

The Good Soldier

The Bad Heart

The Unreliable Narrator

Translating Ford Madox Ford's *The Good Soldier*

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Introduction

A man tells the saddest story. It is a story of two befriended couples who have known each other for years. It is a story of a wife with an illness and her loving husband and caretaker. Yet it is also a story of lies, adultery and suicide. The man who tells this story is eloquent, part of the upper middle class and generally not spiteful with regard to the people the story is about. But while this man tells his story it slowly becomes apparent that vital bits of information are missing. Even though the story is a detailed account of events by a direct witness there is a sense of deceit, and several questions start to arise. Then comes the realisation that this man might not be speaking the truth, the only source of information might be purposely withholding vital information and it becomes unclear what really happened.

In *The Good Soldier*, a 1915 novel by Ford Madox Ford (Ford Hermann Hueffer), the narrator of the story, John Dowell, is the one who tells such a story. *The Good Soldier* is a tale of lies and deceit, told only by an unreliable narrator. *The Good Soldier* is widely acclaimed as one of the best English novels of all times and is a prime example of the use of an unreliable narrator in one of the first English literary modernist novels. Using flashbacks in non-chronological order, Ford has spun a web of intrigue that slowly reveals the unreliability of the narrator. Even though the very first sentence of the novel is an important clue ("This is the saddest story I have ever heard), it is only gradually that the reader becomes aware of the façade that has been created.

It is clear, as is predominantly the case in literature, that the various stylistic features of *The Good Soldier* make it such an extraordinary work. The most important of these features in the novel are the chronology and those related to the unreliable narrator, especially as the reader's view of the narrator is likely to switch from reliable to unreliable.

This thesis will be concerned with the translation of Ford Madox Ford's *The Good Soldier* and extensive research with regard to its stylistic features in relation to translating the

text from English to Dutch. At first there will be determined what the concept of the unreliable narrator entails and how this is manifested in *The Good Soldier*. Secondly, this paper will examine the stylistic features of the novel with regard to its concept of the unreliable narrator, and translating the text in particular. Then an extensive analysis of the sections to be translated will be made, providing a description of the problems that arise when translating the text and its relevant stylistic features from English to Dutch. The fourth section of this thesis will be comprised of an annotated translation of several sections of *The Good Soldier* to provide possible solutions for the problems afore mentioned.

Ultimately this thesis will form an answer to the following question: what are the difficulties that can arise when a translation of a text with an unreliable narrator is to be made?

Contents

Introduction	1
Ford Madox Ford	6
Life	6
The Good Soldier	9
Plot	9
Themes	11
Narration and Unreliability	12
The Unreliable Narrator	14
The Implied Author	15
Unreliable Narration: Multiple Values	18
Irony	20
The Good (?) Soldier	25
John Dowell as Unreliable Narrator	25
Translating an Unreliable Narrator	31
Stylistic Analysis	32
Preliminary notions	32
A: Lexical categories	35
B: Grammatical categories & syntax	38
C: Figures of Speech	40
D: Context and Cohesion	40
Theory to Practice: Translating <i>The Good Soldier</i>	45
Keywords	46
Addressing the reader	50
Syntax & Grammar	53

Annotated Translation	56
Conclusion.....	56
Bibliography.....	80
Reference Works	82
Appendices	83
1: The Good Soldier, source text.....	83
2: Ford Madox Ford's life: Chronology	90
3: Ford Madox Ford: Novels	92
4: Communicative Model of the Translated Narrative Text (O'sullivan, 2003).....	93

Ford Madox Ford

Life¹

Ford Madox Ford was born as Ford Hermann Hueffer on the seventeenth of December 1873 in Merton, Surry, as the son of Dr. Francis Hueffer and Catherine Madox Brown. Francis Hueffer was a German musicologist and the leading music critic for *The Times* of London. Ford's grandfather was the pre-Raphaelite painter Ford Madox Brown, his uncles were editor and writer William Rossetti and poet and painter Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Their sister, Christina Rossetti, was also a poet. With such an artistically occupied family it might not at all seem strange that Ford Madox Ford, as we shall later see, devoted his life to the arts—the art of writing in particular. As Sondra J. Stang describes in her book *Ford Madox Ford*: “The households in which Ford grew up — both his father's and, after his death, the grandfather's — provided an atmosphere in which it was assumed that a life spent in the service of the arts was not only the best of all possible lives but the only possible life” (9). Ford's father and grandfather were frequently visited by influential Victorian and pre-Raphaelite artists. Despite an upbringing in these surroundings, Ford was never actively encouraged to start writing. His younger brother Oliver seemed the more promising, leaving the role of the family's second best to Ford: “From my earliest days I was taught ... to regard him as the sparkling jewel of the family, while I was its ugly duckling” (qtd. in Stang 10). His father once called him “the patient but extremely stupid donkey” (qtd. in Stang 10). Ford's father died of a heart attack in January 1889 leaving him with the imperative: “Fordie, whatever you do, never write a book” (Stang 13).

¹ A chronology as well as a bibliography can be found as appendices to this thesis.

After the death of his father, Ford, his mother and his sister Juliet moved in with his grandfather and Ford started attending University College School studying music. Ford Madox Brown had great expectations for his grandchildren and, contrary to his son, pushed publication for *The Brown Owl*, a fairy tale that Ford had written for his sister Juliet. “To ensure its success, the grandfather illustrated it with [...] his drawings [...] Ford was to say that *The Brown Owl* had sold better than anything he ever published”(Stang 15). Ford allegedly cared greatly for his grandfather and it is his name that provided the basis for his own pseudonym Ford Madox Ford. Ford Madox Brown died when Ford was twenty-three. Inspired by his grandfather who had at times made his house a community for artists, Ford started a community of writers, supported by his own – often personally funded – literary magazines: *English Review* in London and *Transatlantic Review* in Paris.

It were the magazines and Ford’s keen eye for spotting talented writers that made Ford “one of the great editors of the twentieth century” (Stang 2). Ford discovered D.H. Lawrence and the *English Review* contained contributions by Thomas Hardy, Henry James, Tolstoy, Joseph Conrad, W.B. Yeats, H.G. Wells, Ezra Pound, Wyndham Lewis and W.H. Hudson. The *Transatlantic Review* published works of Joyce, Gertrude Stein, E.E. Cummings, Pound, Conrad, William Carlos Williams, Paul Valéry, John Dos Passos and Hemingway “whom Ford made his associate editor before Hemingway had published any of his novels” (Stang 3). Ford acclaimed much praise from his fellow writers, especially from Pound who was quoted: “the man who did the work for English writing was Ford Madox Hueffer” (qtd. in Stang 1). He entertained friendships with writers H.G. Wells, Henry James and, most notably, Conrad. In 1898, Ford was introduced to Joseph Conrad with whom he collaborated until 1903. In that time, they wrote three books together: *The Inheritors* (1901), *Romance* (1903), and *The Nature of a Crime* (1924) Ford allegedly helped Conrad improve his English, functioning as a living dictionary and thesaurus to make Conrad’s writing less “bookish” (Stang 23). It was in

collaboration with Conrad that he and Ford developed the impressionistic narrative style called *progression d'effet* that Ford uses in *The Good Soldier*. The theory about the narrative style that Conrad and Ford had developed was that it “must carry the story forward and, that as the story progressed, the story must be carried forward faster and faster and with more and more intensity” (qtd. in Hoffmann 75).

In 1894, Ford eloped with Elsie Martindale after a long courtship and difficulties between him and her parents. Elsie was later to be the mother of his daughters Christina and Katherine. Elsie and Ford lived together until 1908, when he met and fell in love with the writer Violet Hunt. Ford moved to Germany to divorce Elsie under German law, yet she refused and they remained married but rarely saw each other again. Ford was a romantic man who had enjoyed the company of many women in his life. In 1918, Ford met the painter Stella Bowen, the mother of his third daughter Julie, with whom he moved to France. When living in Paris with Stella, Ford met the destitute and friendless Jean Rhys. They took her in and Ford later had an affair with her. The last woman Ford lived with was the painter Janice Biala. Scholars suggest that the character of Edward Ashburnham in *The Good Soldier* is modelled after Ford himself.

In 1915, after the publication of *The Good Soldier*, Ford enrolled in the British Army to serve in World War I. Ford lost his ‘prodigious’ memory after he had been gassed: “once he had been able, he reported, to sit down and not translate but write out in French all of *The Good Soldier* from memory. Now he was ‘deliriously’ unable to remember names” (Stang 29). Ford returned to London in 1919 and felt that everyone had forgotten him. To start anew, he then changed his name to Ford Madox Ford.

In 1934, Ford travels to the United States where he is later appointed as professor of comparative literature at Olivet College in Michigan. After falling ill, Ford tried to return to the Provence but died underway in Deauville on the 26th of June, 1939. “Only Janice Biala,

the painter with whom Ford had lived very happily since 1930, and two friends were there to bury him, appropriately, on a hillside overlooking the sea” (Stang 38).

The Good Soldier

The Good Soldier is, as Ford wrote in a dedicatory letter to Stella Bowen, his “great auk’s egg” and was to be, as Stang puts it, “proof to himself and to the world that if he put everything he knew about the art of the novel into one book, it would be the book that would represent him more honourably and accurately than anything he had ever done” (Stang 69).

As a literary critic, Ford had great respect for the French writer Gustave Flaubert and his “concern with style in relation to subject and form” (Hoffmann 76) and it is from the work of Flaubert that Conrad and Ford’s notion of ‘progression d’effet’ arose. First published in 1915, *The Good Soldier* has been said to be the first novel in which the ‘fin-de-cycle’ changes in society and the attitudes towards it have been discussed. The work is generally seen as one of the first modernist novels, “completed seven years before *Maubertley*, Pound’s first wholly modern poem, and eighteen years before *Ulysses*” (Mizener 254).

Plot

The Good Soldier covers a time span of roughly nine years and is the story of two befriended couples, the English Ashburnhams and the American Dowells, who annually meet at a spa and health resort in Nauheim, Germany, for four months a year. Both couples are upper class, the Ashburnhams “what is the custom to call ‘quite good people’” (*TGS* 2) an English county family, and the Dowells wealthy Americans living in Europe. The narrator of the story is John Dowell, the husband of Florence Dowell-Hurlbird and the Ashburnhams are named Leonora and Edward (or ‘Teddy’).

During the course of the novel, John Dowell tells to the reader how he found out about the affair between his wife and Edward Ashburnham and the events related to this event as they occurred to him. His writing takes place several months after the last event in the story. The reason for the couples' stay in Nauheim is the weakened hearts of Florence and Edward: "[t]he reason for poor Florence's broken years was a storm at sea upon our first crossing to Europe" and "[t]he reason for his heart was, approximately, polo, or too much hard sportsmanship in his youth" (*TGS* 1). We become acquainted with the couples and discover that Edward Ashburnham is a serial adulterer and that their marriages and the friendship between the couples are not as good as they appear on the surface. Four of Edward's affairs are shared with the reader: that with La Dolciquita, who blackmails Edward and nearly drives the Ashburnhams bankrupt, that with Mrs Basil, his relationship with Maisie Maiden, who dies of her heart condition, his affair with Florence Dowell, who also commits suicide and his love for Nancy Rufford, who eventually goes mad. We learn that Leonora Ashburnham had known about all these affairs, ending La Dolciquita's blackmailing, hitting Maisie Maiden over the head and telling Dowell of the affair between her husband and his wife. It is revealed that the relationship between Leonora and Edward is a mere façade to keep up appearances: "And is it possible to imagine that during all that time Edward and Leonora never spoke a word to each other in private?" (*TGS* 4).

After Florence's suicide (she drinks a vial of prussic acid of which Dowell says he had always thought it was heart-medicine), Dowell –as does Edward — falls in love with the young Nancy Rufford and buys an estate near that of the Ashburnhams. Because Leonora knows about Edward's love for Nancy, she sends her away to her father in India, causing Edward to commit suicide. In the end, Leonora re-marries to Rodney Bayham, "a quite respectable and eminently economical master of the house" (*TGS* 149), Nancy goes mad and Dowell marries her.

Themes

Perhaps the most important theme in the novel is that of the decline of human nature and society on the edge of World War One, and how this is to be interpreted. A clear allusion to the war is the novel's relation to the fourth of August. "At eleven o'clock on the night of August 4 1914, as every English schoolboy knows, England declared war on Germany. At approximately the same hour on the night of August 4, 1913, as every reader of *The Good Soldier* knows, Florence Dowell commits suicide" (Hoffmann 79). Consequently, the whole novel, as Hoffmann points out, is structured around this date:

Part One ends with the death of Maisie on August 4, 1904. Part Two begins with a specific summary of the date as a portent in Florence's life [...] Part Three begins with the revelation to Dowell of his wife's infidelity with Ashburnham (begun on or just before August 4, 1904; ended August 4, 1913) [...] (Hoffmann 81)

Dowell, as he tries to make sense of the events in his life, tries to make sense of how a society that is governed by good people can fall. In the novel, it is the 'good people' who bring the decline and "the breaking-up of [their] little four-square coterie" (*TGS* 2) upon themselves. The mere appearance of their goodheartedness was a façade for the "rotteness at the core".

It is here that another theme of the novel arises, that of the upper class English and their emotional detachment, their restraint towards showing emotion. Emotion in the novel is exemplified by the heart. The passions between Florence and Edward are alluded to as they are both 'sufferers of the heart'. Their physical heart condition, however, appears to be a sham and it becomes clear that their real troubles are with keeping their passion in check. As a result, both are "punished by suicide" (*TGS* 149). The narrator of the story, John Dowell, never alludes to his own heart and is consequently presented as a man without passion: "[i]t is not that he did not 'love' his wife, but that Dowell, being a proper Philadelphia gentleman, did not respond to her one gesture of passion toward the night of their elopement" (Hoffmann 84).

Ford aims at the impossibility and inevitable dangers of the emotions and passions of human beings and the English habit of hiding them, tucking them away underneath in order to keep up appearances. As an American, Dowell is the designated person to comment on the European passions, as he does when he talks about Florence's infidelity: "She need not have done what she did. She was an American, a New Englander. She had not the hot passions of these Europeans" (*TGS* 41).

In his search for balance between instinct and civilisation, "Dowell raises fundamental questions that are everywhere implicit in the story. Why do men find it impossible to be happy? How can they live if they are not to deny their instincts? [...] what is civilisation worth—how much suffering? In short, how can men find a workable relationship between their instincts and civilisation?" (Stang 71-2). These fundamental questions, as Stang suggests, are the basis for a Freudian reading of the novel:

Freud was to discuss these same questions in two great essays, *Civilisation and Its Discontents* and *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, but it is important to remember that *The Good Soldier* was published fifteen years before the first essay and five years before the second. With great originality, Ford explored novelistically what Freud presented as argument (Stang 72)

Dowell, as the narrator of his own story, is an example of how mankind tries to find its way through life.

Narration and Unreliability

The narrator of *The Good Soldier* is, as said, John Dowell, a first-person narrator who is also a participant in the story. Dowell's narration relies on the principle of 'progression d'effet' and is presented as free direct thought, occasionally alternated with direct speech where Dowell quotes the other characters in the story. Despite his eloquence, Dowell's free direct thought allows for an impressionist narration in which Dowell is able to tell "[...] the story as it

comes” (*TGS* 108) and to digress, emphasise, understate and abbreviate. It also allows him to tell the story in a psychological rather than chronological order.

In his biography of Ford Madox Ford, *The Saddest Story*, Arthur Mizener aptly named the problems that arise when judging John Dowell as a narrator:

The Good Soldier has been the subject of a great deal of controversy that depends ultimately on the ambiguity of fictions narrated in the first person by a participant. In such fictions there is no way for the author to provide us with a reliable judgment of the narrator so that we can determine how to take what he tells us. We can know how to take a dramatised narrator only if we share the author’s values. The author cannot tell the reader what these are; each reader must guess; and what each reader usually guesses is that the author has the same values he has (Mizener 258)

As will be exemplified later in this thesis, Dowell’s narration of his participation in the story forces the reader to question his knowledge: is it possible that he knew about the affair of his wife and Edward Ashburnham? How could he not have known about the affair? What are his true feelings about the other characters in the novel? How does he truly feel about himself? Is it possible that he is continually lying? Where, if at all, is Dowell telling the truth? Mizener suggest that “[a]s a result critics have seen John Dowell [...] as everything from a man ‘incapable of passion, sexual and moral alike,’ who suffered from ‘the dull hysteria of sloth...the sluggish insanity of defective love’ to a ‘narrator [who] fits the [Conrad-Ford] ideal better than Conrad’s Marlow, being even less of an idiosyncratic observer’” (Mizener 258).

The Unreliable Narrator

To be able to translate the aspect of the unreliable narrator, we first need to fully understand what this concept entails. Once the ground rules have been established, John Dowell can – as a narrator – be put up to scrutiny and this particular aspect of *The Good Soldier* can be clearly identified and properly translated. This chapter will be concerned with a thorough analysis of the concept of the unreliable narrator and provide a useable definition for this thesis.

Unreliable narrators are more often used in literary fiction, famous examples include Nick Carraway in Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, the narrator in Henry James' *The Sacred Fount* and Benji Compson in Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*. Whilst these characters are all identified as unreliable or fallible narrators like John Dowell, they have little else in common. Benji is mentally handicapped, Nick Carraway a well-educated World War I veteran and the unnamed narrator in *The Sacred Fount* is a self-proclaimed detective in search of vampirism amongst the guests at a weekend party. Dissimilar as these characters might be, there is a common ground between these narrators: the reader knows that their commentary can not be trusted.

The question arises as to how the reader knows that an unreliable or fallible narrator is indeed unreliable. The narrator does not present himself as such, on the contrary: the experiences of the narrator are related to us first hand and “[w]e ordinarily accept what a narrator tells us as authoritative” (Abrams 244).

So if the reader generally accepts the narrator as an authoritative figure and if the narrator presents himself as such, how then does the reader recognise the unreliable narrator? This is because the author has created a narrative style that contains clues of the narrator's unreliability. In her paper “Reconsidering Unreliability” (Olson 2003), Greta Olson has investigated two important works on the concept of unreliable narration. One of these works is *Unreliable Narration* by Ansgar Nünning and the other is the explanation by Wayne Booth,

which she deems more practical and likely to be more correct. In his books *A Rhetoric of Irony* and *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, Wayne Booth investigates the concept of the unreliable or fallible narrator and poses it directly opposite to the reliable narrator. Nünning argues that unreliability and reliability are not binary opposites and that unreliability is a reader-generated phenomenon, rather than a quality that emanates from the text itself. For the sake of translating *The Good Soldier*, this paper will use the definition by Booth as this treats unreliability as a quality within the text. When unreliability is considered part of the text, it will become one of the features to be translated with it.

