



Ain't we got fun?
Translating The Great Gatsby
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Introduction:

I first read *The Great Gatsby* in secondary school and Fitzgerald's tale of the tragic hero Jay Gatsby soon became one of my favourite novels. Not because it was not a very thick book at all, which is why many of my classmates favoured it, but because it seemed to contain everything a reader could possibly want: a love story, a murder, a mystery, the lives of the rich and famous, descriptions of a country I had never visited and people I had never met but who came to life before my eyes as I read the novel. I did not know about its themes or motives and most certainly never once thought about the difficulties a translator would run into. The book lifted me up from the very first page and when I finished it a few hours later I was left wondering, "How does he do it?". A similar question to the one I ask in this thesis: how does the translator do it? Which problems does a translator face when he translates *The Great Gatsby* and what are their possible solutions? I have found these problems to broadly consist of two things: How to capture Fitzgerald's style in Dutch and how to serve a quintessential American novel from the 1920s to a contemporary Dutch audience, especially with regard to culture specific elements. I have made a translation-relevant text analysis and then embarked on the joyous and daunting task of translating several parts of the novel to serve as a guide to find out whether the assumptions of my analysis were valid. But before I will go into these problems I will now introduce you to the novel that is the subject of these questions, *The Great Gatsby*:

The Story

The novel starts by an introduction of the narrator, Nick Carraway. Nick introduces himself and announces he will tell the tragic story of Jay Gatsby, a man who "turned out alright in the end" (6). Nick tells how he has moved to a place called West Egg where he lives next door to a man named Gatsby. Nick has at first never met this man but is introduced to him via the stories of his cousin Daisy

Buchanan, her husband Tom and their friend Jordan who live nearby at fashionable East Egg. Soon Nick is invited to attend one of the very frequent parties at Gatsby's enormous mansion and he finally meets the man himself. The two men start a friendship and Gatsby soon asks Nick to introduce him to his cousin Daisy. It turns out Daisy and Gatsby once were in love but that a marriage between wealthy Daisy and poor Gatsby, who was then still called Gatz, was out of the question. When Daisy and Gatsby meet again, they soon spend a lot of time in each other's company, much to the annoyance of Tom who dislikes Gatsby's new riches and suspects him of acquiring his money through illegal business. At the same time Tom is having an affair with Myrtle Wilson and Nick has become close to professional golfer Jordan. On a fateful night Gatsby and Daisy drive back from nearby New York when their car hits Myrtle and kills her instantly. When Mr. Wilson finds out it was Gatsby's car he kills Gatsby. Nick guesses that it was not Gatsby who drove the car that night; it was Daisy. After Gatsby's funeral Nick leaves West Egg and turns his back on his former friends he now sees for what they truly are: careless and self-absorbed.

Analysis of the Narrative:

Nick tells the story a year after it has happened, describing events even further back at the beginning of the novel as a way of introducing himself. Throughout the novel, time shifts between the present, i.e. when Nick is writing down his story, and the past, the events of the past summer and his experiences. A clear example of this can be seen in chapter 3 when Nick writes: "Reading over what I have written so far I see that I have given the impression that the events of three nights several weeks apart were all that absorbed me." (GG 46) This also tells us that he is writing it down, instead of merely telling a story. The purpose of this writing is revealed early on: "Only Gatsby, the man who gives his name to this book ..." (GG 5). As such it blurs the line between the actual writer of the novel, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and its fictional writer, Nick Carraway.

Nick tells his story from a first person perspective, chapters 1 to 3 are chronological and written from a single viewpoint (Callahan 35), but the focus shifts sometimes and gradually it seems that Nick knows what other characters are feeling or thinking, "The suggestion was distasteful to Gatsby" (GG 94), and "... [Myrtle's] eyes, wide with jealous terror, were fixed not on Tom but on Jordan Baker, whom she took to be his wife." (GG 97). Rather than these being the words of an omniscient narrator, it seems that Nick wants to present himself as being almost omniscient, he makes assumptions in these examples which could very well be true, but are still assumptions. Upon encountering a sentence like "The suggestion was distasteful to Gatsby", a translator has to ask a question in order to find out what the translation problem is: "who is speaking here?", is it Nick or an omniscient narrator, or is it Nick posing as omniscient? I believe it is the latter and I would identify this translation problem as a language pair specific problem: the verb 'was' cannot be used in Dutch in a word for word translation if the same effect is to be reached, "de suggestie was onsmakelijk voor Gatsby", as it is a copulative verb which creates undesirable vagueness. Other possibilities are: "klonk hem onsmakelijk in de oren", or "leek Gatsby onsmakelijk", or "vond Gatsby onsmakelijk"; all of them fit the meaning of was is said here. I would argue to use a very definite phrasing here, as 'was' is in the source text, "vond", is the option which leaves the least room for speculation. After all, this all knowing feature of Nick is something he enjoys, he is the only person besides Daisy and Gatsby who knows who really killed Myrtle, yet he keeps that to himself.

Sometimes the perspective is that of an omniscient narrator. These transitions in perspective are usually introduced by a transition in lay-out:

"His life had been confused and disordered since then but if he could once return to a certain starting place and go over it all slowly, he could find out what that thing was..."

... One autumn night, five years before, they had been walking down the street when the leaves were falling, and they came to a place where there were no trees and the sidewalk was white with moonlight. They stopped here and turned toward each other. [...]"
(GG 86)

Nick is describing a scene here which he was certainly not present at, yet he seems to have access to. In scenes like these it seems Nick is dramatising, this is not merely telling a story, he creates a flashback, as if in a film the focus changes and we are briefly carried back into the past. This echoes Nick's famous last words at the end of the novel when he says: "So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past." But who is the 'we'? The characters in the story, everyone in the fictional world that is *The Great Gatsby*, or does Nick speak to his audience that he is so well aware of throughout the novel, and therefore indirectly to the readers of the actual novel. This is one of the questions which arises from analysis question "to whom does this speaker speak?". Although on first glance it might not seem to make a difference in the translation process of a novel, the fact that Dutch allows both 'we' and 'wij' might make this case an exception. One might argue that there is a difference in distance between the two and that 'wij' is more stressed than 'we', therefore it does matter who the intended audience is: is it Nick's audience or Fitzgerald's audience, or have these two merged into one? I would argue that 'wij' would more likely refer to Nick and the other characters in the novel, whilst 'we' draws in the audience and makes it broader applicable. I feel the latter is probably the likely candidate, I feel this phrase, which one might read as a warning or a prophecy, includes a broader set of people than just the characters.

Translation-relevant text analysis

The first thing to do before starting a translation, is to analyse the source text (Nord 145). This will allow the translator to clearly establish the process of translation he will follow and help him reach the required result. Scholars like Christiane Nord and Hans Höning have published articles which build on the Laswell-formulation: "Who says what in which channel to whom with what effect?". I have used Nord to make an analysis of the problems a translator will encounter when translating *The Great Gatsby*. Nord's idea is that this analysis should begin with the establishment of a profile of the target text and this should serve as a base, yet the examples she gives, for instance when referring to dates in the past, are usually part of non-fiction translation and I feel it is quite clear no translator would consider changing the time or place of a novel, especially one so bound to both these factors as *Gatsby*.

Nord distinguishes four categories of problems which can occur in the translation process: pragmatic translation problems, problems arising from the differences between the source and target culture, problems which are specific for the differences between the language pair, and text specific translation problems (Nord 147). Problems within all of these four categories will likely occur in translating *Gatsby*, after all a translation problem only occurs when there is no translation available. There is a clear difference between both the time and place in which the original intended reader and the contemporary Dutch reader live (pragmatic), there is a difference between the US and Dutch culture that will likely manifest itself as a translation problem when these two cultures are confronted in the when it comes to for instance miles versus kilometres (culture differences), when it comes to style there might be differences between for instance comparative degrees – more likely vs. waarschijnlijker – (language pair specific problems) and I expect most of all in the way in which the characters in the text express themselves (textspecific elements). This ties in with my own assumption that the problems a translator will encounter in

Gatsby will be either of stylistic nature: language pair specific or text specific, or have to do with culture specific elements: pragmatic problems and culture differences.

Based on these four categories, I will now analyse several translation problems a translator will encounter when translating *The Great Gatsby* from English into Dutch. I have left out the language specific problems because these will occur in most translations from English to Dutch and their examples will likely be of too general a nature to elaborate on in this thesis.

I have established a translation assignment in which these problems will occur, and I have made this translation assignment also my own translation assignment which I have followed when translating *Gatsby*. Additionally, I have assumed that this was the translation assignment given to Susan Janssen who translated *Gatsby* into Dutch in 1985 and whose translation I will compare to my own later on in this thesis. An earlier Dutch translation of *Gatsby* made by L. Cornils and published in 1948 is no longer in print and has not been taken into account in this thesis.

A standard contract for translators has been made by the Vereniging van Letterkundigen (the Dutch Association of Litterateurs) and Groep Algemene Uitgevers (Dutch Group of General Publishers) in which they state: "The translator commits himself to delivering an impeccable Dutch translation directly translated from the original work which is faithful in content and style" (Modelcontract). I have modified this somewhat based on the theory by Hans Hönl which can be explained as: "a translation should follow the source text as closely as necessary as possible rather than as exactly as possible" (Hulst 238, trans Bos). In addition to these demands I have added a line about the preservation of the American identity of the book.

Translation Assignment:

Translate this novel into impeccable Dutch, faithful to Fitzgerald's style and as closely to his content as necessary. A focus of this translation should be on the

American identity of the novel and containing as many original elements as possible whilst not influencing its readability.

Chapter 1. Pragmatic problems

When the book was published, it was received with mixed reviews. Most reviewers were not particularly impressed with the novel, while at the same time great praise came from other writers such as T.S. Eliot (Claridge 173) and Edith Warton (Claridge 168). According to a study by G. Thomas Tanselle and Jackson R. Bryer in 1963, it was not until 1945, twenty years after *Gatsby* was published, that a revival of interest and with it “a considerable amount of serious discussion was directed toward it” (Claridge 188). Tanselle and Bryer found that after its publication in 1925 the book had been “neglected” for twenty years, but then in the early 1940s reviewers picked up the book again and noted its significance and predicting its importance in the American literary canon. In 1951 TLS published an article stating Fitzgerald was “now very generally recognised as having written in *Gatsby* one of the best – if not the best – American novels of the past 50 years” (qtd in 191), it is “a masterpiece representative of its time” (181), and Fitzgerald is now regarded as “the historian of the Jazz Age” (Claridge 181).

As such the status of the novel, the book is part of the literary canon, is of influence for a translator. With regard to this canonization, Javier Franco Aixelá asks the following question: “To what extent are the restrictions that are imposed on a translator increased when a work is perceived as a classic or simply as good literature?” In my own translation of *Gatsby* I found I was influenced by the status of the novel, especially at first I felt reluctance to interfere in Fitzgerald’s words. Aixelá says about this in his article that it is likely that such a status of a novel will most likely automatically lead to a more respectful – and therefore more source text oriented – translation. This seems somewhat contradictory to Nord’s assumption that the analysis of the target text is the focus of the translation process, the influence the source text has according to Aixelá is larger than she would like it to be.

One of the pillars on which Nord’s theory is based is the establishment of the target audience. Only when the intended reader is known can a translator make a

sufficient target text analysis. Because of *Gatsby's* canonical status, the book is well known and therefore likely to draw readers from different backgrounds. In 2012 a new motion picture will be released and its famous director and cast will likely draw a large audience. Such an event will greatly enhance attention for the novel and an edition of the book marketed especially for that purpose is likely to sell more than it has done in previous years. However for my fictional translation assignment I have assumed the novel to be published as a part of the Perpetua Reeks. This series includes, so its publisher Athenaeum states on its website: "the 100 best books in world literature".

This target reader has to be a cross section of the expected audience. In this case the intended reader should be thought of as: A reader with some interest in American culture and therefore in possession of a certain knowledge on that subject, with a moderate to good education who is able to understand some basic English, a reader who is able to conduct research when he does not completely understand something (such as for instance culture specific elements, which I will elaborate on in chapter 2). Other factors such as sex and age are too specific to be taken into account here.

With this reader in mind the translator has a guide in how to deal with differences between the intended target audience of the original edition, Americans of the 1920s, and the contemporary Dutch reader. One of the difficulties the translator will then face is the historical dimension of the text. In his article "De brug bij Bommel herbouwen", James Holmes describes the possibilities a translator has when translating a text from another place and time to the one his audience lives in. He describes a spectrum of choices with regard to location: on one side exotisation which means the text is kept in the foreign, exotic nature (from the perspective of the reader of a translation at least) in which it was written and on the other end naturalisation in which the text is transferred to its target culture. These concepts also occur in Diederik Grit's article "Translating Realia" in which he says this choice has

to be made on the basis of the text purpose: whether to adjust to the target culture or to adjust the target culture to the exotic (Grit 190).

When it comes to time, there are again two extremes: historicisation and modernisation. Scholars have often argued that a translator should be consequent in this, either exoticisation and historicisation or naturalisation and modernisation (Holmes 186) so that these two axes form 'Holmes' cross': a graph from which can be determined whether a text is translated in a preserving or transforming manner. Yet Holmes also distinguishes between three characteristics of the text: the text as a linguistic context in which it is presented, the literary intertext of the genre to which it belongs and the socio-cultural situation in which different objects or symbols have different functions in different cultures. According to Holmes, it is entirely possible that each of these three parts has a different place in the graph which then can vary from one sentence to the next.

A translator translating *Gatsby* for the previously mentioned target reader and in line with the translation assignment would then have to make sure that each of these three characteristics is on the right place of the graph. In practice this means that a text like *Gatsby* will be translated in a rather preservative fashion, as was Aixelá's assumption earlier in this chapter. This means that the language, or linguistic context, will probably be modernised slightly in order to connect to a contemporary audience, but not so much that it will no longer fit the atmosphere of the novel. The translation problems a translator will face when translating a text from the 1920s is that ways in which characters express themselves are a part of fashion: sayings or stopgaps come and go and to make sure the dialogue fits in with the time in which the novel is set, the translator should overall choose a conservative approach.

Chapter 2: Socio-cultural problems

In a quintessential American novel like *The Great Gatsby*, culture specific elements or realia are bound to occur and cause translation problems. The basic assumption for a book like this would be for a translator to preserve its as much of the identity and atmosphere of the novel and never transform Jay Gatsby to a Dutchman, in fact the translator would then breach the terms of his contract. But between that and leaving all English references in, a whole scheme of possibilities lies.

Fitzgerald makes clear references to real life events and people but then changes names and details to avoid naming them directly, although they would have been very clear to his audience at the time. I would describe some of the examples below as 'fictitious realia': fictional events, things or people whose relation to real life realia is clear but who have been slightly altered to avoid direct reference. I would treat these fictitious realia as if they were actual realia, keeping in mind to always use the fictitious name rather than the real one but following strategies designed for realia.

In his article "Translating Realia", Diederik Grit describes how translators can deal with culture specific elements, or realia. These elements themselves appear in one of two forms: "the concrete unique phenomena or categorical concepts which are specific to a certain country or area which would elsewhere have no, or only partial, equivalent" or terms used for these phenomena or concepts (Grit 189). Examples of these include "historic concepts, geographical concepts, private-institutional concepts, public-institutional concepts, unit concepts, and socio-cultural concepts". Grit then argues that the way in which these concepts should be translated depend on three factors: the text sort, the text purpose and the target group. These factors have been mentioned previously as part Nord's theory on translation in general. An example Grit gives is for instance the name of a street, 'Oosterkade' and the fact that it is not clear for an Englishman that this house is located near water (191). Something similar might appear in *Gatsby* where a Dutch reader will not immediately recognise 'Sound' as water. A solution offered by Levý that Grit quotes

in his article is that the translator will then have to slip that information in inconspicuously, for instance by adding “at the waterside” somewhere.”

After establishing which problems a translator might encounter, two relevant questions should be answered before the translation process: ‘Is connotation or denotation important for the target audience’, and ‘how can the connotation or denotation be brought across as adequately as possible. Grit offers 8 strategies a translator can employ upon encountering a culture specific element, :

1. Maintenance: the concept is not changed between source and target language.
2. Loan translation: a lexical translation is used.
3. Approximation: a more or less similar expression in the target language is used.
4. Description: usually used to elaborate on the denotation of a term
5. Core translation: Usually a hyperonym is used to reflect the most important part of the meaning.
6. Adaption: When the function of a term is translated rather than the word.
7. Omission: Used when the denotation is not relevant for the target audience.
8. The eighth strategy is to combine two or more of the aforementioned strategies.

Another theory about how to translate CSE’s is that of Javier Aixelá. Aixelá says that there are only 2 possibilities: maintaining a word or replacing it, but he gives multiple ways to do either of these. His strategies mostly match those of Grit, although he does use different names for the same events, and I will not elaborate on them here. In his article Aixelá also explores which variables lead to certain translation choices. This study, he stresses, is by no means finite and should be considered a classification rather than a list. The four variables are: the supra textual parameter, textual parameter, intra-textual parameter and the parameters caused by the CSE itself (203). The first category has to do with sources outside the text itself and focuses on the expectations and intentions of readers and the client, linguistic

normativity in a country, and the situation of the translator himself. The textual parameters are the previously mentioned canonization, previous translations and limitations to the text brought on by the text for instance being accompanied by images. The CSE itself can lead to problems, or solutions because a standard translation might be available, when the CSE is unclear or has a different connotation in the target culture. The intra-textual parameters have to do with the text itself and its function: cultural considerations, relevance, iteration and coherence within the target text could all lead to choices like leaving something out or adjusting it.

In the next paragraphs I will go into several translation problems which occur when CSE's are used in the source text. I also looked at the existing translation of the book by Susan Janssen from 1985 to see how she dealt with these problems.

Analysis of CSE's in *The Great Gatsby*

The Rise of the Colored Empires

Chapter 1:

“Civilization’s going to pieces,” broke out Tom violently. “I’ve gotten to be a terrible pessimist about things. Have you read ‘The Rise of the Colored Empires’ by this man Goddard?”

Why, no,” I answered, rather surprised by his tone.

