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Translation proposal and analysis of
Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons by Sam Steiner

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Abstract

*The present work proposes a translation from English into Italian of the book *Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons* by Sam Steiner, published by Nick Hern Books in November 2015. The source text of the translation is the script of the homonymous play that premiered in January 2015 at the Warwick Arts Centre, directed by Sam Steiner. The story is about a couple, Oliver and Bernadette, who lives in a dystopian future where the entry into force of the *Quietude Bill* allows people to speak only one hundred and forty words every day, affecting immensely the way they communicate. Besides the translation, the present work includes a chapter dedicated to its theoretical background, with an analysis of the translation theory that pertains the most to my thesis. Moreover, this thesis offers a commentary on the translation. This chapter highlights and analyses the most serious problems that arose during the translation process. For each of these problems, the reader is given an explanation of the translation strategies applied, as well as examples and excerpts of the source and target text. The main purpose of this work is to offer a translation proposal of *Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons* by Sam Steiner and hopefully to bring greater awareness about this talented author who, unfortunately, is almost unknown in Italy.*

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Introduction

In the present thesis I have worked on the translation from English into Italian of the play *Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons* by Sam Steiner, published by Nick Hern Books in November 2015. The book is the script of the homonymous play that premiered in January 2015 at the Warwick Arts Centre, directed by Sam Steiner. The main components of my thesis are the chapter dedicated to the literature review and the study of relevant translation history, the actual translation and the chapter with the analysis of the problems encountered during the translation process.

The choice of the source text was made after an interesting discussion with my thesis supervisor, Professor Dalziel. Being so acquainted with the world of theatre and plays, she introduced me to the reality of the translation of theatre texts. This was a topic I had never dealt with. During my master's degree, I attended courses in specialised translation from English into Italian and vice versa. However, the topic of translating theatrical texts was not part of the courses' programme. At first, Professor Dalziel and I discussed the possibility of translating a different play but then, surfing the internet, I came across the synopsis of *Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons*. This book immediately intrigued me and, after I read it, I decided it was the source text I wanted to work on for my thesis. Sam Steiner is a playwright and screenwriter from Manchester. Besides *Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons*, his plays include *A Table Tennis Play* (2019); *You Stupid Darkness!* (2019) and *Kanye the First* (2017). He is a co-founder of Walrus, a new writing and touring theatre company.

As I have already stated, the source text is the script of the homonymous play which premiered in theatres before the publication of the book. Sam Steiner, in the book's foreword, states that it is odd to think of *Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons* being set down in print as a published volume since it has always felt less like a fixed entity than a living reflection of the work of his theatre company.

The play takes place in England and is set in a dystopian future. The time of the narration is not specified, but it is not far from the present day. As a matter of fact, the society described in the book is like the one we can experience today. The only difference is that, in the narration, the Quietude Bill has come into force. This law sets a limit of one hundred and forty words for everyone to use daily. Once one uses up all of them, one

literally runs out of words and it is impossible for one to pronounce any sound. This law is supported by the government and its repercussions on the people are incredibly drastic.

The location of the play is not explicitly expressed either, yet thanks to the many references to real places, it is possible to assume that it is London. For example, the characters take part in marches against the Quietude Bill in the centre of London and the narration also mentions other spots and shops present in the city. The characters of the play are Oliver and Bernadette. Oliver works as a musician while she is a lawyer. Their age is not specified, but one can assume that they are young, maybe in their thirties. They meet for the first time at a pet cemetery after a cat's funeral and, after they have got to know each other better, they fall in love and become a couple.

The Quietude Bill enters into force when Oliver and Bernadette are in a stable relationship and live together. Oliver is strongly against this law and he actively organises marches of protest that at times become violent and end in vandalism. On the other hand, Bernadette is less concerned about the consequences of this law and she accepts it more light-heartedly. Once the Quietude Bill enters into force, it drastically affects the characters' life and relationship. Communicating becomes extremely complicated, especially because Oliver and Bernadette must manage their jobs, friendships and private life with only one hundred and forty words. Therefore, they should always be very careful about the number of words they pronounce and about which words they choose, since employing precise and clear language is fundamental in order not to waste words. Often in the play the characters find themselves in a situation where they have much to say but no words left, or, conversely, have many words available but nothing to say. Oliver and Bernadette are aware that their life together is even easier than for other people since they already have and know each other. Under these circumstances, meeting someone new and beginning new relationships is truly complicated.

The two characters try to come up with stratagems and solutions to the problems originated by the Quietude Bill. At first, they try to communicate using the Morse code, tapping on the floor to express what they would like to say, but it turns out to be very complicated and ineffective. They also try to communicate through eye contact, but the results are rather awkward and disappointing. Moreover, they attempt to create a personal language including made-up terms created by uniting two or more different words. This turns out to be a good stratagem to save words however, since the Quietude Bill has come

into force, their way of communicating has radically changed and become more complicated.

The source text can also be interpreted as a social critique of the political class and of those laws considered to limit individual freedoms. It is mainly expressed through Oliver's speeches since, as I have stated, he is strongly against the Quietude Bill. He often speaks out harshly against the political class and against this law which, in his opinion, puts the poor and less fortunate at a greater disadvantage. First of all, Oliver argues that this law is a kind of censorship since it actually limits what one can say. He also reflects on how this law can affect people's jobs, especially for those who use a lot of words to work. Being a musician, he knows that this law would be a disaster for him and everyone who works in the music industry. Bernadette points out that this law is not a form of censorship, nor elitist since everyone gets the same number of words. Oliver is aware of that, but he argues that there are people who are more in need of words to live. In his view, this law could disadvantage the poor and further facilitate the powerful. Moreover, nepotism would multiply exponentially and become the only way to get a job because there would be not enough words for interviews. He believes that this would erase the concept of social and class mobility and that the powerful are trying to exclude the working class from social life. Also protesting would be very problematic since one needs words to do it. Oliver also points out that the poor are more in need of communication than the powerful. He argues that rich people can use money to communicate and to express power, for example through the clothes they wear or the car they drive. Conversely, the working class cannot do that and, in Oliver's words, they cannot tell the world that they are fine. Oliver's anger against the ruling political class reaches a climax when he finds out that the government has decided to set up what he calls the "word sanctuaries". These are places where the Quietude Bill has no force, people can speak freely and do not have to worry about the daily word limit. Clearly, the Parliament is on the list of the word sanctuaries and Oliver finds it very upsetting especially because the politicians have planned to move into the House of Commons. This would provide them with unlimited words, besides all the comforts included in the Parliament such as many restaurants, hairdressers and any other sort of facility. On the other hand, people who work in courtrooms will have a special dispensation of words to fulfil their jobs. Oliver is glad because it means that Bernadette can save more words and use them with him, but

at the same time he finds it elitist and will argue more than once about it with his girlfriend. Because of all of these reasons, Oliver is actively against the Quietude Bill and he organises and takes part in several marches against the government. He calls these marches “the noise”, as their main purpose is to allow the people to be heard by the powerful.

The source text is essentially a collection of dialogues between Oliver and Bernadette, while the descriptive parts are very rare and aimed to give indications about the settings of the scene or the way the characters speak. Moreover, the author does not present the facts following the chronological order of the events. For example, the first scene of the narration, the one where Oliver and Bernadette meet for the first time, begins on page 42. The audience can consider this continuous shift back and forward in time very confusing and it may be necessary to read the whole text more than once to fully understand the narration. Through their dialogues, Oliver and Bernadette try to communicate to each other, and to the reader, their feelings and thoughts and personality, although this is often made harder by the Quietude Bill not allowing them to fully express what they have in mind. This can lead, in certain situations, to a general lack of context which, together with the fragmentation of the source text and the non-chronological order of the events, may generate a sense of confusion in the readers.

My thesis is structured as follows. It starts with a chapter dedicated to the analysis of the translation theory that pertains the most to my work. Before writing this chapter, I read and studied many books and essays regarding different topics of linguistics and translation. In doing so, I started by examining those books that would discuss translation at a more general level and then move to those that are more specifically relevant to my work, such as publications regarding translating theatre. This chapter is divided into sections and each of them is dedicated to a different topic in translation studies. It starts with a synthesis of the concept of equivalence in translation, analysed through the points of view of famous linguists and scholars such as Vinay and Darbelnet, Jakobson, Nida, Catford, Newmark and House.

Then there is the section regarding the connection between language and culture. It is highlighted how these two aspects are inseparable since different cultures see their realization and expression in different languages. Nord is among the scholars that better analyses the relationship between culture and language. He argues that communication

takes place in situations, limited in time and space, which are not universal, but are embedded in a cultural habitat, which in turn conditions the situation (Nord 2005a). This is a very important section since in the source text there are many culture-bound elements that require careful analysis.

The first chapter then discusses the role of the translator. It is stated that a translator must be completely acquainted with the source and target culture and language to be able to perform a good translation, but this is not enough. In this section, it is argued that a translator can also be considered as a mediator between languages and cultures because of his/her bi-cultural vision, as he/she is uniquely placed to identify and resolve the disparity between sign and value across cultures (Hatim and Mason 1990).

The following section is dedicated to the strategies applicable when working on a translation project. It is stated how they are involved in the problem-solving process that every translator must consider to complete their task. This section also includes the description and analysis of Malone's and Bakers' translation strategies. These are also the strategies that I found the most applicable and effective to fulfil my translation in an effective way. Then, an entire section is dedicated specifically to the two translation strategies of domestication and foreignization. These two strategies have been introduced for the first time by Venuti in 1995. Scholars have debated extensively about the concepts of domestication and foreignization, especially since the cultural turn in translation studies that took place in the 1970s. The section offers an explanation of such strategies, mainly from the points of view of Venuti and Nida. These two scholars have opposite opinions regarding this topic since Nida puts the target reader in the first place and supports the strategy of domestication, while Venuti is more supportive of the foreignization strategy and argues that its aim is to develop a kind of translation theory and practice to resist the trend of the dominance of the target language.

Then there is a section dedicated to the analysis of the theory of translation regarding the right procedure to deal with wordplays and idiomatic expressions. As I have already stated, the source text is essentially composed of dialogues between Oliver and Bernadette and, as a consequence, the register is not very high and sometimes even colloquial. Therefore, the source text also includes numerous wordplays and idiomatic expressions. These elements are always difficult to translate because of the many factors implied that have to be taken into account to produce a good target text. The last section

of the first chapter deals with the concept of translating theatre texts, which is highly specific to my kind of source text. Translating theatre texts has to face unique problems that are not found in any other type of translation process since it involves many non-linguistic factors. As Bassnett-McGuire states (1985), theatre texts only exist in a dialectical relationship with the performance of that text and that written and performed texts are coexistent and inseparable. As I have already stated, the source text is a written book designed to be read, however it would be impossible and wrong to detach it from the concept of performability.

Chapter Two is dedicated to my translation of *Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons* into Italian. I have translated the whole book and not just some excerpts, first of all because it is not very long and because translating only some parts of it would definitely generate a loss in the text's comprehension. This chapter is structured in two columns, with the source text on the left and the target text on the right. Therefore, it is easy for the reader to examine and compare the two texts. The layout of the source text in Chapter Two is the same as the book I translated from.

Chapter Three regards the analysis of the translation of *Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons*. This chapter opens with general considerations regarding how a comprehensive commentary should be, based mainly on Armstrong's (2005) considerations and guidelines. The goal of the commentary is to show a reasonable degree of awareness of the translation choices I made to overcome the challenges of the source text. Similarly to Chapter One, it is divided into sections and each of them deals with a specific topic or problem that arose from the translation. Examples are always provided for every topic discussed, in order to demonstrate the application of the proper translation strategies. The first section analyses the source text's chronological order which, as I have already stated, does not follow the natural timeline of the events. This section attempts to make order in the narration and recreate the correct sequence of events. The following section deals with the concept of the daily word limit and the characters' word count. As stated in the foreword of the book by Ed Madden, the official director of the play, the daily word limit is the hearth of the play. As I have already mentioned, once the Quietude Bill has become effective, Oliver and Bernadette are only allowed to spend one hundred and forty words per day and this affects a lot their everyday communication. The scenes

that take place after the Quietude Bill has entered into force start with the characters asserting how many words they have got left.

This section analyses first of all the way the characters count the words, then focuses on the main differences between English and Italian in terms of number of words required to express something. In my translation I have always tried to keep the same number expressed by the characters' word counts. At times, it has not been an easy operation due to the many differences in syntax and grammar between English and Italian. This section also presents many excerpts of the source and target text, with the purpose of supporting my argumentations. The following section deals with the contractions and abbreviations used in the source text. As I have anticipated, Oliver and Bernadette try to save words by inventing their own language, also including some made-up words that are the result of contractions of two or more existing words. This section analyses how these contractions are created and how to properly translate them into the target language. The fourth section of the chapter takes into consideration the culture-bound elements of the source text. Many examples of such elements are provided, along with an explanation regarding their translations, the strategies adopted and the effects that I wanted to produce in the target reader.

The last section of this chapter is dedicated to the translation of wordplays and idiomatic expressions. This part also relies on chapter 1.6, where I analyse the relevant theory of translation. The language adopted by Oliver and Bernadette is often familiar, intimate and characterised by the features of colloquial speeches. As a matter of fact, their speeches contain a considerable amount of swear words, wordplays and idioms. In all these cases, I tried not to focus on the single words constituting them, but I rather considered these sequences of words as a whole in order to grasp the figurative meaning and translate it properly into the target language.

The fifth chapter consists of the conclusions of the thesis. This chapter attempts to summarise the whole work discussing the outcome of my translation project and the findings that it generated. The last two chapters are dedicated to the bibliography and the summary in Italian. The purpose of this thesis is to present my translation proposal of the play *Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons* by Sam Steiner, along with the analysis of the translation project and of the relevant translation theory. The intention is also to bring greater awareness about this author who, unfortunately, is almost unknown in Italy.

Hopefully, one day his works will be published in Italy and will be performed in Italian theatres.

Chapter One. Relevant translation theory

Before starting my translation of *Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons* I read and analysed many books and essays regarding different topics of linguistics and translation. The relevant theory is very rich, but I tried to focus on those publications that would pertain the most to my work. I started by studying those books that would discuss translation at a more general level and then move to those that are more specifically relevant to my work, such as publications regarding translating theatre. Moreover, at the University of Padua I attended two courses in specialized translation from English into Italian. These courses, held by Professor Musacchio and Professor Dalziel, provided me with tools and knowledge that were fundamental to completing my work. During these classes, I was introduced to new and interesting publications regarding translation, which I later found very important to set the frame of my project. Furthermore, thanks to these courses I learnt how to approach and deal with specialized translations. In the following sections, I will discuss and analyse in further detail the translation theory I studied and divide it according to the most relevant topics.

1.1 The concept of equivalence

The concept of equivalence in translation has been extensively debated by numerous scholars and many different theories of this concept have been generated throughout the past decades. It is undoubtedly a central issue in translation, although scholars have approached it in radically different ways (Baker 2001). I will now consider and explain the main theories regarding this topic. Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet (1995) consider a translation that is based on the concept of equivalence as a procedure that “replicates the same situation as in the original, whilst using completely different wording” (Vinay and Darbelnet 1995 in Baker 2001: 342). The two scholars also state that it is possible to convey the same stylistic impact of the source text in the target text if the translator applies this procedure to his/her work. Therefore, Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) claim that this procedure is the best way for a translator to approach idiomatic expressions, proverbs and the onomatopoeia of animal sounds. As far as the equivalent expressions between two languages are concerned, the two scholars (1995) add that they

can be adequate only if they are considered as “full equivalents” (Vinay and Darbelnet 1995 in Baker 2001: 255) and included in a bilingual dictionary. Nonetheless, Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) finally acknowledge that a glossary or a list of full equivalent expressions cannot be considered as a guarantee of a perfect translation. They state so because any glossary or list of equivalent expressions could never be completely exhaustive. Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) conclude their work by claiming that the necessity for finding equivalents between two languages is deeply linked to the situation of the source text and that translators should be able to look for and find a solution in the situation itself.

Roman Jakobson further develops the concept of equivalence by introducing the notion of equivalence in difference. In his (1959) work *On linguistic aspects of translations*, Jakobson distinguishes between three different kinds of translations: intralingual translation (within the same language), interlingual translation (between two languages) and intersemiotic translation (between two sign systems). As far as interlingual translations are concerned, the Russian-American linguist states that full equivalence between two code units does not exist and, in his view, “translation involves two equivalent messages in two different codes” (Jakobson 1959: 233). Jakobson does not mean that a perfect translation is something impossible to achieve but rather that, because of the grammatical and cultural differences between two languages, the translator might struggle and even not manage to find a translation equivalent. Basically, Jakobson (1959) asserts that in those cases where a linguistic approach is not suitable to perform a good translation, the translator can decide to qualify and amplify his terminology by other procedures, such as loanwords, loan-translations, neologisms and circumlocutions. Jakobson’s idea relies on his semiotic approach to translation, meaning that the translator has to recode the message from the source culture in order to be able to convey an equivalent message in the target culture. Vinay and Darbelnet and Jakobson’s theories share awareness of the limitations of a linguistic translation theory and put emphasis on the role of the translator, since he/she is the person who has to choose the best technique to perform a good translation.

Jakobson (1959) illustrates some examples, such as the famous one about the difference in understanding the concept of *cheese* between English and Russian languages and cultures. As stated by Munday (2016), this idea of interlinguistic difference has to do

with the contraposition between linguistic universalism and linguistic relativity. The former claims that different languages, regardless of their dissimilarities, share a similar way of considering and experiencing the world, while the latter states that differences in language lead to a different understanding of the world. Linguistic relativity has to do with the famous hypothesis of Sapir-Whorf, according to which the structure of a language affects its speakers' worldview or cognition, and thus people's perceptions are relative to their spoken language (Whorf 1956). However, Jakobson's work, as well as Vinay and Darbelnet's theory, assert that a translation from one language to another can always be pursued, regardless of the potential dissimilarities in culture and grammar between the source and the target text.

Eugene Nida, in his (1964) publication *Toward a Science of Translating*, distinguishes between two different types of equivalence: formal equivalence (which he will later on redefine as formal correspondence) and dynamic equivalence. The former "focuses attention on the message itself, in both form and content" (Nida 1964: 159). The goal of formal equivalence is that the target language matches the different elements in the source language as closely as possible. This kind of equivalence consists of an item of the target language that represents the closest equivalent of a word or phrase of the source language. However, Nida (1964) states that formal equivalence between items of a language pair does not always exist. Formal equivalence is profoundly focused on the structure of the source text since this is the element that conveys and determines accuracy and correctness. Because of it, this procedure might keep a certain distance between source and target culture and generate a translation that is not easy to understand by the target audience. Nida (1964) himself states that "Typically, formal correspondence distorts the grammatical and stylistic patterns of the receptor language, and hence distorts the message, so as to cause the receptor to misunderstand or to labor unduly hard" (Nida 1964 in Fawcett 1997: 201). Typical examples of this translation are the "gloss translations", but it is also used often in legal and academic environments, as it provides the reader with a closer insight of language and customs of the source culture.

