot tegemoet gaan.'

Ze slikte, en keek even om zich heen alsof ze bang was dat ze afgeluisterd zouden worden.

‘Er is een Franse vroedvrouw,’ antwoordde ze zachtjes. “Heeft in de dienst van koninginnen en gravinnen³⁰ gewerkt, zei Kitty. Ze was speciaal geschoold. Weet hoe ze dingen moet doen die de dokters niet doen, als u begrijpt wat ik bedoel.’

‘Ik begrijp het precies. Weet je hoe ze heet?’

Mairi gaf fluisterend antwoord, ‘Kitty noemde haar Madame Anchou. Zei dat ze een mantel met capuchon van de duurste stoffen droeg en een zwaar accent had.’

‘Hoe kreeg Kitty contact met deze vrouw?’

‘Ze heeft kamers in een taverne, maar u moet het met de waard bespreken. Hij maakt de afspraken.’

‘Voor een deel van de prijs, ongetwijfeld.’

Mairi knikte. ‘Het kost een hoop geld, dat weet ik wel. Kitty moest een medaillon dat ze van haar moeder had gekregen verpanden. Brak haar hart, maar ze had geen andere keus.’

‘Wat kreeg ze precies voor haar geld?’

‘Dat was het vreemde: enkel pillen. Ik zei tegen Kitty dat ze was bestolen als ze al het geld daarvoor had betaald, maar ze zei dat ze een overeenkomst hadden gesloten. Madame Anchou beloofde haar dat de pillen het probleem zouden oplossen, dat ze de baby eruit zouden laten komen, weet u wel? Maar als garantie kon Kitty terugkomen als het niet werkte, en dan zou ze het alsnog doen. Kitty stelde dat ze liever de pillen nam en keek hoe dat ging als ze dan de messen en breinaalden kon overslaan.’

Raven herinnerde zich zijn discussie met Ziegler en Mrs Stevenson. Wanhopige vrouwen zouden goed geld betalen voor een ‘geheime remedie’, zeker als die werd verstrekt door een vroedvrouw uit Parijs, geschoold aan het beroemde Hôtel Dieu, die hiervoor in dienst was geweest van de Franse adel. Maar zoals Mrs Stevenson al had gewaarschuwd waren het niet altijd onschadelijke pillen die ze kregen voor hun geld.

‘En waar is die taverne van waaruit ze werkt?’ vroeg Raven.

‘In Leith. Hij heet de King’s Wark.’

³⁰ “Contessas” is often used to refer to Italian countesses. However, I decided to omit the Italian notion for the sake of readability and because it is not very important where the countesses came from. She simply means that she has worked for many influential people.

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Appendix I: Source Text

I.i. Chapter 40

Sarah carried a tray into the drawing room bearing a pot of tea, three cups and a tray of fancies. She did not think that anyone could still be hungry after the bounteous meal she had watched them consume, but she was aware of Agnes Petrie's eyes tracing the progress of the little cakes from door to table. Mina often claimed to have 'a second compartment for sweet things' to excuse how she fell upon such treats after a generous dinner, though Sarah had noticed that her habits had been more abstemious in recent times: specifically since Dr Beattie started showing an interest in her.

The ladies had retired upstairs to the drawing room while the gentlemen remained around the dining table to commence the professor's preferred after-dinner pursuit: that of testing new candidates to improve upon ether as a drowsy syrup. Drs Simpson, Keith and Duncan were joined by a layperson, Captain James Petrie, but as he described himself as 'a man of intrepid spirit', he had had no qualms about throwing his weight behind the medical men's pioneering quest.

Captain Petrie was Mrs Simpson and Mina's brother-in-law, the widower of their late sister. He was a voluble personality, a man who looked like he did not quite belong amidst domestic gentility. He had been friendly and polite to the staff, however. Indeed, while Sarah waited at the table, he had asked her to pass on his compliments to Mrs Lyndsey for a remarkable meal, though it became retrospectively clear that this was merely a pretext for him to hold forth on the subject of 'the only meal I might be permitted to consider more remarkable'.