“Well, it’s a fine book, and everybody ought to read it. The idea is if we don’t look out the white race will be — will be utterly submerged. It’s all scientific stuff; it’s been proved.”

The name Goddard and the book title are a thinly veiled allusions to Lothrop Stoddard and his book *The Rising Tide of Color Against White World-Supremacy* from 1920 (Cambridge Gatsby 183). In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century a

new genre books with of 'pseudoscientific ideas' (Renteln) emerged and were widely read in both the US and Europe. In these books scholars like Stoddard, he had a Ph.D. in history from Harvard, tried "to prove the fundamental inequality among races" from a scientific, usually biological perspective. Although presented as science, the proof they claimed was false and their objective was to "legitimise the Aryan myth" (Renteln). By having Tom Buchanan read this book and promote it, we learn about his character and ideas, we now know Tom is a racist although he does not actually encounter any African American people in the novel. "The most solid, most damning representative of postbellum America has to be Tom Buchanan, whose racism and manner of the plantation owner revolts even Daisy and Jordan" (Samuels 154). Fitzgerald put this information in on purpose, yet he does it quite subtly, he wants to show another side to the husband Daisy cheats on, make him unlikeable. This critical element of Tom's character is relevant for the reader and therefore a translation problem because a Dutch reader likely lacks the necessary background information to place this in the proper context.

Fortunately for the translator, Fitzgerald has included a title of a book supposedly written by this Goddard which is instantly recognisable as belonging to the aforementioned genre. By doing this he makes sure that even those who do not recognise the reference to Stoddard, understand this part of Tom. The title would therefore have to be translated quite literally into Dutch to preserve this idea. The problem with that might then lie in 'empires', in the 1920s colonialism was still going on in Africa and the Far East and the link to the great European empires is unavoidable. The question a translator should ask here: what is rising here? Are these peoples rising against their oppressors or are they forming their own empires now. It would seem the latter is more likely, Tom fears that his own race will be 'submerged' which would not happen if the oppression in Africa would stop, the 'coloured people' would have to come to America to submerge Tom. I feel that element would therefore have to be included in the translation of the title. Another

problem is the plural 'empires' which makes "De opkomst van het gekleurde rijk" a less likely choice. In her Dutch translation, Susan Janssen avoids these problems by replacing empires to peoples. She used: "*De opkomst van de heerschappij van gekleurde volkeren*", quite a clear title with obvious white supremacist content. Also by doing this, she has formed a hybrid between the fictional title and the real one by including the reference to domination which the fictional title does not.

Fixing of the world series:

Chapter 4:

"Meyer Wolfsheim? No, he's a gambler." Gatsby hesitated, then added coolly: "He's the man who fixed the World's Series back in 1919."

"Fixed the World's Series?" I repeated.

The idea staggered me. I remembered, of course, that the World's Series had been fixed in 1919, but if I had thought of it at all I would have thought of it as a thing that merely *happened*, the end of some inevitable chain. It never occurred to me that one man could start to play with the faith of fifty million people — with the single-mindedness of a burglar blowing a safe.

According to Fitzgerald scholar Matthew Brucoli, the source for Meyer Wolfshiem is Arnold Rothstein, who was tried but cleared from "complicity in the throwing of games in the 1919 world series" (Brucoli 35). This well-known event happened as following: The Chicago White Sox were a very successful but also very underpaid team of which eight members agreed to purposely lose — 'throw' — several games and thus lose the world series. Rothstein was generally believed to be the man who funded the pay offs to the players.

Such a CSE — the World Series — is described by Grit as a 'public-institutional concept', and the translation problem lies in the fact that there is no reference in the source text to indicate to what sports this refers. An American reader will definitely

recognise the term World Series as a baseball term, and though a Dutch reader might be familiar with the term, chances of him knowing of the fixing that happened almost a century ago in a foreign country to a sport that is not practised commonly in the Netherlands, are slim. I have therefore kept World Series in and add a little information.

Then there is the matter of the 'fixing', the meaning of which is hard to capture in one word in Dutch, 'omkopen' cannot refer to the series itself but to the players or teams, but even if you add them, the word 'omkopen' alone does not make clear what has happened. A possible solution is to include the name of the team and make it more descriptive. I did this by first elaborating on the original sentence in English and asking myself "how would you describe this event to an American who knows about his own culture but not this specific event", then translating that and adding even more information. I have underlined the information added in each step. The reason why I include step two is to see where a translation problem actually occurs, in this case I would argue that you combine two strategies; you fill in the blanks in the readers knowledge of the event, this reader is not necessarily foreign. The two different strategies employed here are: Maintaining (World's Series) and Description ("de White Sox" and "verliezen").

"He's the man who fixed the World's Series back in 1919."

↓

≈ He is the man who bribed the White Sox into losing the 1919 World's Series.

↓

"Hij is de man die de White Sox omkocht om de World's Series van 1919 te verliezen."

The addition of 'honkballers' could be done for Dutch readers, yet this addition occurs on the basis of the alteration between step two and three where just 'White Sox' is then deemed insufficient, but the addition of so lengthy an elaboration is

unlikely in Gatsby's direct speech. If a translator wanted to put that in, a better location might be in Nick's reflection of what he has just heard just a few sentences later: "that the World's Series had been fixed in 1919", then you could translate that into: "dat de honkballers waren omgekocht om de World's Series te verliezen in 1919" where it is much less marked as it does not occur in direct speech.

A question Aixelá poses in his article is that of relevance: what is the relevance of a CSE within the text. When it comes to the character of Wolfshiem this reference to the world series is vital in my view because it gives his standing: he is a powerful, wealthy and notorious man, not a mere criminal but a big fish. At the same time it shows what kind of business Gatsby is involved in and the nature of his relationship to Wolfshiem. So I would argue that although Wolfshiem is fictional, the fixing of the World Series is not and Fitzgerald gives the characters credibility by intertwining their fictional experiences with real life events, this is described by Short and Leech as 'verisimilitude' (127), it gives the story authenticity.

Bootlegging

1. "He's a bootlegger," said the young ladies, moving somewhere between his cocktails and his flowers. (chapter 4)
2. "Who is this Gatsby anyhow?" demanded Tom suddenly. "Some big bootlegger?"
"Where'd you hear that?" I inquired.
"I didn't hear it. I imagined it. A lot of these newly rich people are just big bootleggers, you know."
"Not Gatsby," I said shortly. (chapter 6)
3. I picked him for a bootlegger the first time I saw him, and I wasn't far wrong" [said Tom]. (chapter 7)

In the 1920s and early 1930s the American government employed very strict rules regarding alcohol. In this period, called the Prohibition, the making, selling and transport of alcohol were illegal. Organised crime got into the business of bootlegging, a name said to be derived from the smuggling of bottles of alcohol in boots, and on several occasions throughout the novel it is said that this is how Gatsby made his money (source!). Gatsby has made up so many stories about himself that even Nick does not know how he made his riches, yet Nick refuses to believe that he is a bootlegger (see excerpt chapter 6). It certainly would explain Gatsby's strange connexion to Wolfsheim and his secretive long distance phone calls.

The importance of this information is that it changes Gatsby from a self made rich man in the eyes of the audience, which has previously been assured by Nick that Gatsby was in fact "all right", to a criminal. Gatsby is only referred to as a bootlegger through reported speech, narrator Nick never comments on this part of Gatsby's life. Also again we see here the subjectivity Nick employs. The word 'bootlegger' is a socio-cultural concept which is too unfamiliar in the target culture to maintain it in its original form. Unfortunately Dutch lacks a similar descriptive term. The most likely Dutch translation would then be to use an approximation of 'smuggler' – smokkelaar- although it should be further clarified that this is the smuggling of alcohol rather than for instance narcotics or weapons, because it is so characteristic of the period in which the novel is both written and set. Another option would be to replace the noun 'smokkelaar' with the verb 'smokkelen' in the first example: "Hij smokkelt drank" instead of "Hij is een dranksmokkelaar". But this would not work as well in the second or third example where Tom defines Gatsby as a person by saying he is a bootlegger, if you were to change sentence 2 into "Een of andere grote smokkelaar van drank", it would become too wordy and would lose strength. Also you would run into a problem with the word 'just' in the second sentence, Tom dismisses Gatsby by saying he is "just a big bootlegger", he is not worth much in

Tom's eyes, but "Een of andere smokkelaar van drank" does not have quite the same effect. In her translation Susan Janssen uses 'dranksmokkelaar' in all these examples.

Castle Reckrent

Chapter 5:

"Are you in love with me," she said low in my ear, "or why did I have to come alone?"

"That's the secret of Castle Rackrent. Tell your chauffeur to go far away and spend an hour." (67)

The novel *Castle Rackrent* (1800) by Maria Edgeworth has never been translated into Dutch and the reference to it will therefore most likely not be recognised by a contemporary Dutch reader who is not likely to have read a not very well known British novel of over 200 years old. What is so interesting about the mentioning of this book is the fact that it is one of the first examples of an English novel that, "sets out to destroy the reader's expectations of narrative reliability" (Solomon 72), which is perhaps a hint towards the questioning of Nick's reliability as a narrator. After all, we have only his account of the events taking place in the novel. Keeping this reference in the Dutch translation without readers actually knowing the book is difficult. Yet by putting the name of the novel in Italics, and thus stressing the allusion, the translator hands his audience the tool it needs to investigate further, on its own. I would classify such a change as an 'intratextual explanation' as described by Aixelá (201), the change is not noticeable and does not affect the reader.

Another option is to leave the reference out entirely. This could be done when a translator feels that the precise meaning is less relevant than the sketch of the situation and is usually used in general texts. An option would then be to use a Dutch collocation the secret – geheim – and use for instance "het geheim van de smid" and although a reader

might not pick up on the fact that this is very different from what it says in the original text, the extent of this compromise, especially the allusion to the role of the narrator in a novel, is in my opinion too large.

Geographic locations:

“I lived at West Egg, the — well, the less fashionable of the two, though this is a most superficial tag to express the bizarre and not a little sinister contrast between them. my house was at the very tip of the egg, only fifty yards from the Sound, and squeezed between two huge places that rented for twelve or fifteen thousand a season.[...]

Across the courtesy bay the white palaces of fashionable East Egg glittered along the water, and the history of the summer really begins on the evening I drove over there to have dinner with the Tom Buchanans.”

“About half way between West Egg and New York the motor road hastily joins the railroad and runs beside it for a quarter of a mile, so as to shrink away from a certain desolate area of land. This is a valley of ashes — a fantastic farm where ashes grow like wheat into ridges and hills and grotesque gardens; where ashes take the forms of houses and chimneys and rising smoke and, finally, with a transcendent effort, of men who move dimly and already crumbling through the powdery air.”

Most of the geographical elements in this novel are fictional, most noticeably East Egg, West Egg and The Valley of the Ashes. Yet “West Egg and East Egg, fictional as to shape and name, otherwise correspond to Great Neck (where Fitzgerald lived in 1922-1924) and Manhasset Neck on the North Shore – the Long Island sound side – of Long Island” (Brucoli 38), so they are again, like for instance Stoddard, recognisable for the audience who picks up on what Fitzgerald does not try very hard to hide because in the context of these places exists the real world. The importance of the

locations used by Fitzgerald are also stressed in an article on Fitzgerald and the twenties in which Ronald Berman says: "One of the reasons for the interest in the novel is his description of the city, and any study of the language must take that into account" (81). There is a turning point where the very real New York City crosses over into fictional East Egg and West Egg. Yet because its context is real and there are so many references to where this place would be, it is not particularly clear that no such place exists. Especially to a foreign reader, who is probably not very familiar with small towns in America, it would be quite conceivable that this is a real town. Reality and 'mock reality' (Leech and Short 123) happily co-exist within the novel. These are again fictional realia and should be treated as actual realia in my view, a translator would never translate New York to Nieuw York and it would be equally absurd to translate East Egg into Oost Ei. The names of cities should therefore be maintained, even if they do not actually exist. Other examples of geographic realia occur mainly in chapter 3 where Nick describes his life in New York and names many locations. Again I would argue that these should be maintained in their English forms because they are a vital part of the credibility Fitzgerald evokes. A tool that Fitzgerald uses to do this can be seen at the beginning of chapter 4 where a long list of guests of Gatsby's parties appears, complete with comments from Nick: "From East Egg, then, came Chester Beckers and the Leeches and a man named Bunsen whom I knew at Yale and Doctor Webster Civet who was drowned last summer up in Maine" (49). The inclusion of the real university Yale gives credibility, as do the names of the cities and as does the addition of the fact that the poor doctor has since drowned.

Chapter 3: Text specific problems

The translation problems which lie in the text itself are usually of a stylistic nature. But what is style? According to Leech and Short, there are different ways this has been defined by scholars. The first is the dualist approach in which style represents “manner rather than matter, [...] expression rather than content” (13). The term dualist refers to the fact that there is a separation between the two. This viewpoint is not shared by the monists who believe that the two cannot be separated: form and content are one. The difference between the two is that dualist authors think of content first, and then consider various choices in which to express them whereas the monists believe that to change expression, would be to change content (17).

According to scholar Xiangqi Liu who wrote her thesis on style in *The Great Gatsby*, “one of the simplest yet most profound reasons it is considered an American classic is its use of language” (Liu 2001:5, 662). Liu feels that Fitzgerald’s figurative use of language “appeals to the senses” and that he achieves this style by his frequent use of adjectives. She points out that one of the things which mark Fitzgerald’s style is his use of contradictory adjectives, like ‘sad’ and ‘lovely’, and points out that by doing so “this technique visualises the character” (662), also she argues it “helps to convey the author’s interpretation of the scene and is typical of Fitzgerald’s use of subjective description” (662).

Professor Charles Samuels agrees with Liu that it is the language which is *Gatsby’s* “fundamental achievement”, he says: “Throughout, *The Great Gatsby* has the precision and splendour of a lyric poem, yet well-wrought prose is merely one of its triumphs. Fitzgerald’s distinction in this novel is to have the language celebrate itself” (Samuels 152). He adds: “In Joyce’s sense of the word, *The Great Gatsby* is one of the few novels *written* in our language” (158). In this chapter I will explore examples of this style and the translation problems that occur from them.

Reporting verbs

One of the ways in which Fitzgerald brings the images to life is his use of reporting verbs. However in this case we must realise that it is in fact narrator Nick who adds a certain amount of subjectivity to the image by the choice of a reporting verb. Reporting verbs, words used –by narrator Nick- to describe how a character speaks are often used more than once, and to describe different characters. In their textbook *Style in Fiction*, Leech and Short investigate what kind of verbs different characters in example texts use and what can be derived from this. I have conducted a similar investigation, for chapter 1 of *The Great Gatsby* as an example, I have made an inventory of these verbs and I have classed them as either neutral or marked. The choice in which category a word should be placed was made on whether the word was used as a mere observation or whether it was marked because there is a certain emotion involved in it because I felt the perception of these emotions was of a more subjective nature than the neutral ones and that they were used to say something about the character in an implicit way. I found that while all characters in the chapter use neutral expressions, the marked verbs are almost all used by Daisy and Tom. By describing their way of speaking, Nick from very early on in the novel, influences his readers' perception of these characters. At the same time he describes his own contributions to the dialogue as 'answered', 'asked', 'inquired' and on one occasion 'confessed', which although marked, confirm the submissive role he wishes to assume, that of a mere observer. Further on in this thesis I shall elaborate on the importance of Daisy's voice but for now I will focus on the way in which her speech is described.

Neutral	#	Speaker	Marked	#	Speaker
advised	1	T	confessed	1	N
answered	2	N	corroborated	1	T
asked	4	N	insisted	3	D, T
began	2	D, J	objected	2	D, T
confirmed	1	D	demanded	2	D, T
explained	1	D	broke out	1	T
inquired	2	N, D	retorted	1	D

remarked	3	T, D, J	called	2	D, J
said	24	D, T, J, N	cried	2	D
suggested	1	J	whispered	3	D
went on	1	D	complained	2	D
			yawned	2	J

D= Daisy, T= Tom, J= Jordan, N=Nick

= the number of times this verb is used in chapter 1

The function of these reporting verbs is to contribute to the image of the persona the reader has and starts to recognise. For instance, by getting to know Daisy, we also come to understand what she does when she ‘cries’ in for instance “Do they miss me, she cried ecstatically” (GG 11) and thus can pick a Dutch word to best represent this action, ‘kirren’ might then be a suitable solution where for another character you might have chosen ‘uitroepen’. Another, more direct, example of how the text gives the translator hints how to translate words like these, is actually given directly from Nick to his audience when he remarks: “(I’ve heard it said that Daisy’s murmur was only to make people lean toward her; an irrelevant criticism that made it no less charming.)” (11). This hint, placed between brackets, explains for instance what is meant when Daisy ‘whispers’ which she does quite a lot, three times in chapter 1 alone. For an ambiguous word like ‘whisper’, which also has a meaning of gossip and rumour, a translator’s first resort to finding out the meaning meant here by Nick, is to close read the text, he will find it often contains clues.

Image of the personage

The characters in this novel all represent things, they are metaphors for social classes. Fitzgerald was “keenly aware of social stratification, of the American class system” (Broccoli, documentary) and what he does in this novel is personify these classes with the people who inhabit them. The characters in the novel can be divided into five categories: American aristocracy, self-made riches, middle class, blue collar and a last category in this case for underworld characters. These classes are not merely

related to money, because Nick comes from a better background and has had a better education than Gatsby and is therefore in that respect closer related to Tom and Daisy than Gatsby is. Yet when it comes to money, Gatsby is far more wealthy than Nick, yet seemingly not rich enough to live on East Egg. Then there is the matter of Gatsby's supposed bootlegging, although never confirmed as being a criminal, there are plenty of hints to suggest this, and if true would perhaps put Gatsby in the same category as Wolfshiem and Klipspringer.

American aristocracy:	Tom and Daisy
Self-made riches:	Gatsby, Jordan
Middle class:	Nick
Blue collar:	The Wilsons, Mr. Gatz
Questionable background:	Wolfshiem, Klipspringer

If we are indeed to take the members of a class as representatives for that class, it is important to know which elements they represent and why this is important in translation. I will focus on the roles of Tom and Daisy Buchanan as representatives of the American Aristocracy because that is in my view most foreign to a Dutch audience.