Dynamic equivalence is based on "the principle of equivalent effect" (Nida 1964: 159), according to which "the relationship between receptor and message should be substantially the same as that which existed between the original receptors and the message" (Nida 1964: 159). According to this principle, the meaning of the original text

is translated in such a way that the target text will trigger the same impact on the target audience as the source text did on the original audience. Nida states that “Frequently, the form of the original text is changed; but as long as the change follows the rules of back transformation in the source language, of contextual consistency in the transfer, and of transformation in the receptor language, the message is preserved and the translation is faithful” (Nida and Taber 1982: 200). In Nida’s view, the key requirement is the concept of naturalness, since he states that the goal of dynamic equivalence is to find “the closest natural equivalent to the source-language message” (Nida 1964: 166). In order to achieve naturalness, the translator can consider adjustments of grammar, lexicon and cultural references of the source text, in a way that the language of the target text does not show inference from the source language. Therefore, the message of the source text has to be modified according to the target audience’s linguistic needs and cultural expectations. Nida is clearly more in favour of the application of the dynamic equivalence rather than the formal correspondence. This is also coherent with the translation project he was working on at the time, namely the translation of the Bible (Nida 1959).

Nida identifies four basic requirements of a good translation, which are: making sense, conveying the spirit and manner of the original, having a natural and easy form of expression, producing a similar response (Nida 1964). The fourth requirement summarises what I have stated so far, namely the importance for Nida to achieve an equivalent effect on the target audience. He adds that in order to achieve an equivalent effect, correspondence in meaning must have priority over correspondence in style. Nida is much interested in the semantic quality of translation, and therefore he stresses the importance that the message of the source text remains clear in the target text.

John Catford adopts a more linguistic approach to translation if compared to Nida. Catford introduces the concept of types of translation, and his distinction is based on three criteria (Catford 1965). The criteria are: the extent of translation (full or partial translation), the grammatical rank at which the translation equivalence is established (rank-bound or unbounded translation), the levels of language involved in translation (total or restricted translation). Clearly, the second criterion is the one that concerns the concept of equivalence. In a rank-bound translation, the translator will try to find in the target language an equivalent for each word or morpheme from the source text. Conversely, unbounded translations will not seek an equivalence for a particular rank, but

these equivalences can be found at the level of the sentence, clause or other ranks of the speech. Catford (1965) also states that the English language has five of these ranks or levels.

Moreover, Catford introduces a second dimension of correspondence: textual equivalence. Textual equivalence arises when a portion of the target text is considered “to be the equivalent of a given portion of a source text” (Catford 1965: 27). He investigates this concept by analysing which items of the target text change as a consequence of any alteration to the source text. Catford also introduces the concept of translation shifts, and he defines them as “departures from formal correspondence in the process of going from the source language to the target language” (Catford 1965: 73). The linguist distinguishes two main types of translation shift, the first one being the level shift, where the item of the source language at a certain linguistic level (e.g. grammar) involves an equivalent in the target language at a different level (e.g. lexis). The second type of translation shift concerns the category shifts, which are divided into four classes: structure-shifts involve grammatical changes in the structure of the source text and that of the target text; class-shifts occur when an item of the source language is translated with an item of the target language that belongs to a different grammatical class; unit-shifts involve changes in rank; intra-system shifts happen when “source and target language possess systems which approximately correspond formally as to their constitution, but when translation involves selection of a non-corresponding term in the target language system” (Catford 1965: 80). Catford’s theory of translation was criticized especially by Snell-Hornby (1988). In her view, the concept of equivalence in translation is just an illusion and, therefore, something that cannot be fully accomplished. She argues that Catford’s linguistic theory of translation is not thorough, since he does not take into account other factors, such as textual, cultural and situational features.

Peter Newmark’s theory of translation is aligned to Catford’s one since he too considers the success of equivalent effect as an illusion. He argues that “the conflict of loyalties, the gap between emphasis on source and target language, will always remain as the overriding problem in translation theory and practice” (Newmark 1981: 38). Newmark introduces the distinction between semantic and communicative translation (Newmark 1981, 1988). Communicative translation aims at producing on the reader an effect as similar as possible to the effect obtained on the reader of the original text.

Conversely, semantic translation attempts to convey the exact contextual meaning of the original text, keeping into account the possibilities given by the semantic and syntactic structures of the second language. Moreover, Newmark claims that semantic translation is different from literal translation, since it preserves, interprets and sometimes even explains context. Literal translation, on the other hand, will always be very similar to the lexis and syntax of the source text. Newmark considers literal translation to be the best approach, providing that an equivalent effect is achieved. As a matter of fact, he states that “in communicative as in semantic translation, provided that equivalent effect is secured, the literal word-for-word translation is not only the best, it is the only valid method of translation” (Newmark 1981: 39).

Clearly, Newmark’s analysis of communicative translation is similar to Nida’s concept of dynamic equivalence because of the effect it tries to recreate on the reader of the target text. Moreover, Newmark’s semantic translation resembles Nida’s formal equivalence. However, Newmark does not completely agree with the full principle of equivalent effect, as that effect “is inoperant if the text is out of the target language space and time” (Newmark 1981: 69). To support his theory, the linguist describes the example of a modern British translation of Homer: Newmark argues that it would be an impossible task, for any modern translator, to produce on his audience the same effect that the oral source text had on its listeners in ancient Greece.

House, in her (1977) publication *A Model for Translation Quality Assessment* is in favour of semantic and pragmatic equivalence. In her view, the source and the target text should convey the same function. House states that it is important to determine the situational dimensions (House 1977 and 2009) of a text in order to understand its function. She adds that the translator needs to identify and analyse the particular situation in which the text is placed before starting his/her work. High-quality translations will present similar situational features to the source text and, therefore, they will be functionally equivalent. In other words, House argues that “a translation text should not only match its source text in function, but employ equivalent situational-dimensional means to achieve that function” (House 1977: 49).

House (1977) also introduces the concepts of overt and covert translations. She explains that an overt translation does not directly address the audience of the target text. Therefore, the translator should not try to recreate a second original since, according to

House's words, an overt translation "must overtly be a translation" (House 1977: 189). On the other hand, covert translations attempt to produce a text that is functionally equivalent to the source text. House specifies that, regarding covert translations, the source text "is not specifically addressed to a target culture audience" (House 1977: 194).

House (1977) explains that an academic article could be an example of a covert translation, as the source text will not necessarily exhibit any features specific to the source culture. She believes that, in this case, the readers do not need to know that it is a translation since the article will have the same argumentative force as if it had been written in the target language. On the other hand, a political speech could be a good example of an overt translation since the source text is addressed to a specific cultural group and the target readers cannot read it and feel as if it was referring to themselves. In this case, functional equivalence cannot be maintained, therefore the source text will function differently from the target text.

Baker offers a wider and more detailed list of features to better define the notion of equivalence (Baker 1992). Baker's analysis of the concept of equivalence combines the linguistic and the communicative approach. Relating to the translation process, she studies the idea of equivalence at different levels. Baker makes a distinction among different types of equivalences, such as: equivalence at word level, grammatical equivalence, textual equivalence, pragmatic equivalence. Baker (1992) argues that equivalence at word level should be the first one to be taken into account by a translator when using a bottom-up approach to the work. The British linguist asserts that the translator should keep in consideration various aspects when analysing a single word, such as number, gender and tense. By doing so, while investigating the source text, the translator will manage to consider the words as single units and find a direct equivalent word in the target language. Baker (1992) then describes grammatical equivalences referring to the variety of grammatical categories across languages. As a matter of fact, the translator should take into account the different grammatical rules across languages, since these differences might imply considerable changes in the way the message of the text is conveyed. When finding correspondence in the target language, the translator may have to add or omit pieces of information, in relation to the different grammatical structures of the source and the target text. Baker (1992) states that amongst these grammatical structures, the translator should consider number, tense, aspects, person,

gender. Baker (1992) proceeds in her work considering textual equivalence in terms of information and cohesion between source and target text. The translator can decide whether or not he/she will produce a text that is cohesive and coherent to the original, and he will base his decision on three important factors, namely the target audience, the purpose of the translation and the text type. Finally, Baker (1992) describes pragmatic equivalence with reference to implicatures and strategies of avoidance used in the translation. The translator really needs to understand completely the message of the source text, considering not only what is explicit but also what is implied in the author's words. The final goal is to make the reader of the target culture understand clearly what the original implied in its language and culture.

Pym includes in his theory the rise of Computer-Assisted Translation (CAT) tools and identifies two types of equivalence: natural and directional equivalence (Pym 2007). Natural equivalence focuses on identifying naturally-occurring terms in the source and target language. It aims at identifying natural equivalents in the relevant languages also thanks to glossaries and term bases. Conversely, directional equivalence focuses on analysing and rendering the source text meaning in an equivalent form in the target text. Through the use of translation memories and corpora, the translator will have available already translated material and will be able to choose exact and fuzzy matches of bits of his source text.

In conclusion, the notion of equivalence in translation has been widely debated over the decades, and it is clear that this is still a controversial topic in the field of translation studies. Many scholars have expressed their opinions regarding this concept, but however it does not seem that they share a universal approach and this makes it difficult to find a common definition of equivalence.

1.2 Translating culture

Language and culture are two concepts that have always been closely linked together. Every organised group of people is characterised not only by their own language, but also by their culture, which is the result of their natural environment, history, social reality and many other factors. Moreover, the concept of culture is definitely not static, but it is rather dynamic and continuously changing as historical events influence a certain nation.

Different cultures see their realization and expression in different languages. The meeting of different cultures implies the need to find a way to communicate (originally, this happened for trading and political purposes), and this is where the importance of translation becomes evident. In accordance with what I have stated, cultural exchange can be considered as the origin of translation. Therefore, it is clear that focusing on linguistics is not enough to perform a good translation, but it is also fundamental to consider the many social and cultural elements related to the source and the target language.

Jakobson (1959) argues that cross-linguistic and cultural differences lie mainly in obligatory grammatical and lexical forms. He argues that “languages differ essentially in what they must convey and not in what they may convey” (Jakobson 1959: 236). He expresses some examples of such differences, which can occur at the level of gender, at the level of aspect, or at the level of semantic fields.

Bronislaw Malinowski states that “language is essentially rooted in the reality of the culture ... it cannot be explained without constant reference to these broader contexts of verbal utterance” (Malinowski 1923: 305). Malinowski is thought to be one of the first anthropologists to realise that language and culture are two inseparable concepts. As a matter of fact, he argues that language can only be understood with reference to culture (Malinowski 1923 in Katan 1999). In 1923 Malinowski coined the term “context of situation” and stated that an interlocutor can fully understand the meaning of a language only if he has clear, whether implicitly or explicitly, these two contexts (situation and culture).

The beginning of a cultural approach to translation is conventionally associated with the publication of *Translation, history and culture* (Bassnett and Lefevere 1990). The two authors analyse the way culture affects translation and vice versa. A cultural approach to translation focuses especially on the importance of culture in translation and on the cultural influence of translation on the target audience region. Therefore, it does not focus on conveying the message or function of the original, but rather on the analysis of the different cultural and historical contexts.

The importance of the concept of culture in translation is debated by scholars, especially because it is interrelated with three main problem areas (Katan 1999 in Munday 2009). First of all, the definition of culture itself is still controversial. By 1952, American anthropologists Alfred Louis Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn (1961) compiled a list of 164

definitions of the term “culture”, which is considered to be “one of the most complicated words of the English language” (Williams 1983). The second problem is the historical division between scholars who perceive language and culture as two different realities and those who consider language as culture. Finally, the third problem is the importance of the “culture filter” in translation. House (2006: 349) argues that “a cultural filter is a means of capturing cognitive and socio-cultural differences in expectation norms and discourse conventions between source and target linguistic–cultural communities”. Katan agrees with House and adds (1993, 1999) that cultural filters are one of the ways in which groups organize their shared perception of the world. Moreover, he identifies (1993) four perception filters, each of which is responsible for orienting our interpretation of the world and the phenomena. The filters are: physiological, culture, individual and language.

Lawrence Venuti deals with literary translation (1998) and states that translation studies must take into consideration cultural issues as well. In his work (1998), besides questioning the linguistic-oriented approach to translation, Venuti asserts that sometimes translations are not only determined by cultural purposes because publishers and editors play a huge role in determining whether a work will be read by the target audience. Regarding the relationship between culture and translation, Venuti (1995) describes the different approaches and outcomes of the strategies of domestication and foreignization. I will better analyse this topic in section 1.5.

Nord claims that communication takes place in situations, limited in time and space, which are not universal, but are embedded in a cultural habitat, which in turn conditions the situation (Nord 2005a). Moreover, each situation is conditioned by the constraints of the situation-in-culture. Nord proceeds (2005a) by arguing that if the target-culture conditions are different from those of the source culture, the translator can choose between two possible strategies. He/she can either transform and adapt the text so that it can work under the target-culture conventions, or replace the source-text functions with their respective meta-functions in the target culture. Nord defines the former possibility as “instrumental translation” and the latter as “documentary translation” (Nord 2005b). Nord specifies that he does not consider one type of translation to be better than the other, he argues that the choice of the type of translation depends on many factors, such as the kind of audience the translated text is addressed to and the purposes it is supposed to fulfil.

In conclusion, the text itself should be regarded as only one of the many aspects to be considered when performing a good translation. As a matter of fact, there are other cultural factors, that Katan (2009) defines as “silent” and “unconscious”, that determine how a text will be understood. Hence, the translator should be a “cross-cultural specialist” (Snell-Hornby 1922) and know deeply the source and the target culture. This is the only way to fully understand how a text is perceived by its original audience in order to carry that message to the target reader.

1.3 The role of the translator

As I stated in the previous section, a translator must be completely acquainted with the source and target culture and language to be able to perform a good translation. In this respect, the translator can be considered a cultural mediator. George Steiner (1975: 45) argues that “the translator is a bilingual mediating agent between monolingual communication participants in two different language communities”. However, Steiner’s emphasis is on linguistic mediation. Cultural mediation is something different and more multifaceted than translation, as stated by Stephen Bochner (1981). Supporting Bochner, Ronald Taft (1981: 73) claims that a mediator is more than a translator because, besides translating skills, he must also possess communication, technical and social skills as well as knowledge about society.

Nonetheless, it is evident that the concept of mediation is embedded in that of translation, as also stated by Basil Hatim and Ian Mason (1990: 223) “the translator is first and foremost a mediator between two parties for whom mutual communication might otherwise be problematic”. The two scholars assert that a translator is a mediator in two specific ways (Hatim and Mason 1990: 223-224): because of his/her bi-cultural vision, as he/she is uniquely placed to identify and resolve the disparity between sign and value across cultures, and because he/she is a critical reader since he/she is given the chance to read the text carefully before translating it. To this idea, Lance Hewson and Jacky Martin (1991) add that a translator is also a critic. They argue (1991: 143) that “certain texts have been subject to what one might call an intense and loving scrutiny [...] to the extent that people might well consult a translation in order to have a better (or more complete) understanding of the original”.

Regarding the skills that a good translator must possess, Mossop (2020: 7) adds the need for accuracy and for successful communication of the text's message to the reader. Mossop (2007) defines these requirements as "implied" since, as he asserts in the same paragraph, "people who use the services of translators don't ask for an accurate translation; they just assume that it will be accurate". Moreover, Bell (1991) argues that the professional translator should demonstrate skill in five different kinds of knowledge: target language knowledge, text-type knowledge, source language knowledge, subject area knowledge and contrastive knowledge.

Venuti expresses his opinion regarding the role of the translator in the famous *The Translator's Invisibility* (1995). Venuti uses the term "invisibility" to describe "the translator's situation and activity in contemporary British and American cultures" (Venuti 1995: 1). The scholar argues that this invisibility is due mainly to two phenomena. The first one is the "illusion of transparency" created by expert translators who manage to produce a fluent, idiomatic and readable target text. The second phenomenon is related to the way the translated texts are typically read in the target culture. In this respect, Venuti states that "a translated text [...] is judged acceptable by most publishers, reviewers and readers when it reads fluently, when the absence of any linguistic or stylistic peculiarities makes it seem transparent, giving the appearance that it reflects the foreign writer's personality or intention [...] in other words, that the translation is not in fact a translation, but the 'original'" (Venuti 1995: 1). Venuti's critique of the publishing industry is that translation is sometimes regarded as of secondary quality and importance and even "rarely considered a form of literary scholarship" (Venuti 1995: 32).

In the early 20th century, Walter Benjamin's essay *The Translator's Task* (1921) is an attempt to conceive of translation as a form of art whose unique concern is what happens when one language passes into another. In this respect, Benjamin's views (1921) are similar to those of Venuti in that it should not be considered as a secondary derivative of literary art. The essay opens with a provocative statement: "no poem is meant for the reader, no picture for the beholder, no symphony for the audience" (Benjamin 1921: 151). Benjamin's intent is to draw the attention away from the communicative function of art, as art's primary intention is not to inform, instruct or even delight its audience. Benjamin's theory immediately shifts to translation as he argues "if the original does not exist for the reader's sake, how could the translation be understood on the basis of this

premise?” (Benjamin 1921: 152). Benjamin (1921) claims that translations have focused too much on establishing how the translator best communicates the original’s meaning in the target language; however, in Benjamin’s view, this is a futile procedure that will inevitably lead to an “inaccurate transmission of an inessential content” (Benjamin 1921: 151). In other words, the scholar believes that the translator should not be too concerned with what the original text means. Conversely, Benjamin asserts that the translator’s work ought to “ultimately serve the purpose of expressing the innermost relationship of languages to one another” (Benjamin 1921: 154). Benjamin’s arguments are also on the same lines as those of Venuti regarding the idea that the true translator does not simply bring the text to the reader, making it as digestible as possible, but his/her role is to keep all the foreignness of the original text. In conclusion, according to Benjamin, true translation is closer to the act of creation than to any passive attempt at transmission.

1.4 Translation strategies

In broad terms, translation strategies are used by translators when they encounter a problem in their work. Therefore, they are involved in the problem-solving process that every translator must consider to complete their task. Several authors (Lörscher 1991, Chesterman 1997, Hejwowski 2004) assert that the term strategy in translation is not precisely defined and that this concept is still debated.

Wolfgang Lörscher argues that translation strategy is “a potentially conscious procedure for the solution of a problem which an individual is faced with when translating a text segment from one language to another” (Lörscher 1991: 76).

Hejwowski’s definition of translation strategy is similar to Lörscher’s, and he distinguishes this concept from technique, which he describes as “the choice of a solution to a specific problem encountered during the translation process” (Hejwowski 2004: 76). This distinction corresponds to Chesterman’s juxtaposition between “local” and “global” translation strategies. In Chesterman’s view, “global strategies” are evaluated in response to the question “how to translate this text or this kind of text”, while “local strategies” answer the question “how to translate this structure/this idea/this item” (Chesterman 1997: 90-91).

Chesterman (1997) discusses the topic of translation strategies in his book *Memes of Translation: The Spread of Ideas in Translation*. The author describes strategy as “a kind of process, a way of doing something”, he adds that “strategies are forms of explicitly textual manipulation” and that “a strategy offers a solution to a problem” (Chesterman 1997: 88-89). In this publication (1997), Chesterman reminds his reader that a translation project must always keep into consideration the close link between the text and the context. The strategy to adopt is always to be evaluated within a context in order to maintain the functional and dynamic nature of translation (Chesterman 1997). The scholar asserts that translation strategies are not right or wrong in themselves, but they are to be adopted and used functionally and dynamically considering the genre of the text, the type, mode, purpose and audience of the translation, and the method chosen (Chesterman 1997).