The Implied Author

To understand Booth's explanation of the concept of the unreliable narrator it is important to understand the term 'implied author'. Booth coined the term implied author to exemplify the distance between the real author and his or her work, and thus avoids the problems that can arise with an autobiographical reading of a novel (Olson 94). The personality of an implied author can be a complete opposite of that of the real author. The implied author is a representation of a disguise that the real author uses to tell the story with a certain effect. As Booth mentions: "the telling is itself a dramatic rendering of a relationship with the author's 'second self'"² (*Fiction* 212). Booth calls the picture that the reader gets of the implied author one of the most important effects of a work (*Fiction* 71). A reader will react differently to different types of implied authors and this reaction helps to determine the reader's response to the work. The writer can alter the guise of the implied author to suit the effect he or she is

² Strikingly, Ford had noticed his 'second self', only he called it 'the under self'. "... somewhere inside him, apparently beyond the control of his conscious will, there was another self in Ford, what he called in his novels 'the under self.' This under self is the source of his best work. Its voice can be heard from time to time in his earlier books, but it is clearest in *The Good Soldier* and *Parade's End* (Mizener xxiii).

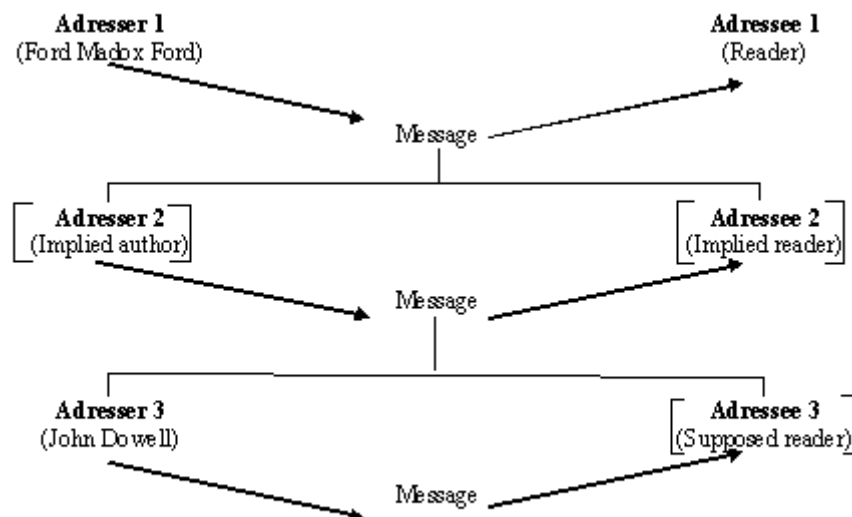
trying to achieve. Booth says that it is important for the reader to be able to grasp what position he or she should take in “the world of values” (*Fiction* 73) and that the implied author is a method deployed by the writer to help the reader determine the meaning of the text:

Our sense of the implied author includes not only the extractable meanings but also the moral and emotional content of each bit of action and suffering of all of the characters.

It includes, in short, the intuitive apprehension of a completed artistic whole; the chief value to which *this* implied author is committed, regardless of what party his creator belongs to in real life, is that which is expressed by the total form. (*Fiction* 73-74)

In this way it is possible for the writer to create different implied authors for different works; the writer is not limited by his or her own personality, views or opinions.

It is important to note that there exists a distinction between the implied author and narrator of a novel. The implied author, as the writers’ ‘second self,’ is the one that creates the narrator. The narrator can then in turn tell the reader about one or several protagonists or about him- or herself, creating a first-person narrator. The narrator then becomes the spokesperson for the implied author who is created by the writer to be his spokesperson for a reader that he supposes will read the work. The supposed reader is also called the implied reader. In *Style in Fiction*, Geoffrey Leech and Mick Short have drawn up a diagram to clarify the discourse structure (212). This diagram will now be used to clarify the discourse structure in *The Good Soldier*:



Ford Madox Ford speaks to the reader and yet it is the implied author that speaks to the implied reader which are represented by John Dowell and his addressee. The addressee in this case being the reader to which Dowell tells his story. Dowell addresses the reader directly: “You will gather from this statement that one of us had, as the saying is, a ‘heart’ ...” (*TGS* 1). Were this a conventional literary discourse situation, the discourse participant between square brackets would collapse “into the equivalent participant in the immediately subordinate level of discourse structure” (Leech and Short 212), as happens with the example Leech and Short give us of *David Copperfield*: “The collapsing on the ‘addressee’ side of the diagram takes place more or less by default” (212). In the case of *David Copperfield*, the collapsing takes place because the novel is narrated by an I-narrator and there is no evidence that there is anyone listening, so the reader supposes David is talking directly to him or her. The problem that arises when a story is told to us by an unreliable narrator is that the collapsing never takes place or that the discourse structure unfolds again.

Unreliable Narration: Multiple Values

The discourse structure as discussed in the previous paragraph is a representation of what Booth calls the "...implied dialogue among author, narrator, the other characters, and the reader" (155). Booth notes that it is this dialogue that contains the range in which these four can sway from identification to complete opposition "... on any axis of value, moral, intellectual, aesthetic, and even physical" (155). Booth explains that the distance can vary between: the narrator and the implied author, the narrator and the characters, the narrator and the reader's own norms, the implied author and the reader, and the implied author and the other characters. It is the distance between these agents that forms the effect which makes the reader relate to a literary work to greater or lesser degree. Booth notes that this effect can be obvious or subtle and that it depends on a wide variety of variables: "It is obvious that on each of these scales my examples do not begin to cover the possibilities. What we call 'involvement' or 'sympathy' or 'identification,' is usually made up of many reactions to author, narrators, observers, and other characters" (*Fiction* 158). Booth recognises the impracticality of this wide range of possibilities and defines the concept of the unreliable narrator as follows:

For practical criticism probably the most important of these kinds of distance is that between the fallible or unreliable narrator and the implied author who carries the reader with him in judging the narrator [...] [i]f he is discovered to be untrustworthy, then the total effect of the work he relays to us is transformed [...] I have called a narrator *reliable* when he speaks for or acts in accordance with the norms of the work (which is to say, the implied author's norms), *unreliable* when he does not. (*Fiction* 158-9)

It is thus the difference between the norms of the implied author and that of the narrator which makes the latter unreliable.

The ‘unfolding’ of the discourse structure as presented by Leech and Short happens when the reader becomes aware of the difference in values between the implied author and the narrator. Leech and Short mention that there is a set of shared values from which a writer can draw to help the reader form an opinion of the character, for example: “[...] readers will tend to have a prejudice in favour of people who are kind to children, and against people who are cruel to them” (221). It is when the prejudices of the implied author differ from those of the narrator that the unreliable narrator emerges. In the case of *The Good Soldier*, one might assume that most readers will have a negative attitude towards the adultery of Florence and Edward. As an example: even though Edward Ashburnham had an affair with his wife, in the end John Dowell mentions that he loves Edward: “For I can’t conceal from myself the fact that I loved Edward Ashburnham” (*TGS* 149). It is reasonable to assume that the reader might find it difficult to concile this statement from Dowell with the affair between Edward and his wife. The reader will likely question Dowell’s positive statement as the general prejudice towards people who commit adultery is a negative one. And here the discourse structure unfolds, as Leech and Short note:

It may be that the assumption of agreement is one of the features that distinguish fictional discourse from other kinds of discourse. It is not that we as readers cannot disagree with the values portrayed by the author, but that if we are made conscious of disagreement, this is a sign of the author’s failure to carry us with him: like suspension of disbelief, suspension of dissent seems to be a sacrifice which readers are ready to accept in embarking on the adventure of reading a novel. (222)

An unreliable narrator increases the distance between himself and the reader whereas the distance between the implied author and the reader grows smaller as they are both more distant from the unreliable narrator. The basis for these distances is a strong understanding

between the reader and the implied author on the bases of values, Booth calls this the ‘secret communion’.

Irony

The basis for the secret communion, or mutual understanding between the reader and the implied author, can exist prior to the novel, as is the case with the example of kindness and cruelty to children as provided by Short and Leech, or it can be developed in the novel itself. The implied author then attempts to establish – or re-establish – a secret communion between himself and the reader. According to Leech and Short, the secret communion is the basis for irony in a novel and define irony as follows: “a double significance which arises from the contrast in values between different points of view” (223). Greta Olson also remarks on irony as pre-existing agreements between human beings that are awoken by the text: “that is why we understand ‘is that your coat on the floor?’ to mean ‘I want you to pick it up now’” (Olson 94). It is this understanding between reader and implied author that allows the reader to identify an unreliable narrator as an unreliable narrator. Booth and Olson understand unreliable narration to be a part of irony. When the careful reader identifies irony he will almost simultaneously indentify the unreliability of the narrator. In *A Rhetoric of Irony*, Booth has proposed four steps to reconstructing irony.

Step one of the process of reconstructing irony is that “the reader is required to reject the literal meaning” (*Irony* 10). Booth rightly says that the words are weighed and – by the careful reader – put up to scrutiny. The reader will then discover “either some incongruity among the words or between the words and something else he knows” (*Irony* 10). Dowell’s professed love for Edward is an example of this incongruity and it can also be found in the very first sentence of *The Good Soldier*:

“This is the saddest story I have ever heard.”

There is no incongruity in this sentence itself, the narrator simply introduces a story that he has heard, that has happened to someone else and in which he had no part to play. Yet on further reading it becomes apparent that the narrator is in fact an actor in the story he refers to. This is where the reader can feel that he or she needs to reject the literal meaning. If the narrator is telling his own story, how then can he have heard it from another source?

Step two in Booth's reconstruction entails trying out alternative interpretations or explanations. Booth suggests that the reader might consider the author crazy, incompetent or fallible. Perhaps the writer made a mistake. In this example however, seeing that it is the very first sentence of the novel, it is very unlikely that the implied author purposelessly jotted down this sentence or that he later failed to notice his mistake.

The third step is when the reader makes a decision about the author's knowledge or beliefs and thereby his intentions. Booth says: "It is this decision about the author's own beliefs that entwines the interpretation of stable ironies so inescapably in intentions" (*Irony* 11). As Booth believes Voltaire to be ironic in the example given in his *A Rhetoric of Irony*³, so do I believe that Ford is deliberately ironic.

Step four, when the reader has made a decision about the knowledge or beliefs of the author, is to choose a new meaning which suits the reader best. Booth sums it up as follows: "in contrast to what statement [the implied author] pretends to be making, which implies beliefs that he cannot have held, he is really saying such-and-such, which is in harmony with what I know or can infer about his beliefs and intentions" (*Irony* 12).

³ Booth's example is a line from Voltaire's *Candide*: "when all was over and the rival kings were celebrating their victory with Te Deums in their respective camps...". In his explanation of step three, Booth remarks: "My confidence that Voltaire was being ironic [...] depends on my conviction that, like me, he sees and rejects what the statement implies: 'Both sides can win a war.'" (*Irony* 11).

Olson presumes that the decision about what is meant in the text will be shared by the careful readers: “finally, a non-literal meaning is settled upon, one that most sophisticated readers—‘those who have the necessary information’—would agree upon and unsophisticated readers would not” (95). It is this agreement between readers and – as I would like to propose – the implied author that makes up the secret communion. It is only when the reader understands the implied author that he is able to notice the irony and the unreliable narrator. The incongruities between the knowledge and beliefs of the implied author and the narrator are what makes the narrator an unreliable one. It is the irony and the mutual understanding that signal at the clues and evidence for the narrator’s unreliability.

Greta Olson has outlined several of these clues Booth has identified. She states that the reader generally accepts the literal meaning until textual signals indicate that this meaning no longer applies. These clues include:

(1) Paratextual elements as in titles such as [*Gullible’s Travels*,] Thomas Mann’s *Felix Krull*, *Confidence Man* and in epigraphs; (2) direct warnings that the author should not be confused with the narrator as in Nabakov’s postscript to *Lolita* in which he distances himself from the sexual preferences of Humbert Humbert; (3) obvious grammatical, stylistic, or historic mistakes on part of the narrator; (4) conflicts between fictional facts; (5) and discrepancies between the values asserted in the work and those of the author in other contexts (Olson 95)

These clues and how they appear in *The Good Soldier* will be examined in the following chapter.

An important notion about the concept of unreliability is that an unreliable narrator is not necessarily the same as a lying narrator, as Booth point out in *The Rhetoric of Fiction*: “It is most often a matter of what [Henry] James calls *inconscience*; the narrator is mistaken, or he believes himself to have qualities which the author denies him” (*Fiction* 159). There is

however a great variety in unreliable narrators. Some of these narrators (perhaps the easiest to spot) are indeed lying, their narration is purposely not in sync with – fictional – fact, others are misinformed or miss out on vital bits of information, some bestow character traits on themselves that the implied author denies them. There are unreliable narrators whose actions are conflicting with their proposed norms, knowledge and ideas. Some narrators are morally flawed, like Humbert Humbert in *Lolita*, others are cognitively impaired, like Benji in *The Sound and the Fury*. There are narrators who are unreliable because they have the wrong self image “...as in *Huckleberry Finn*, [where] the narrator claims to be naturally wicked while the author silently praises his virtues behind his back” (*Fiction* 159). I argue that John Dowell in *The Good Soldier* is an unreliable narrator because he elaborates on trivial matters to disguise that he is leaving out vital information about events and – most importantly – about his character. The true nature of his character however, as we shall later see, is disclosed to the reader through various literary techniques the implied author applies.

An unreliable narrator is created when the narrator’s norms and values differ from those of the implied author (or ‘second self’ of the author). The unreliable narrator is a literary device used by the implied author to decrease the distance between him and the reader, creating – or strengthening – a mutual understanding, or secret communion, which forms the basis for the deployment of irony in a literary work. It is then because of the ironic properties of a text that the unreliable narrator is revealed. The textual signals make the sophisticated reader aware that the narrator’s norms and values differ from those of the implied author by undergoing four steps: (1) the need to reject the literal meaning, (2) trying out alternative meanings, (3) make a decision about the author’s knowledge, (4) choose a new meaning. However, careful reading is required to establish the secret communion that is needed for the deployment of irony.

The one thing that all unreliable narrators have in common is that “they depart from their author’s [or implied author’s] norms” (*Fiction* 159), creating a bigger gap between the implied author and themselves and making the one between the implied author and the reader smaller. The manner in which they do so and the size of the distance between the norms of the implied author and those of the narrator can vary considerably.

The Good (?) Soldier

John Dowell as Unreliable Narrator

At first glance, there appears to be no reason to doubt John Dowell as a reliable source for the story he relates to the reader; it is the story of his own experiences, he is a first-hand witness and he promises the reader that he will relate his story as if they were in a cottage by a fireside together. He is elaborate in his descriptions and often mentions the specific numbers of dates, people's ages and stretches of time:

Captain Ashburnham [...] was thirty-three; Mrs Ashburnham – Leonora – was thirty one. I was thirty-six and poor Florence thirty. Thus today Florence would have been thirty-nine and Captain Ashburnham forty-two; whereas I am forty-five and Leonora forty (*TGS 2*)

If for nine years I have possessed a goodly apple that is rotten at the core and discover its rottenness only in nine years and six months less four days, isn't it true to say that for nine years I possessed a goodly apple? (*TGS 3*)

Because numbers are easily checked – in contrary to, for example, moods and feelings – this gives the reader the impression that his story is factual and accurate. Yet soon onwards in the novel, the reliability of the narrator begins to crack and crumble. Dowell shows clear doubt of himself and his knowledge: “I know nothing – nothing in the world – of the hearts of men” ; “what do I know even of the smoking room?” ; “I don't know how it is best to put this thing down” (*TGS 3,5,6*). And yet this is still Dowell giving the reader the impression that he is sharing his doubts, fears, everything, as he is trying to establish a bond as if he and the reader

sat together by a fireside in a cottage. For the less-careful reader it is easy to believe Dowell, “we ordinarily accept what a narrator tells us as authoritative” (Abrams 244) and he seems honest about what he knows and does not know. There also appears to be no reason for him to lie.

Still, the reader cannot accept that Dowell is the ignorant fool he makes himself out to be. As Sondra Stang points out in her book *Ford Madox Ford*:

Dowell is a *faux-naif* of the most artful kind, a pretender to innocence, a master of obfuscation, a manipulator of every trick, the most unreliable of unreliable narrators. There are overstatements, understatement, denials, lies evasions, contradictions, accusations, exaggerations, puns, apparent irrelevancies, logical fallacies, omitted links, digressions, sharp anticipations, delayed explanations, swings of mood, and explosions great and small. He embarrasses, bullies, confuses, and tests the reader; he presumes on his credulity; he cloys, simpers, condescends; he writes of ‘monstrous things’ in a ‘frivolous manner.’ He spirals up and down, toward and away from his point, buries it, conceals it, flattens and misleads with false emphasis; he lurches from self-denigration to self-promotion and back; he suddenly varies the intensities and the volume and pushes himself into the story. And he repeats. (Stang 72-3)

It is clear that Stang has established a secret communion with the implied author by picking up on the textual clues described by Booth. Perhaps she has done so unconsciously, for there is no mention in her book of where these hints appear in the novel. To show that Dowell actually is the unreliable narrator Stang makes him out to be, I will now take *The Good Soldier* through these clues.

The first of the clues that Booth mentions are the paratextual elements, such as titles. Even though Ford's original intention was to give *The Good Soldier* another name,⁴ this title can still be said to be ironic, as most readers would agree that the adulterer Edward Ashburnham – the good soldier in the title – is not worthy of the moniker. The second indicator, a direct warning of Ford that he is not to be confused with the narrator is absent, as is conventionally the case in novels. In fact, it is suggested that *The Good Soldier* is based on an event in Ford's personal life.⁵

Another important clue in connection to a possible unreliable narrator is when faults appear between fictional facts. In *The Good Soldier*, these faults are limited to just one. As we have seen, almost all events in the book take place on the fourth of August: Florence's birthday, the start of her journey around the world, her affair with Jimmy, John and Florence's wedding day, when the Ashburnhams first meet the Dowells, the boxing of Maisie's ears, the death of Maisie Maiden, the beginning of the affair between Edward and Florence, when Leonora finds out about the affair, and Florence's suicide. As said, the fourth of November is an important date in the book because it symbolises its link with the First World War, which started when England declared war on Germany on the fourth of August 1914, at eleven o'clock at night. Florence commits suicide at about the same time on the same date in 1913.

⁴ The title Ford had proposed was *The Saddest Story* but the publishers asked for a different title as they did not think it appropriate during the First World War. “[H]alf ironically, he suggested *The Good Soldier*” (Mizener xiii).