Tom Buchanan: Gatsby's enemy in his love for Daisy, is also his enemy in social status. For as much as Gatsby wants to be a gentleman, like Tom is in social status rather than in behaviour, gentlemen like Tom will never accept him into their circles or regard him as an equal. This comes back in other Fitzgerald novels and stories as well: "Money is not the problem, the social order is against them, usually personified by a rich man's son who understands that when poor boys rise, rich boys have less space to breathe in. [...] They are all threatening – and in each of the stories they are responsible for at least one death." (Berman 80). Yet although he is responsible in the sense that he has sent Wilson out to confront Gatsby, knowing full well that he was greatly distressed and armed, he does it because he is convinced Gatsby killed Myrtle. As Nick realises in his final meeting with Tom, "it was, to him, entirely

justified" (GG 139). Tom behaves in a way which represents his social group in post-war America: "Tom Buchanan's opinions and lifestyle conjure up the new Southern aristocracy who grew even richer because of alliances with Northern industrial capital and technology" (Callahan 51).

At an early stage of the novel, Nick says he feels "Tom would drift on forever" (9), and Ronald Berman believes this drifting does not merely refer to their frequent relocations but more to a "complete opposite of moral consciousness"(92). Berman feels that by choosing these words, Fitzgerald echoes the words of American journalist Walter Lippmann, who had said that America had become "a nation of drifters, mindless and self-absorbed. A fatal lack of energy is implied [...]" (qtd in Berman 92). The importance of this word – drift – is hard to catch in translation as a single and subtle word for this is not available in Dutch, yet it important to maintain this image as it predicts later events in the novel. As Berman puts it, "The language tells us, long before Tom and Daisy and Jordan make their decisions, how these decisions are likely to be made." (93) They forecast the purposeless with which these characters live their lives and shows their true intentions. Small words like these may go unnoticed if one is not familiar with their reference and for a translator it is very much part of his job to take this into account when settling on a word in the target language. The verb drift might then be translated into 'drijven' which includes the image of useless floating around but has perhaps too positive a connotation in Dutch, while a word like 'zwerven' is too negative and unlike their rich lifestyle. Susan Janssen has used 'rondzwerven' which does preserve the image of purposelessness.

Daisy Buchanan: A drifter, like her husband, and also characterised, like her husband, directly by Nick as 'careless'. Daisy is the object of Gatsby's affection, but what is it that Daisy loves? We know what she does not love: Tom, who she cheats on with Gatsby; Gatsby, who she lets take the blame for Myrtle's murder; her daughter, who is hardly mentioned in the novel. The thing that Daisy seems to love most of all is money. "Her voice is full of money" (94), Gatsby famously states, and

ironically it is Gatsby, whose downfall is partly caused by the fact that he is unable to understand Daisy's shallowness, who points out the negativity in it by saying this. As much as Daisy's physical beauty is commented on in the novel, her voice is the main reoccurring subject. By stressing the beauty of her voice, a contrast is created between the voice and the actual words she speaks. "Daisy's voice may be golden, but not her speech: she is often at a loss for words, and can express sincerity or the appearance of sincerity only through repetition" (Berman 90). At the same time, there is a hint of magic and enchantment in that voice throughout the novel, turning Daisy into an almost mythical figure, a siren. Fitzgerald uses the word 'voice' 69 times in his novel, of which 18 times in chapter 7, the chapter of the confrontation between Gatsby, Daisy and Tom, as well as the death of Myrtle. Sometimes the voice is Tom's, but mostly Daisy's and it hints to Daisy's shallowness in sentences like: "Her voice struggled on through the heat, beating against it, molding its senselessness into forms". But most of all I feel it sets up a barrier between Daisy herself and the image of Daisy, it seems the two have come undone from her as a person,

"But with every word she was drawing further and further into herself, so he gave that up, and only the dead dream fought on as the afternoon slipped away, trying to touch what was no longer tangible, struggling unhappily, undesperingly, toward that lost voice across the room.

The voice begged again to go." (105)

The image this evokes is one of distance, of Gatsby's dream slipping away from him. She is just a voice now, her shallowness exposed: "Daisy, rarely described directly, is part idea" (Berman 88). This vital word, 'voice', should be recognised by translator and should be a focal point in translation, sentences containing the word should be translated in a way that this effect is maintained. It is the tool Daisy uses to enchant men and to be admired and loved, because that is what Daisy really longs

for: "I told her how I'd stopped off in Chicago for a day on my way east and how a dozen people had sent their love through me. Do they miss me? she cried ecstatically" (11).

Daisy seems to "hover in an endless present tense" (Catherine B. Burrows, qtd in Coleman 9), her habit of reiterating phrases "repeats the moment just passed and creates what Gertrude Stein called the 'continuous present'" (107?). By doing so, Daisy refuses to let the present give way to the future. This relates to the novel's important theme of 'time': "the novel is time-haunted, permeated with hundreds of references to the escape of memory from our lives" (Brucoli, *New Essays on The Great Gatsby*, 10-12, qtd in Berman 91). It is vital for a translator to recognise this element of Daisy's speech, she has her own peculiar way of expressing herself: "Is this absolutely where you live?" (GG 67), the word absolutely has not meaning here, it is not necessary grammatically yet it is very much the way Daisy speaks. She also uses it earlier in the novel when she says: "You remind me of a rose, an absolute rose" (GG15). When a meaningless word like that is repeated in the direct speech of a character, one can assume it is a stopgap, which means that that has to be taken into account in translation. In this example a Dutch counterpart is readily available – absoluut – but even if a translator were to choose another term, he would have to keep the repetition in mind, the word he picks would have to fit into all the sentences in which the English stopgap is used. By making the character's speech recognisable, Fitzgerald draws the reader in, as Liu explains: "With a kind of acoustic effect, the reader seems to stand in front of the characters to listen to their speech. And as the reader knows them better, the distance between the reader and the characters is greatly shortened."(421).

Dialogue

The Great Gatsby is characterised by its many dialogues. It is this subject on which Xiangqi Liu elaborates on in her article "Stylistic Analysis of *The Great Gatsby* from Context category". Lui says "In the story, apart from the distinctive features of

vividness and immediacy, direct speeches enable the reader to identify the characters by the words they utter, with the words playing an essential role in revealing the characters' inner selves or temperaments" (5). I have arrived on the same conclusion, recognising this especially in Daisy. I feel she was the character who gave most away by speaking, not by what she said, but by how she said it, again an example of Fitzgerald's style. Daisy speaks the words she thinks she has to speak, but there is no sincerity to them, she plays a part when she says for example:

"You see I think everything's terrible anyhow," she went on in a convinced way. "Everybody thinks so — the most advanced people. And I *know*. I've been everywhere and seen everything and done everything." Her eyes flashed around her in a defiant way, rather like Tom's, and she laughed with thrilling scorn. "Sophisticated — God, I'm sophisticated!" (GG 17)

A word like 'sophisticated' is a translation problem as it has multiple meanings, what Daisy would like to say about herself that she is a woman of the world, we know that from the sentences she speaks before in this excerpt, she likes to be one of the 'advanced people.' But 'sophisticated' also has a different meaning, one the reader might feel is more appropriate as a description of Daisy; artificial. A Dutch word with a double meaning is 'geraffineerd', but its second meaning 'doortrap' (Van Dale) has a much more negative meaning than artificial, and the whole point about Daisy is that she is so shallow, by using 'geraffineerd' an intent to her actions later on in the novel is implied. Another option might be to choose a word to match just one of the meanings and try to convey the other by the context. For instance by using 'verfijnd' and adding a more dramatic tone to the repetition so the audience will recognise the irony more easily: "Verfijnd, God, wat ben ik toch verfijnd!"

In the example above it is the tone which makes the difference and it is this tone which is so hard to define in written texts. Short and Leech argue however that

“tone can be indicated by varied and subtle use of grammatical, lexical, and graphological markers, as well as by authorial descriptions of a character’s manner of speech”. They go on to say that “[the audience] judge a character’s tone by relating it to some contextual norm of appropriateness” (248). An example of this could perhaps be Gatsby’s constant addressing of Nick as “Old sport”, he does so from the very first time they meet, when it could be deemed inappropriate that he does. The way in which such a phrase is translated then might be influenced by the way in which this is perceived by the translator. “Ouwe jongen” or “Beste kerel” are two examples which have rather different registers, one more working class and the other a bit more posh. The image Gatsby would like to create fits the latter and I would therefore suggest that is the likelier choice.

One of the challenges both writer and translator face in any novel is make conversation seem spontaneous. According to Susanne Cadera, fictive dialogue in literature takes place on two levels: the narrative and the linguistic (Caldera 37). The function of these resources on a narrative level is “to mark dialogue of characters in literary discourse and to suggest universal features of oral communication” (37) Examples of elements which contribute to that are “rhythm, spontaneity and dynamism” (37). On a linguistic level one might think of “simple phrasing, filler words and particles, repetition and redundancy” (Caldera 37). Leech and Short describe forms of ‘normal non-fluency’ (L&S 130) which also appear in *The Great Gatsby*, such as:

- Hesitation pauses: “I don’t play well. I don’t – I hardly play at all. I’m all out of prac – .”(74)
- False starts: “I’m p-paralysed with happiness” (11)
- Italics to stress something: “He does not want any trouble with *anybody*”. (36)

These elements add to the authenticity of the events in the novel and should be taken into account in the translation. The question is however, if they can be translated in

the same way they are used now, or whether Dutch has different ways of being non-fluent. A false start, 'p-paralysed with happiness' works very well with the letter P, but might not work equally well with other letters. A Dutch word for paralysed would be *verlamd* or *verstijfd*, or less likely *verstard* or *verdoofd*. So would the repetition of the first letter 'v' work just as well? I think it would, "Ik ben v-verlamd van geluk". In her translation of *The Great Gatsby*, Susan Janssen has opted for repeating more than just that one letter, instead repeating the first syllable: "Ik ben ver-verlamd van vreugde". I feel that although this is might be a realistic way to render someone stuttering, it is carrying the joke that Daisy is making too far, because she is not stuttering, she is pretending to act out her paralysis: directly after she has said that, Nick describes her: "She laughed again, as if she said something very witty [...]"(13).

In the case of the use of italics for stress, the same question arises: is it the same part of a word, or even the same word in a sentence which is stressed in Dutch? In the example above only the first two syllables of 'anybody' are in italics. The reason this is done is to stress the certainty with which it is said, - any trouble with anybody -. This causes an immediate problem in Dutch because of the double negative that would arise in a lexical translation : "hij geen enkel probleem wil met geen enkel mens" , this is an undesirable. A more obvious way of expressing this would be: "Hij wil met niemand enig probleem", but then the repetition is lost and one might argue the need for italics. I feel however that the whole word 'niemand' is stressed here: the woman comments specifically on the fact that Gatsby goes to great lengths to avoid problems with anyone, even someone he does not know. Therefore I would argue that the entire word 'niemand' should be in italics. Susan Janssen did not share my view and wrote '*niemand*' (42). I feel this is quite marked, it stands out as unusual because although it does stress the first syllable, 'nie' is not a word on its own like 'any', and would therefore decide against this.

In their textbook Short and Leech describe a variety of ways in which a character in a novel can express himself. There is a difference between Direct Speech (DS) in which the words spoken by a character are recorded verbatim: ‘ “I adore it!” exclaimed Daisy’ (GG 73) of which the translation, or at least the manner in which it is presented is rather straightforward: “Conventional dialogue, presented in quoted direct speech [...] is not such a great challenge for the translator” (Cadera 38). On some occasions Indirect Speech (IS) is used, which can present problems:

“My house looks well, doesn’t it?” he demanded. “See how the whole front of it catches the light.”

I agreed that it was splendid. (GG 70)

Here the exact words Nick uses are not recorded, but the message is the same. Nick might employ this technique simply to save time and space in his novel, but another reason he might do this is to attract attention to himself in his role of narrator. Liu says in her article that “Such contrast enables the novelist to control —the ‘light and shade’ of conversation, the high-lighting and back-grounding of speech according to the role and attitude of characters. (Leech & Short, 1981: 335)” (421). While English allows verbs like ‘agreed’ in this example to appear quite natural, it is not always easy to accomplish that same effect in Dutch, especially in IS, a few possibilities: (1) “Ik was het met hem eens dat het prachtig was”/ (2) “Ik bevestigde dat het prachtig was”/ (3) “Ik stemde in dat het prachtig was”. These options do not seem satisfactory: in (1) it is unsure if Nick just thinks this or if he also expresses this to Gatsby. The many plosive sounds that occur in examples (2) and (3) seem to differ in rhythm from the rest of the novel and should perhaps be discarded for that reason. An option might then be to use the verb ‘zei’ (“Ik zei dat het inderdaad prachtig was”) which draws the attention to the act of speech and makes it more direct, and by adding ‘inderdaad’ you keep the connotation of agreement. In cases such as these, the syntactical difference between English and Dutch can easily: “hamper the fluency of the text by trying to keep too close to the source text” (Cadera 45).

Most translations include forms of manipulation as seen in the example above and throughout this thesis. When it comes to translating dialogue, there are two reasons why a translator makes a certain choice: "The translator's own (conscious or unconscious) literary ideology and the literary devices dominant in the target culture and, depending on the concept of what the role of literature is, or should be, in the social system as a whole" (Lefevere, qtd in Cadera 38). Cadera gives examples such as the introduction of paragraphs which have an influence on the reading experience. Something like that might occur in a modern translation of *Gatsby* with regards to the rather frequent use of hyphens in DS, something which has gone out of fashion in Dutch literature.

"I adore it!" exclaimed Daisy. "The pompadour! You never told me you had a pompadour – or a yacht."

"Look at this," said Gatsby quickly. "Here's a lot of clippings – about you." (GG73)

The use of these hyphens in these two successive lines and also at the same place in the sentence could pose a translation problem. If you were to remove them, the hesitation which they represent, apparent in especially Gatsby's speech, would be lost. There is a change of tone implied, like he would add the last bit softly and tenderly. If a translator would want to leave the hyphens out, there are no a lot of other options which would have that same effect. A comma for instance has a far lesser effect. In this case, because both these examples occur as an afterthought to a sentence, you could argue that these could stay in, they are called 'gedachtenstreepjes' in Dutch after all. But as their appearance is so frequent, the replacement of all these hyphens is something for which perhaps no single solution exists but that would have to be judged per case.

Chapter 4: Translating *The Great Gatsby*

Before embarking on the process which gives its name to this thesis, I have made several decisions about how I was going to handle this translation. The first this I did was establish the function of its target text (Nord 236). As *The Great Gatsby* is very much a part of the American, but also world, canon, I felt it would be appropriate that it would be included in the Perpetua Series. This series includes, so its publisher Athenaeum states on its website: “the 100 best books in world literature”. To my dismay *Gatsby* has not made the cut, but for this translation we will pretend it has.

As a part of this series, I feel *Gatsby* should be as faithful as possible to its source text. A series which boasts about publishing ‘classics’, should do exactly that and a translator should be more than usually careful not to make any large changes. The hesitation a translator feels when translating a work of such stature, is described by Aixelá in his article (source!). When I met Rop Zweedijk, editor at Athenaeum, I asked him whether the publisher is in fact stricter in reviewing a translation that is meant for this specific series. He told me this was not the case, but that that might be due to the high standards Athenaeum holds all its translations, or indeed all publications, to. It is this standard which I have used when I made my own translation.

As this is a relatively short novel, I felt I needed to translate parts of chapters in various places in the book, so to cover as many different styles as occur in the novel. I have chosen to translate an excerpt from every odd chapter.

Stating my own translation strategy was one thing, but after finishing my translation and annotation, I decided to check myself. In order to get a clear view of the choices I –sometimes subconsciously – make, I classified all my annotations by using Andrew Chesterman’s strategies. Chesterman distinguishes between three categories of possible changes: syntactic strategies, semantic strategies and pragmatic strategies.

A translation dating from 1985 by Susan Janssen is still in print and after I finished my own translation I started reading her version. From the five chapters I partly translated, I picked passages which I think best illustrated the differences between her strategy and mine. Unfortunately I have not been able to come in contact with Ms. Janssen so I cannot ask her what her strategy was, or even if she indeed had one. I do know however, that she has been in contact with the authority on Fitzgerald, Matthew Brucoli, as she thanks him on the final page for his “clarifications on the original English text” (trans. Bos). Nevertheless I will comment on the choices she has made and compare them to my own choices and to the source text. The context for my comments is to see whether a new translation of *Gatsby* would be required if it were to be included in the Perpetua Series.

Translation

De Grote Gatsby

Hoofdstuk 1

Tijdens mijn jongere en kwetsbaardere¹ jaren gaf mijn vader me een goede raad die me sindsdien niet meer heeft los gelaten.

“Voor je kritiek hebt op een ander,” zei hij, “moet je steeds bedenken dat niet iedereen op deze wereld dezelfde kansen² heeft gehad als jij.”