Malone (1988) offers a thorough classification of translation strategies. He argues that the translator can choose from nine strategies, which I will now describe briefly. The first and most obvious one is the strategy of “equation” and it refers to some form of automatic equivalence between terms of two different languages. This strategy includes loans and calques. It is considered to be the default position: an item should be translated by its clear one-to-one equivalent, whenever it is pragmatically and culturally possible. The second strategy is the one of “substitution”, which is the implementation of a translation that bears little or no morphological resemblance or semantic relation to the source text. This is the strategy to be considered when translating, for example, proverbs and idiomatic expressions. “Divergence” is the strategy that consists in choosing a suitable translation from a potential range of alternatives. Conversely, “convergence” involves rendering a range of alternatives with a single lexical item. In both cases, contextual and co-textual clues will guide the translator into the right choice. The strategy of “amplification” requires the translator to add some elements to the original in order to facilitate the reader in comprehending the text. Conversely, “reduction” consists in omitting an element in the target text because it is regarded as redundant or even misleading. The next two strategies are the ones of “diffusion” and “condensation”. They are described by Taylor as “the phenomenon of linguistically slacking or tightening source text expressions for the text version, that is, providing more or less elaboration” (Taylor 1998: 56). Finally, the strategy of “reordering” is used “whereby one or more

target elements appear in a position different from that of the source text” (Malone 1988: 65). In other words, it requires the translator to operate basic inversion procedures between the syntax of source and target text.

Baker (1992), in her book *In Other Words. A Coursebook on Translation*, lists and describes eight strategies used by professional translators to deal with cases of non-equivalence. The first one is the “translation by a more general word”. Baker (1992) argues that this is one of the commonest strategies and that it works equally well in most languages, since “the hierarchical structure of semantic fields is not language-specific” (Baker 1992: 26). Then is the “translation by a more neutral/less expressive word”, which is also related to the semantic field of structure. The third strategy is the “translation by cultural substitution”, which involves replacing a culture-specific item or expression with a target language item that is likely to have a similar impact on the target reader. This strategy makes the translated text more natural, more understandable and more familiar to the target reader. “Translation using a loan word or loan words plus explanation” is particularly common in dealing with culture-specific items. The fifth strategy is the “translation by paraphrase using a related word”. This strategy is used when the source item is lexicalized in the target language but in a different form, and when the frequency with which a certain form is used in the source text is higher than it would be natural in the target language. The “translation by paraphrase using unrelated words” is used when the concept in the source item is not lexicalized in the target language. The paraphrasing strategy can be preferred to choosing related words as it can make the meaning of the source item clearer. The seventh strategy is the “translation by omission”. In some contexts, it can be useful to omit to translate a word or expression, especially if their meaning is not necessary for the understanding of the translation. Finally, the “translation by illustration” can be used when the equivalent item refers to a physical entity that can be illustrated. It would allow the translator to avoid over-explanation and to be concise.

Venuti argues that translation strategies simply involve the tasks of selecting the text to be translated and of developing a method to do it (Venuti 2001). In Venuti’s view (2001), these tasks are driven by cultural, economic and political factors. Venuti (2001) believes that many different translation strategies can be divided into two major categories. On the one hand, a translation project may conform to values currently present in the target culture. On the other hand, the translator can decide to deviate from

prevailing domestic values and preserve linguistic and cultural differences between source and target text. This is the difference between domesticating and foreignizing strategies.

1.5 Domestication and foreignization

As mentioned in the previous section, domestication and foreignization are two basic translation strategies, introduced by Venuti (1995), which provide both linguistic and cultural guidance. According to Venuti, domestication refers to “an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target-language cultural values, bringing the author back home”, while foreignization is “an ethnodeviant pressure on those (cultural) values to register the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text, sending the reader abroad” (Venuti 1995: 20).

In broad terms, one can refer to the definition of Shuttleworth and Cowie (1997: 59), which defines domestication as the “type of translation in which a transparent style is adopted to minimize the strangeness of the foreign text for target language readers” and, conversely, explain that foreignization occurs when “a target text is produced which deliberately breaks target conventions by retaining something of the foreignness of the original”. Scholars have debated extensively about the concepts of domestication and foreignization, especially since the cultural turn in translation studies that took place in the 1970s and shifted the attention of translators to brand new social, cultural and historical perspectives. As a matter of fact, the conflict between domestication and foreignization can be regarded as cultural and political rather than linguistic. In this respect, Nida, argues that “for truly successful translation, biculturalism is even more important than bilingualism, since words only have meanings in terms of the cultures in which they function” (Nida 2001: 82). Nida’s theory of translation puts the target reader in the first place and supports the strategy of domestication. He believes that the rendition in the version should be completely natural, that the behavioural model in the source language should be assimilated into the target readers’ cultural sphere (Nida and Taber 1969).

On the other hand, Venuti is more supportive of the foreignization strategy. He argues that the aim of foreignization is to develop a kind of translation theory and practice that resists the trend of the dominance of the target language, so as to give prominence to

the difference between the original and the version in terms of language and culture (Venuti 1995). Venuti (1995) states that there is violence residing in the very purpose and activity of domestication and his belief is also influenced by the Anglo-American aggressive monolingual cultural background. In other words, Venuti (1995) believes that foreignization is an “estranging translation style designed to make visible the presence of the translator by highlighting the foreign identity of the source text and protecting it from the ideological dominance of the target culture” (Venuti 1995 in Munday 2016: 147). Moreover, Venuti (1995) claims that if the translator's language is the same the author would have used if he had written in the target language, the translator's work becomes invisible; therefore, in order to make it visible, the translator must highlight and exploit the asymmetries between the languages (Venuti 1995 in Salmon 2003).

Naturally, foreignization and domestication both have their advantages and disadvantages in literary translation. Domestication allows the readers to perceive the similarities between different cultures, but at the same time it makes translated texts smooth, clear and coherent to the target-language readers' culture. However, domesticated translations can also exclude characteristics of nations and peoples, and this inevitably causes distortions of original texts. Foreignization, on the other hand, tries to keep an exotic atmosphere for target-language readers and makes them feel the difference between languages and cultures, but can also cause misunderstandings and highlight cultural dissimilarities. In conclusion, determining whether a translation project is domesticating or foreignizing clearly depends on a detailed reconstruction of the cultural formation in which the translation is produced and consumed. Therefore, what is domestic or foreign can be defined only with reference to the changing hierarchy of values in the target language culture (Venuti 2001).

1.6 Wordplays and idiomatic expressions

Idioms and wordplays are an inalienable part of communication that have been found and analysed in most of the existing languages. The sense of these expressions cannot be grasped from the meaning of the single words constituting them, therefore understanding and translating idioms and wordplays is always problematic. As a matter of fact, the *Longman Idioms Dictionary* (1998) defines them as “a sequence of words which has a

different meaning as a group from the meaning it would have if you understood each word separately”. Moreover, the *Collins English Dictionary* (2006) defines idioms as “an expression such as a simile, in which words do not have their literal meaning, but are categorized as multi-word expressions that act in the text as units”. People of different cultures use completely different expressions to convey the same meaning. Sometimes, an expression that is completely understandable to the speakers of a language might make no sense at all to the interlocutors of another language. This happens because idioms are deeply linked to the culture of a specific group of people and it is influenced by many factors such as religion, geography, society, etc.

Baker (1992) compares idioms and fixed expressions with collocations and argues that the former are at the extreme end of the scale from collocations in terms of flexibility of patterning and transparency of meaning. She defines them as “frozen patterns of language which allow little or no variation in form and, in the case of idioms, often carry meanings which cannot be deduced from their individual components” (Baker 1992: 63). Baker specifies that idioms “allow no variation in form under no circumstances [...] unless one is consciously making a joke or attempting a play on words” (Baker 1992: 63). If no wordplay is intended, Baker argues that a writer cannot do any of the following with an idiom: change the order of the words, delete a word from it, add a word to it, replace a word with another, change its grammatical structure (Baker 1992). Newmark (1988) claims that an idiom has two main functions: pragmatic and referential. The pragmatic function involves surprising, interesting, delighting the audience. The referential function aims to “describe a mental process or state, a concept, a person, an object, a quality or an action more comprehensively and concisely than is possible in literal or physical language” (Newmark 1988: 104).

Delabastita (1997: 1-2) claims that a wordplay is “a deliberate communicative strategy, or the result thereof, used with a specific semantic or pragmatic effect in mind”. Wordplays are very often related to humour. As a matter of fact, the *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary* (2000) defines wordplay with reference to humour: “making jokes by using words in a clever or amusing way, especially by using a word that has two meanings, or different words that sound the same”. Delabastita argues that there are many different ways to produce a wordplay. In his view (1996: 130), the linguistic means available to achieve a wordplay are: phonological and graphological structure, lexical

structure (polysemy), lexical structure (idiom), morphological structure and syntactic structure.

As I have already stated, translating idioms and wordplays is always, to a certain degree, problematic. Baker (1992: 65) claims that “the first difficulty that a translator comes across is being able to recognize that s/he is dealing with an idiomatic expression”. Nonetheless, she adds that the more difficult an expression is to understand and the less sense it makes in a given context, the more likely a translator will recognize it as an idiom” (Baker 1992: 65). Hatim and Munday (2004: 10) argue that the main problem regarding idioms and fixed expressions is that “the sense may be translated, while the form often cannot”. In Baker’s view, there are many more problems to be considered when dealing with such elements in translation. She classifies these problems into four categories (Baker 1992: 68-71): an idiom or fixed expression may have no equivalent in the target language; an idiom or fixed expression may have a similar counterpart in the target language, but its context of use may be different; an idiom may be used in the source text in both its literal and idiomatic senses at the same time; the very convention of using idioms in written discourse, the contexts in which they can be used, and their frequency of use may be different in the source and target languages.

In the same publication, Baker (1992) also deals with the possible way to deal with the task of translating fixed expressions. She lists four problem-solving strategies to overcome such difficulties (Baker 1992: 71-78): using an idiom of similar meaning and form; using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form; translating by paraphrase; translating by omission. She concludes by stating that “the way in which an idiom or a fixed expression can be translated into another language depends on many factors [...] questions of style, register, and rhetorical effect must also be taken into consideration” (Baker 1992: 71-72).

1.7 Translating theatre

Translating theatre texts involves unique problems that are not found in any other type of translation process. Many scholars (Bassnett-McGuire 1985, Kruger 2007, Osimo 2011) state that the main difficulty resides in the nature of the text itself. A theatre text involves many non-linguistic factors since “it exists in a dialectical relationship with the

performance of that text; the two texts - written and performed – are coexistent and inseparable” (Bassnett-McGuire 1985: 87). She adds that the translator is asked to deal with a written text that is part of a larger complex of sign systems, which involves paralinguistic and kinetic features.

With regard to the development of theatre studies, Bassnett-McGuire (1985) argues that there has been a continued focus on the verbal text to the exclusion of the other signs systems involved. In her view, this has represented an obstacle in the studies and has resulted in an imbalance, because of the prioritization of the verbal text. Tadeusz Kowzan (1975) agrees that the script is only one of the several components of a theatre text. He (1975: 52-80) identifies five categories of expression in the making of a performance which correspond to five semiological systems: the spoken text (generally reported in the written script); bodily expression; the actor’s external appearance (such as gestures and physical features); the playing space; non-spoken sound. Kowzan (1975) then divides further these five categories into thirteen distinct sub-sections, but his main point is the non-hierarchical nature of the different sign systems.

Osimo (2011) distinguishes between translation for printed editions and translation for acting. Theatre texts can also be read for themselves, in such cases the translator will not focus on the playability of the text, rather on the philological care for the original and the target culture. Osimo (2011) specifies that, in this respect, translation for theatre becomes an example of literary translation. On the other hand, when a translation is made for acting, the criteria of playability are fundamental.

In theatre texts, a very important role is played by dialogues and monologues. Osimo (2011) argues that it is fundamental that such dialogues sound realistic and plausible. He asserts (2011) that an implausible dialogue line would have a negative impact on the actor’s work and even disable the identification with the part he/she is playing. As a consequence, the translation of these dialogues should also sound as natural and realistic as possible. Osimo (2011) states that translating a spoken language into another is a very challenging task since this operation must consider many factors that affect the way the people naturally speak, such as their education, profession and position in society. Bassnett-McGuire (1985) identifies another peculiarity of theatre texts: they are time-bound. Since these texts are composed of dialogues and stage directions, “the

problem of form merges with the question of speech rhythms” (Bassnett-McGuire 1985: 89).

In the same publication (1985: 90-91) Bassnett-McGuire lists and explains five different translation strategies to deal with theatre texts. The first one is treating the theatre text as a literary text and it is probably the most common one. The translator’s focus will be on the distinctive features of dialogue on the page and not on the paralinguistic ones. This strategy is commonly used when the commission is for publication rather than for stage production. The second strategy consists in using the source language cultural context as frame text. It involves the use of target language stereotypical images of the source language culture to provide a comic frame. The third strategy is translating “performability” and implies an attempt in the target language to create fluent speech rhythms. It also involves an attempt to try to create an equivalent register in the target language and to omit passages that are too closely bound to the source language's cultural and linguistic context. The fourth strategy consists in creating source language verse drama in alternative forms. In this type of translation, the principal criterion is the verse form. The last strategy is the one of co-operative translation. In Bassnett-McGuire’s view (1985), this is the strategy that produces the best result. As she states herself, “it involves the collaboration of at least two people on the making of the target language text, either a source language and a target language native speaker, or someone with knowledge of the source language who works together with the director and/or actors who are to present the work” (Bassnett-McGuire 1985: 91). In this type of translation, the translator becomes someone who produces a basic scenario that is then worked on by the company; moreover, it avoids the concept of performability as a quality that can be added to the written text.

Luigi Pirandello (1908) criticizes the role of illustrators of books, actors and translators. In his view, all three reinterpret the original work and, in doing so, they recreate and even falsify it. According to Pirandello (1908), it seems that the concept of faithfulness is impossible to achieve when translating theatre texts, but he also accepts that there is no alternative to this paradox. Alessandro Serpieri (1978) adds that a further difficulty to tackle when translating theatre texts is the presence of deixis. In Serpieri’s opinion, deixis is what lies at the origin of dramatic discourse. He gives much relevance to deixis and argues that meaning in theatre is entrusted mainly to the deixis; also syntax,

grammar, rhetoric, etc are dependent on the deixis (Serpieri 1978). He believes that a radical alteration of the deictic system of the source language text would alter the dynamics of the text from many points of view. Bassnett-McGuire, in (1978) an article regarding problems of theatre translation, introduced the concept of a gestural language distinguishable within the written text. In (1985) this later publication, the scholar confirms the presence of such language in a text and adds that the best way of deciphering and translating it might be the use of deictic units.

In conclusion, translation for theatre is an activity that involves an awareness of multiple codes, both in and around the written text. Bassnett-McGuire (1985) suggests that the concept of performability as a criterion for translating should be set aside, in order to focus more closely on the linguistic structures of the text itself. On the other hand, other scholars such as Mario Luzi (1990) believe that the test on the stage is the only one that can reveal the adequateness of a translation. The theory of translating theatre is still controversial among scholars, but it is clear that it is a very complicated task that requires a solid awareness of numerous factors, both linguistic and non-linguistic, regarding the source and the target culture and traditions.

Chapter Two. The translation

LEMONS LEMONS LEMONS
LEMONS LEMONS

Sam Steiner

LIMONI LIMONI LIMONI LIMONI
LIMONI

Sam Steiner

Characters

BERNADETTE

OLIVER

Personaggi

BERNADETTE

OLIVER

Note on Text

A forward slash (/) indicates interrupted speech.

Nota al Testo

Una barra obliqua (/) indica un discorso interrotto.

They speak slowly and quietly.

OLIVER. Thirty-four.

BERNADETTE. Twenty-one.

Pause.

Day?

OLIVER. Yeah. Yours?

BERNADETTE. Yeah. Tuesday
happened again.

OLIVER. Sorry.

BERNADETTE. Well, sorf.

OLIVER. Fuck it.

Pause.

Talk?

BERNADETTE. Eleven. You talk.

OLIVER. About?

BERNADETTE *shrugs*.

Bernadette.

BERNADETTE. I know.

OLIVER. I can't know you in one
hundred and forty.

Pause.

BERNADETTE. Try.

*

OLIVER. We need to stop meeting here.
It's all a bit morbid.

BERNADETTE. Well, it's the only
place that I know that you know.

OLIVER. You've never asked where
else I know.

Parlano lentamente e a bassa voce.

OLIVER. Trentaquattro.

BERNADETTE. Ventuno.

Pausa.

Giornatina?

OLIVER. Già. Tu?

BERNADETTE. Sì. Martedì ha colpito
ancora.

OLIVER. Spiace.

BERNADETTE. Beh, qualcosa.

OLIVER. Al diavolo.

Pausa.

Parliamo?

BERNADETTE. Undici. Parla tu.

OLIVER. Di?

BERNADETTE *fa spallucce*.

Bernadette.

BERNADETTE. Lo so.

OLIVER. Non posso conoscerti con solo
centoquaranta parole.

Pausa.

BERNADETTE. Provaci.

*

OLIVER. Dobbiamo smettere di
incontrarci qui. È tutto un po'
macabro.

BERNADETTE. Beh, è l'unico posto
che so che conosci.

OLIVER. Non mi hai mai chiesto che
altri posti conosco.

BERNADETTE. Well maybe I just like revisiting the graves of dead cats. Maybe I'm just that kind of girl.

OLIVER. Maybe we should talk about other places that we could meet.

Pause.

I told my friend Eliot / about you

BERNADETTE. Eliot's the one that played trumpet on / your latest

OLIVER. Yeah / and

BERNADETTE. The one that's really pro-word limit.

OLIVER. Yeah. Fascist fuck. Anyway I told him that I'd met a... person... and that she was you, you know, that her name was Bernadette and that she had... like I described you to him, your features and everything... that you're a lawyer / and stuff.

BERNADETTE. Training.

OLIVER. And then he asked me where we met.

BERNADETTE. You didn't tell / him that

OLIVER. That we'd met at a funeral for a cat named Dennis? No.

BERNADETTE. Or that we...

OLIVER. Continued to meet at the pet cemetery for... No.

BERNADETTE. So you haven't actually told him...

BERNADETTE. Beh, forse è solo che mi piace rivisitare le tombe dei gatti morti. Forse sono proprio quel tipo di ragazza.

OLIVER. Forse dovremmo parlare di altri posti dove incontrarci.

Pause.

Ho detto al mio amico Eliot / di te

BERNADETTE. Eliot è quello che ha suonato la tromba al / tuo ultimo

OLIVER. Sì, e

BERNADETTE. Quello che è davvero a favore del limite di parole.

OLIVER. Sì. Fascista del cazzo. Comunque gli ho detto di aver conosciuto una... persona... e che eri tu, sai, che il suo nome era Bernadette e che aveva... come ti ho descritta a lui, i tuoi lineamenti e tutto... che sei un avvocato / e roba simile.

BERNADETTE. Aspirante.

OLIVER. E poi mi ha chiesto dove ci siamo conosciuti.

BERNADETTE. Non gli hai detto / che

OLIVER. Che ci siamo conosciuti a un funerale per un gatto di nome Dennis? No.