⁵ Ford was asked to accompany a married man and his mistress to the station. The girl was to be sent away to avoid scandal. The man and girl parted with lack of display of affection and emotion which Ford found “to be a manifestation of a national [English] characteristic that is almost appalling” The girl died underway “and Ford comments ‘that at the moment of separation a word or two might have saved the girl’s life and the man’s misery’” (Hoffmann 75). Almost exactly the same scene occurs towards the end of the novel, when Edward and Dowell escort Nancy Rufford to the trainstation.

There are some errors that Dowell makes when referring to the specific dates. The date of the death of Maisie Maiden for instance, is later referred to by Dowell as a month after the two couples met at Nauheim. Yet this would mean that Maisie died in early September, not August. There is however evidence that these errors are not deliberate. Hoffmann points out that in the manuscript version of *The Good Soldier*, the original date for the first meeting was in July 1906 instead of August 1904.

The signals that matter most, specifically when bearing in mind that a translation of the novel has to be made, are: the obvious historical flaws and flaws in grammar and style on part of the narrator and discrepancies between the values asserted in the work and between them and those of the implied author.⁶ I have found no evidence of historical flaws in *The Good Soldier*, nor have I found evidence to suggest otherwise. Even if there were historical flaws, there would be little benefit in treating them here, as I will explain in the next section. Little grammatical and stylistic flaws were discovered, apart from the ones Stang also remarks upon: “[...] he writes of ‘monstrous things’ in a ‘frivolous manner’” (Stang 73). *The Good Soldier* is an intricate web woven by a stylistically complex narrative, yet never does Ford seem to drop the ball. The novel is of course Ford’s “Auk’s egg”; the culmination of his stylistic powers.

The main signals then, are the incongruities between the norms of the narrator and those asserted in the work and those of the implied author. Or, as Arthur Mizener aptly puts it in his biography of Ford: “The ironic wit of *The Good Soldier*’s style depends, not on a

⁶ I have here adapted the last clue as given by Olson: “discrepancies between the values asserted in the work and those of the author in other contexts” (Olson 95) because I want to assess the unreliability within *The Good Soldier*. Readers of the source text and/or the translation are likely to be unfamiliar with Ford’s values, life and work.

discrepancy between the narrator's attitude and Ford's, but on a discrepancy between Dowell's attitude as a participant in the events and Dowell's attitude as a narrator of them" (Mizener 265). Dowell takes the reader back to events he did not understand at the time and of which he poses to know little at the time of telling. Dowell's chronologically jumbled narrative – "I have, I am aware, told this story in a very rambling way" (*TGS* 108) – gives the reader an insight into Dowell's confusion and the impression that he is truly telling the story as it came to him. The sequencing in *The Good Soldier* is psychological instead of chronological. Jan-Jaap Spies notices the same effect in his thesis on *The Sound and the Fury*: "Although this technique renders the reconstruction of the events more difficult for readers, they get acquainted with the mind of the narrator more intimately than would have been the case with outside narration" (Spies 22). The psychological sequencing is Dowell's means to confuse the reader and convince him that he (Dowell) does not know what to make of the story and never has. However, at the time he is writing this story he knows everything, almost as an omniscient narrator, and every now and then the reader is given the impression that he has known all along. Dowell is a smart and educated man, with a keen eye for colour and an enormous attention to detail. It is as nothing in the nine years of which he tells us has missed his attention, every little detail and anecdote is remembered and shared with the reader. And yet he had failed to notice the affair between Edward and Florence. Moreover, he had failed to notice that Florence feigned her heart condition. At least, this is what he tells the reader and yet the ironic clues in the story suggest otherwise, as Arthur Mizener has made insightful by applying italics to the following section from *The Good Soldier*: "I believe that for the twelve years [Florence's] life lasted, after the storm that *seemed* irretrievably to have weakened her heart—I don't believe that for one minute she was out of my sight, *except when she was safely tucked up in bed...*" –with Jimmy" (Mizener 266). The discrepancies between Dowell's actions and his narrative, the incongruities between the norms in his narrative and those in his

actions, are the signals provided for the reader by the implied author that unmask the unreliable narrator in *The Good Soldier*.

Unreliable Narration in *TGS*

This section will be concerned with identifying the features that make up *The Good Soldier's* unreliable narrator. After having identified John Dowell as an unreliable narrator it is now important to know which textual elements provide for this aspect. As the irony and the unreliability of Dowell are two of the main attractions of *The Good Soldier*,⁷ the reader must be able to establish a secret communion to appreciate the irony in the novel. The secret communion here however, is not between the reader and the implied author (as we have seen earlier in this thesis in the diagram of Leech and Short), it is between the reader and the implied translator, who positions him-/herself between the implied author and the reader. Emer O'Sullivan has identified the function of the implied translator in her article "Narratology Meets Translation Studies, or, The Voice of the Translator in Children's Literature": The translator functions as the implied reader of the source text. He/she then creates the target text (the translation) which is parallel to the source text and which is directed to a new implied reader: the implied reader of the target text⁸ (O'Sullivan par. 13). The communication between the real author of the source text and the real reader of the target text is enabled by the real translator. The real author, real translator and real reader are all agents outside the text. Within the text, the implied author is communicated through the implied translator to the implied reader. As the implied translator is the only source of information for the reader of the translation, it is this translator that needs to re-establish the bond between him/her and the reader if the target text is to have the same effect as the source text.

⁷ The notion of Spies about *The Sound and the Fury* "the story is not complex but the narrative is" (Spies 22), is mostly true for *The Good Soldier*. Simply translating the storyline would do the original no justice at all.

⁸ O'Sullivan's model is added as an appendix to this thesis.

As mentioned before, the historical mistakes as well as the mistakes in fictional facts are of less interest when translating a text with an unreliable narrator. These errors will most likely find their way into the translation and have little to do with the grammar, semantics or stylistics of the text. The fourth of August 1914 will in Dutch still be the fourth of August, 1914. Historical errors can be handled in the same way. The translator must however in this case be aware that – when perhaps checking the facts – he/she does not correct the author when he has made a historical mistake; it was surely his intention to use it as a flag to signal an incongruity between the norms of the implied author and the narrator.

Stylistic Analysis

It is clear then that for the translation of the irony and the unreliable narration we must look for oddities in the grammar, semantics and general style of the text, as well as the incongruities between the norms of the narrator and the implied author. To find the special grammatical, semantic and stylistic aspects of the text I will, in the next section, follow the example of Spies (as *The Sound and the Fury* also has an unreliable narrator) and use the stylistic model of Leech and Short to analyse Dowell's narration in two fragments of *The Good Soldier*: part one of the first chapter (pages 1-6) and the end of the story (pages 149-151). This model consists of: a preceding summary; (A) Lexical categories; (B) Grammatical categories; (C) Figures of speech; (D) Context and cohesion.

Preliminary notions

The first aspect of John Dowell's narration in *The Good Soldier* the reader is likely to notice are the long sentences alternating with short sentences and questions and exclamations, for example: "I don't know; I don't know; was that last remark of hers the remark of a harlot, or is it what every decent woman, county family or not county family, thinks at the bottom of her

heart? Or thinks all the time for the matter of that? Who knows?" (*TGS* 5). Noticeable is Dowell's tendency to provide as much information as possible, as he often digresses. The next excerpt starts out as an explanation of Dowell's sympathies for Edward but then becomes a digression about men in smoking rooms and how they care about carnal matters:

I don't want you to think that I am writing Teddy Ashburnham down a brute. I don't believe he was. God knows, perhaps all men are like that. For as I've said what do I know even of the smoking-room? Fellows come in and tell the most extraordinarily gross stories—so gross that they will positively give you a pain. And yet they'd be offended if you suggested that they weren't the sort of person you could trust your wife alone with. And very likely they'd be quite properly offended—that is if you can trust anybody alone with anybody. But that sort of fellow obviously takes more delight in listening to or in telling gross stories—more delight than in anything else in the world. They'll hunt languidly and dress languidly and dine languidly and work without enthusiasm and find it a bore to carry on three minutes' conversation about anything whatever and yet, when the other sort of conversation begins, they'll laugh and wake up and throw themselves about in their chairs. Then, if they so delight in the narration, how is it possible that they can be offended—and properly offended—at the suggestion that they might make attempts upon your wife's honour? (*TGS* 5).

After this section, Dowell turns his attention back to Edward, his actual focus: "Or again: Edward Ashburnham was the cleanest looking sort of chap [...]" (*TGS* 6). He does this after his mind had wandered off to the smoking room, to the men in the smoking room, how they tell their stories, what their attitude is towards various aspects of their lives and how they would react to accusations about making "attempts upon your wife's honour".

The novel has a first person narrative varying between past and present tense and together with the digression and the long sentences strewn with commas, this gives the reader

the impression that he is offered an insight into the mind of the narrator. John Dowell appears to be relating his every thought to the reader, mentioning every detail that springs up in his mind. The first few paragraphs of the book introduce the main characters and give a short description of their interrelation and individual origins and then the narrative turns to Dowell's personal sentiment about the affairs he is yet to relate to the reader. Dowell asks one rhetorical question after the other and the text becomes riddled with question marks and exclamation marks (*TGS* 2-6). Early in the novel, in the second paragraph, the attention of the narrative is directed to the reader: "Paris, you see, was our home [...]" (*TGS* 1). At the beginning of the sixth paragraph, this effect is even stronger: "You may well ask why I write" (*TGS* 2), drawing the reader further in and creating the impression that Dowell is speaking to the reader directly. As mentioned before, the sequence of events as related by the narrator is not chronological but psychological, strengthening the impression that Dowell is telling the story "as it comes" (*TGS* 108).

Dowell then is the narrator of the story, yet also the main focaliser. All the events in the book are directly related to his point of view and what the other characters tell him. In terms of the discourse situation it is this aspect that makes the careful reader unfold the discourse structure, as I have shown in the previous chapter. It is this unfolding that is relevant to the translator as he/she will be positioned in the discourse structure. It is then up to the translator whether or not – and to what degree – he/she wishes to make him-/herself visible. For my translation, I have opted for as little visibility as possible to minimise the interference in the communication between the implied author and real reader of the target text. Another important aspect of the unfolding of the discourse structure that is relevant to the translator – and more relevant to my topic – is that the unfolding makes the existence of the unreliable narrator possible. If there is no difference between the narrator and the implied

author, there can be no incongruities between them and the unreliable narrator would – according to Booth’s definition – not exist.

A: Lexical categories

The general notion about the vocabulary of John Dowell is that it is complex. Both the objective method of Leech and Short of counting the syllables (64-5) as the more subjective method of identifying semantically difficult words point in the direction of a complex vocabulary. Dowell uses a formal vocabulary with many allusions to art and history to illustrate his point:

Yes, she went right off to England to her attorney and his while he was still in the arms of his Circe [...] [H]e got sick of the lady quite quickly, but not before Leonora had had such lessons in the art of business from her attorney that she had her plan as clearly drawn up as was ever that of General Trochu for keeping the Prussians out of Paris in 1870 (*TGS* 32).

To interpret these words, a certain degree of knowledge of art and history is required. Trochu, for instance, was famed for his passive defence of Paris and if the reader is unfamiliar with the classical Circe, he/she might make up that Edward and the girl had a passionate relationship. When considering that Circe was the witch that turned Odysseus’ men into swine and intended to make them all her prisoners, another picture arises. Also, Dowell makes clever use of polysemic words, (most notably ‘good people’ ‘intercourse’, ‘four-square’, ‘heart’, ‘quite’) as will be further examined in the next chapter and the annotated translation. Dowell switches between descriptive and evaluative narrative and although it is clear that he expresses his utter confusion and dislike of the situation, evaluative words are rarely used to express his feelings directly. The evaluative aspect is carried mostly by the rhetoric – as I will discuss in section C – and this effect is so strong that there is little need for a direct evaluative vocabulary, which is clear in the following excerpt:

If for nine years I have possessed a goodly apple that is rotten at the core and discover its rottenness only in nine years and six months less four days, isn't it true to say that for nine years I possessed a goodly apple? So it may well be with Edward Ashburnham, with Leonora his wife and with poor dear Florence. And, if you come to think of it, isn't it a little odd that the physical rottenness of at least two pillars of our four-square house never presented itself to my mind as a menace to its security?

(TGS 3)

Even though 'goodly', 'rotten', 'poor dear' and perhaps even 'pillars' and 'menace' are evaluative, the only evaluative word that directly denotes Dowell's attitude in the section above is 'odd' and this is not a very strong judgement, especially since it is accompanied by the adjective 'little'. The evaluative power of the section (as for most of the book) comes from the questions that Dowell raises; he speaks of physical (objective) rottenness but actually calls Edward and Florence "rotten at the core".

There exists a duality in the adjectives that John Dowell uses in the examined sections. On the one hand they are adjectives with positive connotations: *good, leisured, nicer, right, good, extraordinarily safe, long, tranquil, old beautiful, goodly, friendly, safely, warm, honest, nice, dear, excellent, first rate, one of the best, proper*. Yet the other set of adjectives has an exact opposite connotation: *saddest, sad, poor, unthinkable, crashing, faint, frail, tremulous, horribly, strained, tremendously long, grinding, extraordinarily gross, hopeless, raging* (TGS 1-6). It is striking that almost all the negative adjectives apply to the story and John Dowell himself, whereas the positive adjectives are used to describe Edward and Leonora Ashburnham. Dowell's use of adjectives for Florence has a duality within itself, he usually refers to her as "poor Florence" and "poor dear Florence" (a combination of positive and negative) almost as often as just Florence. Because of the duality, Dowell enables the

reader to judge the events even though he often pretends to judge for himself: “I cannot conceal from myself the fact that I now dislike Leonora” (*TGS* 149).

Another noteworthy aspect of the novel which occurs especially at the beginning of the novel is the use of the pronoun ‘you’. Dowell uses ‘you’ in a general sense: “as you must also expect with this class of English people”, so that it might also be replaced by the more formal ‘one’ and he also uses it frequently to address the reader directly: “I swear to you that [it] was such another unthinkable event” (*TGS* 2). The use of the pronoun helps Dowell to draw the reader in, as if the two are truly sitting by ‘a fireplace of a country cottage’ in the English countryside. However, as the story progresses, the use of this pronoun becomes less frequent. This is in concurrence with the narrative style (*progression d’effet*) of Ford and Conrad. By addressing the reader less Dowell appears to be losing his composure, it gives the narrative a more rambling, stronger chain-of-thought effect.

Certain keywords in the text are concerned with emotions. Dowell proclaims to know nothing of the hearts of men and it is the search for the emotive and his fascination with it and witnessing its decline that are reasons for him to write. One of the most important of these words is the word ‘heart’. Dowell uses the word ‘heart’ to allude to Florence and Edward’s conditions: both the actual diseases of the heart as their repeated adultery. ‘Heart’ is the most recurrent significant noun in the novel and is used by Dowell to denote nearly every emotive quality in people, he speaks of Leonora’s “goodheartedness”, Captain Ashburnham “also had a heart” and Florence “was the sufferer” of it. The only heart that Dowell never talks about is his own.

Another important word is the verb ‘to know’. As Eugene Goodheart points out in his essay “The Art of Ambivalence in *The Good Soldier*”: “it becomes difficult to sort out what is known and what is not known and what kind of knowing is involved” (Goodheart par. 23). As

mentioned, Dowell hides in not knowing anything and yet he knows everything. It is the instability in his character, the unreliability, that is hinted at here.

B: Grammatical categories & syntax

The sentence structure of *The Good Soldier* is both complex and simple. Longer sentences are alternated with short sentences, segmented clauses, questions and exclamations. Even though the longer sentences are generally not extraordinarily long, they contain a lot of information due to the extensive use of interjections and of subordinating clauses such as adverbial and nominal clauses. Together with the variation in sentence length, this provides for a rather confusing effect. The long sentences exemplify John Dowell's tendency to digress and provide information whereas the short sentences tend to exemplify his attitude towards this information. Also, the short sentences are often questions that Dowell asks himself, strengthening the rhetorical aspect of the narration, inviting the reader to form an opinion for himself.

We were, if you will, one of those tall ships with the white sails upon a blue sea, one of those things that seem the proudest and the safest of all the beautiful and safe things that God has permitted the mind of men to frame. Where better could one take refuge? Where better? (*TGS* 2).

In the excerpt above, the first sentence expands by using ever longer subordinate clauses⁹ creating a strong effect that draws the reader in so Dowell can finish by dropping the question. The simile between the couples relationship and the ship expands and elaborates ever further:

⁹ [we were] if you will] one of those tall ships] with the white sails] upon a blue sea] one of those things that seem the proudest and safest] of all the beautiful and safe things] that God has permitted the mind of men to frame.]

it is a tall ship, with white sails, upon a blue sea, proudest and safest, of all beautiful and safe things, (that God has permitted), that God has permitted the mind of men to frame. The reader's attention is drawn away from the tragic story and then Dowell quickly pulls him/her back again by dropping the question and repeating its crux.

Noting that ungrammaticality may function as a signal for unreliability, I have found only one type of ungrammatical sentences in *The Good Soldier*. Ford's frequent use of commas, semicolons and dashes make it possible for the complex sentence structure to be complex and digressive and yet grammatical, as is the case in the first sentence of the following excerpt:

I never shall forget the polished cob that Edward, beside me, drove; the animal's action, its high-stepping, its skin that was like satin. And the peace! And the red cheeks! And the beautiful, beautiful old house. (*TGS* 11).

However, the shorter sentences at the end are ungrammatical; they are opened by a capital and closed with a full stop or exclamation mark, and yet they are not complete sentences.

According to Leech and Short, these fragments can be used to emphasise the different steps that take place in the mind of the narrator/narratee. Leech and Short use the example of Ford's fellow writer Conrad: "(14) 'She saw there an object. That object was the gallows. She was afraid of the gallows'" (176). Short and Leech explain that this strengthens the effect of the realisation that takes place in the narratee's mind. Ford uses segmentation to the same basic effect; to exemplify what is happening in John Dowell's mind as he relates his story to the reader.

Another striking feature of John Dowell's narration – as we have seen in the excerpt above – that is that he often starts sentences with 'and'. Using 'and' at the beginning of a sentence automatically links it to the previous sentence and thus allows for more digression and an emphasis of the chain-of-thought effect.