Daar liet hij het bij, maar wij maakten zelden veel woorden vuil bij het communiceren en ik begreep dat er veel meer achter zat. Als gevolg daarvan heb ik de neiging alle oordelen op te schorten, een eigenschap die er toe heeft geleid dat ik allerlei lieden met bijzondere karakters³ en ook de nodige volleerde zeurkousen hebben leren kennen. Een afwijkende geest ontdekt deze eigenschap in een normaal persoon al snel en zal zich er aan vast klampen, en zo is het gebeurd dat ik er op de universiteit onterecht van beschuldigd werd een intrigant te zijn, enkel omdat ik op

¹ The build-up of words in the original text can be transposed onto Dutch but Dutch does not favour a modifier such as ‘meer’ to go with the Dutch word for vulnerable, instead it gets a suffix on the word itself to modify it. The problem is that the rhythm of the all-important first sentence changes. I have decided that grammatical correctness in this case should prevail over rhythm. By doing so, I have changed the level (Chesterman G9)

² While ‘advantages’ in the original text has clearly positive meaning, I have chosen not to use ‘voordelen’ in Dutch as the meaning of the word in this context might be unclear. Instead I have chosen to use the Dutch ‘kansen’ (chances), which is a bit more neutral but is recognisable in this context because of sayings like: “gelijke kansen”. As such I have used a hyponym (Chesterman S3)

³ The personification in ‘curious natures’ works well in English but not so good in Dutch, especially in combination with ‘to open up’, therefore I have decided to add the hyponym (Chesterman S3) ‘lieden’ which might perhaps be best translated by folk. The word ‘lieden’ fits in quite well with the time set and the style of Nick’s description.

de hoogte was van de heimelijke kwellingen van wilde, vreemde mannen. De meeste vertrouwelijkheden werden ongevraagd verteld – ik heb regelmatig slaap, bezigheden of een vijandige ongeïnteresseerdheid geveinsd wanneer ik een onmiskenbaar teken zag waaruit bleek dat er een intieme onthulling op stapel stond; de intieme onthullingen van jonge mannen, of in elk geval de wijze waarop ze onder woorden worden gebracht, zijn doorgaans immers zelden origineel⁴ en vaak bedorven door voor de hand liggende omissies. Het niet oordelen is een kwestie van onbegrensde hoop. Ik ben nog altijd bang dat ik iets zal missen als ik vergeet, zoals mijn vader hooghartig opperde en ik hooghartig herhaal, dat het gevoel voor de elementaire fatsoensnormen niet eerlijk over de mensheid is verdeeld.

En nu⁵, nadat ik zo heb opgescheept over mijn tolerantie, moet ik toegeven dat deze niet grenzeloos is. Gedrag mag dan gegrondvest zijn op rotsen of drijfzand, maar op een gegeven moment maakt het me niet meer uit waar het vandaan komt. Toen ik afgelopen herfst terugkeerde uit het Oosten had ik behoefte aan een wereld die altijd gelijkmatig en moreel verantwoord⁶ zou zijn; ik had geen zin meer in

⁴ Keeping the term 'plagiarism' in a adjective in Dutch is not possible (as such a word does not exist), therefore two options are available: either use it as a different grammatical entity, for instance: "zitten vol met plagiaat", or replace it by another word. In this case I have chosen to use an antonym (Chesterman S2).

⁵ Fitzgerald's sentence implies that after some descriptions of what has happened previously, Carraway now briefly arrives in the present before he again switches to previous events. I have added the word 'now' to stress this as I felt it would go unnoticed because of the slight difference between the present 'moet' and the past 'moest'. I have also chosen to use 'grenzeloos' rather than 'zonder grenzen' because I felt it would support the rhythm.

⁶ Fitzgerald uses two military references, uniform and attention, here. To translate the 'in uniform' literally would mean to lose its second meaning of 'gelijkmatig', would Carraway really like everyone to go dressed as soldiers? I think not, I think it is more about the orderly and unfrivolous aspects of the army which he now craves. I felt a translation which would

allerlei buitensporige uitweidingen en bevoorrechte inkijkjes in het menselijk hart. Enkel Gatsby, de man die zijn naam aan dit boek leent, was ontheven van dit gevoel – Gatsby, die stond voor alles waar ik een natuurlijke afkeer van heb. Als persoonlijkheid ontleend wordt aan een onafgebroken reeks van geslaagde gebaren, was er iets adembenemends aan hem, hij had een soort van verhoogde ontvankelijkheid voor de beloftes die het leven biedt, alsof hij zo’n ingewikkelde machine was die aardbevingen op tienduizend⁷ kilometer afstand waarneemt. Deze ontvankelijkheid had niets te maken met die slappe gevoeligheid die veredeld wordt met de term ‘creatief temperament’ – het was een uitzonderlijk vermogen te vertrouwen, een romantische bereidheid die ik nooit eerder in iemand zag en waarschijnlijk ook nooit meer zal zien. Nee – uiteindelijk bleek dat het met Gatsby wel goed zat; het was wat op Gatsby aasde, het bedorven stof dat in het spoor van zijn dromen zweefde waardoor ik mijn interesse in de zinloze smarten en kortdurende vreugdes van de mens tijdelijk verloor.

include military terms like “geef acht” (stand attention) would be too marked and have sacrificed them to maintain their meaning.

⁷ The actual distance from which such a machine can register earthquakes is not relevant here, it is the fact that it is able to do so from very far away. I have kept the large number to stress that effect and also to keep this assertion casual, a more or less the same amount of kilometres would be 15000, which sounds a lot more specified.

Hoofdstuk 3, pagina 46-48

Nu ik teruglees wat ik tot nu toe geschreven heb, lijkt het alsof het slechts de gebeurtenissen van die drie avonden⁸ waren die me al die tijd bezig hadden gehouden. Maar in werkelijkheid waren het slechts vluchtige gebeurtenissen in een drukke zomer en op dat moment interesseerde het me nog allemaal oneindig veel minder dan mijn eigen besognes.

Het gros van de tijd was ik aan het werk. Vroeg in de ochtend wierp de zon mijn schaduw naar het westen terwijl ik me door de witte kloven van lower⁹ New York naar het kantoor van de Probity¹⁰ Trust haastte. Ik kende de voornaam van de andere bedienden en junior verzekeringsverkopers en at bij de lunch sausijes¹¹ en

⁸ The simple English “three nights several weeks apart” does not have an equally simple Dutch equivalent. I have therefore taken this sentence apart in order to maintain the fluency, which means that the fact that the three nights were not consecutive has been left out. I felt this could be allowed as the fact that these nights were weeks apart has already been mentioned in the description of each night. I have hereby made this more implicit (Chesterman PR2)

⁹ I have kept the names of geographical locations as they are in the source text. Now this is not the name of a city but rather an area but I felt it would not stand out in this text. Removing it is not an option as I feel it contributes to the credibility of the story and translating it into Neder New York (like for instance Nederrijn) would be adding a strange element and would therefore be marked.

¹⁰ The name of this firm is relevant as it fits so well with Nick’s description of himself. Yet ‘Probity’ is a word most likely not known to most readers of a Dutch translation. Translating it was not an option as a Dutch firm would stand out in NY and I felt I had to leave it in so this element would not be lost to advanced readers of English. I have added “to the office of” because I felt that whereas a ‘trust’ is well-known to an American reader, a Dutch reader might not pick up on the fact that this was indeed Nick’s place of employment. By doing this, I changed the explicitness. (Chesterman PR2)

¹¹ At first I translated this into “kleine varkensworstjes”, which is what it says. But later on I realised in Dutch we have the word sausijes which is still widely recognisable due to its

aardappelpuree en koffie met ze in donkere, drukke restaurants. Ik had zelfs een korte verhouding met een meisje uit Jersey City dat op de administratie werkte maar toen haar broer me dreigend begon aan te kijken heb ik het langzaam dood laten bloeden toen ze in juli op vakantie ging.

Ik dineerde meestal in de Yale Club – om de een of andere reden was dat het treurigste moment van de dag – en dan ging ik boven in de bibliotheek zitten en studeerde een serieus uur lang op investeringen en verzekeringen. Er liepen meestal wel een aantal druktemakers rond maar die kwamen nooit in de bibliotheek dus het was een prima plek om te werken. Als de avond zacht was, slenterde ik daarna langs Madison Avenue langs het oude Murray Hill Hotel en door Thirty-third Street naar Pennsylvania Station.

Ik begon gesteld te raken op New York, het energieke, avontuurlijke gevoel dat het 's avonds uitstraalde en genoeg dat het rusteloze oog scheidt in de constante beweging van mannen, vrouwen en machines. Ik genoot ervan langs Fifth Avenue te lopen en romantische vrouwen uit de menigte te zoeken en me voor te stellen dat ik deel uit zou maken van hun leven en dat niemand dat ooit zou weten of afkeuren. Soms, in mijn hoofd, volgde ik ze naar hun appartementen op de hoeken van verborgen straten en draaiden ze zich naar me om en lachten naar me voor ze door een deur verdwenen, de warme duisternis in. Bij het vallen van de betoverende hoofdstedelijke schemering voelde ik soms een angstaanjagende eenzaamheid en ik voelde het ook in anderen – arme jonge bedienden die wat rondgingen voor de etalages, wachtend op weer een eenzaam diner in een restaurant – jonge bedienden in het schemerlicht, die de belangrijkste¹² momenten van de avond en van hun leven verspilden.

famous vessel 'sausijzenbroodje'. I have used cultural filtering (Chesterman PR1) here as I felt it would be less marked than the descriptive form.

¹² The word poignant has several meanings such as for instance 'touching' or 'precious' but there is also a sense of urgency to it. The ambiguity of the word is hard to catch in Dutch and

Om acht uur, als de donkere straten van Manhattan¹³ vijf rijen dik vol stonden met ronkende taxi's op weg naar de theaters¹⁴, voelde ik de moed opnieuw in mijn schoenen zakken. Silhouetten zaten tegen elkaar aan in de taxi's terwijl ze wachtten, en stemmen zongen, en er klonk gelag om onverstaanbare grappen, en de gloed van brandende sigaretten schetsten ondefinieerbare gebaren binnenin. Ik stelde me voor dat ik ook op weg was naar vrolijkheid en deelde in hun vertrouwelijke¹⁵ opwinding en wenste ze veel plezier.

Ik verloor Jordan Baker een poosje uit het oog maar hartje zomer vond ik haar weer terug. In het begin voelde ik me geveleid als ik ergens met haar mee naar toe ging want ze was een golfkampioene en iedereen kende haar van naam. Toen werd haar meer dan dat. Ik was niet echt verliefd, maar ik voelde een soort tedere nieuwsgierigheid. Dat verveelde, arrogante masker dat ze opzette naar de buitenwereld verborg iets – de meeste poses verbergen op termijn wel iets, zelfs als

I have chosen to try to do them all justice by using the hyponym (Chesterman S3) 'important', which leads to a fading of what is actually said in the source text.

¹³ I set out to keep the novel as quintessentially American as possible and from that perspective kept as many geographical names as they were. Here however, I was confronted by such a specific reference that translating its meaning would lead to the descriptive wordiness which one should avoid in literary works. I have therefore used a broader area, easily recognisable, yet still very much part of the sub-area described as "the Forties" which are, according to the Cambridge edition of *Gatsby*: "The east-west cross streets in midtown Manhattan. The theatre district was roughly bound between Forty-second and Fiftieth Street." I felt this was too specific to include and too hard to, literally, place for a foreign reader that have changed the abstraction level (Chesterman S5).

¹⁴ I have used the hyponym (Chesterman S3) 'theaters' and left out the fact that these are all located in the same district in order to maintain the fluency of the description.

¹⁵ The sexual connotation which is bound to occur when combining the words 'intimate' and 'excitement', seems more poignant in Dutch than in English, which is why I have avoided translating 'intimate' with 'intiem' and chose a synonym (Chesterman S1).

dat niet de reden is waarom ze ermee begonnen zijn – en op een dag kwam ik erachter wat het was. Toen we op een feest bij iemand¹⁶ in Warwick waren, liet ze een auto die ze geleend had buiten in de regen staan met de kap open, en loog er vervolgens over – en ineens herinnerde ik me dat verhaal over haar waar ik toen die avond bij Daisy niet op kon komen. Op haar eerste grote golftoernooi was er een incident dat zowat de kranten haalde – de beschuldiging dat zij een slecht liggende bal had verplaatst in de halve finale. Het incident mondde haast uit tot een schandaal en stierf toen een stille dood. Een caddie trok zijn verklaring in en de enige andere getuige gaf toe zich wellicht vergist te hebben. De combinatie van de gebeurtenis en de naam waren me bijgebleven.

Jordan Baker ging slimme, scherpe mannen instinctief uit de weg en ik zag nu in dat dat was omdat ze zich veiliger voelde in een gezelschap¹⁷ waar elke afwijking van de norm onmogelijk werd geacht. Ze was ongeneselijk oneerlijk. Ze kon er niet tegen om achter te staan en ik nam aan dat het deze houding was waardoor ze al van jongs af aan uitvluchten zocht die ervoor zorgden dat ze die koele, arrogante

¹⁶ A 'house party' today is very different from a house party in the 20s, so using the English word was quite out of the question. A literal translation, 'huisfeest', to me has a strong connotation of being held in a student's quarters and is therefore not applicable here. As the party is just at someone's home, I have used a descriptive form and have changed the level (Chesterman G9)

¹⁷ One can safely assume Jordan Baker does not hold men to different standards when in airplanes, yet I have not been able to find a meaning of the word which would fit in this context. From this context I have assumed its meaning to be a form of situation. As 'situation' implies some form of action, I felt this would not be the right word and specified it further to the people in his situation. Fitzgerald's words have been lost in this meaning and I would categorise this as a paraphrase (Chesterman S8)

glimlach naar de wereld kon draaien en tegelijkertijd aan de eisen van haar krachtige, energieke¹⁸ lijf te voldoen.

Het maakte mij niet uit. Oneerlijkheid in een vrouw is iets wat je nooit al te erg kwalijk kunt nemen. Ik vond het vluchtig spijtig, en vergat het toen. Het was op dat zelfde feest dat we een merkwaardig gesprek hadden over autorijden. We waren er op gekomen omdat zij zo dicht langs de wegwerkers was gereden dat ons spatbord de knoop van een jas van een van de mannen had gerukt.

“Je bent een dramatische chauffeur,” riep ik. “Je moet of voorzichtiger doen, of überhaupt niet rijden.”

“Ik doe voorzichtig.”

“Nee, dat doe je niet.”

“Maar andere mensen wel,” zei ze luchtig.

“Wat heeft dat er nou mee te maken?”

“Die blijven bij me uit de buurt,” hield ze vol. “Er zijn twee mensen nodig om een ongeluk te veroorzaken.”

“Stel nou dat je iemand tegenkomt die net zo achteloos is als jij?”

“Ik hoop dat dat niet zal gebeuren,” antwoordde ze. “Ik haat achteloze mensen. Daarom ben ik zo op jou gesteld.”

Haar grijze ogen, vermoeid van het tegen de zon in kijken, staarden recht vooruit, maar ze had weloverwogen onze relatie veranderd, en even dacht ik dat ik van haar hield. Maar ik denk langzaam en zit vol met inwendige regels die als remmen op mijn verlangens trappen en ik wist dat ik me echt eerst uit die toestand thuis zou moeten wurmen. Ik had eens per week brieven geschreven en ze getekend met “Liefs, Nick” terwijl ik eigenlijk alleen maar kon denken aan hoe, als dat meisje

¹⁸ What exactly the demands of Jordan’s “hard, jaunty body” are, remains quite unclear and the adjectives only obscure the meaning rather than clarify it. As I have not been able to find any secondary literature on this reference I have decided to keep as close to the source text as possible and use a literally translation (Chesterman G1) as to avoid interpretational errors.

tenniste, een klein snorretje van transpiratie zich vormde op haar bovenlip. Niettemin was er een zekere verstandhouding die eerst tactisch verbroken moest worden voordat ik vrij was.

Iedereen denkt toch tenminste één van de kardinale deugden te bezitten en dit was de mijne: Ik ben één van de weinig eerlijke mensen die ik ooit ben tegengekomen.

Hoofdstuk 5 (pagina 64-68)

Toen ik die avond thuiskwam in West Egg was ik even bang dat de zaak in brand stond. Het was twee uur 's nachts en dit hele stuk van het schiereiland baadde in fel licht dat kunstmatig op het struikgewas scheen en lange, dunne schitteringen veroorzaakte op de elektriciteitskabels langs de weg. Toen ik om de hoek kwam, zag ik dat het Gatsby's huis was, verlicht van toren tot kelder.

Eerst dacht ik dat er weer een feest was, een wilde partij waar 'verstoppertje' of 'haringen in een ton'¹⁹ gespeeld werd en het hele huis gebruikt werd in het spel. Maar er was geen geluid. Alleen de wind door de bomen, waardoor de kabels bewogen en de lichten uit en aan gingen alsof het huis naar het duister knipoogde. Toen mijn taxi weg bromde zag ik Gatsby over het gazon naar me toe lopen.

"Je huis ziet er uit als een Wereldtentoonstelling," zei ik.

"Oh ja?" Hij keek er afwezig naar. "Ik heb een kijkje genomen²⁰ in een paar kamers. Laten we naar Coney Island gaan, beste kerel. We nemen mijn wagen."

"Het is al te laat."

"Nou, zullen we dan een baantje trekken in mijn zwembad? Ik heb het de hele zomer nog niet gebruikt."

"Ik moet echt naar bed."

"Oké."

Hij bleef staan en keek me aan met onderdrukte nieuwsgierigheid.

¹⁹ Sardines have turned to haring in this example of a game. I could not find whether such a game exists in The Netherlands, but because the saying is quite well-known and invokes an image – How to fit 20 people in a Mini Cooper - , and the fact that it is combined with the verb 'play' make its meaning clear. This is an example of cultural filtering (Chesterman PR1)

²⁰ This glancing is quoted at the end of this passage when Nick says he does not know "for how many hours he 'glanced into rooms' [...]" and I have based my translation of this 'glancing' on the latter one, as that should fit into a much tighter mould, and I felt this colloquial expression best fitted that quotation.

“Ik heb met juffrouw Baker gesproken,” zei ik na een ogenblik. “Ik ga Daisy morgen opbellen en haar op de thee vragen.”

“Oh, dat lijkt me een goed plan,” zei hij luchtig. “Ik wil je niet tot last zijn.”

“Welke dag komt jou handig uit?”

“Welke dag komt JOU handig uit?” verbeterde hij me snel. Want ik wil je niet tot last zijn, zie je.”

“Wat dacht je van overmorgen?”

Hij dacht er even over na en zei²¹ toen, met tegenzin:

“Ik wil het gras laten maaien.”

We keken allebei naar het gras – er was een duidelijke lijn waar mijn onverzorgde tuin eindigde en zijn donkere, goed onderhouden gazon begon. Ik vermoedde dat hij mijn gras bedoelde.

“Er is nog iets,” zei hij onzeker, en aarzelde.

“Stel je het liever een paar dagen uit?” vroeg ik.