BERNADETTE. O che noi...

OLIVER. Abbiamo continuato ad incontrarci al cimitero degli animali per... No.

BERNADETTE. Quindi in realtà non gli hai detto...

OLIVER. No. I told him we met in a Greggs.

Pause.

I think we should talk about other places that we could meet. Like abattoirs or sausage factories.

BERNADETTE. Yeah. We should. We should. It's just...

OLIVER. Yep.

BERNADETTE. That I don't know you outside the pet cemetery, Oliver. I don't know you when you're around other people really.

OLIVER. Only the carcasses of dead animals.

BERNADETTE. Yeah.

OLIVER. Right.

BERNADETTE. And what if you're like a different guy when you're not around the...

OLIVER. The... yeah.

BERNADETTE. Yeah.

OLIVER. I think I'm pretty much the same.

BERNADETTE. Yeah obviously / you are but...

OLIVER. If a little less on edge.

BERNADETTE. No obviously you're the same. But what, okay, what if, when there are more people around and when there are smells and billboards and cinemas and like fastfood restaurants and rock music and people on the streets selling burgers...

OLIVER. No. Gli ho detto che ci siamo incontrati in una panetteria.

Pausa.

Penso che dovremmo parlare di altri posti in cui potremmo incontrarci. Tipo mattatoi o fabbriche di salsicce.

BERNADETTE. Sì. Dovremmo. Dovremmo. È solo...

OLIVER. Già.

BERNADETTE. Che non ti conosco al di fuori del cimitero degli animali, Oliver. Non ti conosco davvero quando sei con altre persone.

OLIVER. Solo con carcasse di animali morti.

BERNADETTE. Ecco.

OLIVER. Già.

BERNADETTE. E se fossi una persona diversa quando non sei in mezzo alle...

OLIVER. Le...già.

BERNADETTE. Già.

OLIVER. Penso di essere più o meno lo stesso.

BERNADETTE. Sì ovviamente / lo sei però...

OLIVER. Se non meno nervoso.

BERNADETTE. No ovviamente sei lo stesso. Ma e se, okay, e se, quando ci sono più persone intorno e quando ci sono gli odori e i cartelloni pubblicitari e i cinema e tipo i ristoranti fast-food e la musica rock e la gente per strada che vende hamburger...

OLIVER. Right.

BERNADETTE. Sorry.

OLIVER. Do you not want to be...

BERNADETTE. No!

OLIVER. Right.

BERNADETTE. No no no no it's just
all... out there you know... it's
ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhh.

Pause.

OLIVER. Ahhhhh?

Pause.

I don't really eat many burgers and
I'm quite good at shutting out street
sellers. Like shutting them down.
Downtown.

Pause.

BERNADETTE. I'm scared.

OLIVER. Of smells and cinemas and
rock music?

BERNADETTE. Of things getting / in
the

OLIVER. We'll listen to hip hop. And
we'll buy DVDs.

BERNADETTE. And get air freshener.

OLIVER. And get air freshener.

*

*OLIVER is crouched on the floor.
BERNADETTE stands, looking down at
him sceptically. OLIVER taps out: Dot
dash dash dash. Pause. Dot dot dash.*

OLIVER. Capisco.

BERNADETTE. Scusa.

OLIVER. Tu non vuoi essere...

BERNADETTE. No!

OLIVER. Giusto.

BERNADETTE. No no no no è solo
che... là fuori sai... è
ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhh.

Pausa.

OLIVER. Ahhhhh?

Pausa.

Non mangio poi tanti hamburger e
sono abbastanza bravo a
divincolarmi tra i venditori
ambulanti. Cioè a svincolarmi. In un
vicolo.

Pausa.

BERNADETTE. Ho paura.

OLIVER. Degli odori e dei cinema e
della musica rock?

BERNADETTE. Delle cose che /
potrebbero

OLIVER. Ascolteremo hip-hop. E
comprenderemo DVD.

BERNADETTE. E prenderemo un
deodorante per ambienti.

OLIVER. E prenderemo un deodorante
per ambienti.

*

*OLIVER è accovacciato sul pavimento.
BERNADETTE è in piedi e lo guarda
con scetticismo. OLIVER batte la
sequenza: Punto, linea, linea, linea.
Pausa. Punto punto punto linea. Pausa.*

Pause. Dot dash dot dot. Pause. Dot dot. Pause. Dot.

BERNADETTE *looks weary and motions as if to say 'I have no idea what you just said.'*

OLIVER. Fuck.

*

BERNADETTE. Hi.

OLIVER. Hi. You look nice. High heels.

BERNADETTE. Yeah, you didn't tell me where we were going... so I dressed nice. Where are we going?

OLIVER. We're going zorbing.

BERNADETTE. What?

OLIVER. We're going to Frankie and Benny's.

*

They are playing Articulate.

OLIVER. Ready.

BERNADETTE. Yep. Ready.

OLIVER. Okay right, right. Band. They're a band. They were big in the eighties. Absolutely awful, music-wise. Not damp damp damp.

BERNADETTE. Wet Wet Wet.

OLIVER. Yep. Okay so these are like, right, like peninsulas but they've got water all the way round.

BERNADETTE. Islands.

OLIVER. Yep but they've never had sex.

BERNADETTE. Virgin Islands.

Punto punto punto punto. Pausa. Punto punto. Pausa. Punto.

BERNADETTE *sembra stanca e fa un cenno come per dire "Non ho idea di quello che hai appena detto".*

OLIVER. Merda.

*

BERNADETTE. Ciao.

OLIVER. Ciao. Stai bene. Tacchi alti.

BERNADETTE. Sì, non mi hai detto dove andiamo... così mi sono vestita bene. Dove andiamo?

OLIVER. Andiamo a fare zorbing.

BERNADETTE. Cosa?

OLIVER. Andiamo a mangiare al Frankie & Benny's.

*

Giocano ad Articulate.

BERNADETTE. Pronti.

OLIVER. Sì. pronti.

BERNADETTE. Okay giusto, giusto. Una band. Sono una band. Andavano molto negli anni Settanta. Veramente squisiti, dal punto di vista musicale. Squisiti come zeppole.

OLIVER. Led Zeppelin.

BERNADETTE. Sì. Okay allora queste sono tipo sì, tipo delle penisole ma con l'acqua tutta intorno.

OLIVER. Isole.

BERNADETTE. Sì ma non hanno mai fatto sesso.

OLIVER. Isole Vergini.

*

OLIVER. Nineteen.

BERNADETTE. Two. Hungry?

OLIVER *nods*.

OLIVER. Want?

BERNADETTE. Lamb.

OLIVER. Kind?

BERNADETTE *looks at him helplessly*.

Zero?

BERNADETTE *nods*.

Shepherd's pie?

BERNADETTE *pulls a disgusted expression*.

Stew?

BERNADETTE *shakes her head*.

Rogan josh?

BERNADETTE *shakes her head and begins to mime 'kebab'*.

Lollipop.

Pause.

Lollipop.

*

OLIVER. Morning.

BERNADETTE. Morning.

OLIVER. Hi.

BERNADETTE *smiles*.

BERNADETTE. Hi.

OLIVER. You talk in your sleep.

BERNADETTE. What did I say?

*

OLIVER. Diciannove.

BERNADETTE. Due. Fame?

OLIVER *annuisce*.

OLIVER. Vuoi?

BERNADETTE. Agnello.

OLIVER. Come?

BERNADETTE *lo guarda impotente*.

Zero?

BERNADETTE *annuisce*.

Shepherd's pie?

BERNADETTE *fa un'espressione di disgusto*.

Stufato?

BERNADETTE *scuote la testa*.

Spezzatino?

BERNADETTE *scuote la testa e comincia a mimare 'kebab'*.

Spiedino.

Pausa.

Spiedino.

*

OLIVER. Giorno.

BERNADETTE. Giorno.

OLIVER. Ciao.

BERNADETTE *sorride*.

BERNADETTE. Ciao.

OLIVER. Parli nel sonno.

BERNADETTE. Cosa ho detto?

OLIVER. It was pretty hard to tell.
Something about a bad man stealing
your pens. Think it was a bad man.
Could've been Batman.

Pause.

BERNADETTE. It was Batman.

*

BERNADETTE. Hi.

OLIVER. Hi.

BERNADETTE. I like coming home to
you.

*

OLIVER. Sixteen.

BERNADETTE. Twenty-four.

OLIVER. What do?

BERNADETTE. Bed?

OLIVER. Half seven.

BERNADETTE *nods.*

Tired?

BERNADETTE *nods.*

BERNADETTE. You?

OLIVER *nods.*

You're always tired.

Pause.

Word-hoarding.

OLIVER. Badly today.

BERNADETTE. Too much going on.

*

BERNADETTE. When was the last time
you saw her?

OLIVER. Difficile da dire. Qualcosa a
proposito di un maestro di yoga che
ti ruba le penne. Penso che fosse un
maestro di yoga. Forse era Maestro
Yoda.

Pausa.

BERNADETTE. Era Yoda.

*

BERNADETTE. Ciao.

OLIVER. Ciao.

BERNADETTE. Mi piace tornare a casa
da te.

*

OLIVER. Sedici.

BERNADETTE. Ventiquattro.

OLIVER. Che facciamo?

BERNADETTE. Letto?

OLIVER. Sette trenta.

BERNADETTE *annuisce.*

Stanca?

BERNADETTE *annuisce.*

BERNADETTE. Tu?

OLIVER *annuisce.*

Sei sempre stanco.

Pausa.

Risparmiando parole.

OLIVER. Male oggi.

BERNADETTE. Troppo per la testa.

*

BERNADETTE. Quando è stata l'ultima
volta che l'hai vista?

OLIVER. I see her every now and then.
We go on those marches. Against
the hush law.

BERNADETTE. Bill.

OLIVER. Bill.

BERNADETTE. She's the one that's
really in to it?

OLIVER. Yeah. She almost ran against
them in Basildon.

BERNADETTE. As an independent?

OLIVER. Yep.

BERNADETTE. Why Basildon?

OLIVER. She thought there was a
diverse voter base or something.
Lots of undecideds.

BERNADETTE. But you're... you're in
to it too. The marches.

OLIVER. Yeah.

BERNADETTE. Why did you break up?

OLIVER. It was just time.

BERNADETTE. Why was it time?

OLIVER. I don't know, Bernadette. A
whole host of reasons.

BERNADETTE. And you see her every
now and then?

OLIVER. Yeah.

BERNADETTE. Well then I want to see
her every now and then. If she's
your 'anti-establishment buddy'
then I want her to be my like normal
buddy.

OLIVER. Yeah?

BERNADETTE. Mmmm. But, okay, I
want you to tell me all your things.

OLIVER. La vedo ogni tanto. Andiamo
a fare quelle marce. Contro la legge
del silenzio.

BERNADETTE. Proposta di legge.

OLIVER. Proposta di legge.

BERNADETTE. Lei è quella molto
coinvolta?

OLIVER. Sì. Si è quasi candidata contro
di loro a Canterbury.

BERNADETTE. Da indipendente?

OLIVER. Sì.

BERNADETTE. Perché Canterbury?

OLIVER. Pensava che ci fosse una base
elettorale diversificata o qualcosa
del genere. Un sacco di indecisi.

BERNADETTE. Ma tu sei... ci sei
dentro anche tu. Le marce.

OLIVER. Già.

BERNADETTE. Perché vi siete lasciati?

OLIVER. Semplicemente era tempo.

BERNADETTE. Perché era tempo?

OLIVER. Non lo so, Bernadette. Tutta
una serie di ragioni.

BERNADETTE. E la vedi ogni tanto?

OLIVER. Sì.

BERNADETTE. Bene, allora voglio
anch'io vederla ogni tanto. Se lei è
la tua "amica anti-establishment"
allora voglio che sia per me tipo
un'amica normale.

OLIVER. Sì?

BERNADETTE. Mmmm. Ma, okay,
voglio che tu mi dica tutte le robe
vostre.

OLIVER. What?

BERNADETTE. All of your and what's-her-name...

OLIVER. Julie.

BERNADETTE. Julie. All of you and Julie's things.

OLIVER. Things?

BERNADETTE. Yeah. Oliver, every couple has their own kind of little... language.

OLIVER. Right.

BERNADETTE. Like a dialect.

OLIVER. Like Canadian French.

BERNADETTE. Kind of like Canadian French but small-scale I guess.

OLIVER. Like if there were only two people in Canada and they both used to be French.

BERNADETTE. Yeah. Like your own set of in-jokes and pet names and little ways of phrasing things that just develop. And I know that I've recycled them before and I don't want that to... Like I'll be talking in one guy's, an ex's, language and making our jokes and saying things in ways that we came up with together and then I'll turn around and it'll be this completely different, new man in front of me and he doesn't get... he thinks I've got this really weird way of talking that isn't funny or endearing or sexy but that's just weird.

OLIVER. So he didn't understand what you were...

BERNADETTE. No, no. He understood. We were speaking in English. It was

OLIVER. Cioè?

BERNADETTE. Le robe di te e come-si-chiama...

OLIVER. Julie.

BERNADETTE. Julie. Tutte le robe di te e Julie.

OLIVER. Robe?

BERNADETTE. Sì. Oliver, ogni coppia ha un proprio piccolo... linguaggio.

OLIVER. Giusto.

BERNADETTE. Come un dialetto.

OLIVER. Tipo il francese canadese.

BERNADETTE. Un po' come il francese canadese ma in scala ridotta, credo.

OLIVER. Come se ci fossero solo due persone in Canada ed in precedenza fossero entrambe francesi.

BERNADETTE. Sì, come la vostra serie di battutine e nomignoli e modi di formulare le cose che cambiano sempre. E so che li ho riciclati in passato e non voglio che questo... Cioè parlare nella lingua di un ragazzo, un ex, e fare le nostre battute e dire cose in modi che abbiamo inventato insieme e poi girarmi e vedere questo uomo nuovo completamente diverso di fronte a me che non capisce... e pensa che io abbia questo strano modo di parlare che non è divertente o simpatico o sexy ma è solo strano.

OLIVER. Quindi non ha capito cosa stessi...

BERNADETTE. No, no. Ha capito. Parlavamo la stessa lingua. Solo era

just as if English had been... okay imagine you've got a cheese grater. One of those cheese graters with the four different sides that grates the four different types of cheese gratings. It's like each one of those sides is a different relationship and while I was with Stuart I was grating my cheese on one side of the grater and the cheese came out in a really weird shape that we'd, I dunno, designed together. Then when I was with Clint I kept grating my cheese on the same weird side out of habit and Clint would lift up the grater, look at the grated cheese and be like 'what the fuck?' like 'this isn't the mature cheddar that I know and love.'

OLIVER. Cheese is language.

BERNADETTE. Yeah.

OLIVER. You went out with a Clint?

BERNADETTE. He was actually lactose intolerant. Not metaphorically... he genuinely struggled with dairy.

OLIVER. Well I'm really good with dairy. Like I have a very capable stomach.

BERNADETTE. I want you to tell me all of your things so that I never have to lift the grater up and find someone else's cheese in our kitchen.

OLIVER. Metaphorically...?

BERNADETTE. Yeah.

OLIVER. Right.

BERNADETTE. Oliver, please.

come se fosse... Okay, immagina di avere una grattugia. Una di quelle grattugie con quattro lati diversi che grattugia il formaggio in modi diversi. È come se ognuno di questi lati fosse una relazione diversa e mentre stavo con Stuart grattugiavo il mio formaggio su un lato della grattugia e il formaggio veniva fuori in una forma davvero strana che avevamo, non so, progettato insieme. Poi quando stavo con Clint continuavo a grattugiare il mio formaggio dallo stesso strano lato per abitudine e Clint sollevava la grattugia, guardava il formaggio grattugiato e diceva "ma che cazzo?", tipo "questo non è il cheddar maturo che conosco e amo".

OLIVER. Il formaggio è lingua.

BERNADETTE. Già.

OLIVER. Sei uscita con un Clint?

BERNADETTE. In realtà era intollerante al lattosio. Non metaforicamente... aveva serie difficoltà con i latticini.

OLIVER. Beh, io me la cavo coi latticini. Cioè ho uno stomaco molto competente.

BERNADETTE. Voglio che tu mi dica tutte le robe vostre in modo che non debba mai alzare la grattugia e trovare il formaggio di qualcun'altra nella nostra cucina.

OLIVER. Metaforicamente...?

BERNADETTE. Sì.

OLIVER. Giusto.

BERNADETTE. Oliver, per favore.

Pause.

OLIVER. Okay. Errrrm. Well, I can't remember most of them. But we... okay so we started calling each other... babycakes.

BERNADETTE. Babycakes?

OLIVER. It started off ironically. But by the end it just felt almost natural. Don't look at me.

BERNADETTE. Babycakes?

OLIVER. This is horrible.

BERNADETTE. I just want all the stuff we say to each other to be stuff that we haven't said a million times before. Or at least like we're saying it in a new way that is just... I know this is ridiculous.

OLIVER. It is ridiculous.

BERNADETTE. I'm sorry.

OLIVER. You're being neurotic.

BERNADETTE. I'm not neurotic.

OLIVER. I know but you're being it.

BERNADETTE. I know.

OLIVER. I love you.

Silence.

BERNADETTE. Have you said that before?

OLIVER. Yeah.

BERNADETTE. To other people?

OLIVER. Yeah.

Pause.

BERNADETTE. Still sounds pretty good, I guess.

Pausa.

OLIVER. Okay... Errrrm. Beh, molte non me le ricordo. Ma noi... okay, abbiamo iniziato a chiamarci...pasticcino.

BERNADETTE. Pasticcino?

OLIVER. È iniziato in modo ironico. Ma alla fine ci suonava quasi naturale. Non mi guardare.

BERNADETTE. Pasticcino?

OLIVER. È orribile.

BERNADETTE. Voglio solo che le cose che ci diciamo non siano cose che abbiamo già detto un milione di volte. O almeno tipo dirle in un modo nuovo che è davvero... so che è ridicolo.

OLIVER. È ridicolo.

BERNADETTE. Scusa.

OLIVER. Stai facendo la nevrotica.

BERNADETTE. Non sono nevrotica.

OLIVER. Lo so ma lo stai facendo.

BERNADETTE. Lo so.

OLIVER. Ti amo.

Silenzio.

BERNADETTE. L'hai già detto in passato?

OLIVER. Sì.

BERNADETTE. Ad altre persone?

OLIVER. Sì.

Pausa.

BERNADETTE. Suona comunque abbastanza bene, credo.