He proceeded to talk at length of his exploits defending Britain's interests in the American War, telling of how in 1814, following victory in the Battle of Bladensburg, his company had marched on Washington. 'We took the city with such swiftness and audacity that James Madison's dinner was still warm upon the table when we stormed his house and set it ablaze. I fetched a leather-bound book of poetry from the library shelves and briefly sat

down to finish the abandoned meal before the flames took over, for it is a sin to waste good food.'

Sarah was most impressed with this tale, thinking Captain Petrie sounded gallant and colourful; certainly a good deal less dusty than most of the grey-faced medical men who had dined there. It was only as they ascended the staircase that she overheard Mrs Simpson say to Mina: 'I wonder how many times we have sat through him telling that story.'

'Almost as many as the number of soldiers who claim to have eaten of that meal,' Mina replied. 'Truly, it must have been quite a plateful.'

This exchange had, of course, taken place out of earshot of Agnes Petrie, the captain's daughter and Mrs Simpson's niece. Agnes was a plump and rather giddy creature who did not strike Sarah as blessed with the highest level of intelligence, though at least this did not mean another fine female mind condemned to atrophy through disuse. Neither had she inherited her father's easy grace in dealing with the staff, and came across as a rather spoiled and self-regarding young woman.

Sarah was pouring the tea when the entire house was shaken by the crash of the front door being thrown open against the wall. It was followed by a sound like rumbling thunder, the shuddering thump of someone rushing down the hall with such haste and force of weight that she could feel it vibrate through the boards beneath her feet.

'What on earth is that?' asked Mrs Simpson.

Sarah hastened to investigate, the ladies rising to their feet at her back. She looked over the banister and observed Jarvis standing against the wall with an affronted expression upon his face.

'What occurs?'

'Mr Raven just came charging through here like he had the devil at his heels,' he said.

Sarah hastened downstairs into the dining room. She found Raven crouched over Dr Simpson, who lay face-down upon the floor, the bodies of Dr Keith and Captain Petrie motionless alongside. Raven rolled Dr Simpson over and placed his ear to his chest.

'He breathes,' he announced, panting heavily, a near-tearful anxiety in his voice. He was soaking wet, his hair plastered to his face, which was red with exertion.

'You've been running.'

'I rushed here from Gregory's lab,' Raven said, still struggling to catch his breath. 'The formula Duncan ordered is poisonous. It rendered two rabbits unconscious before killing them shortly after. I fear it may yet do the same here.'

Sarah noticed a bottle sitting on the table where Dr Duncan sat slumped, his arms sprawled before him as though reaching for it. She recognised the handwriting on the label.

'But this bottle isn't from Professor Gregory. It came from Duncan and Flockhart. "Perchloride of formyle",' she read.

She handed it to him, Raven's hand outstretched impatiently. He read the label, a look of confusion upon his face, and as he did so, Dr Simpson's eyes opened.

Sarah thought back to earlier in the day, when she had come here to prepare the dining room and lay the table for dinner. She had found easily a dozen bottles untidily ranged on top of the sideboard, still others seemingly abandoned on the floor. As she endeavoured to tidy the former away, she had knocked one onto its side, causing it to roll to the back where it dropped into the gap between the wall and the cabinet.

She didn't have the strength to move the sideboard on her own, and besides, at that moment, Dr Duncan had come in and begun chastising her for interfering. She therefore decided it best not to mention how she had just mislaid one of his bottles.

Dr Simpson tried to sit up then lay back again, blinking several times and looking at his surroundings as though they did not make sense. Sarah fetched a cushion to help support his head as Mrs Simpson and Mina appeared in the doorway.

'Oh, dear heavens, what has happened?' Mina asked.

Mrs Simpson rolled her eyes. Clearly it was not the first time she had witnessed such a sight.

The professor focused upon his wife and propped himself up with his elbow. He looked at the concerned faces crowded above him and smiled.

'This is far stronger and better than ether,' he said.

Dr Keith was next to stir, but there was no gentle waking for him. Instead he began to thrash about, kicking at the table as though trying to overturn the few items that had thus far managed to remain upright upon it. This was accompanied by loud snoring on the part of Dr Duncan.