“Oh, nee daar gaat het niet over. Nou ja --” Hakkelend begon²² hij een paar keer aan een zin. “Nou, ik dacht – nou, kijk eens, beste kerel, jij verdient niet erg veel of wel?”

“Niet erg veel.”

Dit leek hem gerust te stellen en wat zelfverzekerder ging hij verder.

²¹ I have changed the cohesion of this sentence (Chesterman G8) because in Dutch the adverb ‘reluctant’ cannot be moved quite so far away from its verb as happens in this example. “Toen, met tegenzin:” [...], does not go with the ending, “zei hij.” I have therefore moved the verb forward in the sentence.

²² The fumbling Gatsby does, seems to be a clumsy way to ask something for which he feels embarrassed, rather than actual stuttering. I felt words like ‘stuntelen’ did not fit the behaviour of Gatsby, at least not towards Nick – I felt it had a more negative image than fumbling. I have settled on what I felt to be a hybrid between the two and changed the emphasis (Chesterman S7)

“Dat dacht ik al, vergeef me mijn – Weet je, ik heb er een zaakje naast, een soort bijbaan, weet je wel. En ik dacht dat als je nou niet veel verdient – je verkoopt obligaties toch, beste kerel?”

“Dat probeer ik.”

“Nou, dan zal dit je interesseren. Het kost maar weinig tijd en je kunt er een leuk bedragje mee ophalen. Het is een nogal vertrouwelijke zaak.”

Ik realiseer me nu dat dit gesprek onder andere omstandigheden een keerpunt²³ in mijn leven had kunnen zijn. Maar, omdat uit zijn tactloze bewoordingen duidelijk bleek dat het aanbod werd gedaan om me een dienst te bewijzen²⁴, moest ik hem wel onderbreken.

“Ik heb mijn handen al vol,” zei ik. “Ik dank je voor het aanbod maar ik kan echt niet nog meer werk aannemen.”

²³ At first I read the word crisis as the Dutch ‘crisis’, a critical situation. But then the context does not make much sense, why would Nick panic if Gatsby offered him an illegal income. He could always decline and perhaps it would negatively influence his relationship with Gatsby, but it would hardly be one of the big crises in a person’s life. In the Van Dale dictionary crisis is also translated into Dutch as ‘keerpunt’ (turning point) which would make a lot of sense in this context, Nick’s life would change dramatically if he would have more money, he might fancy himself living like Gatsby. Therefore I have decided it is more likely this was meant and have translated it as such.

²⁴ It is not entirely clear what is meant here: who is rendering which service to whom? Does Gatsby want Nick to do something for him, or rather, is he doing Nick a favour by offering him a chance to make some money? I have opted for the latter because of what Nick says next: “I had no choice but to cut him off”. Nick seems like the sort of person who is happy to help a neighbour and not cut him off before he has even asked the question. Furthermore, I feel it is unlikely Gatsby would need Nick to help him with his business dealings. John Callahan says about this in his article “A form beyond myth”: “To accept a handout is both bad form and bad manners.” (38) I have translated accordingly.

“Je hoeft geen zaken met Wolfshiem te doen hoor.” Hij dacht duidelijk dat ik terugschok vanwege de “konneksie²⁵” waarover bij de lunch gesproken was, maar ik verzekerde hem dat het daar niet mee te maken had. Hij bleef wachten, hoopte dat ik een gesprek zou beginnen, maar ik was in gedachten verzonken dus ging hij met tegenzin naar huis.

De avond had me een licht en vrolijk gevoel gegeven; ik denk dat ik al diep in slaap was toen ik binnenkwam. Dus ik weet niet of Gatsby nog naar Coney Island is gegaan, of hoe lang hij nog “kijkjes in kamers” heeft genomen terwijl zijn huis baadde in het licht. De volgende ochtend belde ik Daisy vanaf kantoor en nodigde haar uit op de thee.

“Neem Tom niet mee,” waarschuwde ik.

“Wat?”

“Neem Tom niet mee.”

“Welke Tom?” vroeg ze onschuldig.

Op de dag dat we hadden afgesproken, goot het van de regen. Om elf uur klopte een man in een regenjas, met een grasmaaier in zijn hand, op mijn voordeur en zei dat Mr. Gatsby hem gestuurd had om het gras te maaien. Dit deed me herinneren dat ik was vergeten mijn Fin te vragen terug te komen dus ik reed naar het centrum van West Egg om haar in natte en witgekalkte staten te zoeken en wat kopjes en citroenen en bloemen te kopen.

De bloemen bleken overbodig want om twee uur werd er namens Gatsby een halve²⁶ kas bezorgd en ontelbare dingen om ze in te zetten. Een uur later ging de

²⁵ Wolfshiem’s Jewish pronunciation of ‘connection’, replacing the k-sound with a g-sound, is hard to maintain in Dutch, as Jewish Dutch is less marked. I have replaced it with a wrongly spelled word in which the hard s- consonant (as opposed to the -tie ending) in Dutch would reveal an accent of some sort.

²⁶ One may assume that no actual greenhouse is delivered to Nick, this is a metaphor for the enormous quantity of flowers that is brought. In Dutch, it is possible to add a modifier, in this case halve (half a) to strengthen this image while at the same time stressing that this is

deur wat nerveus open en Gatsby, in een wit flanellen pak met zilver hemd en goudkleurige das, haastte zich naar binnen. Hij was bleek en donkere tekenen van slapeloosheid waren zichtbaar onder zijn ogen.

“Gaat alles goed?” vroeg hij direct.

“Het gras ziet er goed uit, als je dat bedoelt.”

“Welk gras?” informeerde hij uitdrukingsloos. “Oh, het gras in de tuin.” Hij keek er naar door het raam, maar, afgaand op zijn gezichtsuitdrukking, denk ik niet dat hij iets zag.

“Ziet er prima uit,” zei hij vaag. “In een van de kranten stond dat de regen rond vier uur op zou houden. Ik denk in de *Journal*. Heb je alles wat je nodig hebt in de vorm van – van thee?”

Ik nam hem mee naar de keuken waar hij wat afkeurend naar de Fin keek. Samen inspecteerden we de twaalf citroencakejes van de delicatessenwinkel.

“Zijn ze goed?” vroeg ik.

“Natuurlijk, natuurlijk! Ze zijn prima,” en voegde daar nietszeggend aan toe, “... beste kerel.”

Om half vier koelde de regen af tot een vochtige mist waarin af en toe nog een dunne regendruppel als douw leek te zwemmen. Gatsby bladerde met een afwezige blik door een editie van Clay's *Economics*²⁷, schrok op van de Finse stappen die de keukenvloer deden schudden, en staarde af en toe naar de beslagen ramen alsof zich

indeed a metaphor as half a greenhouse would be impossible. It makes the dialogue run more smoothly as the reader does not have to wonder whether this is meant literally. One could argue that a reader of English might have the same problem which is not solved by the original text, but I felt the Dutch translation benefitted from this little addition.

²⁷ In my fictional translation assignment I have stated that I would try to keep the novel as American as possible. Also Fitzgerald's style is to include many real or realistic elements in the story to contribute to its credibility. The combination of these two factors has made that I have kept the book, in its original English title in my translation.

daarachter een reeks onzichtbare maar verontrustende gebeurtenissen afspeelde. Uiteindelijk stond hij op en deelde met onzekere stem mee dat hij naar huis ging.

“Waarom?”

“Er komt niemand op de thee. Het is al te laat!” Hij keek naar zijn horloge alsof hij ergens anders dringend verwacht werd. “Ik heb niet de hele dag de tijd.”

“Doe niet zo gek, het is pas twee voor vier.”

Ellendig ging hij zitten, alsof ik hem geduwd had, en op datzelfde moment klonk het geluid van een motor die mijn oprit opdraaide. We spongen allebei op en ik liep, nu zelf ook enigszins angstig, de tuin in.

Onder de druipende seringen kwam een grote open wagen de oprit op. De wagen stopte. Daisy’s gezicht, lichtjes opzij gedraaid onder een driehoekige lila hoed, keek naar me met een stralende en²⁸ verrukte glimlach.

“Is dit helemaal²⁹ waar je woont, mijn liefste?”

De vrolijke deining van haar stem was een uitheemse³⁰ toon in de regen. Ik moest het geluid ervan volgen, omhoog en omlaag, met mijn oor³¹, voordat de

²⁸ I have added the conjunction ‘en’ to these two adjectives because I felt they were too similar in meaning, strangely more than in English, to have them appear consecutively, thereby changing the structure of the constituent (Chesterman G5)

²⁹ Daisy’s affected way of expressing herself causes her to use more words than necessary, adding meaningless words like these. I felt it was important to maintain that element of her, how her beautiful voice quite literally speaks ‘sweet nothings’. I felt this best came across in the Dutch word ‘helemaal’ as a translation.

³⁰ I have interpreted tonic to refer to tone rather than to toxication, because of the many references in the book to the sound of her voice. I have used ‘uitheems’ to stress its foreignness in the constant sound of the rain. A word like exotic would also come to mind but I felt that would be too strong an image and not fit with blonde, fair Daisy.

³¹ “with my ear alone” is a description which must be meant figuratively, as the ear cannot move without at least the rest of the head participating, yet the way Nick describes the scene,

woorden doordrongen. Een vochtige lok haar lag als een veeg blauwe verf over haar wang en toen ik haar hand pakte om haar uit de auto te helpen, was die nat en bedekt³² met glinsterende druppels.

“Ben je verliefd op me?” zie ze zacht in mijn oor, “of is er een andere reden dat ik alleen moest komen?”

“Dat is het geheim van *Castle Rackrent*³³. Zeg tegen je chauffeur dat hij een eind hiervandaan rijdt en een uurtje wegblijft.”

“Kom over een uur maar terug, Ferdie.” Daarna mompelde ze op serieuze toon: “Hij heet Ferdie.”

“Heeft hij last van zijn neus door de benzine³⁴?”

“Dat denk ik niet,” zei ze onschuldig. “Hoezo?”

We gingen naar binnen. Tot mijn grote verbazing was de woonkamer verlaten.

“Nou, dat is gek,” riep ik uit.

“Wat is gek?”

Ze draaide zich om toen er een zacht, keurig klopje op de voordeur klonk. Ik liep erheen en opende de deur. Gatsby, lijkbleek, zijn handen in zijn jaszakken gestoken alsof ze verzwaard waren, stond me in een plas water treurig aan te staren.

it seems a very physical action. I have left the ‘alone’ out in Dutch as I felt it would be too marked.

³²After I changed the structure of this clause I have added ‘bedekt’ as I felt this would enhance the fluency of the sentence more than the less usual causal connection “nat van de ...”.

³³ The novel *Castle Rackrent* (1800) by Maria Edgeworth has never been translated into Dutch and the reference to it will not be recognised by contemporary Dutch audience. I have decided to use Italics to stress the fact that this is a literary allusion.

³⁴ This is a reference to a story Daisy told Nick earlier in the novel about a butler her family had who had to resign because the silver polish affected his nose (15). Nick makes a joke about this, which is not picked up by Daisy. In translating this sentence, a translator needs to make sure he uses the same words as in Daisy’s story, in this case ‘affect’.

Met zijn handen nog steeds in zijn zakken schreed hij me voorbij de gang in, draaide scherp de hoek om alsof hij op rails liep en verdween de woonkamer in. Het was helemaal niet grappig. Ik hoorde mijn eigen hart tekeergaan en trok de deur dicht tegen de toenemende regen.

Een halve minuut lang klonk er geen enkel geluid. Toen hoorde ik uit de woonkamer een soort gesmoord gemompel en een deel van een lach, gevolgd door Daisy's stem die op duidelijk gekunstelde toon zei: "Ik ben echt vreselijk blij je weer te zien."

Een stilte: het duurde afschuwelijk lang. Ik had niets te doen in de gang dus ik ging de kamer binnen.

Gatsby, met zijn handen nog altijd in zijn zakken, leunde tegen de schoorsteenmantel als een volmaakte vervalsing van iemand die op zijn gemak is, zelfs wat verveeld. Zijn hoofd leunde zo ver achterover dat het rustte op de wijzerplaat van een kapotte mantelklok en vanuit deze positie staarden zijn radeloze ogen naar Daisy die angstig maar gracieus op de rand van een rechte stoel zat.

"Wij hebben elkaar al eerder ontmoet," mompelde Gatsby. Zijn ogen wendden zich even tot mij en zijn lippen openden zich in een mislukte poging tot een lach. Gelukkig koos de klok dit moment om te kantelen onder de druk van Gatsby's³⁵ hoofd, en draaide die zich om en ving het ding met trillende vingers op en zette het terug op zijn plaats. Toen ging hij zitten, stijfjes, zijn elleboog op de arm van de bank en zijn kin in zijn hand.

"Het spijt me van de klok," zei hij.

³⁵ As Dutch lacks an indefinite pronoun and the sexes of nouns are not particularly relevant to the language and therefore not well known amongst its speakers, a reader of Dutch might assume a clock to be masculine in Dutch, which it is not, and confuse Gatsby's head with the head of the clock; in which case the clock would fall from being top-heavy. To avoid this I have added that it is in fact Gatsby's head which causes this.

Mijn eigen gezicht had nu een tint van een diep tropisch rood aangenomen. Ik kon geen enkele beleefdheid bedenken hoewel er duizenden door mijn hoofd spookten.

“Het is een oude klok”, zei ik stompzinnig.

Ik denk dat we allemaal even dachten dat de klok op de grond in stukken was gevallen.

“We hebben elkaar al in geen jaren meer gezien,” zei Daisy, haar stem zo zakelijk als maar kon.

“In November vijf jaar.”

Het automatisme waarmee Gatsby antwoordde leidde opnieuw tot een minuut zwijgen. Ik kreeg ze allebei in beweging door met de wanhopige suggestie dat ze me in de keuken konden helpen met de thee toen de demonische Fin die binnenbracht op een dienblad.

Hoofdstuk 7 (pagina 93-95)

(...)

Ze gingen naar boven om zich klaar te maken terwijl wij drie mannen daar de hete steentjes stonden te verschuiven met onze voeten. Een zilver boogje maan zweefde al aan de hemel³⁶. Gatsby begon iets te zeggen, veranderde van gedachten maar toen had Tom zich al naar hem omgedraaid en keek hem verwachtingsvol aan.

“Neem me niet kwalijk?”

“Heb je je stallen hier op het terrein?” vroeg Gatsby, duidelijk met moeite.

“Een meter of vijfhonderd verderop.”

“Oh.”

Een stilte.

“Ik snap niet waarom we nu weer de stad in moeten,” begon Tom fel.
“Vrouwen krijgen van die ideeën in hun hoofd –

“Zullen we iets te drinken meenemen?” riep Daisy van boven uit een raam.

“Ik haal wel wat whisky,” antwoordde Tom. Hij liep naar binnen.

Gatsby zei stijfjes tegen me:

“Ik kan er niks over zeggen in dit huis, beste kerel.”

“Ze heeft niet een erg discrete stem,” merkte ik op. “Haar stem is vol van³⁷ –”

Ik twijfelde.

“Haar stem is vol van geld,” zei hij ineens.

³⁶ English distinguishes between multiple states of sky, western or eastern sky. This has to do with the phases of the moon, which rises in the east and is therefore in the west from the afternoon on. Yet Dutch does not employ such descriptions, (westerlucht is not on the wordlist of the Taalunie) and I have opted to change the explicitness (Chesterman PR2) and not use descriptions in order to give information which is not particularly relevant as the time of day can be derived from other events in this passage.

³⁷ I have elaborated on my choice of ‘vol van’ in the comparison I have made between my translation and the one by Susan Janssen.

Dat was het. Ik had het nooit eerder begrepen. Haar stem was vol van geld – dat was de onuitputtelijke charme waarmee hij steeg en daalde, het rinkelen ervan³⁸, het lied van de cimbalen³⁹ dat er in klonk... De dochter van de koning, hoog in een wit paleis, het zondagskind...

Tom kwam het huis uit en rolde intussen een fles⁴⁰ in een handdoek, hij werd gevolgd door Daisy en Jordan die kleine strakke hoedjes van metallic stof⁴¹ op hadden en dunne mantels over hun arm droegen.

“Zullen we met z’n allen met mijn auto gaan?” stelde Gatsby voor. Hij voelde aan het warme groene leer van de stoel. “Ik had hem in de schaduw moeten laten staan.”

“Is het een gewone schakelbak⁴²?” wilde Tom weten.

“Ja.”

“Nou, neem jij dan mijn coupé en laat mij jouw auto naar de stad rijden.”

³⁸ The description following the statement that her voice is full of money, contains imagery which fits with that idea: the rise and fall of the stock market, the jingling of coins, the biblical reference to charity (see next note). In my translation I have tried to maintain these references so they are recognisable as such, therefore it has to be ‘rinkelen’ instead of for instance ‘tinkelen’.

³⁹ A link between cymbals and money can be found in the Bible (1 Corinthians xiii) ““Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.” (“Charity”)

⁴⁰ For liquids, a quarter gallon is 0.94 liters, about the size of a regular bottle in Dutch therefore I have left out the reference to the size of the bottle in the translation.

⁴¹ The adjective ‘metallic’ is quite well-known in The Netherlands and a search in several fabric (web)stores has proven that the English term ‘metallic’ is maintained in the Dutch language when referred to such a cloth.

⁴² According to the Cambridge edition of *The Great Gatsby*, most cars in the 20s had an H-gearshift (201)

Gatsby vond het een onaangenaam plan.

“Ik denk niet dat er veel benzine meer in zit,” wierp hij tegen

“Benzine zat,” zei Tom vrolijk. Hij keek naar de meter. “En als het opraakt, stop ik bij een drugstore⁴³. Je kunt alles kopen bij een drugstore tegenwoordig.”

Deze schijnbaar doelloze opmerking werd gevolgd door een stilte. Daisy keek fronsend naar Tom en een ondefinieerbare uitdrukking die tegelijkertijd duidelijk onbekend maar ook vaag herkenbaar was, gleed over zijn gezicht.

“Kom op, Daisy,” zei Tom en duwde haar richting Gatsby’s wagen. “Rij jij met mij mee in deze kermisattractie?⁴⁴”

Hij opende het portier maar ze maakte zich los uit zijn arm.