*	*
OLIVER. Can't wait to see you. I love you.	OLIVER. Non vedo l'ora di vederti. Ti amo.
*	*
BERNADETTE. Happy birthday! I love you.	BERNADETTE. Buon compleanno! Ti amo.
*	*
OLIVER. Merry Christmas! I love you.	OLIVER. Buon Natale! Ti amo.
*	*
BERNADETTE. Break a leg, I love you.	BERNADETTE. In bocca al lupo, ti amo.
*	*
OLIVER. Yeah, you sign the lease now, I'll sign it when I get there. Yeah, I love you.	OLIVER. Sì, tu firma il contratto adesso, io lo firmo quando arrivo. Sì, ti amo.
*	*
BERNADETTE. Yeah, of course I love you. I'm sorry.	BERNADETTE. Sì, certo che ti amo. Mi dispiace.
*	*
OLIVER. Listen, just listen, I love you. Why wouldn't they?	OLIVER. Ascolta, ascolta e basta, ti amo. Perché non dovrebbero?
*	*
BERNADETTE. I love you, okay? I love you. But I need to focus right now. I've left the dishes.	BERNADETTE. Ti amo, okay? Ti amo. Ma ora ho bisogno di concentrarmi adesso. Ho lasciato i piatti da lavare.
*	*
OLIVER. I love you.	OLIVER. Ti amo.
*	*
BERNADETTE. I love you.	BERNADETTE. Ti amo.
*	*
OLIVER. Ninety-eight.	OLIVER. Novantotto.
BERNADETTE. Thirteen. Good luck. Got your speech?	BERNADETTE. Tredici. Buona fortuna. Hai il discorso?

OLIVER *nods*.

Lovou.

OLIVER *nods*.

Lovou.

OLIVER. Lovou.

*

OLIVER. I saw Julie today.

BERNADETTE. Oh yeah? What do you want for dinner?

OLIVER. I don't mind.

BERNADETTE. I want burgers.

OLIVER. Burgers are fine.

BERNADETTE. Big old beef burgers with gravy and ketchup.

OLIVER. She's put a bit of weight on.

BERNADETTE. Julie? I thought she went on Atkins.

OLIVER. Didn't work.

Silence.

But I was talking to her about the stuff I've been doing recently, playing with texture and instrumentation and stuff. Polyphony. And she was saying that she knows this lyricist who's pretty much the next big / thing. And she...

BERNADETTE. You know when I was little I didn't think songs had words in them.

OLIVER. Bernadette, I was right in the middle of a story.

OLIVER *annuisce*.

Tivubi.

OLIVER *annuisce*.

Tivubi.

OLIVER. Tivubi.

*

OLIVER. Ho visto Julie oggi.

BERNADETTE. Ah sì? Cosa vuoi per cena?

OLIVER. È uguale.

BERNADETTE. Io voglio degli hamburger.

OLIVER. Gli hamburger van bene.

BERNADETTE. Dei bei grandi hamburger di manzo con salsa gravy e ketchup.

OLIVER. Ha messo su un po' di peso.

BERNADETTE. Julie? Pensavo seguisse la dieta Atkins.

OLIVER. Non ha funzionato.

Silenzio.

Comunque le stavo dicendo a cosa ho lavorato recente, riguardo il tessuto musicale e la strumentazione e cose del genere. Polifonia. E mi diceva che conosce questo paroliere che è praticamente la prossima grande / stella. E lei...

BERNADETTE. Sai quando ero piccola non pensavo che le canzoni contenessero delle parole.

OLIVER. Bernadette, ero nel bel mezzo di una storia.

BERNADETTE. Sorry. Carry on.

OLIVER. I hate it when you do that.

BERNADETTE. I was enjoying it. Carry on.

OLIVER. I can literally see you drifting / off

BERNADETTE. I was listening. Julie's clever and loves carbohydrates.

OLIVER. There's always this moment with you when something I say makes you go 'oh yeah, that sounds a lot like my life' and / then you're off thinking about...

BERNADETTE. That's unfair. / You're being really unfair now.

OLIVER. You used to think songs didn't have words in them?

BERNADETTE. Yeah.

OLIVER. That's stupid.

BERNADETTE. I was little.

OLIVER. So what... What did you think they sang?

Pause.

BERNADETTE. Vowel sounds. Like kind of improvised vowel sounds in tune with the, I dunno, the rhythm. Like:

She sings a vowel-sound melody.

OLIVER. But you could... you knew / words.

BERNADETTE. Oh yeah I knew about words. That there were words. And I was speaking them by then, I was speaking. I just didn't know they were in...

BERNADETTE. Scusa. Continua.

OLIVER. Odio quando fai così.

BERNADETTE. Mi stava piacendo. Continua.

OLIVER. Hai la testa letteralmente / altrove

BERNADETTE. Stavo ascoltando. Julie è intelligente e ama i carboidrati.

OLIVER. C'è sempre questo momento con te quando qualcosa che dico ti fa dire "oh sì, assomiglia molto alla mia vita" e / poi ti metti a pensare a...

BERNADETTE. Non è giusto. Sei veramente ingiusto adesso.

OLIVER. Credevi che le canzoni non contenessero parole?

BERNADETTE. Già.

OLIVER. È stupido.

BERNADETTE. Ero piccola.

OLIVER. E cosa...cosa pensavi cantassero?

Pausa.

BERNADETTE. Suoni vocalici. Tipo una specie di suoni vocalici improvvisati in sintonia con, non so, il ritmo. Tipo:

Canta una melodia di vocali.

OLIVER. Ma potevi...conoscevi / le parole.

BERNADETTE. Oh sì, conoscevo le parole. Che esistevano le parole. E le usavo già allora, le usavo. Solo che non sapevo che fossero nelle...

OLIVER. Songs.

Pause.

Right.

BERNADETTE. You okay?

OLIVER. Yeah.

BERNADETTE. You're a bit serious today.

OLIVER. Sorry.

BERNADETTE. I'm sorry for interrupting you.

OLIVER. Sorry if I've been a bit serious.

BERNADETTE. Where did you see fat Julie?

OLIVER. What?

BERNADETTE. Julie. Where did you see her?

OLIVER. Oh. The supermarket. She was buying falafel.

*

BERNADETTE. Thirty-six.

OLIVER. Six.

Long pause.

I'm sorry.

BERNADETTE. Tough day?

Pause.

OLIVER. Tough day.

BERNADETTE. Mine fine. Settled the Wilson case.

Pause.

OLIVER. I'm glad.

BERNADETTE. Zero?

OLIVER. Canzoni.

Pausa.

Bene.

BERNADETTE. Tutto okay?

OLIVER. Sì.

BERNADETTE. Sei un po' serio oggi.

OLIVER. Scusa.

BERNADETTE. Scusa per averti interrotto.

OLIVER. Scusami se sono stato un po' serio.

BERNADETTE. Dove hai visto la grassa Julie?

OLIVER. Cosa?

BERNADETTE. Julie. Dove l'hai vista?

OLIVER. Oh. Al supermercato. Stava comprando dei falafel.

*

BERNADETTE. Trentasei.

OLIVER. Sei.

Lunga pausa.

Mi dispiace.

BERNADETTE. Giornata pesante?

Pausa.

OLIVER. Giornata pesante.

BERNADETTE. Mia bene. Sistemato il caso Wilson.

OLIVER. Son contento.

BERNADETTE. Zero?

OLIVER *nods*.

Joint custody. David gets weekends.
Good they compromised.

Pause.

OLIVER *nods*.

*

OLIVER. So?

BERNADETTE. I really love it.

OLIVER. You do?

BERNADETTE. I do.

OLIVER. You like the flutes? And the
little...

He hums a fanfare.

BERNADETTE. I do. I really love it.

OLIVER. Okay.

BERNADETTE. I've gotta go over
some stuff.

OLIVER. When does the trial start?

BERNADETTE. Tomorrow.

OLIVER. First big trial.

BERNADETTE. First big trial.

OLIVER. I hate words like really.

BERNADETTE. What?

OLIVER. I really love it. You said: I
really love it.

BERNADETTE. Okay...

OLIVER. Qualifiers.

BERNADETTE. Qualifiers?

OLIVER. I really love it. If you say: I
love it, that's like wow what a nice

OLIVER *annuisce*.

Affidamento condiviso. David
ottiene i weekend. Un buon
compromesso.

Pausa.

OLIVER *annuisce*.

*

OLIVER. Quindi?

BERNADETTE. Mi piace davvero.

OLIVER. Ti piace?

BERNADETTE. Sì.

OLIVER. Ti piacciono i flauti? E i
piccoli...

Canticchia una fanfara.

BERNADETTE. Sì. Mi piace davvero.

OLIVER. Okay.

BERNADETTE. Devo rivedere delle
cose.

OLIVER. Quando inizia il processo?

BERNADETTE. Domani.

OLIVER. Primo grande processo.

BERNADETTE. Primo grande
processo.

OLIVER. Odio le parole come davvero.

BERNADETTE. Cosa?

OLIVER. Mi piace davvero. Hai detto:
mi piace davvero.

BERNADETTE. Okay...

OLIVER. Avverbi.

BERNADETTE. Avverbi?

OLIVER. Mi piace davvero. Se dici: Mi
piace, è come dire wow che bel

compliment, she loves what I do. I really love it is like saying: Please believe that I like this thing. Believe it, believe it. Right, now let's just talk about my problems.

BERNADETTE. Whoa. That is really not. That is / not

OLIVER. The only time anyone has ever meant the word 'really' is when Eva Cassidy sings it in 'Over the Rainbow'.

BERNADETTE. Oliver.

OLIVER. She goes: Reeceaaally.

BERNADETTE. Oliver.

OLIVER. Reeceeeaaally.

BERNADETTE. You're insecure.

OLIVER. No, I'm not.

BERNADETTE. You're insecure about being insecure.

Pause.

OLIVER. No, I'm not.

BERNADETTE. I love your stuff. Okay?

OLIVER. Yeah.

BERNADETTE. Okay?

OLIVER. Yeah. With this stuff... I am just a bit...

BERNADETTE. Yeah. Listen, I've gotta go look over some stuff.

Pause.

OLIVER. I never thought I'd go out with a lawyer.

complimento, le piace quello che faccio. Mi piace davvero è come dire: Per favore, credi che mi piaccia questa cosa. Credici, credici. Bene, ora parliamo dei miei problemi.

BERNADETTE. Aspetta. Non è davvero così. Non / è

OLIVER. L'unica volta che qualcuno ha mai usato seriamente la parola "davvero" è quando Luca Carboni la canta in "Mi ami davvero".

BERNADETTE. Oliver.

OLIVER. Quando dice: Davveroooo.

BERNADETTE. Oliver.

OLIVER. Davveroooo.

BERNADETTE. Sei insicuro.

OLIVER. No non lo sono.

BERNADETTE. Sei insicuro di essere insicuro.

Pausa.

OLIVER. No non lo sono.

BERNADETTE. Mi piace quello che fai. Okay?

OLIVER. Sì.

BERNADETTE. Okay?

OLIVER. Sì... Con queste cose... Sono solo un po'...

BERNADETTE. Sì. Ascolta, devo andare a rivedere alcune cose.

Pausa.

OLIVER. Non avrei mai pensato che sarei uscito con un avvocato.

BERNADETTE. Well I always thought I'd be one so...

OLIVER. I know.

BERNADETTE. Sorry I can't live to your standards.

OLIVER. That is really not what I'm saying.

Pause.

That's not what I said.

Pause.

BERNADETTE. Can we talk about this later?

OLIVER. Sure.

Silence.

*

OLIVER. Look, I need to get this done. Let's just talk about this later okay?

*

BERNADETTE. Listen, I've got a presentation tomorrow. Can we talk about this later?

*

OLIVER. Just stop, just stop. I think it'd be better if we talked about this a bit... when we've cooled off.

*

BERNADETTE. I've got to go, I'm late. We'll just talk about it later.

*

BERNADETTE. Beh, ho sempre pensato che lo sarei diventata, quindi...

OLIVER. Lo so.

BERNADETTE. Mi dispiace di non poter vivere all'altezza dei tuoi standard.

OLIVER. Non sto davvero dicendo questo.

Pausa.

Non ho detto questo.

Pausa.

BERNADETTE. Possiamo parlarne più tardi?

OLIVER. Certo.

Silenzio.

*

OLIVER. Senti, ho bisogno di finire questa cosa. Parliamone più tardi okay?

*

BERNADETTE. Ascolta, ho una presentazione domani. Possiamo parlarne più tardi?

*

OLIVER. Smettila, smettila. Credo che sarebbe meglio se ne parlassimo un po'... quando ci saremo calmati.

*

BERNADETTE. Devo andare, sono in ritardo. Ne parleremo più tardi.

*

OLIVER. I think it's really important we talk about this and I'm glad you brought it up.

*

BERNADETTE. I really do want to talk about it though.

*

OLIVER. Yeah.

*

BERNADETTE. Yeah.

*

All dialogue is shouted unless specified otherwise.

BERNADETTE. Just let me drive the car, Oliver. Don't fucking tell me how. No, no I am a better driver than you are. I am better than you are at driving. He wasn't anywhere fucking near me. Oh you're scared, scared. You're always fucking scared. You do this 'Oh I'm scared for us, it was heartbreaking for me, I was deeply hurt' bullshit. I am concentrating on the road.

OLIVER. Jesus Christ. I'm letting you drive the... Bernadette, you're checking your phone on the motorway... I'm not saying that I'm not saying that I'm not. I was scared. You were inches away from... Yes, I was scared, you almost ploughed into a... When do I do that? You are cold, Bernadette. You're cold. Jesus, concentrate on the...

A sudden intake of breath.

OLIVER. Penso sia davvero importante parlarne e sono contento che tu abbia tirato fuori l'argomento.

*

BERNADETTE. Voglio davvero parlarne però.

*

OLIVER. Già.

*

BERNADETTE. Già.

*

Tutto il dialogo è urlato se non specificato diversamente.

BERNADETTE. Lasciami guidare la macchina, Oliver. Non dirmi come, cazzo. No, no, io guido meglio di te. Sono più bravo di te a guidare. Non era affatto vicino a me, cazzo. Oh, hai paura, paura. Hai sempre paura, cazzo. Fai questa scenetta del cazzo del "Oh ho paura per noi, è stato straziante per me, sono stato profondamente ferito". Mi sto concentrando sulla strada.

OLIVER. Cristo santo. Ti sto lasciando guidare la... Bernadette, stai usando il telefono in autostrada... Non sto dicendo che non sto dicendo che non lo sono. Avevo paura. Eri a pochi centimetri da... Sì, ho avuto paura, hai quasi tamponato un... Quand'è che farei così? Sei fredda, Bernadette. Sei fredda. Cristo, concentrati sulla...

Inspira repentinamente.

BERNADETTE (*mumbled*). He was...
he came out of nowhere.

Long pause.

Stop it.

OLIVER. I wasn't saying anything.

BERNADETTE. Sometimes you don't
have to say things.

OLIVER. Yeah, sometimes.

*

OLIVER. Twelve.

BERNADETTE. Eighteen.

Silence.

OLIVER. This good.

BERNADETTE. Put extra cayenne in
beans.

OLIVER. Thanks.

Pause.

Hair nice.

BERNADETTE *sighs*.

BERNADETTE. Thanks.

*

OLIVER. We are happy aren't we?

BERNADETTE. Yes.

OLIVER. You're happy?

BERNADETTE. Yes.

OLIVER. And I'm happy.

BERNADETTE. Yes.

OLIVER. Good.

BERNADETTE. When you're happy,
you're still not happy all the time are
you?

BERNADETTE (mormorando). Era... è
sbucato dal nulla.

Lunga pausa.

Smettila.

OLIVER. Non stavo dicendo niente.

BERNADETTE. A volte non c'è
bisogno di dire niente.

OLIVER. Sì, a volte.

*

OLIVER. Dodici.

BERNADETTE. Diciotto.

Pausa.

OLIVER. Bene così.

BERNADETTE. Metti più pepe di
Caienna nei fagioli.

OLIVER. Grazie.

Pausa.

Bei capelli.

BERNADETTE *sospira*.

BERNADETTE. Grazie.

*

OLIVER. Noi siamo felici vero?

BERNADETTE. Sì.

OLIVER. Tu sei felice?

BERNADETTE. Sì.

OLIVER. E io sono felice.

BERNADETTE. Sì.

OLIVER. Bene.

BERNADETTE. Quando sei felice, non
sei comunque sempre felice, vero?

OLIVER. No. That'd be weird.

BERNADETTE. It'd be creepy.

OLIVER. It'd be downright creepy.

BERNADETTE. Yeah. You need light
and / shade.

OLIVER. Light and shade. Yeah.
Otherwise you'd get sweaty and /
overheat.

BERNADETTE. We only argue because
we know each other so well.

OLIVER. I'm really glad we're on the
same page about this.

BERNADETTE. Me too.

Pause.

Why did you and Julie / break up?

OLIVER. Because it was just time.

BERNADETTE. Why was / it time?

OLIVER. There were a whole host of
reasons.

Pause.

BERNADETTE. Oliver. I'm sorry that I
make more money than you.

*

OLIVER. Well, you know what it is? It's
censorship.

BERNADETTE. It's not / censorship.

OLIVER. Of course / it is.

BERNADETTE. It's not censorship.
You can say anything you like
just... concisely.

OLIVER. That's bullshit, Bernadette.

BERNADETTE. It's not bullshit, Oliver.
I'm not saying it's a good law. / It's

OLIVER. No. Sarebbe strano.

BERNADETTE. Sarebbe inquietante.

OLIVER. Sarebbe davvero inquietante.

BERNADETTE. Sì. C'è bisogno di luce
e / ombra.

OLIVER. Luce e ombra. Sì. Altrimenti
si suda e ci si surriscalda.

BERNADETTE. Litighiamo solo perché
ci conosciamo molto bene.

OLIVER. Sono davvero contento che
siamo sulla stessa lunghezza d'onda
a riguardo.

BERNADETTE. Anch'io.

Pausa.

Perché tu e Julie / vi siete lasciati?

OLIVER. Perché era il momento.

BERNADETTE. Perché era / il
momento?

OLIVER. C'era tutta una serie di motivi.

Pausa.

BERNADETTE. Oliver. Mi dispiace di
guadagnare più soldi di te.

*

OLIVER. Beh, sai cos'è questo? È
censura.

BERNADETTE. Non è / censura.

OLIVER. Certo / lo è.

BERNADETTE. Non è censura. Puoi
dire tutto quello che vuoi solo... in
modo conciso.

OLIVER. È una merda, Bernadette.

BERNADETTE. Non è una merda,
Oliver. Non sto dicendo che è una

not. I'm just saying it's not censorship.

OLIVER. You're pussyfooting, Bernadette. Fence-sitting. There are things you can't say in one hundred and forty words.

BERNADETTE. I know that.

OLIVER. Like wedding speeches, or presentations or epic poetry. Songs. A lot of songs have / more than one hundred and forty words in.

BERNADETTE. I'm with you. I agree with you. This was a thing before. Why are you so riled up all of a sudden?

OLIVER. The polls are showing a / serious turn towards

BERNADETTE. The polls have been the same for weeks. Ever since they got in. Before / even.

OLIVER. Hip hop is as good as dead.

BERNADETTE. They're talking about a daily limit. All the errm, you know, the hip-hop rappers, they could do half a song and then come in and do the second half the next day.

OLIVER. It'll cost too much. Studio time is fucking expensive. The big names will be fine but the young ones...

BERNADETTE. Well maybe they'll waive it in special circumstances.

OLIVER. What? Like your divorce trials.

BERNADETTE. No.

buona legge. / Non lo è. Sto solo dicendo che non è censura.

OLIVER. Stai tergiversando, Bernadette. Sei indecisa. Ci sono cose che non si possono dire in centoquaranta parole.

BERNADETTE. Questo lo so.

OLIVER. Come i discorsi di nozze, o le esposizioni o i poemi epici. Le canzoni. Molte canzoni hanno / più di centoquaranta parole.