After several minutes of this, Dr Duncan began to rouse and George Keith, having ceased his semi-conscious violence, raised himself to his knees. He gripped the table, only his eyes visible above the edge, and stared in an unfocused way, with a hauntingly vacant expression on his face, as though his human spirit had abandoned him. For some reason he directed this ghastly gaze at Mina, who looked reciprocally transfixed, horrified by what she was seeing. Thus, just as everyone else was regaining either consciousness or composure, Mina threatened to faint. An upturned chair was righted for her, and Sarah was dispatched to find her fan and fetch her a glass of water.

Dr Simpson climbed to his feet, assisted by his wife.

'Waldie was right,' he declared, delight in his voice. 'This is by far the most promising of all our experiments.' He looked about himself eagerly. 'Where has it gone? Is there any left?'

The sopping Raven held out the bottle to him, but Mrs Simpson gestured him away.

'I think perhaps we have all had enough excitement for one evening.'

The professor would not be denied. 'But this is just the beginning. We may well have found what we have been searching for. Who else would like to try?'

Mina was first to find her voice. But not in the affirmative. 'I for one will not be making such an exhibition of myself. The look on Dr Keith's face just now will haunt me for the rest of my days'

'Oh, come away now, Mina. It may be your chance to form part of history.'

Dr Simpson grabbed the bottle from Raven, removed the stopper and waved it in Mina's direction. Looking suddenly alarmed, Mina got out of her chair and backed away from him. The professor then began to chase her round the table as she shrieked her objection.

The pursuit was short-lived as Dr Simpson subsided into laughter and had to give up. Raven rescued the bottle before its contents were inadvertently poured onto the carpet.

'I'll try it,' said a voice, which turned out to belong to Agnes Petrie. She had been standing in the doorway and now pushed forward into the room. 'Oh, do let me have some.'

Dr Simpson looked to her father, who nodded assent. Sarah suspected he had said no to few requests where his daughter was appellant.

Agnes squeezed herself into a dining-room chair and began to inhale the saucer of liquid that had been poured for her. Within a matter of moments, her eyes fluttered and she declared herself to be lighter than air, which seemed all the more remarkable given her size. She then began shouting 'I'm an angel, I'm an angel,' before sliding to the floor in a manner far removed from the seraphic. She remained there, peacefully unconscious, for a full five minutes.

Dr Simpson decided he would try it upon himself again, ignoring the concerned looks of his wife. Dr Duncan joined him and Dr Keith took out his pocket watch to time the duration of the drug's effect.

'Perchloride of formyle,' Keith stated, taking a note. 'Somewhat more of a mouthful than "ether". Can we give it a shortened name?'

As Dr Simpson raised the glass to his nose, he paused momentarily. 'I believe Waldie said it was also known as "chloroform".'

I.ii. Chapter 45

The final outcome of any sequence of events can turn on many pivots: there is always a multiplicity of nodes, intersections in a fragile system of happenstance whereby the slightest divergence at one would have altered all. The fate of chloroform and the mystery of Evie's death were intertwined in just such a system, and either could have easily been diverted down a path to a dead end by the slightest whim of chance.

For instance, Professor Miller was equally enthusiastic about his Queen Street neighbour's discovery and was keen to be among the first to use it in a surgical case. A messenger had arrived at No. 52 the day after the Carstairs case, looking for Simpson to administer chloroform to a patient suffering from a strangulated hernia at the Infirmary. Unfortunately, the doctor was not at home and his whereabouts unknown, prompting Raven to once more lament the lack of an appointment book, as well as to wonder if the refusal to keep one was a deliberate tactic to hide the doctor's more clandestine calls. Several students, including Raven, were despatched to find him, but to no avail. Sarah even suggested Raven stand in for the professor. He scoffed at this proposal but was secretly pleased that she thought him capable of such a thing.

Professor Miller was forced to proceed without any anaesthesia, as the surgery could not wait. Upon the first incision, the patient fainted and could not be revived. He died with the operation unfinished. If chloroform had been administered, it would have been blamed. If Raven had administered it, so would he.