“Neem jij Nick en Jordan maar mee. Wij volgen je in de coupé.”

Ze liep vlak naast Gatsby en raakte zijn jas aan.

Jordan, Tom en ik gingen op de voorbank van Gatsby’s auto zitten, Tom drukte de onbekende pedalen aarzelend in en we vlogen de drukkende hitte tegemoet, hen buiten ons gezichtsveld achterlatend.

“Zag je dat?” wilde Tom weten.

“Wat?”

Hij keek me doordringend aan en realiseerde zich dat Jordan en ik het al lang geweten moesten hebben.

“Jij denkt zeker dat ik dom ben, hè?, vroeg hij. “Misschien is dat wel zo, maar ik heb een – een soort van zesde zintuig, soms dat me vertelt wat ik moet doen. Misschien geloof je dat niet maar, maar de wetenschap –”

⁴³ A drugstore is a typically American store, a CSE. The Dutch Taalunie has included the word in its compound Dutch spelling on its wordlist and I have chosen to maintain (Grit 282, trans Bos) that word.

⁴⁴ References to fairs and circus appear several times in the novel and even featured on the original dust jacket (Cambridge Edition of *The Great Gatsby*, Appendix 3 “Note on the Dust Jacket (209)”) and I felt it was important to keep this reference in and find a suitable term to go with his imagery.

Hij viel stil. De huidige situatie maakte zich van hem meester en trok hem weg van de theoretische afgrond.

“Ik heb een onderzoekje ingesteld naar deze kerel,” ging hij verder. “Ik had nog er nog wel dieper op in kunnen gaan als ik geweten had...”

“Ben je bij een helderziende geweest?” vroeg Jordan vrolijk.

“Wat?” hij staarde verward naar onze lachende gezichten⁴⁵. “Een helderziende?”

“Over Gatsby.”

“Over Gatsby! Nee natuurlijk niet. Ik zei dat ik een klein onderzoekje had ingesteld naar zijn verleden.”

“En je ontdekte dat hij in Oxford gestudeerd heeft,” zei Jordan behulpzaam.

“In Oxford!” riep hij ongelovig. “Absoluut niet! Hij draagt roze pakken!”

“Toch heeft hij in Oxford gestudeerd.”

“Oxford in Nieuw-Mexico misschien,” snoof Tom minachtend.

“Hoor eens Tom, als jij zo’n snob bent, waarom heb je hem dan uitgenodigd?” vroeg Jordan geïrriteerd.

“Daisy heeft hem uitgenodigd; ze kent hem van voor we getrouwd waren – Joost mag weten waarvan.”

⁴⁵ I have chosen to shorten this sentence because I felt it could be done unnoticed as the original seems a bit long winded when translated to Dutch because the adverb ‘confused’ cannot appear on its own at the beginning of a sentence and with a pronoun between it and its verb: “verward, hij staarde ons aan”, a change of structure (Chesterman G7) is therefore unavoidable.

(...)

Op een namiddag in oktober zag ik Tom Buchanan. Hij liep voor me op Fifth Avenue op zijn kenmerkende alerte en agressieve manier, zijn handen voor zijn lichaam alsof hij elke bemoeienis wilde voorkomen, zijn hoofdbewegingen scherp van hier naar daar, alsof het zich aanpaste aan zijn rusteloze ogen. Net toen ik langzamer ging lopen om te zorgen dat ik hem niet zou inhalen, stond hij stil en keek fronsend in de etalage van een juwelier. Ineens zag hij me en liep met uitgestoken hand terug.

“Wat is er Nick? Wil je me de hand niet schudden?”

“Inderdaad. Je weet wat ik van je vind.”

“Je bent gek, Nick,” zei hij meteen. “Zo gek als een deur. Ik weet niet wat er mis is met jou.”

“Tom,” vroeg ik, “wat heb jij die middag tegen Wilson gezegd?”

Hij staaarde me in stilte aan en ik wist dat ik goed geraden had wat er was gebeurd in die ontbrekende uren. Ik wilde me omdraaien maar hij kwam me achterna en greep me bij mijn arm.

“Ik heb hem de waarheid verteld,” zei hij. “Hij kwam aan de deur toen we op punt stonden te vertrekken en toen ik liet zeggen dat we er niet waren, probeerde hij met geweld naar boven te komen. Hij was gek genoeg om me te vermoorden als ik niet verteld zou hebben van wie die auto was. Hij had zijn hand de hele tijd op zijn revolver terwijl hij binnen was –” Hij hield uitdagend zijn mond. “En wat dan nog als ik het gezegd zou hebben? Die kerel heeft het aan zichzelf te wijten. Hij heeft jou en Daisy allebei voor de gek gehouden, maar hij was gewoon een crimineel⁴⁶. Hij reed over Myrtle heen alsof hij over een hond reed en stopte niet eens zijn auto.”

⁴⁶ A tough one can informally simply mean a criminal (according to Van Dale) and I think this is the meaning Tom uses, he thinks Gatsby is a killer but not only that, he is aware of the fact that he is involved in obscure ways to earn money and he condemns this, by using this

Er was niets dat ik daarop kon zeggen, behalve het onuitspreekbare feit dat het niet waar was.

“En als je soms denkt dat ik er niet onder geleden heb, luister, toen ik het appartement ging opzeggen, zag ik dat verdomde pak hondenkoekjes op tafel staan en ik ben gaan zitten en heb lopen huilen als een klein kind. Mijn hemel, het was vreselijk –”

Ik kon het hem niet vergeven of hem aardig vinden maar ik begreep dat hij zijn eigen acties volledig gerechtvaardigd vond. Het was allemaal erg achteloos en verwarrend. Het waren achteloze mensen, Tom en Daisy, ze gooiden dingen en mensen⁴⁷ stuk en trokken zich dan weer terug in hun geld of in hun achteloosheid of wat het ook was wat ze bij elkaar hield, en ze lieten anderen de rotzooi opruimen die zij hadden gemaakt...

Ik schudde hem de hand; het leek me flauw dat niet te doen, want ik had ineens het gevoel dat ik met een kind aan het praten was. Toen ging hij de juwelier in om een parelketting te kopen, of misschien gewoon een paar manchetknopen – voorgoed verlost van mijn provinciale gevoeligheden.

Gatsby's huis stond nog steeds leeg toen ik wegging – het gras van zijn gazon nu even lang als het mijne. Een van de taxichauffeurs uit het dorp stopte op al zijn ritjes bij het toegangshek en wees naar binnen; misschien was hij degene geweest die Daisy en Gatsby naar East Egg gebracht had op de avond van het ongeluk en misschien had hij een heel eigen versie van het verhaal. Ik hoefde het niet te horen en ik ontweek hem als ik uit de trein kwam.

word I feel he stresses that and thereby justifies the fact that he told Wilson where to find him and is thus involved in Gatsby's death.

⁴⁷ I felt that creatures should be translated into one word as so to keep the rhythm of these lines which function as a sort of conclusion Daisy and Tom and their role in the novel. I have now zoomed in, used a hyponym (Chesterman S3) on the human component of creatures although Fitzgerald might have meant it in a broader sense.

Ik bracht mijn zaterdagavonden door in New York want zijn stralende, duizelingwekkende feesten stonden me nog zo levendig bij dat ik de muziek en het vage geluid van voortdurend lachen uit zijn tuin en de auto's die af en aan reden op zijn oprit, nog kon horen. Op een avond hoorde ik een echte auto stoppen en zag de lichten rusten op de treden bij de voordeur. Maar ik ging niet op onderzoek uit. Het was waarschijnlijk een laatste gast die niet nog niet wist dat het feest voorbij was.

Op de laatste avond, mijn koffer stond gepakt en mijn auto was verkocht aan de kruidenier, ging ik er nog één keer heen en bekeek die gigantische onsamenhangende mislukking van een huis. In het maanlicht stond op de witte treden een obscene woord dat daar door een jongen was geschreven met een stuk steen, ik wiste het uit, mijn schoen raspend over de stenen. Toen liep ik naar het strand en liet me in het zand zakken.

De meeste grote zomerhuizen aan de kust waren nu gesloten en er waren nauwelijks lichten behalve de vage, bewegende gloed van een veerboot over de Sound⁴⁸. En naarmate de maan hoger kwam te staan, smolten die onbelangrijke huizen weg zodat ik me langzaam bewust werd van dit oude eiland dat ooit in bloei stond voor de ogen van de Hollandse zeevaarders – de frisse, groene boezem van de nieuwe wereld. Haar verdwenen bomen, de bomen die hadden moeten wijken voor Gatsby's huis, hadden ooit verleidingen gefluisterd over de laatste en grootste van alle menselijke dromen; een vluchtig, betoverend ogenblik moet de mens zijn adem in hebben gehouden in tegenwoordigheid van dit continent, onderworpen aan een esthetische beschouwingen die hij noch begreep noch wenste, voor de laatste keer in de geschiedenis oog in oog met iets dat slechts geëvenaard werd door zijn eigen vermogen tot fascinatie⁴⁹.

⁴⁸ As stated in my translation assignment, I have tried to keep as many geographical references as they are in English as to maintain the American feel of the novel.

⁴⁹ The verb 'to wonder' comes back in the first line of the next paragraph, yet that also makes it confusing. Because why would Gatsby wonder when he picks out Daisy's light, he has moved there with the sole purpose of living close to her. The second 'wonder' is more closely

En terwijl ik daar zat, te peinzen over de oude onbekende wereld, dacht ik aan Gatsby's fascinatie toen hij voor het eerst het groene lichtje aan het eind van Daisy's stijger ontdekte. Het was een lange reis geweest naar dit blauwe gazon en zijn droom moet zo dichtbij geweest zijn dat het onmogelijk leek dat deze hem nog zou ontglippen. Hij wist niet dat de droom al achter hem lag, ergens in de verte in het niemandsland achter de stad, waar de donkere velden van de republiek doorrolden onder de nachthemel.

Gatsby geloofde in het groene licht, in de orgiastische toekomst die zich jaar in jaar uit steeds verder terugtrekt. Toen ontsnapte ze ons, maar dat geeft niet – morgen zullen we harder rennen, onze armen verder uitstrekken... En er komt een dag – Dus woeden⁵⁰ we verder, schepen tegen de stroom in, telkens teruggeworpen naar het verleden.

linked to fascination than to surprise. Although the mentioning of this being the last time in history that man would see something that would astound him, leave him lost for words, is hard to rhyme with this, that is what it says and I have translated accordingly.

⁵⁰ I wanted to use a word from which the struggle was apparent and which also fitted with the nautical image. 'Woeden' has is an image of unruly and tempestuous movement, of storm and also a connotation of strength as does 'beat'. I also considered 'laveren' a nautical term, to beat (up) can also mean 'opkruisen' (Van Dale, 4) which is what one does to go against the wind and the current, but discarded this alternative because it seemed too soft.

Chapter 5: Comparison between the existing translation and the one made for this thesis.

After analysing and completing my own translation, I will now compare it to an existing and published translation by Susan Janssen from 1985. In some cases the two solutions, Janssen's and my own, to translation problems are both correct and just different. In other cases I feel Janssen's translation might contain mistakes when judged from a 2011 perspective, if her text was judged for republication now, certain choices she made which I feel a publisher would want to change. I have elaborated on such mistakes using several scholarly opinions on the subject of judging a translation. Jacqueline Hulst has summed these up in her article "Het product centraal, criteria en methoden voor de evaluatie van vertalingen" and she has found that different scholars have different rankings of mistakes; they do not consider every mistake to be equally grave. Broadly there are two categories, those who put the translation first and argue that its function should be regarded the highest good and regards for instance mistakes in the language as of lesser importance (Nord, Kupsch-Loserheit) and those who believe there is a difference between mistakes everyone agrees on, like grammar and spelling, and mistakes which are a matter of taste (Pym, House).

Page 5 – lines 1-5

- **FSF:** In my younger and more vulnerable years my father gave me some advice that I've been turning over in my head ever since.
"Whenever you feel like criticizing anyone," he told me, "just remember that all the people in this world haven't had the advantages that you've had."
- **SJ:** In mijn jongere en meer kwetsbare jaren gaf mijn vader me een raad waarover ik sindsdien altijd ben blijven nadenken.

“Wanneer je de neiging voelt op iemand kritiek te hebben”, zei hij, “ vergeet dan niet dat niet alle mensen in deze wereld zo bevoordeeld zijn geweest als jij.”

KB: In mijn jongere en *kwetsbaardere* jaren gaf mijn vader me een *goede* raad die me sindsdien niet meer heeft los gelaten.

“Voor je kritiek hebt op een ander,” zei hij, “moet je steeds bedenken dat niet iedereen op deze wereld dezelfde *kansen* heeft gehad als jij.

In the explanatory footnote in my translation for this thesis I have stated that I believed “meer kwetsbare” to be ungrammatical. The Nederlandse Taalunie says about this problem on its website that words ending in –r usually get a –d in the comparative degree (Taalunie, trappen van vergelijking⁵¹), which would argue in favour of the conjugation I have used. The only problem with this statement is the word usually and I have thus contacted the Taalunie and asked them which one is the proper use. In an email dating June 1, 2011 they said: “The preference is to use “mijn kwetsbaarder jaren” or “mijn kwetsbaardere jaren”. “Meer kwetsbare” is not wrong, but there is no weighty argument to use this descriptive form.” (E-mail Van Wingerden) . I agree with this line of reasoning and feel there is no reason to use a more wordy and marked option. A reason Janssen may have had to chose the less grammatical variant, is to show the progression of the vulnerability in Carraway more clearly and stress that he is still vulnerable now. It is therefore questionable whether Janssen’s choice should be marked a mistake at all, but if it should, it is a mistake against the language system which according to Nord is of lesser importance than pragmatic mistakes (qtd. In Hulst 238), other critics like Hulst and Pym have a different view in this, as do I myself in this case. They argue that some mistakes are just that, mistakes, because they involve grammatical errors or spelling mistakes,

⁵¹ <http://taaladvies.net/taal/advies/tekst/92/>

while pragmatic mistakes are much more subjective, a distinction between binary and non-binary mistakes (Hulst 239).

Fitzgerald has not specified quality of the sort of advice Carraway's father gave him and Janssen has not either. I, however, have added the modifier 'goede' (good) to the word advice in my translation is because I believe these words to be a collocation in Dutch. Furthermore the rhythm of "gaf me een raad" seems off, perhaps because 'raad' in Dutch usually appears without a determiner.

The 'advantages' Carraway's father refers to, have disappeared in Janssen's translation. Instead she has opted for a more descriptive way with the same meaning. The only possible problem might be that the word is not often used and an audience could therefore mistakenly read this as "bevooroordeeld" (prejudiced) which would fit well in this context but changes its meaning dramatically.

Page 47 – lines 9-15:

- **FSF:** Again at eight o'clock, when the dark lanes of the Forties were five deep with throbbing taxi-cabs, bound for the theatre district, I felt a sinking in my heart. Forms leaned together in the taxis as they waited, and voices sang, and there was laughter from unheard jokes, and lighted cigarettes outlined unintelligible gestures inside. Imagining that I, too, was hurrying toward gayety and sharing their intimate excitement, I wished them well.
- **SJ:** Tegen acht uur, wanneer de pulserende taxi's in vijf banen naast elkaar stapvoets door de donkere veertigste straten redden, op weg naar de theaterwijk, kreeg ik weer een beklemmend gevoel. Schimmen bogen zich naar elkaar toe in die telkens stilstaande taxi's, er klonken stemmen, en er werd om onverstaanbare bon-mots gelachen, en brandende sigaretten beschreven onbegrijpelijke cirkels. Ik stelde me voor dat ook ik plezier en

ontspanning tegemoet snelde en aan hun intieme opgewondenheid deelnam, en wenste hun alle goeds.

KB: Om acht uur, *toen* de donkere straten van Manhattan vijf rijen dik vol stonden met *ronkende* taxi's op weg naar de theaters, voelde ik de moed opnieuw in mijn schoenen zakken. Silhouetten zaten tegen elkaar aan in de taxi's terwijl ze wachtten, en stemmen zongen, en er klonk gelag om onverstanebare grappen, en de gloed van brandende sigaretten schetste ondefinieerbare gebaren binnenin. Ik stelde me voor dat ik ook op weg was naar vrolijkheid en deelde in hun vertrouwelijke opwinding en wenste ze veel plezier.

Fitzgerald's craftsmanship in describing images so vividly that in rather few words a city comes to life is apparent in this excerpt. He does not use difficult words or sentence structures and it seems the painting of this picture is almost effortless when in fact we know Fitzgerald to pay great attention to detail and style. I felt it was important in translating this passage to avoid marked words, one of the choices that derived from this was that I left out the street names 'the Forties'. There is a shift in information (Chesterman PR3), it becomes less exact where exactly these cabs are now, but because the sentence ends with "bound for the theatre district" it is still clear where they are going and why these people are so excited, yet it avoids elaborating on these 'forties' as I disagree with Janssen who has just left them in unchanged. I feel 'veertigste straten' is very unclear, the way streets can be numbered in America is not done in The Netherlands and I feel it brings unnecessary vagueness to this description which is meant to be the very opposite from vague; image provoking. I feel this is an example where you could apply the term coined by Hönl as "der notwendige Grad der Differenzierung" which can be explained as: "a translation should follow the source text as closely as necessary as possible rather than as exactly as possible" (Hulst 238, trans Bos).

A word like 'bon-mots' was perhaps quite fashionable or at least regularly used in the mid-Eighties when Janssen made her translation, but I feel it has lost these qualities now. Therefore I feel it should not be used in a new translation, it has become too marked, and is perhaps not even understandable for some readers with a lack of knowledge of French and I feel it is not the right counterpart for the unmarked source term 'jokes'. I however would not qualify that as a mistake on Janssen's part, but as part of a natural process of words going out of fashion.

Page 67 – lines 10-23:

- **FSF:** Under the dripping bare lilac-trees a large open car was coming up the drive. It stopped. Daisy's face, tipped sideways beneath a three-cornered lavender hat, looked out at me with a bright ecstatic smile.

“Is this absolutely where you live, my dearest one?”