C: Figures of Speech

Dowell uses many similes and metaphors to illustrate his story, on average nearly one per page. His similes and metaphors contain comparisons to worldly matters: “as loose and easy and yet as close as a good gloves with your hand” (1), “our little four-square coterie” (2), “one of those tall ships” (2), “a goodly apple” (3) “a raging stallion” (6) but also often to matters concerning art and history: “the whole sack of Rome by the Goths” (2), “like a minuet” (3). The use of metaphors and similes give the sense that Dowell is always weighing out that which he describes, that everything he tells the reader is compared and contrasted to something else. Yet again the reader is invited to do the same, to compare and contrast Dowell’s statements and judgements to what he or she knows from real life or history and arts. As Stang suggests: “We are drawn into the story to make decisions and judgements that the narrator refuses to make directly; we must judge his judgements or we lose the thread” (Stang 76). The effect of the elaborate metaphors is strong, so that a comparative preposition is not always needed. Rather than making the comparison explicit by using a simile, the more subtle technique of the metaphore suffices, as we have seen in the example of the rotten apple as a metaphor for the rottenness of English society and the secret adultery of Florence and Edward.

D: Context and Cohesion

As noted, *The Good Soldier* has a psychological rather than a chronological sequence and this is strengthened by the cohesion within the text. We might expect *The Good Soldier* to have few coordinating conjunctions in order to confuse the reader and yet these conjunctions are not noticeably absent. On the contrary, the sentences follow up logically, aided by lexical items as ‘and’, ‘so’ and ‘for’. The effect of the grammatical cohesion is that it creates a stream of consciousness that draws the reader further into the mind of John Dowell and his story.

Dowell seems to truly tell the story as it comes to him, allowing justification for his many digressions as can be seen in the next excerpt:

Yet, if one doesn't know that this hour and day, at this pitch of civilization to which we have attained, after all the preachings of all the moralists, and all the teachings of all the mothers to all the daughters in saecula saeculorum ... but perhaps that is what all mothers teach all daughters, not with lips but with the eyes, or with heart whispering to heart. And, if one doesn't know as much as that about the first thing in the world, what does one know and why is one here? (TGS 5, [my emphasis])

Despite the grammatical coherence, Dowell jumps from one point to the next, he digresses even within his digressions. There are certain consistencies throughout the novel though, as we have seen before Dowell almost always alludes to Florence as 'poor (dear) Florence' and there is the ever-recurring heart-theme. Dowell also seems to be fascinated by time, as he meticulously describes hours, months and years.

As for the context¹⁰, we have seen that Dowell addresses the reader directly and pictures him and the reader together as he tells his story in the cottage setting. The reader is constantly reminded that Dowell is telling him his story directly. The other characters speak also, mainly through direct speech as it is brought to the reader by Dowell.

Finally, an important feature of the stylistics in the novel is that the narration appears to come in surges, as is apparent in the following passage:

The mob may sack Versailles; the Trianon may fall, but surely the minuet—the minuet itself is dancing itself away into the furthest stars, even as our minuet of the Hessian bathing places must be stepping itself still. Isn't there any heaven where old beautiful

¹⁰ Short and Leech use this term to denote the relationship between sender and receiver: "Does the writer address the reader directly, or through the words or thoughts of some fictional character? What linguistic clues are there of the addresser-addressee relationship?" (64).

dances, old beautiful intimacies prolong themselves? Isn't there any Nirvana pervaded by the faint thrilling of instruments that have fallen into the dust of wormwood but that yet had frail, tremulous, and everlasting souls?

No, by God, it is false! It wasn't a minuet that we stepped; it was a prison—a prison full of screaming hysterics, tied down so that they might not outsound the rolling of our carriage wheels as we went along the shaded avenues of the Taunus Wald. (*TGS* 3)

The first part of this excerpt, before the dash, is a continuation of the rant that Dowell was in when he had realised that something beautiful, of which he thought it would be everlasting, had ended. Then the narration calms down; the repetition of minuet, the imagery of dancing up to the stars and finally the imagery of stepping still make that the sentence slowly ends. Then Dowell enters a moment of consideration; perhaps there is life after death, emphasised by the use of the words 'heaven' and 'Nirvana'. Dowell contemplates that it must be beautiful (he repeats this word) and peaceful, an afterlife filled with gentle sounds described as 'faint thrilling', of 'frail, tremulous, and everlasting souls'. Then there is a short pause as the paragraph ends and Dowell seems to wake up; to realise after consideration that there is nothing good about his situation as he crudely exclaims: "No, by God, it is false!". What follows is a grim comparison between their intimacy and an asylum; negative images as 'prison', 'screaming', 'hysterics' and 'tied down' dominate the last passage. As we can see, Dowell's narration is highly unstable, reflecting the instability in Dowell's character, where he actually pretends to be a calm "cuckold, eunuch, fool" (*Stang* 73).

As *Stang* has suggested, it is Dowell who "confuses, and tests the reader" (*Stang* 72) and the stylistic aspects discussed above help to create this effect. It is Dowell's errant character that is wrought by the semantic and stylistic features of the text, which provide for the clues of the unreliability of his narration as *Max Saunders* noted: "the novel... insists on

the complexity of human character, its contradictoriness and instability” (qtd. in Goodheart par. 24).

The stylistic features of *The Good Soldier* account for the strengthening of the aspect of the unreliable narrator and it needs to be remarked that – within the stylistics of a novel – unreliability is mainly a semantic effect. As Booth has noted, the discrepancies between the norms of the narrator and those of the implied author provide for the narrator’s unreliability. These discrepancies can not solely be made explicit by means of stylistic features, it is mainly *what* Dowell says that is in discord with the norms of the implied author. However, the norms of the implied author are not shared with the reader on a semantic level. The bases for the ‘secret communion’ between the implied author and the reader, Dowell’s eloquence, knowledge, instability, confusion and his way of confusing the reader, rely, as we have seen, on *The Good Soldier*’s stylistic properties.

Thus, when translating *The Good Soldier*, the translator needs to be aware of these stylistic features as they are the basis for the ‘secret communion’. Spies has suggested provisional translating and comparing source text and target text in translator training as a means of sensibilisation for stylistic aspects (Spies 77). Noting that *The Good Soldier* is considered a modernist work, there is another advice of Spies that applies here:

[I]t can be maintained that modernism has a penchant for limited viewpoints so that in translation one has to be careful to maintain that limited vision. This is, perhaps, stating the obvious, but the devil is in the detail, as we have seen: even seemingly insignificant changes [...] may lead to subtle incongruities in the text world. The maxim should be not to give away more than the source text warrants” (77).

In the following chapter, I will go into detail on the translational issues that arise when an attempt is made to preserve this limited viewpoint and the concept of the unreliable narrator when translating *The Good Soldier*.

Theory to Practice: Translating *The Good Soldier*

As this thesis is concerned with the translation of *The Good Soldier*, considering in particular the aspect of unreliability, I will in this chapter examine how this could be undertaken. As argued before, if the reader of the target text is to spot Dowell's unreliability, the implied translator must – like the implied author – establish a 'secret communion' between him-/herself and the implied reader. The reader of the translation needs to be aided – as is the reader of the source text – in unfolding the discourse structure in the novel.

For the discourse structure to unfold, it is necessary that there exists a discrepancy between the norms of the narrator and those of the implied author. Here emerges an important issue considering the unreliability in *The Good Soldier*. As the implied author of novel does not directly share his views with the reader, the unfolding of the discourse structure relies mainly on the stylistic properties of the text. In the previous chapter, I have examined what these stylistic properties are and argue that the unreliability of John Dowell is based on several – stylistically wrought – aspects of his narration.

The discrepancies between the norms of the implied author and Dowell as a narrator emerge through the representation of Dowell's unstable character reflected in the surging narration, his indirect invitations to the reader to judge the characters and events in the novel, Dowell's own incoherent judgements, the chain-of-thought effect, and his tendency to confuse the reader by his many digressions.

To aid the implied reader of the translation in unfolding the discourse structure and discovering Dowell's unreliability, the implied translator must fulfil the role of the implied author and establish a secret communion between him-/herself and the implied reader. It is here that the translator faces certain translational issues; several problems arise when translating due to the contrast between English and Dutch. These translational issues are mainly concerned with the novel's grammar, syntax, general style and polysemy, all of which

account – as we have seen in the stylistic analysis – for Dowell’s unreliability. In this chapter, I will examine several of these problems and provide possible answers to them.

I will base the analysis of the translational issues in *The Good Soldier* on the analyses of Spies and Van de Wardt as they have both analysed modernist works (*The Sound and the Fury* and *Mrs. Dalloway*, respectively) with regard to making a Dutch translation. Also, I will draw from articles by translation scholars James Holmes and Hans G. Höning for a more general approach to solving certain translation issues.

The hypothetical assignment for the translation shall be made according to the model contract of the Dutch foundation for literaries, providing for “an in impeccable Dutch translation that is in style and content faithful to and drafted directly from the original text” (VvL [my translation]).

Keywords

In the stylistic analysis we saw that the *The Good Soldier* contains certain keywords. ‘Heart’ and related words are used to exemplify the human instinct as well as Dowell’s search for understanding human emotions and how they led towards the actions he describes in his story. The usage of the verb ‘to know’ is omnipresent in the narration and hints at Dowell’s unreliability as Stang suggests: “His periodic claims to nothingness—being nothing, doing nothing, knowing nothing, [...] are a camouflage for his shrinking from conclusions, his fear of expertise and his failure to deal with it” (Stang 76). As a participant in the story, and his role as a narrator, Dowell could be expected to know everything, yet he claims to know nothing, the extensive use of ‘to know’ raises question what Dowell knows or what anybody knows (or can know) about human relations and what it actually means to know anything. Because Dowell uses keywords consistently, I see it as preferable for the target text to be consistent as well. However, whilst the translation of ‘heart’ is pretty straightforward, consistently translating ‘to know’ in its different meanings into Dutch poses a problem.

One of the main issues when translating ‘to know’ is that the basic single English form has two different logical verb equivalents in Dutch: ‘weten’ and ‘kennen’. Although there is a wide variety of possible Dutch translations for phrases with the verb ‘to know’, they each depend on different forms and usage of the source phrases. To be able to be consistent, I have opted to consider only the most basic and direct translations for ‘to know’: ‘weten’ and ‘kennen’. I follow here the suggestion of Hönig who notes that, as the third step in source text analysis, the translational segments need to be determined (Hönig 135). I chose to treat ‘to know’ in this case on wordlevel as I have previously identified it as a keyword. The usage of ‘to know’ is recurrent within various different phrases in the novel but – noting that ‘knowing’ is a recurrent theme in the story – nearly always alludes to the ambiguous meaning of the verb itself. Hönig remarks that in this stage of the translation, the translator often resorts to dictionaries. Considering the verb ‘to know’ on its own requires a basic interpretation applicable in most situations. The two general translations for ‘to know’ in the standard English-Dutch dictionary are ‘weten’ and ‘kennen’ (Van Dale). ‘Weten’ denotes knowledge of a certain fact or facts, whereas ‘kennen’ denotes familiarity. ‘Kennen’ is mostly used to allude to people or places whereas ‘weten’ can never directly refer to people.

“I know Leonora” may be translated as

“Ik ken Leonora”,

but never as

“Ik weet Leonora”

There are however cases when the translation of ‘to know’ depends on context and interpretation. For example, the following sentence:

“This is, I believe, a state of things only possible with English people of whom, till today, when I sit down to puzzle what I know of this sad affair, I knew nothing whatever.” (*TGS* 1)

might be translated as

Dit is, geloof ik, alleen maar mogelijk met Engelse mensen van wie, tot vandaag, nu ik me hier zit te bedenken wat ik weet van deze treurige affaire, ik helemaal niets kende (nothing was familiar)

or

... Engelsen van wie, [...] ik helemaal niets wist (nothing was known)

The first translation is awkward because the verb ‘kende’ refers to the noun ‘niets’ and although this is grammatically correct, it is a semantic oddity because ‘kennen’ should refer to people, the last translation of the sentence is not a Dutch idiom. To consistently translate ‘to know’ with ‘kennen’ is even stranger, and grammatically incorrect, in the next example: “I don’t know how it is best to put this thing down” (*TGS* 6) / Ik ken niet hoe...

When translating the verb ‘to know’ it is semantically and grammatically impossible to be as consistent in Dutch as Dowell is in English. However, most cases of ‘to know’ in *The Good Soldier* imply a translation with ‘weten’. There are so much of these cases even, that there are enough signals left.

An important phrase in the novel is ‘good people’, employed by Dowell to refer to Florence, Leonora and Edward Ashburnham and himself. It is never made explicitly clear what Dowell means by the phrase, yet he does allude to what it entails:

The given proposition was, that we were all “good people.” We took for granted that we all liked beef underdone but not too underdone; that both men preferred a good liqueur brandy after lunch; that both women drank a very light Rhine wine qualified with Fachingen water—that sort of thing. It was also taken for granted that we were both sufficiently well off to afford anything that we could reasonably want in the way of amusements fitting to our station [...] that we could give each other dinners and dine our friends and we could indulge if we liked in economy (*TGS* 19)

The description is that of the upper class, with enough means to do as they please. The irony in the phrase is that these ‘good people’ are not so much morally good, they are just as flawed as people of the lower classes who do not qualify for the moniker, but that they are “well off”. Michael Levenson says in his article “Character in *The Good Soldier*”: “Conspicuously, the description ‘good people’ fails to account for the characters it describes. It does not explain; it conceals; and the obvious incongruity between concept and character initiates far more subtle difficulties in the novel” (Levenson 375).

Possible translations for “... the Ashburnhams being more particularly what in England it is the custom to call ‘quite good people’” include:

‘... wat in Engeland gewoonlijk ‘hogere klasse mensen’ genoemd wordt’

‘... wat in Engeland gewoonlijk ‘betere mensen’ genoemd wordt’

‘... wat in Engeland gewoonlijk ‘gegoede mensen’ genoemd wordt’

‘... wat in Engeland gewoonlijk ‘mensen van stand genoemd’ wordt’

‘... wat in Engeland gewoonlijk ‘goede mensen’ genoemd wordt’

as these have the connotations in Dutch of people who are well off and of a higher social class in society. However, apart from the last example, they do not so much allude to the moral aspect of ‘good people’, it refers more to the environment in which these people move themselves. I have therefore chosen for ‘goed’/ ‘betere’, which to a lesser extent alludes to the social class (although it is an assonant of ‘gegoede’) but more towards the moral aspect of the term ‘good people’. This solution also provides for an easier combination with the translation of ‘quite’ as will become apparent in the next paragraph.

Considering John Dowell’s unreliability, there is one keyword that can not be ignored: ‘quite’. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, ‘quite’ can be used as: an intensifier, an emphasiser and a moderating adverb. Consider for example the sentence “[T]he Ashburnhams being what [...] is custom to call ‘quite good people’ (*TGS* 2) in its following meanings:

The Ashburnhams being what is custom to call ‘wholly good people.’

The Ashburnhams being what is custom to call ‘really good people.’

The Ashburnhams being what is custom to call ‘absolutely good people.’

The Ashburnhams being what is custom to call ‘fairly good people.’

The Ashburnhams being what is custom to call ‘somewhat good people.’

The Ashburnhams being what is custom to call ‘moderately good people.’

The Ashburnhams being what is custom to call ‘slightly good people.’

It is up to the reader to decide what Dowell’s attitude towards the Ashburnhams – and their kind of people – is. It is here again that the distance between the reader and the narrator is increased. Dowell uses the word often, down to the last sentence in the novel (“She was quite pleased with it” (*TGS* 151), leaving the reader consistently wondering what it is that he means and allowing the reader to question his judgments. In translation, a word with a similar effect needs to be used and it needs to be used consistently if it is to function as a signal to the reader. For this translation, I have considered ‘aardig’, ‘behoorlijk’, ‘erg’, ‘tamelijk’, ‘nogal’ and ‘best’. I decided to use ‘best’ as it can be used as both an emphasiser and a moderator and is applicable in generally all instances.

Addressing the reader

As mentioned, John Dowell regularly addresses the reader directly using the second-person pronoun *you*: “You, the listener, sit opposite me. But you are so silent. You don’t tell me anything” (*TGS* 7). Considering the second-person pronoun there exists a specific problem between English and Dutch: in Dutch, the second-person pronoun exists of three¹¹ common forms: the informal *je*, the demonstrative *jij*, and the formal *u*. This poses a problem for the

¹¹ ‘Gij’ and ‘ge’ could also serve as possible translations for ‘you’ but since these are heavily historically marked I will no longer consider them as possibilities.

translation from English to Dutch, for there needs to be determined which pronoun to use where there is no clear distinction in the original. This problem of choice is further complicated when Dowell uses *you* in a more general sense, in sentences such as: “[I]n a novel, or a biography, you take it for granted that the characters have their meals with some regularity” (TGS 68). In this last case, *you* could – in addition to the three previous options – also be translated with *men*, as this is the more general denotative pronoun in Dutch.

In addition to this duality in the use of the second-person pronoun, the historical distance between the novel and the modern reader also needs to be considered. Dowell’s language, as well as some of the – fictional – facts are historically marked. The following excerpts serve as examples for instances where the reader becomes aware of the historical distance between him and the novel: “[W]e are not in the Provence where even the saddest stories are gay” (TGS 6), “For [...] what do I know even of the smoking-room?” (5), “[S]he wore an immensely broad Leghorn hat” (12), “And, what the devil!” (12)¹². According to translation scholar James Holmes, the translator has the option to modernise or historicise his/her translation but must be aware of the consequences. Holmes suggests that a translation must be “sufficiently consistent with the original to be considered a translation” (Holmes 187 [my translation]). As an attempt to consistently modernise *The Good Soldier* in the translation would require vast alterations and most likely result in an adaptation rather than a translation, the historical distance between reader and text will remain in the target text. In regard of this distance, the choice for *u* as a translation for *you* might be made, as *u* is the more formal and

¹² *Gay* is a term that is currently more closely related to homosexuality than cheerfulness and is rarely used in the latter context anymore. The *smoking-room* as it is referred to here, was usually a room in a large private house especially reserved for smoking and has now – in this particular form – largely gone out of existence. The *Leghorn hat*, a headdress resembling the backside of a rooster, is a typical fashion item for the period of the story. *What the Devil!* Is also historically marked as it has been replaced by *what the hell/fuck?*.

the more historically marked pronoun. However, as we have seen, John Dowell attempts to involve the reader, to draw him into his story. In light of this last notion, and despite the change in style from the historisation in the translation, I have opted for translating *you* with the less formal *je*, as if Dowell was speaking to the reader on a personal level. For example, a translation for “you know at once whether you are concerned with good people” (TGS 21) would read:

Je weet meteen of je te maken hebt met goede mensen.

Instead of:

U weet meteen of u te maken heeft met goede mensen.

or

Men weet meteen of men te maken heeft met goed mensen.