Dr Simpson posited that it was fortunate he could not be found on this particular occasion. The damage to chloroform's reputation at this early juncture could have been irreparable. Raven felt obliged to comment that this was surely no justification for not keeping an appointment book.

Though it was not ultimately crucial in terms of the information it imparted, Raven would have reason of his own to thank serendipity, given how easily a particular encounter that occurred shortly after this might never have taken place.

It was amidst the chaos of the morning clinic, such sessions becoming steadily more crowded as the weather grew colder. Raven emerged from his consulting room to summon

his next patient and found himself confronted by Mitchell, the burly individual who had conveyed poor Kitty in his arms but left without conveying much else. Had Raven been delayed a little longer by the previous patient, or had George Keith finished with his but ten seconds sooner, Mitchell might have passed through and been gone again without Raven seeing him.

It had been a hectic – if exciting – time since the night their paths last crossed, given it had been the same night Simpson discovered the effects of chloroform. The matter of Kitty's death was seldom far from Raven's mind, but opportunities to investigate further had been limited. Not only was he hard-pressed to find time away from his duties, but a greater factor was his reluctance to traverse the Old Town other than via the safety of Simpson's carriage. He knew that Flint's men would be looking for him with redoubled interest now, and in certain cases with vengeance on their minds. It seemed reasonable to fear that Flint might even wish to make an example of him.

Raven had briefly happened upon Peggy, who had shared lodgings with Evie at Mrs Peake's house. He asked if she had heard of a girl named Kitty, but was sent away with a flea in his ear when he further explained that they shared a profession. 'We don't all know each other,' she scolded him. 'We're not all friends, or some sisterhood of hours.'

Mitchell stood clutching his cap in much the same posture he had done before. When he looked up, his expression betrayed that he recognised Raven, though a degree of puzzlement indicated further that he did not remember from where.

Raven showed him into the seclusion of his consulting room and let him outline his complaint, his uncomfortable hobbling gait providing an overture.

He rolled up his trouser leg and showed Raven a long cut, slightly swollen and weeping pus. 'I cut it upon a splintered board about a week ago. I thought it just needed time to heal, but what started as a scab has turned into this.'

Raven immediately thought of the preparation Sarah had given him for his face when first he arrived at Queen Street. He said nothing of that quite yet, however.

'Mr Mitchell, I work also at the Maternity Hospital. You were the gentleman who so kindly carried a stricken woman to us recently, weren't you? Kitty, you said her name was.'

He looked on his guard. 'Yes. I gather it did not go well.'

'No, sadly we were unable to do anything for her. I need to know who she was, where she lived. Can you tell me from where you carried her? Or the name of the girl you were with, that I might find her?'

Mitchell sat back in his seat, folding his arms. Raven had anticipated this. It was one thing to act upon the spur of the moment, quite another to speak of one's dealings with whores.

'I am not sure I recall the details of that night,' Mitchell said, 'and nor do I particularly wish to.'

Raven nodded, as though understanding. 'A pity. Just as I am not sure I recall the formula for the ointment that would surely cure your wound.'

A few hours later, Raven was standing inside a ramshackle building on Calton Road being confronted by a woman about whom he had been warned by Mitchell. He had come here on his way to the Maternity Hospital, reasoning that not only would it be easier to spot the Weasel and Gargantua in daylight, but also less likely they would attempt to assail him in full view of a busy thoroughfare.

The madam of the bawdy house to which he had been directed was a corpulent and intimidatingly ugly woman by the name of Miss Nadia. Raven could not imagine her ever having worked on her back, but reckoned she was particularly suited to her role in that by the time the customers got past her, any girl they were presented with would look like Venus by comparison.

'I wish to see a woman by the name of Mairi,' he stated. 'I am informed she works here.'

Miss Nadia gave him a cold smile. 'She does indeed. I can enquire if she is available, but I'll be wanting to see the colour of your money first.'