BERNADETTE. Sono d'accordo con te. Davvero. Questo lo sapevamo già. Perché all'improvviso sei così irritato?

OLIVER. I sondaggi mostrano una / preoccupante svolta verso

BERNADETTE. I sondaggi sono gli stessi da settimane. Da quando sono entrati. Prima / anche.

OLIVER. L'hip hop è bello che spacciato.

BERNADETTE. Stanno parlando di un limite giornaliero. Tutti gli ehm, sì, i rapper hip-hop, potrebbero fare metà canzone e poi tornare il giorno dopo per la seconda metà.

OLIVER. Costerà troppo. Il tempo in studio costa una marea cazzo. I grandi nomi andranno bene, ma i giovani...

BERNADETTE. Beh, forse lo revocheranno in circostanze speciali.

OLIVER. Cosa? Come i tuoi processi di divorzio.

BERNADETTE. No.

OLIVER. You know what it does? It alienates the working class.

BERNADETTE. Does it?

OLIVER. It's elitist.

BERNADETTE. How? Everyone gets the same / number of...

OLIVER. Yes everyone gets the same number of words but it's the working classes that need them most. The powerful stay powerful because nobody's got enough words to challenge them, nepotism multiplies exponentially and becomes basically the only way of getting jobs because well, who's got enough words for interviews? Social mobility doesn't exist in this. Class mobility is... it's polarised. It's all polarised. Protest is banned. They're cutting the working class off like a bad bit of meat. Like how does anyone rise up in this? How do you say 'Hello you, everyone, hello, I'm here and I'm fucking good,' you know. I'm good. Nobody can tell each other they're good any more. But if you've got money you're fine because you wear it don't you? You wear it in your clothes and in the way you walk and in the buildings that you go in and out of. But the working class – Jesus! – the working class can't get their foot through the door. You know I thought you'd be angry about this, Bernadette.

BERNADETTE. Why's that, Oliver? Because I'm one of them?

OLIVER. Everyone should be angry about this.

OLIVER. Sai cosa fa? Aliena la classe operaia.

BERNADETTE. Dici?

OLIVER. È elitario.

BERNADETTE. Come? Tutti ricevono lo stesso / numero di...

OLIVER. Sì tutti ricevono lo stesso numero di parole ma sono le classi operaie che ne hanno più bisogno. I potenti rimangono potenti perché nessuno ha abbastanza parole per sfidarli, il nepotismo si moltiplica esponenzialmente e diventa fondamentalmente l'unico modo per ottenere un lavoro perché beh, chi ha abbastanza parole per i colloqui? La mobilità sociale non esiste in tutto ciò. La mobilità di classe è... è polarizzata. È tutto polarizzato. Protestare è vietato. Stanno tagliando fuori la classe operaia come un pezzo di carne avariata. Cioè come si fa a sollevarsi in questa situazione? Come si fa a dire "Buongiorno, buongiorno a tutti, sono qui e sto bene, cazzo". Sto bene. Nessuno può più dire agli altri che sta bene. Ma se hai i soldi sei a posto perché li indossi, no? Li indossi nei tuoi vestiti e nel modo in cui cammini e negli edifici in cui entri ed esci. Ma la classe operaia, Cristo!, la classe operaia in quegli edifici non può nemmeno metterci il piede. Sai pensavo che questo ti avrebbe fatta arrabbiare, Bernadette.

BERNADETTE. Perché dici così, Oliver? Perché sono una di loro?

OLIVER. Questa cosa dovrebbe far arrabbiare chiunque.

BERNADETTE. Don't patronise me.

OLIVER. They're banning democracy.

BERNADETTE. They're not banning anything.

OLIVER. They're limiting it.

BERNADETTE. Words are the weapons of the middle class. Not the working class. I read that.

OLIVER. There is no more middle class. It polarises everything. People who need words to prove themselves and people who don't.

BERNADETTE. Apparently it's been really good in Norway.

OLIVER. For what?

BERNADETTE. I don't know, Oliver, for the way people talk to each other?

OLIVER. What because they don't any more?

BERNADETTE. Maybe.

OLIVER. I wasn't patronising you.

BERNADETTE. Okay.

OLIVER. I didn't mean to.

BERNADETTE. Okay.

OLIVER. I just think that you, you know, come from a certain background and they, right now, need some sticking up for but it's me / that's really trying to do...

BERNADETTE. What, that's gracing us working-class people with his support?

BERNADETTE. Non fare il superiore con me.

OLIVER. Stanno mettendo al bando la democrazia.

BERNADETTE. Non stanno mettendo al bando nulla.

OLIVER. La stanno limitando.

BERNADETTE. Le parole sono le armi della classe media. Non della classe operaia. L'ho letto.

OLIVER. Non esiste più la classe media. Questo polarizza tutto. Chi ha bisogno di parole per dimostrare quanto vale e chi no.

BERNADETTE. Sembra che abbia funzionato bene in Norvegia.

OLIVER. Per cosa?

BERNADETTE. Non lo so, Oliver, per il modo in cui le persone si parlano?

OLIVER. Sarà perché non lo fanno più?

BERNADETTE. Forse.

OLIVER. Non stavo facendo il superiore.

BERNADETTE. Okay.

OLIVER. Non volevo.

BERNADETTE. Okay.

OLIVER. Penso solo che tu, sai, venga da un certo background e loro, in questo momento, hanno bisogno di un po' di sostegno, ma sono io quello / che sta davvero cercando di...

BERNADETTE. Cosa, di onorare noi della classe operaia con il suo sostegno?

OLIVER. No.

BERNADETTE. You're not a better person than me.

OLIVER. I know that.

BERNADETTE. I'm a lawyer.

Pause.

OLIVER. Yeah, and there are lots of people who haven't been as lucky.

BERNADETTE. I'm not lucky.

OLIVER. Alright, who haven't worked as hard as you have maybe but I don't think they deserve to be cut out by a law that limits how much they can say.

BERNADETTE. How much everyone can say.

OLIVER. Yes, how much everyone can say. But it takes more words if you don't have money, Bernadette.

BERNADETTE. I am not my background.

OLIVER. I know that.

BERNADETTE. No, I'm not my background.

OLIVER (*robotically*). Yes, and you're not a lawyer and you're not my girlfriend. You're little bits of / all of those things.

BERNADETTE. Yes and I'm not Bernadette summed up in one word or...

OLIVER. You're / little bits of...

BERNADETTE. I'm little bits of all of those things and yes, more and I'm not something that is finished. Soon, now even, I'm going to be little bits

OLIVER. No.

BERNADETTE. Non sei una persona migliore di me.

OLIVER. Questo lo so.

BERNADETTE. Io sono un avvocato.

Pausa.

OLIVER. Sì, e ci sono molte persone che non sono state così fortunate.

BERNADETTE. Io non sono fortunata.

OLIVER. Va bene, che non hanno lavorato duramente come te, forse, ma non credo che meritino di essere tagliate fuori da una legge che limita quanto possono dire.

BERNADETTE. Quanto tutti possono dire.

OLIVER. Sì, quanto tutti possono dire. Ma ci vogliono più parole se non si hanno soldi, Bernadette.

BERNADETTE. Io non sono il mio background.

OLIVER. Questo lo so.

BERNADETTE. No, non sono il mio background.

OLIVER (*con voce da robot*). Sì, e tu non sei un avvocato e non sei la mia ragazza. Sei piccoli pezzi di / tutte queste cose.

BERNADETTE. Sì e non sono Bernadette riassunta in una parola o...

OLIVER. Sei / piccoli pezzi di...

BERNADETTE. Sono piccoli pezzi di tutte queste cose e sì, di più e non sono qualcosa di già finito. Presto, anche adesso, sarò anche piccoli

of other things as well and you're going to have to be okay with that.

OLIVER. I know that, Bernadette. I didn't mean...

BERNADETTE. It's a bad law. I don't think it's going to pass.

OLIVER. How are you going to explain all of those little things in one hundred and forty words?

BERNADETTE. Maybe I'm not going to explain it.

OLIVER. Then nobody's gonna know who you are.

BERNADETTE. Well... I don't... Oliver, I was agreeing with you. It's a bad law. It's a bad law. I don't think it's going to pass.

OLIVER. Good.

BERNADETTE. Hey.

OLIVER. I'm going on the march tomorrow.

BERNADETTE. I thought we were going to the aquarium.

*

BERNADETTE. Twenty-six.

OLIVER. 123,205,750.

Pause.

BERNADETTE. You've improved.

OLIVER. Words humans use in lifetime.

BERNADETTE. A lot.

OLIVER. Used to.

BERNADETTE. Now?

pezzi di altre cose e tu dovrai fartene una ragione.

OLIVER. Lo so, Bernadette. Non intendevo...

BERNADETTE. È una brutta legge. Non credo che passerà.

OLIVER. Come farai a spiegare tutte queste piccole cose in centoquaranta parole?

BERNADETTE. Forse non le spiegherò.

OLIVER. Allora nessuno saprà chi sei.

BERNADETTE. Beh... io non... Oliver, ti stavo dando ragione. È una brutta legge. È una brutta legge. Non credo che passerà.

OLIVER. Bene.

BERNADETTE. Ehi.

OLIVER. Andrò alla marcia domani.

BERNADETTE. Pensavo che saremmo andati all'acquario.

*

BERNADETTE. Ventisei.

OLIVER. 123.205.750.

Pausa.

BERNADETTE. Sei migliorato.

OLIVER. Parole usate in una vita dalle persone.

BERNADETTE. Molte.

OLIVER. Prima.

BERNADETTE. Ora?

OLIVER. 4,011,350.

BERNADETTE. Still a lot.

OLIVER. If talking from birth.

BERNADETTE. Unlikely.

OLIVER. 119,195,400 gone.

BERNADETTE. Memorised?

OLIVER. Per person. Per lifetime.
Extinct.

BERNADETTE. Melodramatic.

OLIVER. Sad. Really sad.

Pause.

BERNADETTE. Qualifiers. They can
go first.

*

OLIVER. I'm busy on Friday.

Pause.

BERNADETTE. You're busy Friday.

OLIVER. I'm busy Friday.

BERNADETTE. Why are you busy
Friday?

OLIVER. Okay right well, listen. They
want us quiet. Hushed. That's the
point, that's the point of the law,
right? So I thought noise. Noise.

BERNADETTE. Noise?

OLIVER. Noise. Doesn't matter what
we're saying. Doesn't matter how.
We don't even need to be saying
anything. Word-wise. Just needs to
be loud. And it's actually happening
on Friday. It was just this thing that
I thought of and now it's...
Thousands of people screaming
through London. We're bringing

OLIVER. 4.011.350.

BERNADETTE. Comunque molte.

OLIVER. Se parlano dalla nascita.

BERNADETTE. Improbabile.

OLIVER. 119,195,400 perse.

BERNADETTE. Memorizzato?

OLIVER. Per persona. Nella vita.
Estinte.

BERNADETTE. Melodrammatico.

OLIVER. Triste. Davvero triste.

Pause.

BERNADETTE. Avverbi. Puoi metterli
per primi.

*

OLIVER. Ho da fare venerdì.

Pause.

BERNADETTE. Hai da fare venerdì.

OLIVER. Ho da fare venerdì.

BERNADETTE. Cosa devi fare
venerdì?

OLIVER. Okay, bene, ascolta. Ci
vogliono quieti. Silenziosi. Questo è
il punto, questo è il punto della
legge, giusto? Quindi ho pensato al
rumore. Il rumore.

BERNADETTE. Rumore?

OLIVER. Rumore. Non importa cosa
stiamo dicendo. Non importa come.
Non c'è nemmeno bisogno che
diciamo nulla. A livello di parole.
Deve solo essere rumoroso. E
accadrà proprio venerdì. Era solo
una cosa che ho pensato e ora è...
Migliaia di persone che urlano per

horns, gongs, trumpets. A couple of guys are bringing a timpani set on a wheely-platform. They're gonna take turns pushing the platform and playing the drums.

BERNADETTE. But aren't you proving them right?

OLIVER. Who?

BERNADETTE. Them. Capital T-H them.

OLIVER. How?

BERNADETTE. Walking through London shouting your heads off.

OLIVER. Of course not, we're being free and using, you know, the human rights that we have.

BERNADETTE. Oh right. Yes. Of course.

OLIVER. You'll be able to hear us from space. Space.

BERNADETTE. But there's nobody in space.

OLIVER. Bernadette. You will be able to hear our protest march from space. I mean that is... sick. That's a fucking cool protest march if you can hear it from... Democracy is all about...

BERNADETTE. What is democracy about, Oliver?

Pause.

OLIVER. Democracy is about voices being heard. On Friday our voices are going to be heard through Westminster, across the channel, across the whole freaking world and, yes, into space. And,

Londra. Porteremo corni, gong, trombe. Un paio di ragazzi porteranno un set di timpani su un carretto. Faranno a turno per spingerlo e suonare i tamburi.

BERNADETTE. Ma non gli stai dando ragione?

OLIVER. A chi?

BERNADETTE. A loro. L maiuscolo O loro.

OLIVER. Come?

BERNADETTE. Camminando per Londra e urlando a squarciagola.

OLIVER. Certo che no, siamo liberi e sfruttiamo, cioè, i diritti umani che abbiamo.

BERNADETTE. Oh giusto. Sì. certo.

OLIVER. Ci si potrà sentire dallo spazio. Dallo spazio.

BERNADETTE. Ma non c'è nessuno nello spazio.

OLIVER. Bernadette. Si potrà sentire la nostra marcia di protesta dallo spazio. Voglio dire che è... epico. È una cazzo di marcia di protesta fighissima se puoi sentirla da... La democrazia è tutta...

BERNADETTE. Cos'è la democrazia, Oliver?

Pausa.

OLIVER. La democrazia consiste nel farsi sentire. Venerdì le nostre voci saranno sentite per Westminster, al di là della Manica, in tutto il maledetto mondo e, sì, nello spazio.

Bernadette, it was kind of all my idea.

BERNADETTE. Isn't there no sound in space?

Pause.

OLIVER. I don't think that's right.

*

OLIVER. Forty-six

BERNADETTE. Nine.

OLIVER. Okay. Right. I need to just tell you this now... at the noise...

BERNADETTE. No, don't.

OLIVER. No, I do.

BERNADETTE. Oliver, don't. Got nothing to give back.

*

BERNADETTE. Coverage was great.

OLIVER. Yeah.

BERNADETTE. Really. The coverage was everywhere.

OLIVER. Not too bad, yeah.

BERNADETTE. You looked handsome on TV.

OLIVER. Thanks. Jealous?

BERNADETTE. What? No. Of course not.

Pause.

Are you happy with it?

OLIVER. With what?

BERNADETTE. The protest.

OLIVER. Well it's not really about me being happy with it.

E, Bernadette, è stata un po' tutta una mia idea.

BERNADETTE. Non c'è silenzio assoluto nello spazio?

Pausa.

OLIVER. Non credo sia corretto.

*

OLIVER. Quarantasei.

BERNADETTE. Nove.

OLIVER. Okay. Bene. Devo solo dirti questo ora... al rumore...

BERNADETTE. Non farlo.

OLIVER. No, lo faccio.

BERNADETTE. Oliver, no. Non ho di che controbattere.

*

BERNADETTE. Copertura mediatica eccellente.

OLIVER. Già.

BERNADETTE. Davvero. Ne han parlato ovunque.

OLIVER. Non male, sì.

BERNADETTE. Eri bello in TV.

OLIVER. Grazie. Gelosa?

BERNADETTE. Cosa? No. Certo che no.

Pausa.

Soddisfatto?

OLIVER. Di cosa?

BERNADETTE. Della protesta.

OLIVER. Beh, in realtà il punto non è che io ne sia soddisfatto.

BERNADETTE. Isn't it?

Pause.

OLIVER. Bernadette.

BERNADETTE. Mmmm.

OLIVER. I need to... I'm really...

BERNADETTE. What?

OLIVER. I don't really know how to say...

BERNADETTE. Oliver.

OLIVER. I'm really sorry.

BERNADETTE. Reeceaaaally?

OLIVER (*steely*). Bernadette.

Silence.

BERNADETTE. What?

OLIVER. Today erm...

Pause.

BERNADETTE. What?

OLIVER. Please don't hate me. I think that would be probably more than I could, you know... take I guess.

BERNADETTE. What did you do?

OLIVER. I mean I know you do sometimes. Hate me. But it's always... fleeting. It's always short bursts of hate and even when I think it's going to be longer than that it isn't. But even those sometimes feel like deserts.

BERNADETTE. Oliver. What did you do?

Pause.

BERNADETTE. Ah no?

Pausa.

OLIVER. Bernadette.

BERNADETTE. Mmmm.

OLIVER. Devo... sono davvero...

BERNADETTE. Cosa?

OLIVER. Non so davvero cosa dire...

BERNADETTE. Oliver.

OLIVER. Mi dispiace davvero.

BERNADETTE. Davveroooo?

OLIVER (*freddamente*). Bernadette.

Silenzio.

BERNADETTE. Cosa?

OLIVER. Oggi ehm...

Pausa.

BERNADETTE. Cosa?

OLIVER. Per favore, non odiarmi. Penso che probabilmente sarebbe più di quanto potrei, sai... sopportare, credo.

BERNADETTE. Che cosa hai fatto?

OLIVER. Voglio dire che so che a volte lo fai. Odiarmi. Ma è sempre... passeggero. Sono sempre brevi esplosioni di odio e anche quando penso che dureranno a lungo non è così. Ma anche quelle a volte sembrano delle punizioni.

BERNADETTE. Oliver. Che cosa hai fatto?

Pausa.

OLIVER. Julie was at the march. She...
I tried to... I didn't try that hard.

Silence.

BERNADETTE *nods and turns away.*

We threw a brick through a window.

BERNADETTE. What?

OLIVER. Yeah. We threw a brick through a window.

BERNADETTE. You threw a brick through a window?

OLIVER. Yep. Of an HMV.

BERNADETTE. You threw a brick through the window of an HMV.

OLIVER. We did. I mean we threw a brick each. We didn't throw one together. I don't even know how you'd go about that. Probably wouldn't be a very good throw if we'd done that. In terms of power or accuracy.

BERNADETTE. That was the thing.

OLIVER. What? Yep. That was the thing.

BERNADETTE. Oh.

OLIVER. Yep. We didn't get caught or anything but I knew you'd be annoyed.

BERNADETTE. Yeah, I am... Oliver. I'm really...

Silence.

OLIVER. I love you.

OLIVER. C'era Julie alla marcia. Lei...
Ho provato a... Non così convintamente.

Silenzio.

BERNADETTE *annuisce e si volta.*

Abbiamo lanciato un mattone contro una finestra.

BERNADETTE. Cosa?

OLIVER. Sì. Abbiamo lanciato un mattone contro una finestra.

BERNADETTE. Avete lanciato un mattone contro una finestra?

OLIVER. Sì. Di un H&M.

BERNADETTE. Avete lanciato un mattone contro una finestra di un H&M.

OLIVER. Esatto. Voglio dire, abbiamo lanciato un mattone a testa. Non ne abbiamo lanciato uno insieme. Non so nemmeno come sarebbe possibile. Probabilmente non sarebbe stato un buon lancio se l'avessimo fatto così. In termini di potenza o precisione.

BERNADETTE. Dovevi dirmi questo.