The distance between the speaker and the reader is decreased, involving the reader more strongly.

As the story progresses, this aspect of the narration lessens and Dowell more often interchanges *you* with the more formal *one*, a pronoun that is formally marked as Van de Wardt mentions in “What a Plunge!”, her thesis on Virginia Woolf’s *Mrs. Dalloway*: “... the use of *one* can be regarded as impersonal and in writing even, as an attempt to depersonalise without shifting into the passive voice” (Van de Wardt 67-8)¹³. As I interpret Dowell’s use of *one* as a marker for him distancing himself from the reader, I will translate *one*, whenever grammatically applicable, with *men*. The contrast between ‘je’ and ‘men’ will serve as a marker for Dowell’s unstable personality, alternately distancing himself from the reader and drawing the reader closer.

¹³ For an elaborate analysis of the use of *one*, regarding translation into Dutch, see Van de Wardt’s thesis “What a Plunge!” (67-71). I will not go in as much detail, as the use of *one* in *The Good Soldier* is less frequent and does not effect the general style of the novel as much as in *Mrs. Dalloway*.

Syntax & Grammar

As noted in the previous chapter, the syntactic structure of *The Good Soldier* evokes a feeling of fragmentation. This fragmentation is in accordance to the discourse mode of the novel: Dowell tells the story as it comes to him and, as we might expect, his chain-of-thought is elaborated upon, fragmented, interrupted and sidetracked. The fragmentation is most visible in the beginning of Dowell's sentences, a large number of which start with a conjunction, mostly 'and': "And I trusted mine and it was madness. And yet again you have me" (*TGS* 6). By starting his sentences with a conjunction, the number of Dowell's additions becomes virtually limitless, he can add as much information as he likes when he goes along. In Dutch, as well as in English, it is unnatural to start a sentence with a coordinating conjunction, as it usually connects two parts of a sentence together. Applying this principle would, however, speed up the narration. Consider:

the animal's action, its high-stepping, its skin that was like satin. And the peace! And the red cheeks! And the beautiful, beautiful old house. (*TGS* 11)

a possible, but syntactically odd translation could be:

de beweging van het dier, zijn hoge tred, zijn huid was als satijn. En de rust! En de rode wangen! En het prachtige, prachtige oude huis.

a syntactically more correct translation would read:

de beweging van het dier, zijn hoge tred, zijn huid was als satijn. De rust! De rode wangen! Het prachtige, prachtige oude huis.

By deleting 'En' in the last translation, the exclamations are no longer linked by the conjunction and become separate units. However, to maintain the chain-of-thought effect, I have chosen to stick to starting the sentences with conjunctions.

Van de Wardt remarks in her thesis that "One of the problems which not just in MD, but every translation from English into Dutch, poses a problem on almost every occasion, is

the use of present participle or imperfect tense” (Van de Wardt 61). This is also true for *The Good Soldier*, of which a striking – yet problematic – example can be found in the next sentence:

“**Living**, as we perforce lived, in Europe, and **being**, as we perforce were, leisured Americans, which is to say that we were un-American, we were thrown very much into the society of the nicer English” (*TGS* 1).

A rather literal translation of this sentence would be:

‘**Wonende**, zoals we noodgedwongen woonden, in Europa, en **zijnde**, zoals we noodgedwongen waren, bevoorrechte Amerikanen, wat zo veel is als te zeggen dat we on-Amerikaans waren, werden we heel erg in de gemeenschap van de betere Engelsen geworpen’

Van de Wardt mentions that the use of this form in Dutch could “have an alienating effect on the reader” (Van de Wardt 61), and poses several possibilities for translation: the ‘aan het + infinitive construction’ (we waren aan het wonen), the ‘terwijl + a change to simple present or past construction’ (terwijl we waren), and ‘various conjugations’ (Van de Wardt 61). Van de Wardt notes that these solutions are not always applicable as seems to be the case in this sentence: ‘zijn’ is a constant state of being, and cannot be accompanied by the ‘aan het’ construction as it does not denote action. The important aspect of the imperfect tense in this case is the link it provides with the subordinating clause at the end of the sentence: ‘we were thrown [...] into’. The English construction makes it possible to omit ‘because’ at the beginning of the sentence: “[Because we were] living, as we perforce lived, in Europe, and being, as we perforce were [...] we were very much thrown into the society of the nicer English”. The only way that this link in Dutch can be held without radically changing the sentence structure and/or explicating by using an ‘omdat’ construction, is to use the imperfect form as in the translation above. A ‘aan het’ or ‘terwijl’ construction would alter the meaning

of the sentence; the Dowells were not only thrown into the society of the nicer English *whilst* they were living in Europe and being leisured Americans, it was *because* they were living in Europe and being leisured Americans.

It needs to be noticed that Dowell is confusing his readers in this sentence (as in many others as he is constantly interjecting), when the reader arrives at the subordinating clause at the end of the sentence, he is forced back to the beginning of the sentence to reconstruct its meaning. A similar effect – however odd it may appear – should be preserved in Dutch as it is the narrator's intention to confuse the reader.

Conclusion

As we have seen, John Dowell provides for an intricate example of an unreliable narrator. Rather than telling straightforward lies or being cognitively impaired, such as Benji in *The Sound and the Fury*. Dowell's unreliability relies on his attempts to confuse the reader, to digress and thus bury his omission of relevant information.

When we look back upon Booth's definition of unreliability:

For practical criticism probably the most important of these kinds of distance is that between the fallible or unreliable narrator and the implied author who carries the reader with him in judging the narrator [...] [i]f he is discovered to be untrustworthy, then the total effect of the work he relays to us is transformed [...] I have called a narrator *reliable* when he speaks for or acts in accordance with the norms of the work (which is to say, the implied author's norms), *unreliable* when he does not (*Fiction* 158-9)

it becomes clear that it is the incongruity between the norms of the implied author and those of Dowell that account for the unreliability of the narrator. For a reader to spot the unreliability it is important that the implied author establishes a 'secret communion' with the reader.

Ford has created an implied author that through various techniques in the novel's style, semantics and grammar signals at the incongruity between his values and those of Dowell's. If the careful reader spots these signals, the unreliable narrator is revealed. As we have seen, the unreliability of Dowell's narration and the way in which this is revealed to the reader account for a large part for the novel's attraction.

In the case of a text with an unreliable narrator, such as *The Good Soldier*, the translator needs to be aware that he or she forms the substitute for the implied author as the

implied translator. It is up to this implied translator to re-establish the ‘secret communion’ with the reader if the same (or similar) ironic effect is to be achieved.

In the case of *The Good Soldier*, as is the case for most literary texts featuring an unreliable narrator, the translator needs to become aware of the stylistic properties that account for this extraordinary narrative form in order to translate them appropriately. The ‘willing suspension of dissent’, as described by Short and Leech, should be temporarily alleviated but no more and not to a stronger degree than in the source text.

The difficulty then of translating a text with an unreliable narrator lies primarily in spotting the signals that account for this aspect and maintaining them so that the reader of the target text is able to establish a similar ‘secret communion’ with the implied translator as the reader of the source text does with its implied author.

As a closing statement, I would like to refer to Spies’ advice and warn the translator for over-interpreting: “...even seemingly insignificant changes [...] may lead to subtle incongruities in the text world. The maxim should be not to give away more than the source text warrants” (Spies 77).

Annotated Translation

Section 1: pages 1-6

Section 2: pages 149-151

DIT IS HET treurigste verhaal dat ik ooit heb gehoord¹. We kenden² de Ashburnhams al negen seizoenen van³ het stadje Nauheim met een innige intimiteit—of,⁴ liever als een band

¹ As argued before ‘heard’ alludes to the unreliability of the narrator. According to the ‘principle of climax’ as described by Leech and Short (179) the last word in a sentence is the most important. In accordance with this principle, I have translated the sentence in a way so that ‘gehoord’ is its last word. It needs however be mentioned that although in this case it is possible to maintain end-stress in translation, it is not always so. Given the importance of this sentence (as it is the opening line of the novel) the ‘principle of climax’ can happily be maintained.

² For an extensive description of the translation of the verb ‘to know’ in *The Good Soldier*, see the analysis in the previous chapter.

³ The most straightforward translation for the source text would be ‘negen seizoenen **van** het stadje Nauheim’, as the original reads ‘nine seasons **of** the town of Nauheim’. The English form refers to the seasons (yearly from July to September) as belonging to Nauheim to indicate the Dowells’ stay there. In Dutch, ‘van’ can be the cause of ambiguousness (Renkema 107) and this would, for perhaps most translations, be a reason to translate ‘of’ with the less ambiguous ‘in’. However, as *The Good Soldier* has an unreliable narrator, I believe that the ambiguousness here might emphasize this aspect and have translated with the ambiguous ‘van’.

⁴ The comma here might seem redundant but this is also the case in the source text: “—or, rather...”. This comma pauses the reader and the narration and can be seen as an example of Dowell ‘telling the story as it comes’ as he pauses to find a good simile.

zo los en gemakkelijk en toch zo nauw als een goede handschoen met je hand. Mijn vrouw en ik kenden Kapitein⁵ en Mevrouw Ashburnham zo goed als het mogelijk was iemand te kennen, en toch, op een andere manier, wisten we helemaal niets van hen. Dit is, geloof ik, alleen maar mogelijk met Engelse mensen⁶ van wie, tot vandaag, nu ik me hier zit te bedenken wat ik weet van deze treurige affaire,⁷ ik helemaal niets wist. Zes maanden geleden was ik nog nooit in Engeland geweest en had ik zeker nog niet de diepten van een Engels hart verkend. Ik kende de oppervlakten.

Ik bedoel niet te zeggen dat we niet bekend waren met een hoop Engelse mensen. Wonende, zoals we noodgedwongen woonden, in Europa, en zijnde, zoals noodgedwongen waren, bevoorrechte Amerikanen, wat bijna zoveel is als te zeggen dat we on-Amerikaans waren, werden we heel erg in de society⁸ van de betere Engelsen geworpen⁹.

⁵ Even though the standard in Dutch is to write professional addresses with a lower case (Renkema 267) the translation will refer to Captain Ashburnham as ‘Kapitein’ with a capital. In the source text, Dowell always uses a capital for Captain (even though this is not a requirement in English), adding a sense of weight to the title. It also implies that he is using it as a second name for Edward Ashburnham. I have done the same for Leonora Ashburnham when she is referred to as Mrs. Ashburnham.

⁶ I decided to translate ‘English people’ consistent with the phrase ‘good people’ with ‘Engelse mensen’ rather than ‘Engelsen’ (English) as Ford also adds ‘people’.

⁷ Luckily, Dutch allows for a translation with the same ambiguous meaning as the original, albeit slightly more obvious as ‘affaire’ is more commonly used to refer to adultery than it is to refer to events.

⁸ Here I have opted for not translating ‘society’. The English form is also used in Dutch (Van Dale) and as it refers here to an aspect of Englishness, the use of an English term might be fitting. In the second section, I have opted for the same solution for ‘gentleman’.

Parijs, zie je, was ons thuis. Ergens tussen Nice en Bordighera voorzag ons in ons jaarlijkse winterverblijf en Nauheim ontving ons altijd van juli tot september. Je zult uit deze opmerking hebben opgemaakt dat één van ons, zoals wordt gezegd, een ‘hart’ had, en, uit de opmerking dat mijn vrouw dood is, dat zij de patiënt was.

Kapitein Ashburnham had ook een hart. Maar, waar een maand per jaar in Nauheim genoeg was om hem precies goed af te stemmen voor de overige elf maanden, de twee maanden¹⁰¹¹ waren maar net genoeg om arme Florence van jaar tot jaar in leven te houden. De reden voor zijn hart was, bij benadering, polo, of te veel intensief sportmanschap in zijn jeugd. De reden voor arme Florence’s gebroken jaren was een storm op zee tijdens onze eerste oversteek naar Europa, en de directe reden voor ons gevangenschap op dat continent waren doktersrecept¹². Ze zeiden dat zelfs de korte oversteek over Het Kanaal het arme ding fataal¹³ zou kunnen worden.

⁹ See the previous chapter for an analysis of this sentence.

¹⁰ The structure of this sentence might seem odd but this is also the case in the source text. The commas before and after the clause ‘waar een maand per jaar in Nauheim genoeg was om hem precies goed af te stemmen voor de overige elf maanden’ indicate that the clause contains additional information and can be omitted. When the clause is omitted, the sentence becomes grammatical again.

¹¹ ‘Or so’ from the source text has no suitable Dutch equivalent that could be placed after ‘two months’. Inserting a Dutch term for ‘or so’ such as ‘ongeveer’ would require a change in the sentence structure in order to omit awkwardness. In order to prevent further complicating this already intricate sentence I have chosen to omit it in translation.

¹² Although ‘doctor’s orders’ is not the same as a doctor’s prescription (‘doktersrecept’), the translation is a phrase that is commonly used in Dutch. This translation (rather than a construction like: ‘ons verblijf was op bevel van de dokter’) preserves the concise nature of the original. It may be assumed that the readers of the target

Toen we elkaar allemaal voor het eerst ontmoetten was Kapitein Ashburnham, thuis op ziekteverlof uit India waar hij nooit naar terug zou keren, drieëndertig; Mevrouw Ashburnham – Leonora – was eenendertig. Ik was zesendertig en arme Florence dertig. Dus nu¹⁴ zou Florence negenendertig zijn geweest en Kapitein Ashburnham tweeënveertig; en ik ben vijfenveertig en Leonora veertig. Je zult opmerken, daarom, dat onze vriendschap een aangelegenheid¹⁵ van jong-middelbare leeftijd was, aangezien we allemaal best¹⁶ kalm van

text infer from ‘doktersrecept’ that Florence’s doctors have recommended she stay on the continent rather than actually given her a written prescription for refraining from sea-travel.

¹³ The active structure of the source text (the crossing might kill the poor thing) is replaced by a passive structure as the personification of ‘the crossing’ would be awkward and not used in Dutch.

¹⁴ I have chosen to translate ‘today’ with ‘nu’ rather than ‘vandaag’ as it applies to a situation that occurs for a longer stretch of time in the present. In English, ‘today’ can refer to the present without limiting it to a single day. In Dutch, ‘vandaag’ should be accompanied by ‘de dag’ (vandaag de dag) to acquire the same effect. The meaning of ‘vandaag de dag’ is however not exactly the same and too long a phrase to fit inconspicuously into the sentence.

¹⁵ ‘Jong-middelbare leeftijd’ (‘young middle-aged’) refers here to ‘aangelegenheid’, which is incorrect: it is the Dowells and Ashburnhams who are of ‘middle-age’, not the affair. However, this fallacy also occurs in the source text and so further explication seems unnecessary. ‘Aangelegenheid’ has been moved in front of ‘jong-middelbare leeftijd’ because were it to come after, a possessive ‘s’ would have to be added in Dutch (‘een jong-middelbare leeftijdsaangelegenheid’) creating an even stronger link between the two.

¹⁶ Even though the alliteration of ‘quite quiet’ in the source text is probably deliberate to signal at the use of ‘quite’ (see the section on keywords in the previous chapter), I found it impossible to maintain it in this form. A substitution in the form of the alliteration between ‘aardig’ en ‘aard’, in ‘aardig kalm van aard’ might have been

aard waren, de Ashburnhams waren meer precies wat in Engeland gewoonlijk ‘best goede mensen’ genoemd wordt.

Ze stamden af, zoals je waarschijnlijk al verwacht, van de Ashburnham die Charles I naar de galg vergezelde¹⁷, en, zoals je ook moet verwachten bij deze klasse Engelsen, zou je het niet hebben gemerkt. Mevrouw Ashburnham was een Powys; Florence was een Hurlbird uit Stamford, Connecticut¹⁸, waar, zoals je weet, ze nog ouderwetsers zijn dan zelfs de inwoners van Cranford, Engeland, konden¹⁹ zijn geweest. Ik ben zelf een Dowell uit Philadelphia Pennsylvania,²⁰ waar, naar historische waarheid, er meer oude Engelse families

possible, yet for the sake of consistency (as I have argued in the aforementioned section) I chose to stick with ‘best’.

¹⁷ There was indeed a John Ashburnham who accompanied Charles I to the gallows. Some of his descendants became Earl of Ashburnham, a title that went extinct in 1924. There is no evidence of an Edward Ashburnham who was alive during the period of the story.

¹⁸ It is American custom to name the state in which a certain town lies as many of their names occur more often in different states. As John Dowell is an American I have chosen to maintain this aspect to hint at his Americanness.

¹⁹ The unusual use of the past perfect progressive here signals at the old-fashioned inhabitants of Cranford, England. Ford alludes to Elizabeth Gaskell’s novel *Cranford*, about a fictional town with the same name, on which he bases the description of Stamford, Connecticut. Using this tense form, Ford helps the reader wonder; ‘could have been’? Why would they have ceased to be old-fashioned? These questions draw the attention of the reader back to Cranford, signaling significance. This signal is especially important for the modern reader of the target text, as they will be likely to be less familiar with Gaskell’s novel. At the time *The Good Soldier* was first published, *Cranford* (1853) was reprinted. In his article “Cranford revisited: Ford’s debt to Mrs. Gaskell in ‘The Good Soldier,’” Peter Witkowsky elaborates further on the link between *Cranford* and *The Good Soldier*.

wonen dan je zou treffen in zes willekeurige Engelse provincies samen. Ik draag bij me, in feite – als ware het het enige ding dat me onzichtbaar verankerde aan een enkele plek op de aardbol – de eigendomsakten van mijn boerderij, die ooit verscheidene blokken²¹ tussen Chestnut- en Walnut Street²² omvatte. Deze eigendomsakten zijn in de vorm van een schelpenketting,²³ de gift van een Indianenopperhoofd aan de eerste Dowell, die vertrok

²⁰ In the source text, Pennsylvania is abbreviated to ‘Pa.’ Many Dutch readers will be aware that Pennsylvania is a U.S. state, however their abbreviations are known to a lesser extent. For the sake of clarity, I have chosen to explicate in the translation.

²¹ In America, the term ‘block’ is used to indicate a (usually square) piece of land enclosed by streets occupied by buildings that can be residential or commercial. In Dutch, the term ‘blok’ is also used to signify the same thing, yet it is usually preceded by the function of the buildings: ‘huizenblok’. As Dowell does not elaborate on the type of buildings, I have also chosen not to do so, requiring a little more strain from the reader who then has to draw up the meaning of ‘blokken’ from the context.