The exhilarating ripple of her voice was a wild tonic in the rain. I had to follow the sound of it for a moment, up and down, with my ear alone, before any words came through. A damp streak of hair lay like a dash of blue paint across her cheek, and her hand was wet with glistening drops as I took it to help her from the car.

“Are you in love with me,” she said low in my ear, “or why did I have to come alone?”

“That's the secret of Castle Rackrent. Tell your chauffeur to go far away and spend an hour.”

SJ: Er kwam een grote open wagen de oprit op onder de druipende kale seringenbomen. Hij kwam tot stilstand. Daisy's gezicht, schuin opzij gewend

onder een driehoekige lila hoed, keek me met een stralende opgetogen glimlach aan.

“Is dit absoluut waar je woont, allerliefste van me?”

Het verkwikkende unduleren van haar stem was een onstuimig tonicum in de regen. Ik moest het zangerige geluid een ogenblik op en neer volgen, enkel met mijn oor, voor er een woord tot me doordrong. Een sliert vochtig haar lag als een veeg blauwe verf over haar wang, en haar hand was nat van de glinsterende druppels toen ik hem vastpakte om haar met het uitstappen te helpen.

“Ben je verliefd op me,” zei ze zachtjes in mijn oor, “of waarom moest ik alleen komen?”

“Dat is het geheim van “Castle Reckrent”. Zeg je chauffeur dat hij weg moet gaan voor een uurtje.”

KB: Onder de druipende seringen kwam een grote open wagen de oprit op. De wagen stopte. Daisy’s gezicht, lichtjes opzij gedraaid onder een driehoekige lila hoed, keek naar me met een stralende en verrukte glimlach.

“Is dit helemaal waar je woont, mijn liefste?”

De vrolijke deining van haar stem was een uitheemse toon in de regen. Ik moest het geluid ervan volgen, omhoog en omlaag, met mijn oor voordat de woorden doordrongen. Een vochtige lok haar lag als een veeg blauwe verf over haar wang en toen ik haar hand pakte om haar uit de auto te helpen, was die nat en bedekt met glinsterende druppels.

“Ben je verliefd op me?” zie ze met lage stem in mijn oor, “*of is er een andere reden dat ik alleen moest komen?*”

“Dat is het geheim van de Castle Reckrent. Zeg tegen je chauffeur dat hij een eind hiervandaan rijdt en een uurtje wegblijft.”

This passage is exemplary of Fitzgerald's style, he creates an atmosphere by his lengthy and evocative descriptions of a setting, not only of how the narrator perceives a scene, but almost as if it were real. His many details give a sense of objectivity and add to make Nick seem a reliable narrator. It is Nick who describes Daisy's voice: "her voice was a wild tonic in the rain". Yet the interpretation of the word 'tonic' is problematic here as there are two possible, yet quite different, meanings. Janssen has opted for the meaning of tonic as a potion, a drug which enchants Nick and knocks him of balance so he cannot understand her anymore. Another option is that Nick simply refers to her tone of voice and how it stands out from the sound of the rain. I feel this is more likely as the sound of Daisy's voice is discussed on several instances throughout the novel, most noticeably in the next excerpt. Yet even if this is the case, the English 'tonic' has the ambiguity of both these meanings which cannot be found in a Dutch term, the hint of something magic is in the air and is added to by the use of the adjective 'wild'. I would argue that how you translate 'tonic' influences how you translate 'wild'. The combination "[...] een onstuimig tonicum" (Janssen 76) is then unclear, 'onstuimig' is a word associated with weather, and not with intoxication. I feel wild is meant to stress its strangeness, its difference from normal sounds. But perhaps the biggest problem with this sentence is the use of the Dutch verb 'unduleren', a word rarely used nowadays and the meaning of which will not be known to most readers. Although Van Dale's dictionary describes it as: "golfvorm geven aan", does fit with the rippling and the going up and down later in the sentence, it is too strange a word to be used in a contemporary translation. I think the translation of this sentence by Janssen would not suit a modern audience because of the use of two archaic and marked words – unduleren en tonicum – and because of the loss of the intended imagery that follows from it. These words would qualify as a mistake from a modern perspective because they cannot be justified in light of a translation assignment which prescribes the text should be accessible to a contemporary audience. Such a mistake is a pragmatic mistake, if the target text is leading and has almost become unattached to the source

text as Nord argues, is a mistake of the gravest category, and in this case I agree that although grammatically correct and therefore non-binary according to Pym, it is indeed a grave error when seen from a perspective of being judged for publication in 2011.

Janssen often uses word-for-word translations which seem to hinder the fluency of a sentence, in this excerpt we find an example of this: “of waarom moest ik alleen komen?”. This is exactly what it says in English, yet the combination of ‘of waarom’ is not common in Dutch, the causal relationship between the two parts of the sentence is lost; ‘of’ indicates that there is a new reason coming rather than an explanation of the previous one. On page 71 (FSF/81 SJ) we see her doing something similar when Daisy says: “I don’t see how you live in there all alone” which is translated to: “maar ik begrijp niet hoe je daar helemaal in je eentje woont”. Again, purely from the point of view of ‘translating what it says’, this would be a correct translation, but like the use of the word ‘of’ in the previous example, here the use of the word ‘hoe’ does not fit into this sentence. Daisy now seems to be inquiring after the practical possibility, when in fact she questions his reasons for doing so. Because this occurs several times throughout the novel, this seems to be a ‘linear translation method’ (Naaijkens et al. 306). Van Leuven-Zwart says this method usually derives from a desire to translate faithfully (‘getrouwe vertaling’) and that although a translator has the best intentions, large macro structural changes might occur (230). Another problem which occurs with this method is that it stresses the fact that the text is a translation, for it is unlikely a native Dutch writer would choose such a construction, and for speakers of English, of which there are so many in the Netherlands, the English text seems to shine through here.

Page 93, line 36 – page 94, lines 1-6

- **FSF:** “I can’t say anything in this house, old sport.”
“She’s got an indiscreet voice,” I remarked. It’s full of –”

I hesitated.

“Her voice is full of money,” he said suddenly.

That was it. I’d never understood it before. It was full of money – that was the inexhaustible charm that rose and fell in it, the jingle of it, the cymbal’s song of it... High in a white palace the king’s daughter, the golden girl...

SJ: “In zijn huis kan ik er niet over beginnen, beste kerel.”

“Ze heeft een indiscrete stem,” zei ik. “Een stem vol –” aarzelde ik.

“Haar stem is vol geld,” zei hij plotseling.

Dat was het. Ik had het nooit eerder begrepen. Het was een stem vol geld – dat was de onuitputtelijke charme die er in daalde en oprees, het rinkelen ervan, het cimbalenlied ervan... Hoog in het witte paleis de koningsdochter, het gouden meisje...

KB: “Ik kan er niks over zeggen in dit huis, beste kerel.”

“Ze heeft *niet een erg discrete* stem,” merkte ik op. “Haar stem is vol *van –*”

Ik twijfelde.

“Haar stem is vol van geld,” zei hij ineens.

Dat was het. Ik had het nooit eerder begrepen. Haar stem was vol van geld – dat was de onuitputtelijke charme *waarmee hij steeg en daalde, het rinkelen ervan, het lied van de cimbalelen dat er in klonk...* De dochter van de koning, hoog in een wit paleis, het *zondagskind...*

Daisy, so Nick says, has an indiscreet voice. But what does Nick mean? Does she speak too loud, or rather, is Daisy herself indiscreet and her voice only a tool. Indiscretion is “[...] too great a readiness to reveal things that should remain private

or secret" ("indiscreet, adjective). This seems to apply to Daisy herself, and by reasoning this way, one might conclude that the her voice sounding like money in the next line is indeed again a description of the woman rather than her voice, that's why I chose to use "vol van geld" rather than "vol geld" because Daisy is not filled with money, her thoughts are filled with money. I felt the feature of indiscretion would be clearer in Dutch when used in an antonym because the word 'discreet' is more recognisable than 'indiscreet' (in Dutch) and also because the rhythm in the sentence is less disturbed by this difficult word. I felt this way of expressing himself also fitted well with the fact that Nick 'remarks' rather than 'says' this. In Janssen's version the 'remark' is gone and the hesitation and pronunciation of the next line have become one. I feel the hesitation loses strength by doing this, in Fitzgerald's version, the silence is longer and Gatsby's response more sudden than in Janssen's version. This change is even more marked because of the change in lay-out that follows from it. I would categorise this change as a 'micro structural shift' as described by Kitty Leuven-Zwart in her article "What is a good translation" (Naaijkens et al. 303, trans Bos).

In the description of Daisy's voice the imagery belonging with money is clear: her voice is like the stock market, like coins, like charity. A term like "oprees" is archaic and stand out in this text. However the biggest objection to it, is that it does not provide a link to the stock market, the movements prices and values of the market would not be described as such. I feel there is a loss here which can be classified as a mistake, an element of the source text has been, in my view, unnecessarily lost. "Stijgen en dalen" are terms that would be used as such but which could still be used to describe a voice.

Page 141 – line 1-13:

- **FSF:** And as I sat there brooding on the old, unknown world, I thought of Gatsby's wonder when he first picked out the green light at the end of Daisy's

dock. He had come a long way to this blue lawn, and his dream must have seemed so close that he could hardly fail to grasp it. He did not know that it was already behind him, somewhere back in that vast obscurity beyond the city, where the dark fields of the republic rolled on under the night.

Gatsby believed in the green light, the orgastic future that year by year recedes before us. It eluded us then, but that's no matter — to-morrow we will run faster, stretch out our arms farther. . . . And one fine morning — —

So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past.

SJ: En terwijl ik daar zo zat te mijmeren over de oude, onbekende wereld, moest ik aan Gatsby's verwondering denken toen hij de eerste keer het groene licht aan het eind van Daisy's aanlegsteiger ontwaarde. Hij had het vergeschopt tot deze blauwe *gazons*, en zijn droom moet hem zo dichtbij geleken hebben dat hij hem wel moést grijpen. Hij wist niet dat die droom al achter hem lag, ergens ver terug in die uitgestrekte duisterheid de stad voorbij, waar de donkere velden van de republiek onder de nachtelijke hemel voort golfd.

Gatsby geloofde in het groene licht, de orgiastische toekomst die jaar op jaar vóór ons achteruitwijkt. Ze ontglipte ons toen, maar dat doet er niet toe — morgen zullen we harder lopen, onze armen verder uitstrekken... en op een mooie dag —"

En zo varen we voort, schepen tegen de stroom op, onophoudelijk teruggevoerd naar het verleden.

KB: En terwijl ik daar zat, te peinzen over de oude onbekende wereld, dacht ik aan Gatsby's fascinatie toen hij voor het eerst het groene lichtje aan het eind van Daisy's stijger ontdekte. Het was een lange reis geweest naar dit blauwe gazon en zijn droom moet zo dichtbij geweest zijn dat het onmogelijk leek dat deze hem nog zou ontglippen. Hij wist niet dat de droom al achter hem lag,

ergens in de verte in het niemandsland achter de stad, waar de donkere velden van de republiek doorrolden onder de nachthemel.

Gatsby geloofde in het groene licht, in de orgiastische toekomst die zich jaar in jaar uit steeds verder terugtrekt. Toen ontsnapte ze ons, maar dat geeft niet – morgen zullen we harder rennen, onze armen verder uitstrekken... En er komt een dag –

Dus woeden we verder, schepen tegen de stroom in, telkens teruggeworpen naar het verleden.

These famous last words were among the most difficult to translate in this novel. Not only because I, and according to Aixelá (205) many others, suffer from anxiety when it comes to translating canonised works and in this case words, but because these words could easily be overdone in tone and degree of sentimentality. Also their imagery which is so clear in English, seems much harder to catch in Dutch.

Aside from the differences which I contribute to the natural changes in a language over time which account for differences between Janssen's "ontwaarde" and my own "ontdekte", I felt Janssen's language overall seemed more outdated than throughout the rest of the novel, perhaps she suffered from canonised-words-fear as well? The syntactical order of several clauses like: "zijn droom moet hem zo dichtbij geleken hebben", and "die uitgestrekte duisterheid de stad voorbij", seems to have aged and I would argue that especially this key passage should be made more accessible in a modern edition so that the words can make the impression they deserve to make. I would not however qualify any of Janssen's choices here as mistakes. The only thing that did make me wonder was why she used plural in 'gazons', I have not yet come up with a plausible reason.

My own choice to translate "And one fine morning –" to "En er komt een dag –" could perhaps be regarded an error, I have added a verb and have made it more defined. Judging from a perspective of 'der notwendige Grad der Differenzierung' such a choice is perhaps difficult to defend, but I felt that while the grammar

changed more than perhaps necessary from a syntactic point of view, the image of hope and belief coming from those words is stronger and more like the original than in Janssen's version which is a bit more conservative.

Conclusion

Although rather fearless in every day life, from the very beginning of this project I felt a certain anxiety about translating Fitzgerald's masterpiece. A fear that came primarily from respect and admiration for the novel and the craftsmanship with which it was written. In the introduction to this thesis I stated my main question as: Which problems does a translator face when he translates *The Great Gatsby* and what are their possible solutions?

My assumption that the main problem would be maintaining Fitzgerald's style turned out to be correct, assuming said translator to be myself. The effortlessness with which the novel seems to be written, turns out to consist of many themes and motives carefully woven into the story and on almost every page I discovered things which I marked as being 'important to the translator'. Analysis through Nord helped me classify these problems and also rate their possible solutions.

The other problem I expected, the many Culture Specific Elements proved to be an entirely different problem, but again through analysis and classification I realised that the clear American identity of the novel could be regarded an advantage, the foreign elements could clearly be identified and Chesterman's toolbox of translation solutions combined with the articles by Aixelá and Grit do not only provide almost every possible solution, they force you to question your choices.

A task which started out more daunting than joyous, writing a thesis on one of my favourite novels turned out to provide so much more insight to the novel itself and to the process of translation that in the end joy won out. Hence the title of this thesis which is not only a catchphrase and a subtitle, but can and perhaps should, also be read as a statement: Ain't we got fun translating *The Great Gatsby*!

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Appendix: Original text

Excerpt chapter 1:

In my younger and more vulnerable years my father gave me some advice that I've been turning over in my mind ever since.

"Whenever you feel like criticizing any one," he told me, "just remember that all the people in this world haven't had the advantages that you've had."

He didn't say any more, but we've always been unusually communicative in a reserved way, and I understood that he meant a great deal more than that. In consequence, I'm inclined to reserve all judgments, a habit that has opened up many curious natures to me and also made me the victim of not a few veteran bores. The abnormal mind is quick to detect and attach itself to this quality when it appears in a normal person, and so it came about that in college I was unjustly accused of being a politician, because I was privy to the secret griefs of wild, unknown men. Most of the confidences were unsought — frequently I have feigned sleep, preoccupation, or a hostile levity when I realized by some unmistakable sign that an intimate revelation was quivering on the horizon; for the intimate revelations of young men, or at least the terms in which they express them, are usually plagiaristic and marred by obvious suppressions. Reserving judgments is a matter of infinite hope. I am still a little afraid of missing something if I forget that, as my father snobbishly suggested, and I snobbishly repeat, a sense of the fundamental decencies is parcelled out unequally at birth.

And, after boasting this way of my tolerance, I come to the admission that it has a limit. Conduct may be founded on the hard rock or the wet marshes, but after a certain point I don't care what it's founded on. When I came back from the East last autumn I felt that I wanted the world to be in uniform and at a sort of moral attention forever; I wanted no more riotous excursions with privileged glimpses into the human heart. Only Gatsby, the man who gives his name to this book, was exempt

from my reaction — Gatsby, who represented everything for which I have an unaffected scorn. If personality is an unbroken series of successful gestures, then there was something gorgeous about him, some heightened sensitivity to the promises of life, as if he were related to one of those intricate machines that register earthquakes ten thousand miles away. This responsiveness had nothing to do with that flabby impressionability which is dignified under the name of the “creative temperament.” — it was an extraordinary gift for hope, a romantic readiness such as I have never found in any other person and which it is not likely I shall ever find again. No — Gatsby turned out all right at the end; it is what preyed on Gatsby, what foul dust floated in the wake of his dreams that temporarily closed out my interest in the abortive sorrows and short-winded elations of men.

Except chapter 3:

Reading over what I have written so far, I see I have given the impression that the events of three nights several weeks apart were all that absorbed me. On the contrary, they were merely casual events in a crowded summer, and, until much later, they absorbed me infinitely less than my personal affairs.

Most of the time I worked. In the early morning the sun threw my shadow westward as I hurried down the white chasms of lower New York to the Probity Trust. I knew the other clerks and young bond-salesmen by their first names, and lunched with them in dark, crowded restaurants on little pig sausages and mashed potatoes and coffee. I even had a short affair with a girl who lived in Jersey City and worked in the accounting department, but her brother began throwing mean looks in my direction, so when she went on her vacation in July I let it blow quietly away.

I took dinner usually at the Yale Club — for some reason it was the gloomiest event of my day — and then I went up-stairs to the library and studied investments and securities for a conscientious hour. There were generally a few rioters around, but they never came into the library, so it was a good place to work. After that, if the

night was mellow, I strolled down Madison Avenue past the old Murray Hill Hotel, and over 33rd Street to the Pennsylvania Station.

I began to like New York, the racy, adventurous feel of it at night, and the satisfaction that the constant flicker of men and women and machines gives to the restless eye. I liked to walk up Fifth Avenue and pick out romantic women from the crowd and imagine that in a few minutes I was going to enter into their lives, and no one would ever know or disapprove. Sometimes, in my mind, I followed them to their apartments on the corners of hidden streets, and they turned and smiled back at me before they faded through a door into warm darkness. At the enchanted metropolitan twilight I felt a haunting loneliness sometimes, and felt it in others — poor young clerks who loitered in front of windows waiting until it was time for a solitary restaurant dinner — young clerks in the dusk, wasting the most poignant moments of night and life.