If Raven's finances had a colour, it would be deathly pale. His mother had sent the regular allowance permitted by his miserable uncle, but that had been almost three weeks ago. How he envied the likes of Beattie, typical of those he had studied with whose family riches comfortably financed their living while they learned their profession. His uncle had plenty more to give, and his mother would go to any lengths to secure it if he asked, but

Raven would not have her further humbled before him. Once he began to make money in earnest, he would free her from ever having to ask Malcolm for another penny. For now, however, he had to find another currency.

'I am a doctor at Milton House. I recently treated a girl named Kitty, late of this establishment.'

'Didn't treat her very well, did you? She never came back from Milton House. Are you after payment in kind for services rendered? Because it doesn't work like that.'

Raven fixed her with the same look he had given Mr Gallagher. His dealings with Effie Peake had let him know it was best not to show any weakness. Such women dealt in counterfeit emotions, and in this place there was no reward for honesty.

'There is growing police interest in what might have brought on Kitty's condition. So unless you would prefer James McLevy and his men knocking on your door instead of me, I would suggest you do me a courtesy.'

Miss Nadia considered this for a moment, then bid him follow, leading him to a room on the second floor. Mairi was tall, appearing all the more so for being undernourished. Her olive skin suggested a more exotic provenance than was usual in these parts, though sadly it most likely derived from a father who briefly put to shore some twenty years previous on a ship from Spain or Italy.

'Give him what he wants,' Nadia instructed her. 'And by that I mean answer his questions. Anything else comes at the usual rates.'

Raven closed the door. Mairi was sitting on the bed with an anxious look, detecting that the circumstances were out of the ordinary.

'I treated Kitty at Milton House,' he explained. 'Your client brought her to us. There was nothing we could do to save her, so I sat by her until the end.'

Mairi bit her lip, sadness immediate upon her face. 'Thank you for that,' she said.

'I would know what caused her agonies. She was with child, wasn't she?'

Her expression betrayed that Mairi knew this and more.

'I believe she took measures to get rid of it, and I believe you know that too.'

'I know nothing about that,' she answered, a little too fast.

'Then let's talk about what I think you do know. If you were to find yourself with child, you would have a notion who to speak to about dealing with it, would you not? Who did Kitty speak to?'

Mairi said nothing, but from the widening of her eyes, it was clear that there was a specific something she was not saying.

'Have no fear. I am not looking to get anyone into trouble. But I am a man of medicine and I need to know how this happened. Kitty was not the first to die in this manner and I would ensure a similar fate does not befall any other women.'

She swallowed, looking about herself as though afraid someone might overhear.

'There is a French midwife,' she answered quietly. 'Worked in the service of queens and contessas, Kitty reckoned. She had special training. Knows how to do things that doctors won't, if you know what I mean.'

'Well enough. Do you know her name?'

Mairi answered in a whisper, 'Kitty called her Madame Anchou. Said she wore a hooded cape of the finest cloth and spoke with a strong accent.'

'How did Kitty get in touch with this woman?'

'She has rooms at a tavern. You have to speak to the landlord, though. He makes the arrangements.'

'For a slice, no doubt.'

Mairi nodded. 'It cost a lot of money, I know that. Kitty had this locket her mother gave her that she had to pawn. Broke her heart to part with it, but she had no option.'

'What exactly did her money buy her?'

'That's the thing: only pills. I told Kitty she was robbed if she handed over all her money just for that, but she said there was an agreement. Madame Anchou assured her the pills would deal with the problem: you know, make the baby come right soon. But as a guarantee, if that didn't happen, Kitty should come back and she would perform her service in respect of the fee. Kitty reasoned she would rather take the pills and see how that worked out if it spared her knives and knitting needles.'

Raven recalled his discussion with Ziegler and Mrs Stevenson. Desperate women would pay handsomely for a 'secret remedy', especially if it was dispensed by a midwife

from Paris, trained at the famous Hôtel Dieu, and formerly in the service of French aristocracy. But as Mrs Stevenson warned, it was not always harmless pills their money bought them.

‘And where is this tavern she works out of?’ Raven asked.

‘It’s down in Leith. It’s called the King’s Wark.’