²² The plural in ‘Chestnut and Walnut Streets’ applies to Chestnut Street and Walnut Street (two parallel running streets in central Philadelphia). To explicate that these streets are in America I have chosen to treat the streets as given names in the target text, but that makes the plural no longer applicable (there would have been ambiguity whether the blocks lie between ‘Chestnut’ and ‘Walnut Streets’). To circumvent this problem, the dash was added to accentuate omission.

²³ According to the Oxford English Dictionary, wampum are “Cylindrical beads made from the ends of shells rubbed down, polished, and threaded on strings, which were often combined to form bracelets, belts, collars, serving as currency for the N. American Indians both among themselves and in dealings with Europeans” (OED). This description would be in concurrence with “the grant of an Indian chief to the first Dowell” (*TGS* 2). The word does not occur in the Dutch dictionary *Van Dale* and, consequently, I have chosen to explicate by translating it to ‘schelpenketting’ and adding ‘in de vorm van’ to allude to the currency-function of wampum.

vanuit Farnham in Surry in gezelschap van William Penn. Florence's familie, zoals zo vaak het geval is bij de inwoners van Connecticut, kwamen uit de buurt van Fordingbridge, waar het huis van de Ashburnhams is. Daarvandaan, op dit moment, ben ik feitelijk aan het schrijven.

Je kunt je terecht afvragen waarom ik schrijf. En toch heb ik best veel redenen. Want het is niet ongebruikelijk voor mensen die de val van een stad of het uiteenvallen van een volk hebben aanschouwd om op te willen schrijven²⁴ waar ze getuige van waren ten bate van onbekende erven of van oneindig verre generaties; of, als je wil, gewoon om het beeld uit hun hoofd te krijgen.

Iemand heeft gezegd dat de dood van een muis aan kanker de hele teloorgang van Rome aan de Goten is, en ik zweer je dat het uiteenvallen van onze kleine vierkantsklik²⁵ ook zo'n ondenkbare gebeurtenis was. Stel dat je ons tegen zou komen terwijl we samen aan één van de kleine tafels zaten voor het club huis²⁶, laten we zeggen, in Homburg, de lunch

²⁴ A more suitable translation for 'to set down' would be in the direction of 'uiteenzetten'. However, this would sound closely related to the preceding 'uiteenvallen' and could possibly annoy the reader. Also, 'desire' has been translated by 'willen' which has been moved backwards to allow for a smoother sentence structure. Translating 'desire' with the more obvious 'verlangen' would require a grammatically complicated construction along the lines of: 'te verlangen op te schrijven'.

²⁵ The use of 'Four-square' in the source text could contain several meanings. It applies to the four people in the coterie and their mutual relationships as well as denote the solidity of their bond. In Dutch, the only interpretation that approaches both meanings is 'vierkant'. 'Vierkant' has the element of four and, as an adverb, denotes immovability or solidity.

²⁶ It is unclear as to what kind of club Dowell refers to but, as he is an American, it is most likely a country club, which is also consistent with the miniature golf. In the source text, 'club' and 'house' are separated and I have

gebruikend²⁷ en kijkend naar de midgetgolf, dan zou je hebben gezegd dat, waar het menselijke verhoudingen betreft, we een uitzonderlijk veilige burcht²⁸ waren. We waren, als je wil, een van die grote schepen met de witte zeilen op een blauwe zee, een van die dingen die het meest trots en veilig zijn van alle mooie en veilige dingen waarvan God het aan de mensen heeft toegestaan ze in hun gedachten te vatten. Waar beter zou men kunnen schuilen? Waar beter?

Bestendigheid? Stabiliteit? Ik kan niet geloven dat het weg is. Ik kan niet geloven dat het lange, rustige leven, dat was als het dansen van een menuet, verdween binnen vier verpletterende dagen aan het einde van negen jaar en zes weken. Op mijn woord, ja, onze verbondenheid was als een menuet, simpelweg omdat we op elk mogelijk moment en in elke mogelijke omstandigheid wisten waar te gaan, waar te zitten, welke tafel we unaniem moesten kiezen; en we konden opstaan en gaan, alle vier tegelijk, zonder een teken van één van ons,

opted to maintain this separation as a ‘clubhuis’ in Dutch has strong connotations with a club formed by children.

²⁷ There is no Dutch term for the English ‘afternoon tea’ (the customary eating of cucumber sandwiches, scones, cakes and pastries and drinking tea between two and five pm. Not to be confused with high tea, which takes place between five and seven pm.) and although ‘de lunch gebruikend’ is not exactly the same as ‘taking tea of an afternoon’ it functions as a description of what the two couples are doing; eating and drinking in the afternoon. The addition of ‘gebruikend’ adds a somewhat archaic atmosphere that I feel is consistent with ‘taking tea of an afternoon’.

²⁸ Castle allows itself to be translated by ‘kasteel’, ‘slot’, ‘burcht’ and ‘vesting’ (Van Dale). As Dowell primarily refers to the safety of the castle, something in which he could “take refuge” I have opted for the translation that which does primarily that: provide safety. A ‘vesting’ is built to resist attacks, a ‘kasteel’ is usually also a showpiece and a ‘slot’ is mainly used as a home, providing safety for its residents.

altijd op de muziek van het Kürorkest, altijd in het gematigde zonlicht, of, als het regende, in discrete schuilplaatsen. Nee, inderdaad, het kan niet verdwenen zijn. Je kunt een menuet de la cour niet doden²⁹. Je kunt het muziekboek dicht doen, de klavecimbel opbergen;³⁰ in de kast en kabinetten³¹ kunnen de ratten de witsatijnen deugden³² vernietigen. De meute kan

²⁹ One can not kill a minuet de la cour, is what Dowell claims here. And indeed, it is impossible because the minuet was never alive to begin with. In this sense, a translation with ‘doden’ might seem an unjust personification. In this case however, the music is Dowell’s metaphor for the everlasting soul and contrary to the body it ‘inhabits’ it can not be physically destroyed. Regarding the soul – and thus the minuet – as something personal, ‘doden’ seems the right option here.

³⁰ The semicolon here confuses the reader. Rather than regularly continuing the summary of means by which the physical music may be destroyed by using commas, the semicolon links ‘the harpsichord’ and ‘in the cupboard’ and for a brief moment the reader has to determine whether it is the harpsichord that is closed in the cupboard. Dutch does not allow for the part of the sentence before the semicolon to end with ‘klavecimbel’ but by maintaining the semicolon and by using ‘opbergen’ (put away) instead of closing the harpsichord, part of the estranging effect of the original is maintained.

³¹ Presses is referred to as another kind of cupboard. The entry in the Oxford English Dictionary reads: “Now chiefly *Sc. and Irish English*. A large (usually shelved) cupboard, esp. one placed in a recess in the wall, for holding linen, clothes, books, etc., or food, plates, dishes, and other kitchen items.” This interpretation makes sense, because it is a place where rats may destroy the favours. For the translation exists the need for a Dutch synonym for ‘kast’. The Dutch term for this particular kind of cupboard is ‘inbouwkast’ but, as this moves the reader’s attention from the imagery of – classical – music to more basal matters, I have opted for ‘kabinetten’, a somewhat archaic term referring to valuable wooden cupboards (Van Dale).

³² I was unable to find a satisfactory explanation for ‘favours’ in this context. As ‘white satin favours’ alludes to something related to music that can be stored in a cupboard and be destroyed by rats my best guess is that it refers to sheet music, as the Oxford English Dictionary mentions such a thing as satin paper. The ‘favours’ might then refer to the joy that the music brings.

Versailles plunderen; het Groot Trianon³³ kan vallen, maar zeker toch zal het menuet—het menuet zelf zal zichzelf tot de verste sterren dansen, zelfs nu onze menuet in de Hessische³⁴ badplaatsen zichzelf langzaam³⁵ uit moet stappen. Is er dan geen hemel waar mooie oude dansen, mooie oude intimiteiten zichzelf verlengen? Is er dan geen Nirvana doordrongen van de zwakke vibraties van instrumenten die vergaan zijn tot het stof van alsem³⁶ maar die toch nog die broze, bevende, en eeuwige zielen bezaten?

Nee, verdomme³⁷, het is niet echt³⁸! Het was geen menuet die we dansten; het was een gevangenis—een gevangenis vol met schreeuwende hysterici, vastgebonden zodat ze het

³³ The Trianon is the garden of the castle at Versailles, and is called ‘Groot Trianon’ in Dutch.

³⁴ Being in the German province of Hessen.

³⁵ ‘Langzaam’ (slowly) is added to emphasize that the menuet is slowly coming to a halt. It also reduces confusion between ‘uitstappen’ (getting off) and ‘uitstappen’ (stepping still).

³⁶ There is a biblical reference here. In Revelation, ‘wormwood’ is the name of a star that fell into the water, making one third of all the water so bitter that many people became ill and died. In the Dutch translation of the bible, this star is called alsem.

³⁷ This exclamation is a prime example of the varying intensity in Dowell’s narration. It comes in surges, like waves on the sea; right after he has soothed the reader by using the metaphor of the minuet, using imagery like ‘stepping itself still’, ‘heaven’, ‘old beautiful dances’ ‘Nirvana’, ‘faint thrilling’, ‘frail, tremolous, and everlasting souls’ he wakes everyone by exclaiming it was false. So even though ‘verdomme’ might be a stronger swear than the source text’s ‘by God’, I feel it strengthens the function of the exclamation.

rollen van de wielen van onze koets niet konden overstemmen terwijl we door de beschaduwde lanen van het Taunus Wald gingen.

En toch zweer ik bij de heilige naam van mijn schepper dat het echt waar was. Het was echte zonneschijn; de echte muziek; het echte klotsen van de stralen³⁹ uit de mond van stenen dolfijnen. Want, als we voor mij vier mensen waren met dezelfde smaak, met dezelfde verlangens, spelend⁴⁰—of, nee, niet spelend— hier en daar unaniem zittend, is dat dan niet de waarheid? Als ik negen jaar lang een goede appel heb gehad die in de kern verrot was en de rot pas ontdek na negen jaar en zes maanden minus vier dagen, is het dan niet waar om te zeggen dat ik negen jaar lang een goede appel heb gehad? Zo zou het goed kunnen zijn met Edward Ashburnham, met zijn vrouw Leonora en met arme lieve Florence. En, als je er over nadenkt, is het niet een beetje gek dat de fysieke rot in ten minste twee pilaren van ons vierkante huis zich in mijn hoofd geen bedreiging vormde voor de veiligheid ervan? Zo lijkt het nu ook niet ook al zijn ze beiden toch echt dood. Ik weet het niet...

Ik weet niets – niets in de wereld – van de harten van mensen. Ik weet slechts dat ik alleen ben—vreselijk alleen. Geen haard zal ooit nog, voor mij, getuige zijn van vriendelijke

³⁸ As Dowell suggests that he is constantly in search of what is real, I have chosen here for negation rather than using a translation along the lines of 'nep', 'vals' or 'bedrog'. In this way Dowell's search for what is real is emphasised.

³⁹ Although 'Fonteynen' is a straightforward and acceptable translation for 'Fountains,' it provides an unwanted rhyme with 'dolfijnen' that disturbs the flow of the sentence.

⁴⁰ Inconveniently for translation, Dowell alludes to both meanings of the verb 'to act' here: acting as behaving and acting as performance. He realises this in the section between dashes where he emphasises that he does not mean they were pretending (even though they were). The only Dutch translation I am aware of that has, be it only approximately, these connotations is 'spelen'.

gemeenschap⁴¹. Geen rooksalon zal ooit anders zijn dan bevolkt door schimmen tussen slierten rook. En toch, in Godsnaam, welk leven zou ik kennen als ik dat van de haard en de rooksalon niet ken, aangezien ik mijn hele leven in die plaatsen heb gependeed? Het warme haardvuur! – Ja, er was Florence: Ik geloof dat in de twaalf jaar dat haar leven duurde, na de storm die zo onomkeerbaar haar hart verzwakt leek te hebben—ik geloof niet dat ze ook maar één minuut uit mijn zicht was, behalve wanneer ze veilig ingestopt in bed lag en ik beneden moest zijn, pratend met een of andere goede vent in een lounge of rooksalon of mijn laatste beurt nam met een sigaar alvorens naar bed te gaan. Ik verwijt, begrijp je, Florence niet. Maar hoe kan ze hebben geweten wat ze wist? Hoe heeft ze het leren kennen? Het zo compleet te kennen. Mijn hemel! Er lijkt letterlijk gewoon niet genoeg tijd voor te zijn geweest. Het moet zijn geweest toen ik m'n baden nam, en m'n Zweedse oefeningen, mijn manicures kreeg. Met het leven dat ik leed, dat van de ijverige, zwaarbelaste verpleger, moest ik iets doen om fit te blijven. Het moet toen zijn geweest! Maar zelfs dat kan nog niet genoeg tijd zijn geweest om de ongelofelijk lange gesprekken vol wereldlijke wijsheid te voeren waarover Leonora me na hun dood berichtte. En is het mogelijk voor te stellen dat tijdens onze voorgeschreven wandelingen in Nauheim en omgeving ze de tijd vond de langdurige onderhandelingen voort te zetten die ze voortzette tussen Edward Ashburnham en zijn vrouw? En is het niet ongelofelijk dat Edward en Leonora gedurende al die tijd in privé geen woord met elkaar spraken? Wat moet men denken van de mensheid?

Want ik zweer je dat ze het modelpaar waren. Hij was zo toegewijd als mogelijk is zonder dom te lijken. Zo'n goed voorkomen, met zulke eerlijke blauwe ogen, zo'n zweem van stommiteit, zo'n warme goedgehartigheid! En zij—zo fier, zo vorstelijk in het zadel, zo schoon! Ja, Leonora was bijzonder schoon en zo bijzonder echt dat ze te mooi leek om waar te zijn. Je

⁴¹ To preserve the sexual pun of 'intercourse' I have chosen for 'gemeenschap' rather than the in Dutch more common 'omgang' or 'samenzijn'.

krijgt het niet, ik bedoel, in de regel, zo superlatief samen. Om de voorname familie⁴² te zijn, er uit te zien als de voorname familie, om zo gepast en perfect rijk te zijn; om zo perfect te zijn op elke manier—zelfs tot op de verlossende vleug van arrogantie die nodig lijkt te zijn. Om het allemaal te hebben en het allemaal te zijn! Nee, het was te mooi om waar te zijn. En toch, deze middag nog, toen we de hele zaak bespraken zei ze tegen me: “Ooit heb ik geprobeerd een minnaar te hebben maar ik kreeg het zo aan m’n hart, ik was zo uitgeput dat ik hem weg moest sturen.” Dat trof me als het meest bijzondere dat ik ooit had gehoord. Ze zei⁴³ “Ik lag zelfs in de armen van een man. Zo’n aardige kerel! Zo’n beste vent! En ik zei tegen mezelf, woest, slissend door m’n tanden, zoals ze dat zeggen in romans, en ze echt goed op elkaar bijtend: Ik zei tegen mezelf: Nou, ik heb er zin in en ik ga voor één keer in m’n leven echt plezier hebben—voor één keer in m’n leven!” Het was in het donker, in een koets, op de terugweg van een jagersbal. Elf mijl⁴⁴ moesten we rijden! En toen viel plotseling de bitterheid van de eindeloze armoede, van het eindeloze spel⁴⁵—het viel als een duisternis over me heen, het verpestte alles. Ja, ik moest me beseffen dat ik al verpest was zelfs voor de plezierige tijd

⁴² According to the Van Dale, a ‘county family’ is a ‘(voornam) plattelandsfamilie’. I chose to adhere to the respectable aspect of the phrase, as the term ‘plattelandsfamilie’ might invoke associations with farmers. I believe that Dowell is commenting on the Ashburnhams’ respectability. The Oxford English dictionary also puts the respectable aspect first: “a family belonging to the nobility or gentry, having estates and an ancestral seat in the county” (OED).

⁴³ The omission of the colon also appears in the source text as well as another edition of the source text. I do not know whether it has any significance or if it is just a typo.

⁴⁴ I chose not to naturalise and convert the miles into kilometres, as an emphasis of Leonora’s Englishness.

⁴⁵ In contrary to what we’ve seen before, the use of ‘acting’ here is unambiguous, it refers solely to Leonora’s attempts to keep up appearances. However, ‘spel’ seems to be the right translation as she is performing an act.

toen die kwam⁴⁶. En ik barstte in huilen uit en ik huilde en huilde de hele elf mijl. Stel je eens voor, *ik* aan het huilen! En stel je voor hoe ik die arme beste kerel belachelijk maakte. Het was zeker niet het spel spelen, of wel?”

Ik weet het niet; ik weet het niet; was die laatste opmerking van haar de opmerking van een sloerie, of is het wat elke fatsoenlijke vrouw, voorname familie of geen voorname familie, denkt in het diepste van haar hart? Of wat dat betreft de hele tijd denkt? Wie weet?

Toch, als men dat niet weet op dit uur en deze dag, op dit punt van het afglijden van de beschaving dat we hebben bereikt, na alle preken van alle moralisten, en alle lessen van alle moeders aan alle dochters *in saecula saeculorum*⁴⁷... maar misschien is dat wat alle moeders alle dochters leren, niet met lippen maar met de ogen, of met hart fluisterend tegen hart. En, als men dat nog niet eens weet over de belangrijkste zaak in de wereld, wat weet men dan en waarom is men hier?

Ik vroeg Mevrouw Ashburnham of ze dat aan Florence had verteld en wat Florence had gezegd en ze antwoordde: —“Florence gaf helemaal geen commentaar. Wat kon ze zeggen? Er was niets om te zeggen. Met de schrijnende armoede die we moesten doorstaan om de schijn op te houden, en de manier waarop die armoede teweeg werd gebracht—*jij* weet wat ik bedoel—elke vrouw zou gerechtigd zijn om een minnaar te nemen en ook cadeaus. Florence zei ooit over een erg vergelijkbare situatie—ze was een beetje te goed opgevoed, te Amerikaans, om het over de mijne te hebben—dat het een geval was van een

⁴⁶ The meaning of this sentence might be somewhat difficult for the reader to distinguish, this is however also the case in the source text (“I had been spoiled for the good time when it came”). I attempted to adhere to the source text as much as possible and maintaining the link by using ‘plezierige’ rather than ‘fijne’ or ‘goede’.

⁴⁷ A phrase taken from the Vulgate that is usually translated with ‘for ever and ever’. Also used to denote a human lifespan.

stroomversnelling en dat de vrouw zich gewoon mee kon laten voeren. Ze zei het op z'n Amerikaans natuurlijk, maar dat was de strekking. Ik geloof dat ze letterlijk zei: 'Dat ze het kon doen of laten...'"