OLIVER. Cosa? Sì. Dovevo dirti questo.

BERNADETTE. Oh.

OLIVER. Sì. Non ci siamo fatti beccare o altro ma sapevo che ti avrebbe infastidita.

BERNADETTE. Sì, sono... Oliver. Sono davvero...

Pausa.

OLIVER. Ti amo.

BERNADETTE. Yeah me too. I'm glad it was only one brick. Not like several bricks.

OLIVER. Yeah.

*

BERNADETTE. Thirty.

OLIVER. Two.

BERNADETTE. Choose carefully.

OLIVER. I apologise.

BERNADETTE. For what? Oliver, for what?

*

BERNADETTE. Morning.

OLIVER. Morning.

BERNADETTE. How are you feeling?

OLIVER. Okay.

BERNADETTE. Good.

OLIVER. We've done all we could.

BERNADETTE. You have.

OLIVER. If they're gonna pass this fascist fest of a law now, they were always gonna pass it.

Pause.

You don't think it's fascist.

BERNADETTE. I don't.

OLIVER. How can you think that?

BERNADETTE. I'm different from you.

Pause.

OLIVER. You're gonna be late to work.

BERNADETTE. They've cancelled it.

BERNADETTE. Sì, anch'io. Sono contenta sia stato solo un mattone. Non tipo diversi mattoni.

OLIVER. Sì.

*

BERNADETTE. Trenta.

OLIVER. Due.

BERNADETTE. Scegli attentamente.

OLIVER. Mi scuso.

BERNADETTE. Per cosa? Oliver, per cosa?

*

BERNADETTE. Giorno.

OLIVER. Giorno.

BERNADETTE. Come ti senti?

OLIVER. Okay.

BERNADETTE. Bene.

OLIVER. Abbiamo fatto tutto il possibile.

BERNADETTE. Tu sì.

OLIVER. Se approvano questa legge fascista ora, l'avrebbero approvata sempre.

Pausa.

Tu non pensi che sia fascista.

BERNADETTE. No.

OLIVER. Come puoi non pensarlo?

BERNADETTE. Sono diversa da te.

Pausa.

OLIVER. Farai tardi a lavoro.

BERNADETTE. È stato cancellato.

OLIVER. They've cancelled it?

BERNADETTE. All the courts are shut today. For the vote.

Pause.

OLIVER. That makes sense. This is more important, I suppose.

Silence.

*

OLIVER. Turn it on.

BERNADETTE. Okay.

OLIVER. Here we go.

BERNADETTE. Here we go.

Long silence. It should feel potentially endless.

OLIVER. Turn it off.

Silence.

BERNADETTE. I'm gonna have to gag myself at night.

OLIVER. What?

BERNADETTE. I talk in my sleep. You said I talk in my sleep. I'm gonna have to gag myself at night with like duct tape or a sock or something. Otherwise I'm just wasting. Just being wasteful.

OLIVER. Yeah.

BERNADETTE. I never thought they'd actually...

OLIVER. Yeah.

BERNADETTE. Go through with it.

OLIVER. Yeah.

BERNADETTE. And how can they... how can it go through so.

OLIVER. È stato cancellato?

BERNADETTE. Tutti i tribunali sono chiusi oggi. Per il voto.

Pausa.

OLIVER. Ha senso. Questo è più importante, credo.

Pausa.

*

OLIVER. Accendi.

BERNADETTE. Okay.

OLIVER. Eccoci.

BERNADETTE. Eccoci.

Un lungo silenzio. Dovrebbe sembrare potenzialmente infinito.

OLIVER. Spegni.

Silenzio.

BERNADETTE. Avrò bisogno di imbavagliarmi la notte.

OLIVER. Cosa?

BERNADETTE. Parlo nel sonno. Hai detto che parlo nel sonno. Dovrò imbavagliarmi di notte con del nastro adesivo o un calzino o qualcosa del genere. Altrimenti è solo uno spreco. È solo uno spreco.

OLIVER. Già.

BERNADETTE. Non ho mai pensato che sarebbero davvero...

OLIVER. Già.

BERNADETTE. Andati fino in fondo.

OLIVER. Già.

BERNADETTE. E come possono... come può passare così.

OLIVER. Soon. Yeah.

BERNADETTE. Monday.

OLIVER. They knew it was gonna pass.

BERNADETTE. They can't have. It was too close.

OLIVER. They had the votes.

BERNADETTE. I'm sorry, Oliver.

OLIVER. What for?

BERNADETTE. That you didn't win.

Pause.

OLIVER. We didn't win, Bernadette.

BERNADETTE. Yeah, I know. But I'm just sorry that you didn't. You tried really hard.

OLIVER. Don't patronise me.

BERNADETTE. I really wasn't.

OLIVER. I can't tell any more.

Pause.

BERNADETTE. Okay. Right. So we've got errrm we've got four days, four and a bit days before you know, it kicks in. I really think it's important that we make the most of it. We should make the most of it. Because one hundred and forty words a day isn't a lot of words and I know I'll have to use most of them at work and you'll have to, yes, use some of yours as well. So it'll be hard for us to talk and communicate. You know, like we do.

Pause.

OLIVER. Presto. Già.

BERNADETTE. Lunedì.

OLIVER. Sapevano che sarebbe passata.

BERNADETTE. Non è possibile. Il risultato era incerto.

OLIVER. Avevano i numeri.

BERNADETTE. Mi dispiace, Oliver.

OLIVER. Per cosa?

BERNADETTE. Che non hai vinto.

Pausa.

OLIVER. Noi non abbiamo vinto, Bernadette.

BERNADETTE. Sì, lo so. Ma mi dispiace che tu non abbia vinto. Ci hai provato con tutte le tue forze.

OLIVER. Non fare il superiore con me.

BERNADETTE. Davvero non lo stavo facendo.

OLIVER. Non riesco più a capirlo.

Pausa.

BERNADETTE. Okay. Bene. Allora abbiamo ehm abbiamo quattro giorni, quattro giorni e un po' prima che, sai, entri in vigore. Penso davvero che sia importante approfittarne il più possibile. Dovremmo sfruttarli al massimo. Perché centoquaranta parole al giorno non sono molte e so che dovrò usarne la maggior parte al lavoro e anche tu dovrai, sì, usarne alcune delle tue. Quindi ci sarà difficile parlare e comunicare. Sai, come facciamo noi.

Pausa.

But I guess it's lucky we've already got each other. That we already know each other really well. Meeting someone new would / be...

OLIVER. I need to give a speech.

BERNADETTE. Oh / right, okay.

OLIVER. To the, to the losers, I guess. Thanking them and... I guess encouraging them to keep going / and then I'll come back and we'll spend the next four days figuring this out.

BERNADETTE. I don't think this is something you can just get repealed.

OLIVER. We need to figure out ways round it. Tricks and things.

BERNADETTE. Tricks and things.

*

BERNADETTE. What about abbreviations?

OLIVER. Abbreviations?

BERNADETTE. Like can't or don't or wasn't or weren't or...

OLIVER. What about them?

BERNADETTE. Do they count as one or two?

OLIVER. Oh right. Well how many do they count as one word?

BERNADETTE. We should check.

OLIVER. One. So you can say 'can't' and still have one hundred and thirty-nine left.

BERNADETTE. Well that's a relief.

Ma credo che sia una fortuna che abbiamo già l'un l'altro. Che ci conosciamo già molto bene. Incontrare qualcuno di nuovo / sarebbe...

OLIVER. Devo fare un discorso.

BERNADETTE. Oh / bene, okay.

OLIVER. Ai... ai perdenti, credo. per ringraziarli e... tipo per incoraggiarli a continuare / e poi tornerò e passeremo i prossimi quattro giorni a risolvere questa cosa.

BERNADETTE. Non credo sia qualcosa che si possa semplicemente abrogare.

OLIVER. Dobbiamo trovare il modo di aggirarlo. Trucchi e simili.

BERNADETTE. Trucchi e simili.

*

BERNADETTE. E le abbreviazioni?

OLIVER. Abbreviazioni?

BERNADETTE. Tipo quand'è o anch'io o n'è o nient'affatto o...

OLIVER. Cosa?

BERNADETTE. Contano come una o due parole?

OLIVER. Oh giusto. Beh quante ne contano come parole unite?

BERNADETTE. Dovremmo controllare.

OLIVER. Una. Quindi puoi dire "anch'io" e te ne rimangono ancora centotrentanove.

BERNADETTE. È un bel sollievo.

OLIVER. I feel relieved.

BERNADETTE. Like a weight's been lifted.

OLIVER. A little bit like a weight's been lifted, yes.

BERNADETTE. Like a light weight.

OLIVER. Maybe we should like... Maybe we should just create a whole load of new abbreviations? That halves our output.

BERNADETTE. Like a code?

OLIVER. Yes. Sort of. So, so instead of 'sort of' we could just say 'sorf'.

BERNADETTE. 'Sorf'.

OLIVER. Yeah.

BERNADETTE. Or instead of 'instead of' we could say 'insteaf'.

OLIVER. Exactly.

BERNADETTE. Or instead of 'see you later' we could have errr... we could say... 'seeuoayer'.

OLIVER. Well, I mean that one's a bit... You could just say 'seeya'.

BERNADETTE. Yeah. I like that. That's better.

OLIVER. And instead of saying 'how are you' or 'how was your day' we could just say: 'how?'

BERNADETTE. But what if we're asking a different how-related question. Like how does this microwave oven work or like how

OLIVER. Mi sento sollevato.

BERNADETTE. Come se si fosse tolto un peso.

OLIVER. Un po' come se si fosse tolto un peso, sì.

BERNADETTE. Come un peso leggero.

OLIVER. Forse dovremmo tipo... Forse dovremmo creare un bel po' di nuove abbreviazioni? Per dimezzare quanto diciamo.

BERNADETTE. Tipo un codice?

OLIVER. Sì. Qualcosa così. Tipo, tipo invece che "qualcosa così" potremmo solo dire "qualcosì".

BERNADETTE. "Qualcosì".

OLIVER. Già.

BERNADETTE. O invece che "invece che" potremmo dire "inveche".

OLIVER. Esatto.

BERNADETTE. O invece che "ci sentiamo dopo" potremmo dire ehm... potremmo dire... "cissendopo".

OLIVER. Mah, cioè quella è un po'... potremmo solo dire "cissi".

BERNADETTE. Sì. Mi piace. Funziona meglio.

OLIVER. E invece di dire "come stai" o "com'è andata la tua giornata" potremmo semplicemente dire: "come?"

BERNADETTE. Ma come facciamo se capita una domanda diversa relativa al come. Tipo come funziona questo forno a microonde o come si

did people survive before fat-free frozen yogurt?

OLIVER. Okay.

BERNADETTE. Or how do you pronounce a double-L in Welsh?

OLIVER. Okay. That one wasn't... But I guess they'll emerge.

BERNADETTE. Yeah.

OLIVER. In our daily lives.

BERNADETTE. In our day-to-day.

OLIVER. Yes. Good.

BERNADETTE. Instead of 'I love you' we could say 'lovou'.

OLIVER. Yes. Definitely. Exactly.

*

OLIVER. Morse code! We could speak in Morse code!

BERNADETTE. How does that work?

OLIVER. Okay so each letter is a combination of dots and dashes.

BERNADETTE. Right.

OLIVER. So like an S is three dots.

BERNADETTE. Dot dot dot. That's three words for one letter.

OLIVER. No, no, we'd tap it.

OLIVER dives onto the floor and taps three times.

BERNADETTE. Oliver.

OLIVER. Shhh.

BERNADETTE. Okay.

sopravviveva prima dello yogurt gelato senza grassi?

OLIVER. Okay.

BERNADETTE. O come si pronuncia una doppia L in spagnolo?

OLIVER. Okay. Quella non era... ma credo verranno fuori.

BERNADETTE. Già.

OLIVER. Nella nostra routine giornaliera.

BERNADETTE. Nella nostra quotidianità.

OLIVER. Sì. Bene.

BERNADETTE. Invece che "ti voglio bene" potremmo dire "tivubi".

OLIVER. Sì. Certamente. Esatto.

*

OLIVER. Il codice Morse! Potremmo parlare in codice Morse!

BERNADETTE. Come funziona?

OLIVER. Sì in pratica ogni lettera è una combinazione di punti e linee.

BERNADETTE. Giusto.

OLIVER. Così tipo una S sono tre punti.

BERNADETTE. Punto punto punto. Sono tre parole per una lettera.

OLIVER. No, no, le batteremmo.

OLIVER si getta sul pavimento e batte tre volte.

BERNADETTE. Oliver.

OLIVER. Shhh.

BERNADETTE. Okay.

He taps the floor three times.

S.

OLIVER *smiles widely.*

How do you do a dash?

OLIVER *drags his finger along the floor.*

OLIVER. I'll get you a book on it.

BERNADETTE. Thanks.

*

OLIVER. Maybe we'll just have to look into each other's eyes more. Eye contact. You can do a lot with eye contact.

BERNADETTE. Yeah.

OLIVER. Like people tell whole stories with their eyes.

BERNADETTE. Do they?

OLIVER. I mean metaphorically.

BERNADETTE. Right. Yes.

OLIVER. Though I'm sure people do. Tell whole stories with their eyes. In some cultures.

BERNADETTE. Yeah, in like tribes and stuff.

OLIVER *pauses, looks uneasy.*

OLIVER. Like a long time ago.

BERNADETTE. Yeah.

*

BERNADETTE. How long have we got?

Lui batte tre volte sul pavimento.

S.

OLIVER *fa un gran sorriso.*

Come la fai una linea?

OLIVER *trascina il dito sul pavimento.*

OLIVER. Ti prenderò un libro che lo spiega.

BERNADETTE. Grazie.

*

OLIVER. Forse dovremo solo guardarci di più negli occhi. Contatto visivo. Si può fare molto con il contatto visivo.

BERNADETTE. Già.

OLIVER. Tipo certe persone raccontano storie intere con i loro occhi.

BERNADETTE. Ah sì?

OLIVER. Intendo metaforicamente.

BERNADETTE. Giusto. Sì.

OLIVER. Anche se sono sicuro che le persone lo fanno. Raccontano intere storie con i loro occhi. In certe culture.

BERNADETTE. Già, tipo nelle tribù e simili.

OLIVER *fa una pausa, sembra a disagio.*

OLIVER. Tipo molto tempo fa.

BERNADETTE. Già.

*

BERNADETTE. Quanto tempo abbiamo?

OLIVER. About five minutes.

BERNADETTE. And then...

OLIVER. Yeah.

BERNADETTE. Okay. I want to... I want to say everything then...

OLIVER. Yeah.

BERNADETTE. I want to just say everything, okay?

OLIVER. Yeah.

BERNADETTE. Everything that I've ever wanted to say but never been really able to for some reason or other. And everything that you, Oliver, that you've always wanted to say but never really been able to say for some reason or other.

OLIVER. Yes.

BERNADETTE. I don't want to talk later.

OLIVER. No. Well it'll be difficult to talk later.

BERNADETTE. We'd have to do it in Morse code.

OLIVER. Yes it would be slow.

BERNADETTE. Okay I'll start.

OLIVER. Right. Okay.

BERNADETTE. I'm gonna start.

OLIVER. Whenever you're ready.

BERNADETTE. You start.

OLIVER. Okay.

BERNADETTE. We'll take turns or yeah just see how it goes.

OLIVER. Right. Errrm. Okay. I love you. I do. I'm very grateful for you

OLIVER. Circa cinque minuti.

BERNADETTE. E poi...

OLIVER. Già.

BERNADETTE. Okay. Voglio... voglio dire tutto allora...

OLIVER. Sì.

BERNADETTE. Voglio solo dire tutto, okay?

OLIVER. Certo.

BERNADETTE. Tutto quello che ho sempre voluto dire, ma che non sono mai riuscita a dire per un motivo o per l'altro. E tutto quello che tu, Oliver, hai sempre voluto dire ma che non sei mai riuscito a dire per un motivo o per l'altro.

OLIVER. Sì.

BERNADETTE. Non voglio parlarne dopo.

OLIVER. No. Beh, sarà difficile parlarne dopo.

BERNADETTE. Dovremmo farlo in codice Morse.

OLIVER. Sì sarebbe lento.

BERNADETTE. Okay inizio.

OLIVER. Bene. Okay.

BERNADETTE. Sto per iniziare.

OLIVER. Quando sei pronta tu.

BERNADETTE. Inizia tu.

OLIVER. Okay.

BERNADETTE. Faremo a turno o sì, vediamo come va.

OLIVER. Bene. Ehm. Okay. Ti amo. Davvero. Ti sono molto grato per il

being with me and indulging me I guess in all my little things that I errrm... And I know I like to play the victim sometimes and I like to sulk and I like to punish you. Well I don't like to punish you I just do sometimes – I'm not very forgiving. I know that and I'm sorry for that, I am, I am sorry for that because it, you know, probably has some repercussions on you and your state of mind and on us and...

BERNADETTE. Cool. Cool. Yep. Keep going.

OLIVER. And sometimes I feel that you don't listen to what I'm saying or no you do listen, you do but you always have other cogs whirring at the same time if you know what I mean? Like if you were a laptop you'd have other tabs open. If you were an internet browser I mean. Like you're looking at me, you're definitely looking at me and focusing on me but but but I'm aware that at the top of the page there are, you know, other things open, other tabs. Maybe you've got Facebook or the news or a couple of YouTube videos about cats...

BERNADETTE. Yep doesn't matter, keep going.

OLIVER. And I don't like your brother. I think he is too dismissive of you and, yes, of me as well, and he's too actually, you know what, and you're going to disagree with me here, but too self-involved. I think he is so paranoid about retaining absolute control of every little thing he does that he's actually a bit rude and also,

fatto che stai con me e che mi asseconi credo in tutte le mie piccole cose che io ehm... E so che mi piace fare la vittima a volte e mi piace tenere il broncio e mi piace punirti. Beh, non mi piace punirti, è solo che a volte... non sono molto indulgente. Lo so e mi dispiace per questo, davvero, mi dispiace perché, sai, probabilmente ha delle ripercussioni su di te e sul tuo stato d'animo e su di noi e...

BERNADETTE. Bene. Bene. Sì. Continua.

OLIVER. E a volte ho l'impressione che tu non ascolti quello che dico o no, lo ascolti, ma hai sempre altri ingranaggi in azione allo stesso tempo, non so se mi spiego. Tipo se tu fossi un computer portatile avresti altre schede aperte. Cioè se fossi un browser per internet. Tipo mi stai guardando, mi stai sicuramente guardando e ti stai concentrando su di me, ma sono consapevole che nella parte superiore della pagina ci sono, sai, altre robe aperte, altre schede. Forse hai Facebook o un sito di notizie o un paio di video di YouTube sui gatti...

BERNADETTE. Sì non importa, continua.

OLIVER. E non mi piace tuo fratello. Penso che sia troppo altezzoso nei tuoi confronti e, sì, anche nei miei, ed è troppo, sai cosa, e qui non sarai d'accordo con me, ma è troppo egocentrico. Penso che sia così paranoico nel mantenere il controllo assoluto di ogni piccola cosa che fa che in realtà risulta un po' maleducato e anche, anche, molto

also, very hard to buy presents for on birthdays.

BERNADETTE. Yep, agree about the birthday thing, not the rest.