Again at eight o'clock, when the dark lanes of the Forties were five deep with throbbing taxi-cabs, bound for the theatre district, I felt a sinking in my heart. Forms leaned together in the taxis as they waited, and voices sang, and there was laughter from unheard jokes, and lighted cigarettes outlined unintelligible gestures inside. Imagining that I, too, was hurrying toward gayety and sharing their intimate excitement, I wished them well.

For a while I lost sight of Jordan Baker, and then in midsummer I found her again. At first I was flattered to go places with her, because she was a golf champion, and every one knew her name. Then it was something more. I wasn't actually in love, but I felt a sort of tender curiosity. The bored haughty face that she turned to the world concealed something — most affectations conceal something eventually, even though they don't in the beginning — and one day I found what it was. When we were on a house-party together up in Warwick, she left a borrowed car out in the rain with the top down, and then lied about it — and suddenly I remembered the story about her that had eluded me that night at Daisy's. At her first big golf tournament there was a row that nearly reached the newspapers — a suggestion that she had moved her ball

from a bad lie in the semi-final round. The thing approached the proportions of a scandal — then died away. A caddy retracted his statement, and the only other witness admitted that he might have been mistaken. The incident and the name had remained together in my mind.

Jordan Baker instinctively avoided clever, shrewd men, and now I saw that this was because she felt safer on a plane where any divergence from a code would be thought impossible. She was incurably dishonest. She wasn't able to endure being at a disadvantage and, given this unwillingness, I suppose she had begun dealing in subterfuges when she was very young in order to keep that cool, insolent smile turned to the world and yet satisfy the demands of her hard, jaunty body.

It made no difference to me. Dishonesty in a woman is a thing you never blame deeply — I was casually sorry, and then I forgot. It was on that same house party that we had a curious conversation about driving a car. It started because she passed so close to some workmen that our fender flicked a button on one man's coat.

"You're a rotten driver," I protested. "Either you ought to be more careful, or you oughtn't to drive at all."

"I am careful."

"No, you're not."

"Well, other people are," she said lightly.

"What's that got to do with it?"

"They'll keep out of my way," she insisted. "It takes two to make an accident."

"Suppose you met somebody just as careless as yourself."

"I hope I never will," she answered. "I hate careless people. That's why I like you."

Her gray, sun-strained eyes stared straight ahead, but she had deliberately shifted our relations, and for a moment I thought I loved her. But I am slow-thinking and full of interior rules that act as brakes on my desires, and I knew that first I had to get myself definitely out of that tangle back home. I'd been writing letters once a week and signing them: "Love, Nick," and all I could think of was how, when that certain girl played tennis, a faint mustache of perspiration appeared on her upper lip.

Nevertheless there was a vague understanding that had to be tactfully broken off before I was free.

Every one suspects himself of at least one of the cardinal virtues, and this is mine: I am one of the few honest people that I have ever known.

Excerpt chapter 5:

When I came home to West Egg that night I was afraid for a moment that my house was on fire. Two o'clock and the whole corner of the peninsula was blazing with light, which fell unreal on the shrubbery and made thin elongating glints upon the roadside wires. Turning a corner, I saw that it was Gatsby's house, lit from tower to cellar.

At first I thought it was another party, a wild rout that had resolved itself into "hide-and-go-seek." or "sardines-in-the-box." with all the house thrown open to the game. But there wasn't a sound. Only wind in the trees, which blew the wires and made the lights go off and on again as if the house had winked into the darkness. As my taxi groaned away I saw Gatsby walking toward me across his lawn.

"Your place looks like the World's Fair," I said.

"Does it?" He turned his eyes toward it absently. "I have been glancing into some of the rooms. Let's go to Coney Island, old sport. In my car."

"It's too late."

"Well, suppose we take a plunge in the swimming-pool? I haven't made use of it all summer."

"I've got to go to bed."

"All right."

He waited, looking at me with suppressed eagerness.

"I talked with Miss Baker," I said after a moment. "I'm going to call up Daisy tomorrow and invite her over here to tea."

"Oh, that's all right," he said carelessly. "I don't want to put you to any trouble."

"What day would suit you?"

"What day would suit YOU?" he corrected me quickly. "I don't want to put you to any trouble, you see."

"How about the day after to-morrow?" He considered for a moment. Then, with reluctance:

"I want to get the grass cut," he said.

We both looked at the grass — there was a sharp line where my ragged lawn ended and the darker, well-kept expanse of his began. I suspected that he meant my grass.

"There's another little thing," he said uncertainly, and hesitated.

"Would you rather put it off for a few days?" I asked.

"Oh, it isn't about that. At least — —" He fumbled with a series of beginnings. "Why, I thought — why, look here, old sport, you don't make much money, do you?"

"Not very much."

This seemed to reassure him and he continued more confidently.

"I thought you didn't, if you'll pardon my — You see, I carry on a little business on the side, a sort of side line, you understand. And I thought that if you don't make very much — You're selling bonds, aren't you, old sport?"

"Trying to."

"Well, this would interest you. It wouldn't take up much of your time and you might pick up a nice bit of money. It happens to be a rather confidential sort of thing."

I realize now that under different circumstances that conversation might have been one of the crises of my life. But, because the offer was obviously and tactlessly for a service to be rendered, I had no choice except to cut him off there.

"I've got my hands full," I said. "I'm much obliged but I couldn't take on any more work."

"You wouldn't have to do any business with Wolfsheim." Evidently he thought that I was shying away from the "gonnegtion." mentioned at lunch, but I assured him he

was wrong. He waited a moment longer, hoping I'd begin a conversation, but I was too absorbed to be responsive, so he went unwillingly home.

The evening had made me light-headed and happy; I think I walked into a deep sleep as I entered my front door. So I didn't know whether or not Gatsby went to Coney Island, or for how many hours he "glanced into rooms." while his house blazed gaudily on. I called up Daisy from the office next morning, and invited her to come to tea.

"Don't bring Tom," I warned her.

"What?"

"Don't bring Tom."

"Who is 'Tom'?" she asked innocently.

The day agreed upon was pouring rain. At eleven o'clock a man in a raincoat, dragging a lawn-mower, tapped at my front door and said that Mr. Gatsby had sent him over to cut my grass. This reminded me that I had forgotten to tell my Finn to come back, so I drove into West Egg Village to search for her among soggy, whitewashed alleys and to buy some cups and lemons and flowers.

The flowers were unnecessary, for at two o'clock a greenhouse arrived from Gatsby's, with innumerable receptacles to contain it. An hour later the front door opened nervously, and Gatsby, in a white flannel suit, silver shirt, and gold-colored tie, hurried in. He was pale, and there were dark signs of sleeplessness beneath his eyes.

"Is everything all right?" he asked immediately.

"The grass looks fine, if that's what you mean."

"What grass?" he inquired blankly. "Oh, the grass in the yard." He looked out the window at it, but, judging from his expression, I don't believe he saw a thing.

"Looks very good," he remarked vaguely. "One of the papers said they thought the rain would stop about four. I think it was the JOURNAL. Have you got everything you need in the shape of — of tea?"

I took him into the pantry, where he looked a little reproachfully at the Finn. Together we scrutinized the twelve lemon cakes from the delicatessen shop.

"Will they do?" I asked.

"Of course, of course! They're fine!" and he added hollowly, "...old sport."

The rain cooled about half-past three to a damp mist, through which occasional thin drops swam like dew. Gatsby looked with vacant eyes through a copy of Clay's ECONOMICS, starting at the Finnish tread that shook the kitchen floor, and peering toward the bleared windows from time to time as if a series of invisible but alarming happenings were taking place outside. Finally he got up and informed me, in an uncertain voice, that he was going home.

"Why's that?"

"Nobody's coming to tea. It's too late!" He looked at his watch as if there was some pressing demand on his time elsewhere. "I can't wait all day."

"Don't be silly; it's just two minutes to four."

He sat down miserably, as if I had pushed him, and simultaneously there was the sound of a motor turning into my lane. We both jumped up, and, a little harrowed myself, I went out into the yard.

Under the dripping bare lilac-trees a large open car was coming up the drive. It stopped. Daisy's face, tipped sideways beneath a three-cornered lavender hat, looked out at me with a bright ecstatic smile.

"Is this absolutely where you live, my dearest one?"

The exhilarating ripple of her voice was a wild tonic in the rain. I had to follow the sound of it for a moment, up and down, with my ear alone, before any words came through. A damp streak of hair lay like a dash of blue paint across her cheek, and her hand was wet with glistening drops as I took it to help her from the car.

"Are you in love with me," she said low in my ear, "or why did I have to come alone?"

"That's the secret of Castle Rackrent. Tell your chauffeur to go far away and spend an hour."

"Come back in an hour, Ferdie." Then in a grave murmur: "His name is Ferdie."

"Does the gasoline affect his nose?"

"I don't think so," she said innocently. "Why?"

We went in. To my overwhelming surprise the living-room was deserted.

"Well, that's funny," I exclaimed.

"What's funny?"

She turned her head as there was a light dignified knocking at the front door. I went out and opened it. Gatsby, pale as death, with his hands plunged like weights in his coat pockets, was standing in a puddle of water glaring tragically into my eyes.

With his hands still in his coat pockets he stalked by me into the hall, turned sharply as if he were on a wire, and disappeared into the living-room. It wasn't a bit funny. Aware of the loud beating of my own heart I pulled the door to against the increasing rain.

For half a minute there wasn't a sound. Then from the living-room I heard a sort of choking murmur and part of a laugh, followed by Daisy's voice on a clear artificial note: "I certainly am awfully glad to see you again."

A pause; it endured horribly. I had nothing to do in the hall, so I went into the room. Gatsby, his hands still in his pockets, was reclining against the mantelpiece in a strained counterfeit of perfect ease, even of boredom. His head leaned back so far that it rested against the face of a defunct mantelpiece clock, and from this position his distraught eyes stared down at Daisy, who was sitting, frightened but graceful, on the edge of a stiff chair.

"We've met before," muttered Gatsby. His eyes glanced momentarily at me, and his lips parted with an abortive attempt at a laugh. Luckily the clock took this moment to tilt dangerously at the pressure of his head, whereupon he turned and caught it with trembling fingers, and set it back in place. Then he sat down, rigidly, his elbow on the arm of the sofa and his chin in his hand.

"I'm sorry about the clock," he said.

My own face had now assumed a deep tropical burn. I couldn't muster up a single commonplace out of the thousand in my head.

"It's an old clock," I told them idiotically.

I think we all believed for a moment that it had smashed in pieces on the floor.

"We haven't met for many years," said Daisy, her voice as matter-of-fact as it could ever be.

"Five years next November."

The automatic quality of Gatsby's answer set us all back at least another minute. I had them both on their feet with the desperate suggestion that they help me make tea in the kitchen when the demoniac Finn brought it in on a tray.

Except chapter 7:

They went up-stairs to get ready while we three men stood there shuffling the hot pebbles with our feet. A silver curve of the moon hovered already in the western sky. Gatsby started to speak, changed his mind, but not before Tom wheeled and faced him expectantly.

"Have you got your stables here?" asked Gatsby with an effort.

"About a quarter of a mile down the road."

"Oh."

A pause.

"I don't see the idea of going to town," broke out Tom savagely. "Women get these notions in their heads — —"

"Shall we take anything to drink?" called Daisy from an upper window.

"I'll get some whiskey," answered Tom. He went inside.

Gatsby turned to me rigidly:

"I can't say anything in his house, old sport."

"She's got an indiscreet voice," I remarked. "It's full of — —" I hesitated.

"Her voice is full of money," he said suddenly.

That was it. I'd never understood before. It was full of money — that was the inexhaustible charm that rose and fell in it, the jingle of it, the cymbals' song of it. . . . high in a white palace the king's daughter, the golden girl. . . .

Tom came out of the house wrapping a quart bottle in a towel, followed by Daisy and Jordan wearing small tight hats of metallic cloth and carrying light capes over their arms.

"Shall we all go in my car?" suggested Gatsby. He felt the hot, green leather of the seat. "I ought to have left it in the shade."

"Is it standard shift?" demanded Tom.

"Yes."

"Well, you take my coupe and let me drive your car to town."

The suggestion was distasteful to Gatsby.

"I don't think there's much gas," he objected.

"Plenty of gas," said Tom boisterously. He looked at the gauge. "And if it runs out I can stop at a drug-store. You can buy anything at a drug-store nowadays."

A pause followed this apparently pointless remark. Daisy looked at Tom frowning, and an indefinable expression, at once definitely unfamiliar and vaguely recognizable, as if I had only heard it described in words, passed over Gatsby's face.

"Come on, Daisy," said Tom, pressing her with his hand toward Gatsby's car. "I'll take you in this circus wagon."

He opened the door, but she moved out from the circle of his arm.

"You take Nick and Jordan. We'll follow you in the coupe."

She walked close to Gatsby, touching his coat with her hand. Jordan and Tom and I got into the front seat of Gatsby's car, Tom pushed the unfamiliar gears tentatively, and we shot off into the oppressive heat, leaving them out of sight behind.

"Did you see that?" demanded Tom.

"See what?"

He looked at me keenly, realizing that Jordan and I must have known all along.

“You think I’m pretty dumb, don’t you?” he suggested. “Perhaps I am, but I have a — almost a second sight, sometimes, that tells me what to do. Maybe you don’t believe that, but science — —”

He paused. The immediate contingency overtook him, pulled him back from the edge of the theoretical abyss.

“I’ve made a small investigation of this fellow,” he continued. “I could have gone deeper if I’d known — —”

“Do you mean you’ve been to a medium?” inquired Jordan humorously.

“What?” Confused, he stared at us as we laughed. “A medium?”

“About Gatsby.”

“About Gatsby! No, I haven’t. I said I’d been making a small investigation of his past.”

“And you found he was an Oxford man,” said Jordan helpfully.

“An Oxford man!” He was incredulous. “Like hell he is! He wears a pink suit.”

“Nevertheless he’s an Oxford man.”

“Oxford, New Mexico,” snorted Tom contemptuously, “or something like that.”

“Listen, Tom. If you’re such a snob, why did you invite him to lunch?” demanded Jordan crossly.

“Daisy invited him; she knew him before we were married — God knows where!”

Excerpt chapter 9:

One afternoon late in October I saw Tom Buchanan. He was walking ahead of me along Fifth Avenue in his alert, aggressive way, his hands out a little from his body as if to fight off interference, his head moving sharply here and there, adapting itself to his restless eyes. Just as I slowed up to avoid overtaking him he stopped and began frowning into the windows of a jewelry store. Suddenly he saw me and walked back, holding out his hand.

“What’s the matter, Nick? Do you object to shaking hands with me?”

“Yes. You know what I think of you.”

“You’re crazy, Nick,” he said quickly. “Crazy as hell. I don’t know what’s the matter with you.”

“Tom,” I inquired, “what did you say to Wilson that afternoon?” He stared at me without a word, and I knew I had guessed right about those missing hours. I started to turn away, but he took a step after me and grabbed my arm.

“I told him the truth,” he said. “He came to the door while we were getting ready to leave, and when I sent down word that we weren’t in he tried to force his way upstairs. He was crazy enough to kill me if I hadn’t told him who owned the car. His hand was on a revolver in his pocket every minute he was in the house — —” He broke off defiantly. “What if I did tell him? That fellow had it coming to him. He threw dust into your eyes just like he did in Daisy’s, but he was a tough one. He ran over Myrtle like you’d run over a dog and never even stopped his car.”

There was nothing I could say, except the one unutterable fact that it wasn’t true.

“And if you think I didn’t have my share of suffering — look here, when I went to give up that flat and saw that damn box of dog biscuits sitting there on the sideboard, I sat down and cried like a baby. By God it was awful — —”

I couldn’t forgive him or like him, but I saw that what he had done was, to him, entirely justified. It was all very careless and confused. They were careless people, Tom and Daisy — they smashed up things and creatures and then retreated back into their money or their vast carelessness, or whatever it was that kept them together, and let other people clean up the mess they had made. . . .

I shook hands with him; it seemed silly not to, for I felt suddenly as though I were talking to a child. Then he went into the jewelry store to buy a pearl necklace — or perhaps only a pair of cuff buttons — rid of my provincial squeamishness forever.

Gatsby’s house was still empty when I left — the grass on his lawn had grown as long as mine. One of the taxi drivers in the village never took a fare past the entrance gate without stopping for a minute and pointing inside; perhaps it was he who drove Daisy and Gatsby over to East Egg the night of the accident, and perhaps he had

made a story about it all his own. I didn't want to hear it and I avoided him when I got off the train.

I spent my Saturday nights in New York because those gleaming, dazzling parties of his were with me so vividly that I could still hear the music and the laughter, faint and incessant, from his garden, and the cars going up and down his drive. One night I did hear a material car there, and saw its lights stop at his front steps. But I didn't investigate. Probably it was some final guest who had been away at the ends of the earth and didn't know that the party was over.

On the last night, with my trunk packed and my car sold to the grocer, I went over and looked at that huge incoherent failure of a house once more. On the white steps an obscene word, scrawled by some boy with a piece of brick, stood out clearly in the moonlight, and I erased it, drawing my shoe raspily along the stone. Then I wandered down to the beach and sprawled out on the sand.

Most of the big shore places were closed now and there were hardly any lights except the shadowy, moving glow of a ferryboat across the Sound. And as the moon rose higher the inessential houses began to melt away until gradually I became aware of the old island here that flowered once for Dutch sailors' eyes — a fresh, green breast of the new world. Its vanished trees, the trees that had made way for Gatsby's house, had once pandered in whispers to the last and greatest of all human dreams; for a transitory enchanted moment man must have held his breath in the presence of this continent, compelled into an aesthetic contemplation he neither understood nor desired, face to face for the last time in history with something commensurate to his capacity for wonder.

And as I sat there brooding on the old, unknown world, I thought of Gatsby's wonder when he first picked out the green light at the end of Daisy's dock. He had come a long way to this blue lawn, and his dream must have seemed so close that he could hardly fail to grasp it. He did not know that it was already behind him, somewhere back in that vast obscurity beyond the city, where the dark fields of the republic rolled on under the night.

Gatsby believed in the green light, the orgiastic future that year by year recedes before us. It eluded us then, but that's no matter — to-morrow we will run faster, stretch out our arms farther. . . . And one fine morning — —
So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past.

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