Ik wil niet dat je denkt dat ik Teddy Ashburnham voor brutoot uitmaak. Ik geloof niet dat hij dat was. Wie weet, misschien zijn alle mannen zo. Want zoals ik zei wat weet ik nu zelfs maar van de rooksalon? Kerels komen binnen en vertellen de meest uitzonderlijk grove verhalen—zo grof dat ze je zeker zullen irriteren. En toch zouden ze beledigd zijn als je suggereerde dat zij niet het soort persoon waren waarmee je je vrouw alleen kon laten. En ze zouden heel waarschijnlijk best behoorlijk beledigd zijn—als je tenminste iemand alleen met iemand kunt vertrouwen. Maar dat soort kerel haalt duidelijk meer plezier uit het luisteren naar of vertellen van smerige verhalen—meer plezier dan uit wat dan ook ter wereld. Ze zullen lusteloos jagen en zich lusteloos kleden en lusteloos dineren en werken zonder enthousiasme en het vervelend vinden om drie minuten gesprek over wat dan ook uit te zitten en toch, als dat andere soort gesprek begint, zullen ze lachen en wakker worden en schudden in hun stoel. Hoe, als ze zo veel plezier halen uit het vertellen, hoe is het dan mogelijk dat ze beledigd kunnen zijn – en behoorlijk beledigd – door de suggestie dat ze de eerzaamheid van je vrouw aan zouden tasten? Of nogmaals: Edward Ashburnham was ogenschijnlijk het zuiverste soort kerel; —een perfecte magistraat, een eerste klas soldaat, één van de beste landheren, zo zeiden ze, in Hampshire, Engeland. Voor de armen en voor de hopeloze dronkenlappen, zoals ik zelf heb gezien, was hij als een toegewijde beschermheer. En hij heeft nooit meer dan één of twee keer een verhaal verteld dat niet in de columns van *The Field*⁴⁸ kon in de hele negen jaar dat ik hem kende. Hij vond het niet eens leuk om ze te horen; hij kreeg de zenuwen en ging weg om een sigaar te kopen of zoiets. Je zou gezegd hebben dat hij

⁴⁸ *The Field* is the worlds oldest continually running sports magazine. It was first published in 1853.

precies het soort kerel was aan wie je je vrouw kon toevertrouwen. En ik vertrouwde de mijne en het was waanzin.

En toch, daar heb je me weer. Als arme Edward gevaarlijk was vanwege de kuisheid van zijn uitdrukkingen – en ze zeggen dat dat altijd een teken is van losbandigheid – hoe zit het dan met mij? Want ik zweer plechtig dat ik in heel mijn leven niet alleen nooit ook maar naar iets ongepast heb verwezen in mijn gesprekken; en daarbij, ik sta in voor de zuiverheid van mijn gedachten en de absolute kuisheid van mijn leven. En waar komt het dan allemaal op neer? Is alles dwaasheid en een aanfluiting? Ben ik niet beter dan een eunuch of is de echte man—de man met een recht tot bestaan—een razende hengst eeuwig hinnikend naar zijn buurmans vrouw⁴⁹?

Ik weet het niet. En er is niets om ons te leiden. En als alles al zo mistig is rond een zaak zo elementair als de seksuele moraal, wat moet ons dan sturen in de meer subtiele ethiek van alle andere persoonlijke contacten, gezelschappen, en activiteiten? Of moeten we puur op instinct af gaan? Het is een duisternis⁵⁰.

⁴⁹ In the source text, this phrase (neighing after his neighbour's womankind) resonates one of the ten commandments (covet thy neighbour's wife) whether this is significant or not I would like to leave to the reader and have therefore maintained the hint.

⁵⁰ In this translation of 'it is all a darkness', 'all' has been omitted because I wanted to preserve the shortness of the sentence.

Section 2 (149-151)

Nou, dat is het einde van het verhaal. En, nu ik er op terugkijk zie ik dat het een goed einde is met bruidsklokken en al. De slechteriken—want Edward en het meisje waren duidelijk slechteriken—werden gestraft door zelfmoord en gekte. De heldin—de compleet normale, rechtschapen en lichtelijk bedrieglijke heldin—is nu de gelukkige vrouw van een compleet normale, rechtschapen en lichtelijk bedrieglijke⁵¹ echtgenoot. Ze zal snel moeder worden van een compleet normale, rechtschapen, lichtelijk bedrieglijke zoon of dochter. Een goed einde, dat is waar het op neerkomt.

Ik kan het feit niet voor mezelf verbergen dat ik nu een afkeer heb van Leonora. Ongetwijfeld ben ik jaloers op Rodney Bayham. Maar ik weet niet of het simpelweg een jaloezie is die voortkomt uit het feit dat ik er naar verlangde Leonora voor mezelf te hebben of dat het is omdat aan haar de enige twee personen die ik ooit heb liefgehad werden geofferd—Edward Ashburnham en Nancy Rufford. Om haar te vestigen in een modern landhuis, van elk gemak voorzien en bestuurd door een best respectabele en voortreffelijk economische heer des huizes, was het noodzakelijk dat Edward en Nancy Rufford, voor mij tenminste, niet meer dan tragische schimmen werden.

Ik lijk⁵² die⁵³ arme Edward te zien, naakt en liggend in het donker, op koude rotsen, als één van de Oudgriekse verdoemden, in Tartarus of waar het dan ook was.

⁵¹ This section is a clear example of Dowell's unsteady emotive narrative, he starts off lightly, even hazarding a joke about the normal, virtuous and slightly deceitful family. Yet in the next paragraph he slides towards a sadder, more dark mindset as he considers how he now feels about Leonora.

⁵² After he has been reminded of Edward, Dowell's narration grows even more grim, comparing Edward to a Greek damned in the Tartarus, where some of the worst punishments in Greek mythology were in effect. It opens for the next paragraph, in which another tragic event, the madness of Nancy, is related to the reader.

En wat Nancy betreft... Nou, gisteren zei ze tijdens de lunch opeens:

“Tennisballen!”⁵⁴

En ze herhaalde het woord “tennisballen” drie keer. Ik weet wat er in haar verstand omging; als er van haar gezegd kan worden dat ze verstand heeft, want Leonora heeft me verteld dat, het arme meisje ooit zei dat ze zich voelde als een tennisbal die heen en weer werd geslagen tussen de intense persoonlijkheden van Edward en zijn vrouw. Leonora, zei ze, probeerde haar altijd richting Edward te krijgen, en Edward dwong haar stil en onuitgesproken⁵⁵ terug. En het aparte was dat Edward zelf dacht dat de vrouwen *hem* gebruikten als tennisbal. Of, eigenlijk, hij zei dat ze hem heen en weer stuurden als een verrekt pakketje waar niemand de strafport voor wilde betalen. En Leonora dacht ook dat Edward en Nancy haar oppakten en weggooiden als dat hen zo uitkwam. En daar heb je het dan, het hele plaatje. Let op, ik verkondig niets in tegenstelling tot de geaccepteerde zeden. Ik bepleit de vrije liefde niet in dit of in elk ander geval. De samenleving moet verder, geloof ik, en de samenleving kan alleen bestaan als de normalen, de rechtschape, en de lichtelijk bedrieglijke floreren, en als de gepassioneerden, de koppigen, en de te-waarheidsgetrouwen worden verdoemd tot zelfmoord en gekte. Maar ik gok dat ik zelf, op mijn zwakkere manier,

⁵³ Although the insertion of ‘die’ is not warranted by the source text, I feel it helps the flow of the sentence.

⁵⁴ As Dowell explains, the imagery of Nancy’s exclamation of the word shuttlecock is significant as both she and Edward felt like shuttlecocks going back and forth between different people. In the case of Edward, the word shuttlecock might well have a sexual connotation. To preserve these aspects I have opted to use ‘tennisbal’, which preserves the to and fro meaning as well as, be it to a lesser extent, the Freudian meaning.

⁵⁵ In the source text: ‘tacitly and silently’. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, both words have roughly the same meaning. To preserve the difference between the words yet maintain their similar meanings I have opted for ‘onuitgesproken en stil’ (rather than, for example, ‘stilzwijgend en stil’).

terecht kom in de categorie van de gepassioneerden, van de koppigen, en de te-waarheidsgetrouwen. Want ik kan niet voor mezelf verborgen houden dat ik van Edward Ashburnham hield—en dat ik hem liefhad omdat hij precies mezelf was. Als ik de moed en mannelijkheid en mogelijk ook het fysiek van Edward Ashburnham had gehad dan zou ik, denk ik, veelal hebben gedaan wat hij deed. Hij is voor mij als een grote oudere broer die me meenam op verscheidene uitjes en veel brutale dingen deed terwijl ik gewoon naar hem keek als hij de boomgaard leegroofde, van een afstandje. En, zie je, ik ben net zo'n romanticus als hij was...

Ja, de samenleving moet verder; ze moet zich voortplanten, als konijnen. Dat is wat waarom we hier zijn. Maar ach, ik hou niet van de samenleving—niet echt. Ik ben die absurde figuur, een Amerikaanse miljonair, die één van de antieke onderkomens van Engelse rust heeft gekocht. Ik zit hier, in Edwards wapenkamer, de hele dag en de hele dag in een huis dat volkomen stil is. Niemand bezoekt me, want ik bezoek niemand. Niemand is in me geïnteresseerd, want ik heb geen interesses. Over ongeveer twintig minuten zal ik naar het dorp lopen, onder mijn eigen eiken, langs mijn eigen doornstruiken, om de *American Mail* te halen. Mijn pachters, de dorpsjongens en de winkeliers zullen naar me knikken⁵⁶. Zo dooft het leven uit. Ik zal terugkomen om te dineren en Nancy zal tegenover me zitten met de oude zuster die achter haar staat. Ondoorgrondelijk, stil, uiterst goed gemanierd voor zover het haar mes en vork betreft, zal Nancy voor zich uit staren met de blauwe ogen met samengeperste gestrekte wenkbrauwen erboven. Eens, of misschien tweemaal, tijdens de maaltijd zullen haar mes en vork in de lucht gehouden worden alsof ze zich iets probeerde te bedenken dat ze was

⁵⁶ In the source text, Dowell mentions that the people in the village 'will touch their hats to me'. I found that in Dutch, the description of greetings that involve hats are more amicable than what I think is meant here. The people greet Dowell, but only because they have a professional relationship with him, nobody is actually his friend. To preserve this aspect I have opted for 'knikken' (nod).

vergeten. Dan zal ze zeggen dat ze gelooft in een Almachtige God of spreekt ze dat ene woord “tennisballen” uit, misschien. Het is echt uitzonderlijk om de volstrekt gezonde gloed op haar wangen te zien, om de glans van haar gekrulde zwarte haar te zien, de balans van haar hoofd op haar nek, de gratie van de witte handen—en te bedenken dat het allemaal niets betekent—het is een plaatje zonder betekenis. Ja, het is apart⁵⁷.

Maar, hoe dan ook, er is altijd nog Leonora om je op te beuren; ik wil je niet bedroeven. Haar man is een best economisch persoon met zo’n normaal figuur dan hij een best groot deel van zijn kleren kant-en-klaar kan kopen. Dat is het grote desideratum des levens, en dat is het einde van mijn verhaal. Het kind zal worden opgevoed als rooms-katholiek.

Ik bedenk me ineens dat ik vergeten ben te zeggen hoe Edward aan zijn einde kwam. Je herinnert je dat de vrede was neergedaald op het huis; dat Leonora stilletjes zegevierde en dat Edward zei dat zijn liefde voor het meisje slechts een voorbijgaande fase was. Nou, op een middag waren we samen in de stallen, kijkend naar een nieuw soort ondergrond die Edward aan het proberen was in een paardenbox. Edward praatte behoorlijk geanimeerd over de noodzakelijkheid om het aantal reservisten⁵⁸ in Hampshire op het fatsoenlijke niveau te brengen. Hij was best bedaard, best rustig, zijn huid was egaal gekleurd; zijn haar was goudkleurig en perfect geborsteld; zijn effen baksteenrode teint liep helemaal door tot de

⁵⁷ In the before paragraph, Dowell elaborates on the nothingness of his existence, there is no change and surprise for him. Using the future tense, he tells the reader what he knows is going to happen and the whole paragraph evokes a feeling of self-pity for Dowell’s part. Then he suddenly jumps to telling about Leonora and her new husband, jokingly mentioning that he is the perfect husband for Leonora, as even his figure is economical.

⁵⁸ The Hampshire territorials are a division of territorials (a part of the reserve forces in the UK) from Hampshire. The Dutch equivalent here is ‘reservisten’.

randen van zijn oogleden; zijn ogen waren porseleinblauw en aanschouwden me eerlijk en direct. Zijn gezicht was perfect uitdrukkingloos; zijn stem was diep en ruw. Hij stond fier overeind op zijn benen en zei:

“We moeten ze aanvullen tot tweeduizend driehonderd en vijftig.”

Een stalknecht bracht hem een telegram en ging weg. Hij opende het achteloos, bekeek het zonder emotie, en, in complete stilte, gaf het aan mij. Op het rozige papier stond met een groot onregelmatig handschrift: “Veilig Brindisi. Heb zeldzaam mooie tijd. Nancy.”

Nou, Edward was de Engelse gentleman; maar hij was ook, tot het einde, een romanticus, wiens gedachten opgemaakt waren uit verschillende gedichten en romans. Hij keek op naar het dak van de stal, alsof hij naar de Hemel keek, en fluisterde iets dat ik niet verstond.

Toen stopte hij twee vingers in de vestzak van zijn grijze wollen pak; ze kwamen er uit met een keurig klein zakmes—best een klein zakmes. Hij zei tegen me:

“Je zou best dat telegram naar Leonora kunnen brengen.” En hij keek me aan met een directe, uitdagende, hautaine blik. Ik denk dat hij in mijn ogen kon zien dat ik niet van plan was hem te hinderen. Waarom zou ik hem hinderen?

Ik denk niet dat hij gewild was in de wereld, laat zijn verdraaide pachters, zijn schuttersmaatjes, zijn dronkenlappen, ontwend of niet ontwend, doorgaan zoals ze wilden. Niet al die honderden en honderden van hen verdienden het dat die arme duvel zou lijden voor hun bestwil.

Toen hij zag dat ik niet van plan was hem in de weg te staan werd zijn blik zacht en bijna teder. Hij zei:

“Tot ziens, beste kerel, ik heb een beetje rust nodig, zie je.”

Ik wist niet wat ik moest zeggen. Ik wilde zeggen, “God zegene je,” want ik ben ook een romanticus. Maar ik dacht dat dat best wel eens niet de goede Engelse gewoonte zou

kunnen zijn, dus ik ging op een drafje⁵⁹ met het telegram naar Leonora. Ze was er best blij mee.

⁵⁹ Right after telling the reader about Edward's suicide – a person Dowell supposedly loved very much – he lightly trots off to Leonora and mentions how 'She was quite pleased with [the telegram]. Until the very end of the novel, Dowell's unstable mindset, the clue of the implied author that he does not share Dowell's values, makes the reader judge his every statement.

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Appendices

1: The Good Soldier, source text.

Section 1: page 1-6

THIS IS THE saddest story I have ever heard. We had known the Ashburnhams for nine seasons of the town of Nauheim with an extreme intimacy—or, rather with an acquaintanceship as loose and easy and yet as close as a good glove's with your hand. My wife and I knew Captain and Mrs Ashburnham as well as it was possible to know anybody, and yet, in another sense, we knew nothing at all about them. This is, I believe, a state of things only possible with English people of whom, till today, when I sit down to puzzle out what I know of this sad affair, I knew nothing whatever. Six months ago I had never been to England, and, certainly, I had never sounded the depths of an English heart. I had known the shallows.

I don't mean to say that we were not acquainted with many English people. Living, as we perforce lived, in Europe, and being, as we perforce were, leisured Americans, which is as much as to say that we were un-American, we were thrown very much into the society of the nicer English. Paris, you see, was our home. Somewhere between Nice and Bordighera provided yearly winter quarters for us, and Nauheim always received us from July to September. You will gather from this statement that one of us had, as the saying is, a "heart", and, from the statement that my wife is dead, that she was the sufferer.

Captain Ashburnham also had a heart. But, whereas a yearly month or so at Nauheim tuned him up to exactly the right pitch for the rest of the twelvemonth, the two months or so were only just enough to keep poor Florence alive from year to year. The reason for his heart was, approximately, polo, or too much hard sportsmanship in his youth. The reason for poor Florence's broken years was a storm at sea upon our first crossing to Europe, and the immediate reasons for our imprisonment in that continent were doctor's orders. They said that even the short Channel crossing might well kill the poor thing.

When we all first met, Captain Ashburnham, home on sick leave from an India to which he was never to return, was thirty-three; Mrs Ashburnham Leonora—was thirty-one. I was thirty-six and poor Florence thirty. Thus today Florence would have been thirty-nine and Captain Ashburnham forty-two; whereas I am forty-five and Leonora forty. You will perceive, therefore, that our friendship has been a young-middle-aged affair, since we were all of us of quite quiet dispositions, the Ashburnhams being more particularly what in England it is the custom to call "quite good people".

They were descended, as you will probably expect, from the Ashburnham who accompanied Charles I to the scaffold, and, as you must also expect with this class of English people, you would never have noticed it. Mrs Ashburnham was a Powys; Florence was a Hurlbird of Stamford, Connecticut, where, as you know, they are more old-fashioned than even the inhabitants of Cranford, England, could have been. I myself am a Dowell of Philadelphia, Pa., where, it is historically true, there are more old English families than you would find in any six English counties taken together. I carry about with me, indeed—as if it were the only thing that invisibly anchored me to any spot upon the globe—the title deeds of my farm, which

once covered several blocks between Chestnut and Walnut Streets. These title deeds are of wampum, the grant of an Indian chief to the first Dowell, who left Farnham in Surrey in company with William Penn. Florence's people, as is so often the case with the inhabitants of Connecticut, came from the neighbourhood of Fordingbridge, where the Ashburnhams' place is. From there, at this moment, I am actually writing.

You may well ask why I write. And yet my reasons are quite many. For it is not unusual in human beings who have witnessed the sack of a city or the falling to pieces of a people to desire to set down what they have witnessed for the benefit of unknown heirs or of generations infinitely remote; or, if you please, just to get the sight out of their heads.

Some one has said that the death of a mouse from cancer is the whole sack of Rome by the Goths, and I swear to you that the breaking up of our little four-square coterie was such another unthinkable event. Supposing that you should come upon us sitting together at one of the little tables in front of the club house, let us say, at Homburg, taking tea of an afternoon and watching the miniature golf, you would have said that, as human affairs go, we were an extraordinarily safe castle. We were, if you will, one of those tall ships with the white sails upon a blue sea, one of those things that seem the proudest and the safest of all the beautiful and safe things that God has permitted the mind of men to frame. Where better could one take refuge? Where better?

Permanence? Stability? I can't believe it's gone. I can't believe that that long, tranquil life, which was just stepping a minuet, vanished in four crashing days at the end of nine years and six weeks. Upon my word, yes, our intimacy was like a minuet, simply because on every possible occasion and in every possible circumstance we knew where to go, where to sit, which table we unanimously should choose; and we could rise and go, all four together, without a signal from any one of us, always to the music of the Kur orchestra, always in the temperate sunshine, or, if it rained, in discreet shelters. No, indeed, it can't be gone. You can't kill a minuet de la cour. You may shut up the music-book, close the harpsichord; in the cupboard and presses the rats may destroy the white satin favours. The mob may sack Versailles; the Trianon may fall, but surely the minuet—the minuet itself is dancing itself away into the furthest stars, even as our minuet of the Hessian bathing places must be stepping itself still. Isn't there any heaven where old beautiful dances, old beautiful intimacies prolong themselves? Isn't there any Nirvana pervaded by the faint thrilling of instruments that have fallen into the dust of wormwood but that yet had frail, tremulous, and everlasting souls?

No, by God, it is false! It wasn't a minuet that we stepped; it was a prison—a prison full of screaming hysterics, tied down so that they might not outsound the rolling of our carriage wheels as we went along the shaded avenues of the Taunus Wald.

And yet I swear by the sacred name of my creator that it was true. It was true sunshine; the true music; the true splash of the fountains from the mouth of stone dolphins. For, if for me we were four people with the same tastes, with the same desires, acting—or, no, not acting—sitting here and there unanimously, isn't that the truth? If for nine years I have possessed a goodly apple that is rotten at the core and discover its rottenness only in nine years and six months less four days, isn't it true to say that for nine years I possessed a goodly apple? So it may well be with Edward Ashburnham, with Leonora his wife and with poor dear Florence. And, if you come to think of it, isn't it a little odd that the physical rottenness of at least two pillars of our four-square house never presented itself to my mind as a menace to its security? It doesn't so present itself now though the two of them are actually dead. I don't know....

I know nothing—nothing in the world—of the hearts of men. I only know that I am alone—horribly alone. No hearthstone will ever again witness, for me, friendly intercourse. No smoking-room will ever be other than peopled with incalculable simulacra amidst smoke wreaths. Yet, in the name of God, what should I know if I don't know the life of the hearth and of the smoking-room, since my whole life has been passed in those places? The warm hearthside!—Well, there was Florence: I believe that for the twelve years her life lasted, after the storm that seemed irretrievably to have weakened her heart—I don't believe that for one minute she was out of my sight, except when she was safely tucked up in bed and I should be downstairs, talking to some good fellow or other in some lounge or smoking-room or taking my final turn with a cigar before going to bed. I don't, you understand, blame Florence. But how can she have known what she knew? How could she have got to know it? To know it so fully. Heavens! There doesn't seem to have been the actual time. It must have been when I was taking my baths, and my Swedish exercises, being manicured. Leading the life I did, of the sedulous, strained nurse, I had to do something to keep myself fit. It must have been then! Yet even that can't have been enough time to get the tremendously long conversations full of worldly wisdom that Leonora has reported to me since their deaths. And is it possible to imagine that during our prescribed walks in Nauheim and the neighbourhood she found time to carry on the protracted negotiations which she did carry on between Edward Ashburnham and his wife? And isn't it incredible that during all that time Edward and Leonora never spoke a word to each other in private? What is one to think of humanity?

For I swear to you that they were the model couple. He was as devoted as it was possible to be without appearing fatuous. So well set up, with such honest blue eyes, such a touch of stupidity, such a warm goodheartedness! And she—so tall, so splendid in the saddle, so fair! Yes, Leonora was extraordinarily fair and so extraordinarily the real thing that she seemed too good to be true. You don't, I mean, as a rule, get it all so superlatively together. To be the county family, to look the county family, to be so appropriately and perfectly wealthy; to be so perfect in manner—even just to the saving touch of insolence that seems to be necessary. To have all that and to be all that! No, it was too good to be true. And yet, only this afternoon, talking over the whole matter she said to me: "Once I tried to have a lover but I was so sick at the heart, so utterly worn out that I had to send him away." That struck me as the most amazing thing I had ever heard. She said "I was actually in a man's arms. Such a nice chap! Such a dear fellow! And I was saying to myself, fiercely, hissing it between my teeth, as they say in novels—and really clenching them together: I was saying to myself: 'Now, I'm in for it and I'll really have a good time for once in my life—for once in my life!' It was in the dark, in a carriage, coming back from a hunt ball. Eleven miles we had to drive! And then suddenly the bitterness of the endless poverty, of the endless acting—it fell on me like a blight, it spoilt everything. Yes, I had to realize that I had been spoilt even for the good time when it came. And I burst out crying and I cried and I cried for the whole eleven miles. Just imagine me crying! And just imagine me making a fool of the poor dear chap like that. It certainly wasn't playing the game, was it now?"

I don't know; I don't know; was that last remark of hers the remark of a harlot, or is it what every decent woman, county family or not county family, thinks at the bottom of her heart? Or thinks all the time for the matter of that? Who knows?

Yet, if one doesn't know that at this hour and day, at this pitch of civilization to which we have attained, after all the preachings of all the moralists, and all the teachings of all the mothers to all the daughters in saecula saeculorum... but perhaps that is what all mothers teach all daughters, not with lips but with the eyes, or with heart whispering to heart. And, if one

doesn't know as much as that about the first thing in the world, what does one know and why is one here?

I asked Mrs Ashburnham whether she had told Florence that and what Florence had said and she answered:—"Florence didn't offer any comment at all. What could she say? There wasn't anything to be said. With the grinding poverty we had to put up with to keep up appearances, and the way the poverty came about—you know what I mean—any woman would have been justified in taking a lover and presents too. Florence once said about a very similar position—she was a little too well-bred, too American, to talk about mine—that it was a case of perfectly open riding and the woman could just act on the spur of the moment. She said it in American of course, but that was the sense of it. I think her actual words were: 'That it was up to her to take it or leave it....'"

I don't want you to think that I am writing Teddy Ashburnham down a brute. I don't believe he was. God knows, perhaps all men are like that. For as I've said what do I know even of the smoking-room? Fellows come in and tell the most extraordinarily gross stories—so gross that they will positively give you a pain. And yet they'd be offended if you suggested that they weren't the sort of person you could trust your wife alone with. And very likely they'd be quite properly offended—that is if you can trust anybody alone with anybody. But that sort of fellow obviously takes more delight in listening to or in telling gross stories—more delight than in anything else in the world. They'll hunt languidly and dress languidly and dine languidly and work without enthusiasm and find it a bore to carry on three minutes' conversation about anything whatever and yet, when the other sort of conversation begins, they'll laugh and wake up and throw themselves about in their chairs. Then, if they so delight in the narration, how is it possible that they can be offended—and properly offended—at the suggestion that they might make attempts upon your wife's honour? Or again: Edward Ashburnham was the cleanest looking sort of chap;—an excellent magistrate, a first rate soldier, one of the best landlords, so they said, in Hampshire, England. To the poor and to hopeless drunkards, as I myself have witnessed, he was like a painstaking guardian. And he never told a story that couldn't have gone into the columns of the Field more than once or twice in all the nine years of my knowing him. He didn't even like hearing them; he would fidget and get up and go out to buy a cigar or something of that sort. You would have said that he was just exactly the sort of chap that you could have trusted your wife with. And I trusted mine and it was madness. And yet again you have me. If poor Edward was dangerous because of the chastity of his expressions—and they say that is always the hall-mark of a libertine—what about myself? For I solemnly avow that not only have I never so much as hinted at an impropriety in my conversation in the whole of my days; and more than that, I will vouch for the cleanness of my thoughts and the absolute chastity of my life. At what, then, does it all work out? Is the whole thing a folly and a mockery? Am I no better than a eunuch or is the proper man—the man with the right to existence—a raging stallion forever neighing after his neighbour's womankind?

I don't know. And there is nothing to guide us. And if everything is so nebulous about a matter so elementary as the morals of sex, what is there to guide us in the more subtle morality of all other personal contacts, associations, and activities? Or are we meant to act on impulse alone? It is all a darkness.

Section 2: page 149-151

Well, that is the end of the story. And, when I come to look at it I see that it is a happy ending with wedding bells and all. The villains—for obviously Edward and the girl were villains—have been punished by suicide and madness. The heroine—the perfectly normal, virtuous and slightly deceitful heroine—has become the happy wife of a perfectly normal, virtuous and slightly deceitful husband. She will shortly become a mother of a perfectly normal, virtuous slightly deceitful son or daughter. A happy ending, that is what it works out at.

I cannot conceal from myself the fact that I now dislike Leonora. Without doubt I am jealous of Rodney Bayham. But I don't know whether it is merely a jealousy arising from the fact that I desired myself to possess Leonora or whether it is because to her were sacrificed the only two persons that I have ever really loved—Edward Ashburnham and Nancy Rufford. In order to set her up in a modern mansion, replete with every convenience and dominated by a quite respectable and eminently economical master of the house, it was necessary that Edward and Nancy Rufford should become, for me at least, no more than tragic shades.

I seem to see poor Edward, naked and reclining amidst darkness, upon cold rocks, like one of the ancient Greek damned, in Tartarus or wherever it was.

And as for Nancy... Well, yesterday at lunch she said suddenly: "Shuttlecocks!"

And she repeated the word "shuttlecocks" three times. I know what was passing in her mind, if she can be said to have a mind, for Leonora has told me that, once, the poor girl said she felt like a shuttlecock being tossed backwards and forwards between the violent personalities of Edward and his wife. Leonora, she said, was always trying to deliver her over to Edward, and Edward tacitly and silently forced her back again. And the odd thing was that Edward himself considered that those two women used him like a shuttlecock. Or, rather, he said that they sent him backwards and forwards like a blooming parcel that someone didn't want to pay the postage on. And Leonora also imagined that Edward and Nancy picked her up and threw her down as suited their purely vagrant moods. So there you have the pretty picture. Mind, I am not preaching anything contrary to accepted morality. I am not advocating free love in this or any other case. Society must go on, I suppose, and society can only exist if the normal, if the virtuous, and the slightly deceitful flourish, and if the passionate, the headstrong, and the too-truthful are condemned to suicide and to madness. But I guess that I myself, in my fainter way, come into the category of the passionate, of the headstrong, and the too-truthful. For I can't conceal from myself the fact that I loved Edward Ashburnham—and that I love him because he was just myself. If I had had the courage and virility and possibly also the physique of Edward Ashburnham I should, I fancy, have done much what he did. He seems to me like a large elder brother who took me out on several excursions and did many dashing things whilst I just watched him robbing the orchards, from a distance. And, you see, I am just as much of a sentimentalist as he was.. ..

Yes, society must go on; it must breed, like rabbits. That is what we are here for. But then, I don't like society—much. I am that absurd figure, an American millionaire, who has bought one of the ancient haunts of English peace. I sit here, in Edward's gun-room, all day and all day in a house that is absolutely quiet. No one visits me, for I visit no one. No one is interested in me, for I have no interests. In twenty minutes or so I shall walk down to the village, beneath my own oaks, alongside my own clumps of gorse, to get the American mail.

My tenants, the village boys and the tradesmen will touch their hats to me. So life peters out. I shall return to dine and Nancy will sit opposite me with the old nurse standing behind her. Enigmatic, silent, utterly well-behaved as far as her knife and fork go, Nancy will stare in front of her with the blue eyes that have over them strained, stretched brows. Once, or perhaps twice, during the meal her knife and fork will be suspended in mid-air as if she were trying to think of something that she had forgotten. Then she will say that she believes in an Omnipotent Deity or she will utter the one word "shuttle-cocks", perhaps. It is very extraordinary to see the perfect flush of health on her cheeks, to see the lustre of her coiled black hair, the poise of the head upon the neck, the grace of the white hands—and to think that it all means nothing—that it is a picture without a meaning. Yes, it is queer.

But, at any rate, there is always Leonora to cheer you up; I don't want to sadden you. Her husband is quite an economical person of so normal a figure that he can get quite a large proportion of his clothes ready-made. That is the great desideratum of life, and that is the end of my story. The child is to be brought up as a Romanist.

It suddenly occurs to me that I have forgotten to say how Edward met his death. You remember that peace had descended upon the house; that Leonora was quietly triumphant and that Edward said his love for the girl had been merely a passing phase. Well, one afternoon we were in the stables together, looking at a new kind of flooring that Edward was trying in a loose-box. Edward was talking with a good deal of animation about the necessity of getting the numbers of the Hampshire territorials up to the proper standard. He was quite sober, quite quiet, his skin was clear-coloured; his hair was golden and perfectly brushed; the level brick-dust red of his complexion went clean up to the rims of his eyelids; his eyes were porcelain blue and they regarded me frankly and directly. His face was perfectly expressionless; his voice was deep and rough. He stood well back upon his legs and said:

"We ought to get them up to two thousand three hundred and fifty." A stable-boy brought him a telegram and went away. He opened it negligently, regarded it without emotion, and, in complete silence, handed it to me. On the pinkish paper in a sprawled handwriting I read: "Safe Brindisi. Having rattling good time. Nancy."

Well, Edward was the English gentleman; but he was also, to the last, a sentimentalist, whose mind was compounded of indifferent poems and novels. He just looked up to the roof of the stable, as if he were looking to Heaven, and whispered something that I did not catch.

Then he put two fingers into the waistcoat pocket of his grey, frieze suit; they came out with a little neat pen-knife—quite a small pen-knife. He said to me:

"You might just take that wire to Leonora." And he looked at me with a direct, challenging, brow-beating glare. I guess he could see in my eyes that I didn't intend to hinder him. Why should I hinder him?

I didn't think he was wanted in the world, let his confounded tenants, his rifle-associations, his drunkards, reclaimed and unreclaimed, get on as they liked. Not all the hundreds and hundreds of them deserved that that poor devil should go on suffering for their sakes.

When he saw that I did not intend to interfere with him his eyes became soft and almost affectionate. He remarked:

"So long, old man, I must have a bit of a rest, you know."

I didn't know what to say. I wanted to say, "God bless you", for I also am a sentimentalist. But I thought that perhaps that would not be quite English good form, so I trotted off with the telegram to Leonora. She was quite pleased with it.

2: Ford Madox Ford's life: Chronology

(adapted from Sondra Stang's *Ford Madox Ford*)

- 1873: Born as Ford Hermann Hueffer on December 17 in Merton, Surrey.
- 1889: Death of his father, Dr. Francis Hueffer; family moved to the house of his grandfather, Ford Madox Brown.
- 1891: Conversion to Roman Catholicism. First publication: *The Brown Owl*, a fairy tale for children.
- 1892: Publication of his first novel: *The Sifting of Fire*.
- 1893: Death of his grandfather.
- 1894: Elopement with Elsie Martindale.
- 1897: The Birth of his daughter Christina.
- 1898: Meeting with Conrad.
- 1900: The Birth of his daughter Katherine.
- 1904: Nervous collapse; trip to Germany.
- 1906-08: Publication of *The Fifth Queen* trilogy.
- 1908-09: Editorship of the *English Review*.
- 1908: Meeting with Violet Hunt, with whom he lived until 1915. Collaboration with her on *The Desirable Alien* and *Zeppelin Nights*.
- 1910: Residence in Germany to obtain a divorce from Elsie under German law.
- 1910-11: Elsie's refusal to grant divorce and her libel suit of two newspapers referring to Violet Hunt as Mrs. Hueffer. Ford's bankruptcy and sale of his possessions as a result of legal expenses of attempted divorce and debts of *English Review*.
- 1915: Publication of *The Good Soldier*. Death of Ford's friend, sculptor Gaudier-Brzeska, in the war and Ford's enlistment in the British army; active service at the front from July 1916.

- 1918: Meeting with painter Stella Bowen, a friend of Ezra Pound.
- 1919: Changes his name to Ford Madox Ford. Moves to Sussex with Stella.
- 1920: The birth of his daughter Esther Julia Ford (Julie).
- 1921: Award by poetry magazine for his poem *A House* (the only award in his career).
- 1922: Moves to France with Stella and Julie.
- 1924-25: Editorship of the *Transatlantic Review*.
- 1924: Death of Joseph Conrad. Ford's affair with Jean Rhys.
- 1925: Publication of *No More Parades*.
- 1926: Publication of *A Man Could Stand Up*.
- 1927: Separation from Stella.
- 1928: Publication of *Last Post*.
- 1930: Meeting with painter Janice Biala, with whom he lived until his death.
- 1934-36: Travels in the United States.
- 1937: Appointment at Olivet College, Michigan.
- 1939: Dies in Deauville, France on the 26th of June.

3: Ford Madox Ford: Novels

Bibliography (From Mizener 1971)

“Ford wrote or collaborated on thirty two novels” (Mizener 463).

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|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1892: <i>The Shifting of the Fire</i> | 1913: <i>Mr. Fleight</i> |
| 1901: <i>The Inheritors</i> | 1913: <i>The Young Lovell</i> |
| 1903: <i>Romance</i> | 1915: <i>The Good Soldier</i> |
| 1905: <i>The Benefactor</i> | 1923: <i>The Marsden Case</i> |
| 1906: <i>The Fifth Queen</i> | 1924: <i>Some Do Not...</i> |
| 1907: <i>Privy Seal</i> | 1924: <i>The Nature of a Crime</i> |
| 1907: <i>An English Girl</i> | 1925: <i>No More Parades</i> |
| 1908: <i>The Fifth Queen Crowned</i> | 1926: <i>A Man Could Stand Up—</i> |
| 1908: <i>Mr. Apollo</i> | 1928: <i>Last Post</i> |
| 1909: <i>The ‘Half Moon’</i> | 1928: <i>A Little Less Than Gods</i> |
| 1910: <i>A Call</i> | 1929: <i>No Enemy</i> |
| 1910: <i>The Portrait</i> | 1931: <i>When the Wicked Man</i> |
| 1911: <i>The Simple Life Limited</i> | 1933: <i>The Rash Act</i> |
| 1911: <i>Ladies Whose Bright Eyes</i> | 1934: <i>Henry for Hugh</i> |
| 1912: <i>The Panel</i> | 1936: <i>Vive le Roy</i> |
| 1912: <i>The Humpty-Dumpty</i> | |

4: Communicative Model of the Translated Narrative Text (O'sullivan, 2003)