OLIVER. Yes, well, I thought that was the point. You said you wanted us to / just say

BERNADETTE. No no it was. That's good, that's so good, that's so good. I'll go now.

OLIVER. Great.

BERNADETTE. Okay. Cool. Yep. Right. Sometimes I feel like, and I know I've said this a million times, but that you think I'm shallow.

OLIVER. Right. Yep. Good.

BERNADETTE. No, I do, I do. And also bad. You make me feel like I'm bad. You're always higher than me. For some reason, you're always higher. It's like when we started we decided that you were going to be the good person and I was going to be the bad person. Even though sometimes, occasionally I feel pretty strongly that I'm actually the good person and you, you're the er... And not just in the heat of the moment, I look back on it and I think about it and I reflect and reason with myself and I still think that there, just there, not always, but just there I was the good... one.

OLIVER. Wonderful.

BERNADETTE. Oliver.

OLIVER. No, no carry on. It's good that we're airing these while we've got

difficile comprargli un regalo di compleanno.

BERNADETTE. Sì, sono d'accordo sulla cosa del compleanno, non sul resto.

OLIVER. Sì, beh, pensavo fosse questo il punto. Hai detto che volevi che noi / dicessimo

BERNADETTE. No no lo era. Così va bene, va molto bene, va molto bene. Ora vado io.

OLIVER. Ottimo.

BERNADETTE. Okay. Bene. Sì. Giusto. A volte ho la sensazione, e so di averlo detto un milione di volte, che tu pensi che io sia superficiale.

OLIVER. Giusto. Sì. Bene.

BERNADETTE. No, è vero, è vero. E anche cattiva. Mi fai sentire come se fossi cattiva. Sei sempre più in alto di me. Per qualche ragione, sei sempre più in alto. È come se quando abbiamo iniziato avessimo deciso che tu saresti stata la persona buona e io quella cattiva. Anche se a volte, ogni tanto sento fortemente che in realtà sono io la persona buona e tu, tu sei la... E non solo nella foga del momento, guardo indietro e ci ripenso e ci rifletto e ragiono con me stessa e penso ancora che lì, proprio lì, non sempre, ma in quel momento lì ero io quella...buona.

OLIVER. Fantastico.

BERNADETTE. Oliver.

OLIVER. No, no, continua. È un bene che stiamo esternando queste cose

this errr... fleeting window of opportunity.

BERNADETTE. See there! Just there! 'This fleeting window of opportunity.' What is that? The way you say things. Sometimes I think you use big words to make yourself feel better and me feel worse. Is it some kind of male-dominance thing because my pay cheque is bigger than yours? Is it you saying 'I'm doing what I love because I love it. You, you're a sell-out, you're driven by money and security, but me, well, if I wanted to be a sell-out, if I wanted to be successful, then I'd use all the big words in court and people would listen to me because I'm clever in an obvious way.' A lot of what you say sounds like that sometimes. A lot of our conversations feel like that.

OLIVER. Cool. Cool. Errr can I jump back in here or have you got more to...

BERNADETTE. Yeah do it! Go for it!

OLIVER. Just to say: this is great stuff. Real exorcising stuff.

BERNADETTE. Mmm-hmm. Quickly.

OLIVER. So I don't like what you do. I know you think I don't like it and I know you hate me for that and for not understanding that your mum worked in Tesco and your dad barely worked so you have this thing about achievement. And I love you for that. Obviously. And I know you think you always wanted to be a lawyer but come on, like you had passions and stuff and...

ora che abbiamo questa ehm... fugace finestra di opportunità.

BERNADETTE. Vedi! Proprio lì! "Questa fugace finestra di opportunità". Ma che cos'è? Il modo in cui dici le cose. A volte penso che tu usi dei paroloni per farti sentire meglio e io peggio. È una sorta di dominanza maschile perché il mio stipendio è più alto del tuo? È il tuo modo di dire "Faccio quello che amo perché lo amo. Tu sei una venduta, sei guidata dai soldi e dalla sicurezza, ma io, beh, se volessi essere un venduto, se volessi avere successo, allora userei tutti i miei paroloni in tribunale e la gente mi ascolterebbe perché sono palesemente intelligente"? Molto di quello che dici suona così a volte. Molte delle nostre conversazioni sembrano così.

OLIVER. Bene. Beene. Eee posso intervenire o hai altro da...

BERNADETTE. Sì fallo! Vai pure!

OLIVER. Solo per dire: questa è una gran cosa. Stiamo davvero esorcizzando il problema.

BERNADETTE. Mmm-hmm. Rapido.

OLIVER. Sì allora non mi piace quello che fai. So che pensi che non mi piaccia e so che mi odi per questo e per non capire che tua mamma lavorava in un supermercato e tuo papà lavorava a malapena e che quindi hai questo pallino del successo. E io ti amo per questo. Ovviamente. E so che pensi di aver sempre voluto fare l'avvocato, ma dai, cioè avevi passioni e interessi e...

BERNADETTE. Okay. Great. I really feel like we're making... Like you said it's the exorcism thing. We just say it and then puff it's gone.

OLIVER. Yeah, definitely. Puff.

BERNADETTE. Is there anything else?

OLIVER. Nope.

BERNADETTE. Really?

Long pause.

OLIVER. Nope.

BERNADETTE. Right. Okay great.

OLIVER. Oh and I love you.

BERNADETTE. Yep, I've got something else.

OLIVER. Well we've barely got any time left so...

BERNADETTE. So in bed. Sometimes, sometimes in bed. Okay I know that you... you do this whole love thing. And you're staring in my eyes. Like right in my eyes... While you're... you know. And it's a bit... and I like that you're so responsive to me and caring and intent on me, you know... And it is so nice. Boy, is it nice. Really. But sometimes I'm just a bit... I dunno... it's hard to think of the... Now, bored isn't the right word.

OLIVER. Okay yep faster. Much faster now. Come on. Thirty seconds. Faster faster faster.

BERNADETTE. And I wish you'd just stop fiddling around and worrying about... and just... let loose and really give it something, cowboy. Sometimes I want to feel sexy and powerful and like we could be in

BERNADETTE. Okay. Ottimo. Mi sembra davvero che stiamo facendo... Come hai detto tu, è la cosa dell'esorcismo. Lo diciamo e poi puff non c'è più.

OLIVER. Sì certamente. Puff.

BERNADETTE. C'è altro?

OLIVER. No.

BERNADETTE. Davvero?

Lunga pausa.

OLIVER. No.

BERNADETTE. Bene. Okay ottimo.

OLIVER. Ah e ti amo.

BERNADETTE. Okay, c'è qualcos'altro.

OLIVER. Beh, ci resta pochissimo tempo, quindi...

BERNADETTE. Allora a letto. A volte, a volte a letto. Okay, so che tu... tu fai questa cosa dell'amore. E mi fissi negli occhi. Tipo dritto negli occhi... mentre stai... hai capito. Ed è un po'... e mi piace che tu sia così sensibile con me e premuroso e coinvolto, sai... Ed è così bello. Cavoli, è bello. Davvero. Ma a volte sono un po'... non so... è difficile pensare a... Ora, annoiata non è la parola giusta.

OLIVER. Okay sì più rapida. Molto più rapida. Forza. Trenta secondi. Rapida rapida rapida.

BERNADETTE. E vorrei che tu la smettessi di cincischiare e di preoccuparti di... e solo... che ti lasciassi andare e ci mettessi davvero del tuo, maschione. A volte vorrei sentirmi sexy e potente e tipo

Basic Instinct or *Brokeback Mountain* or... I wish you'd just have at me once or twice. I don't want to be sensitive or lovey, I don't want to feel like your entire life had been leading up to the moment that you put your thing in my... I want you to be strong and...

OLIVER. And wrap it up, wrap it up.

BERNADETTE. But I like that we are, you know, making progress as a couple because what's a relationship if it's not moving... you know and I'm excited, I'm really excited about...

OLIVER. Stop stop stop stop stop!

Long silence.

They both breathe out slowly.

BERNADETTE. Lovou.

OLIVER. Lovou.

Pause.

Bed?

BERNADETTE *smiles*.

BERNADETTE. You.

She nods emphatically and points.

I.

She breathes out and pushes the palms of her hands downwards as if to say 'I need a moment.'

OLIVER *smiles and nods*.

*

OLIVER. I'm sorry but are you okay?

potremmo essere in *Basic Instinct* o in I segreti di *Brokeback Mountain* o... Vorrei sentirti fare di me quel che vuoi, ogni tanto. Non voglio essere sensibile o amorevole, non voglio sentirmi come se tutta la tua vita avesse portato al momento in cui metti il tuo coso nella mia... Voglio sentirti forte e...

OLIVER. E riassumi, riassumi.

BERNADETTE. Ma mi piace che stiamo, sai, facendo progressi come coppia perché cos'è una relazione se non si muove... sai che sono emozionata, sono davvero emozionata riguardo...

OLIVER. Stop stop stop stop stop!

Lungo silenzio.

Entrambi espirano lentamente.

BERNADETTE. Tivubì.

OLIVER. Tivubì.

Pausa.

Letto?

BERNADETTE *sorride*.

BERNADETTE. Tu.

Annuisce con enfasi e indica.

Io.

Espira e spinge i palmi delle mani verso il basso come per dire "ho bisogno di un momento".

OLIVER *sorride e annuisce*.

*

OLIVER. Scusami ma tutto bene?

BERNADETTE (*teary*). Yeah, no I'm fine. / I'm just very

OLIVER. I'm really sorry for your loss.

BERNADETTE. What?

OLIVER. Dennis. I'm really sorry that you had to go through that. I was at the protest. Where he was you know... crushed. It all just got a bit out of hand, if I'm honest. Oh no, but I wasn't / involved.

BERNADETTE. No Dennis wasn't my...

OLIVER (*talking over her*). I tried to save Dennis but couldn't get through the crowd fast enough. I am so sorry. Honestly. I was only there for a friend really. She's super against the hush law, / you see so...

BERNADETTE. No. Dennis wasn't my cat. He was Steph's.

OLIVER. You're not Steph.

BERNADETTE. No.

OLIVER. I just thought... because you were crying...

BERNADETTE. I was very moved.

OLIVER. Oh. Right.

BERNADETTE. I thought it was a beautiful service and I was very moved.

OLIVER. Yeah. I didn't even know they had pet cemeteries. Eerily quiet isn't it. So you know Steph?

BERNADETTE. Yeah. You?

BERNADETTE (*in lacrime*). Sì, no sto bene. / Sono solo molto

OLIVER. Mi dispiace molto per la tua perdita.

BERNADETTE. Cosa?

OLIVER. Dennis. Mi dispiace molto che ti sia capitato tutto questo. Ero alla protesta. Dove lui è stato, sai... schiacciato. È sfuggito tutto di mano, a essere sincero. Oh no, ma io non ero / coinvolto.

BERNADETTE. No Dennis non era il mio...

OLIVER (*parlandole sopra*). Ho cercato di salvarlo ma non sono riuscito ad attraversare la folla abbastanza velocemente. Mi dispiace tanto. Davvero. Ero lì solo per un'amica, in realtà. Lei è molto contraria alla legge del silenzio, / vedi così...

BERNADETTE. No. Dennis non era il mio gatto. Era di Steph.

OLIVER. Tu non sei Steph.

BERNADETTE. No.

OLIVER. Ho pensato... perché stavi piangendo...

BERNADETTE. Ero molto commossa.

OLIVER. Oh. Giusto.

BERNADETTE. Ho pensato che fosse una bellissima funzione ed ero molto commossa.

OLIVER. Sì. Non sapevo nemmeno esistessero i cimiteri per animali. Stranamente tranquillo, vero? Quindi conosci Steph?

BERNADETTE. Sì. Tu?

OLIVER. Well I thought you were her...

BERNADETTE. Why are you here then?

OLIVER. Well I felt bad about the... guilty I guess for being... Oh and I know Dan who did the errr... I guess you'd call it a eulogy.

BERNADETTE. Oh. Tell him I thought it was beautiful.

OLIVER. He's very good at finding things to say about cats.

BERNADETTE. That's quite a skill.

OLIVER. He worked on one of my tracks.

BERNADETTE. You're a musician.

OLIVER. Yeah. Well recently it's just been jingles for adverts and...

BERNADETTE. Anything I'd know?

OLIVER. Probably not.

BERNADETTE. I'm a lawyer.

OLIVER. Oh. Right. Okay. Yeah / that's... that's really impressive, I guess.

BERNADETTE. Yeah. Well I'm doing my pupillage. Training.

OLIVER. You kind of one-upped me there.

BERNADETTE. Yours is much cooler.

OLIVER. Thanks.

BERNADETTE. What's the hush law?

OLIVER. What?

OLIVER. Beh pensavo fossi lei...

BERNADETTE. Perché sei qui allora?

OLIVER. Beh mi sentivo male per il... in colpa, credo, per essere... Oh, e conosco Dan che ha fatto ehm... credo si possa chiamare elogio funebre.

BERNADETTE. Oh. Digli che l'ho trovato stupendo.

OLIVER. È molto bravo a trovare cose da dire sui gatti.

BERNADETTE. È una bella abilità.

OLIVER. Ha lavorato su uno dei miei brani.

BERNADETTE. Sei un musicista.

OLIVER. Sì. Beh ultimamente ho fatto solo motivetti per le pubblicità e...

BERNADETTE. Nulla che possa conoscere?

OLIVER. Mi sa di no.

BERNADETTE. Io sono un avvocato.

OLIVER. Oh. Bene. Okay. Sì / è... è davvero notevole, credo.

BERNADETTE. Sì. Beh, sto facendo il praticantato. Tirocinio.

OLIVER. Direi che hai vinto te.

BERNADETTE. Il tuo lavoro è molto più fico.

OLIVER. Grazie.

BERNADETTE. Cos'è la legge del silenzio?

OLIVER. Cosa?

BERNADETTE. You were on a march or something. Where Dennis was...

OLIVER. You don't / know about the...

BERNADETTE. I'm not really that politically...

OLIVER. It was for the limit thing. The daily-word-/limit thing...

BERNADETTE. Oh the Quietude Bill. I didn't know / it was called that...

OLIVER. Yeah. Yeah, it's a nickname. My friend's really in to it. I just go with her.

Pause.

What's your name?

BERNADETTE. Bernadette.

OLIVER. Wow.

BERNADETTE. What?

OLIVER. No. It's just that that's not a name you hear... but, but, errr, looking at you now it's like I can't imagine anything else. Like you are Bernadette. Like Bernadette is just you summed up in one word.

BERNADETTE. What's your name?

OLIVER. Oliver.

BERNADETTE. Hmmmm I don't buy it.

OLIVER. Pardon?

BERNADETTE. You don't know me.

OLIVER. Well, I'd like to.

BERNADETTE. Eri ad una marcia o qualcosa del genere. Dove Dennis è stato...

OLIVER. Tu non / conosci la...

BERNADETTE. Non mi interessa tanto alla politica...

OLIVER. Era per la roba del limite. La roba del limite giornaliero di parole...

BERNADETTE. Oh il Disegno di Legge sulla Quietude. Non sapevo / che lo chiamassero così...

OLIVER. Sì. Sì, è un soprannome. La mia amica è molto coinvolta. Io la accompagno.

Pausa.

Come ti chiami?

BERNADETTE. Bernadette.

OLIVER. Wow.

BERNADETTE. Cosa?

OLIVER. No. È solo che non è un nome che si sente... ma, ma, ehm, guardandoti ora è come se non riuscissi a immaginarne un altro. Come se tu fossi Bernadette. Come se Bernadette fossi tu riassunta in una parola.

BERNADETTE. Tu come ti chiami?

OLIVER. Oliver.

BERNADETTE. Hmmmm. Non ci credo.

OLIVER. Pardon?

BERNADETTE. Non mi conosci.

OLIVER. Beh, mi piacerebbe.

*

OLIVER *waves at* BERNADETTE.

She waves back.

*They speak excessively slowly and loudly
(Brits-abroad style).*

BERNADETTE. How was your day?

OLIVER. Weird.

BERNADETTE. Weird how?

OLIVER. Eerie.

BERNADETTE. Yeah.

OLIVER. Quiet.

BERNADETTE. Kind of nice.

OLIVER. It's horrible. Orwellian.

BERNADETTE. Like pet cemetery
everywhere.

OLIVER. Your day?

BERNADETTE. How was my...?

OLIVER. Yes.

BERNADETTE. Fine. Spent forty
words ordering smoothie.

OLIVER. Getting special dispensation?

Pause.

BERNADETTE. Talk. Partners backing
case for extra in courts.

OLIVER. Oh that is so fucking
predictable...

*He stops, horrified by his careless
frittering of words.*

*

OLIVER *saluta con la mano*
BERNADETTE.

Lei risponde al saluto.

*Parlano molto lentamente e ad alta voce
(stile italiani all'estero).*

BERNADETTE. Com'è andata la tua
giornata?

OLIVER. Strana.

BERNADETTE. Strana come?

OLIVER. Angosciante.

BERNADETTE. Già.

OLIVER. Silenziosa.

BERNADETTE. Non male dai.

OLIVER. È orribile. Orwelliano.

BERNADETTE. Tipo cimitero degli
animali ovunque.

OLIVER. Tua giornata?

BERNADETTE. Com'è andata la mia...

OLIVER. Sì.

BERNADETTE. Bene. Usato quaranta
parole ordinando frullato.

OLIVER. Riceverete un'esonazione
speciale?

Pausa.

BERNADETTE. Forse. Colleghi
sostengono causa per parole extra in
aula.

OLIVER. Oh quanto era prevedibile
cazzo...

*Si interrompe, inorridito dal suo
incauto spreco di parole.*

BERNADETTE. Long term.

OLIVER. What's short term?

BERNADETTE. Nobody knows.

Pause.

OLIVER. Nobody knows.

*

Playing Articulate again.

BERNADETTE. Cairo!

OLIVER *shakes his head.*

Istanbul!

OLIVER *nods and gives her a thumbs up.*

He takes another deep breath in.

OLIVER. Pushing down. Emotionally.

BERNADETTE. Forgetting.

He shakes his head.

Repressing.

He gestures as if to say 'close'.

Lying.

OLIVER *shakes his head.*

Lying.

OLIVER *shakes his head again.*

I don't know.

OLIVER. Suppressing. Come on.

BERNADETTE. Lying same thing.

OLIVER. Good training.

She nods.

We're getting better.

BERNADETTE. Need be more honest with each other.

BERNADETTE. A lungo termine.

OLIVER. Cos'è a breve termine?

Pausa.

BERNADETTE. Chi lo sa.

*

Giocano di nuovo ad Articulate.

BERNADETTE. Il Cairo!

OLIVER *scuote la testa.*

Istanbul!

OLIVER *annuisce e alza il pollice.*

Fa un altro respiro profondo.

OLIVER. Schiacciare giù. In modo emotivo.

BERNADETTE. Dimenticare.

Lui scuote la testa.

Sopprimere.

Fa un gesto come a dire "quasi".

Mentire.

OLIVER *scuote la testa.*

Mentire.

OLIVER *scuote di nuovo la testa.*

Non lo so.

OLIVER. Reprimere. Dai.

BERNADETTE. Mentire stessa cosa.

OLIVER. Buon allenamento.

Lei annuisce.

Stiamo migliorando.

BERNADETTE. Dobbiamo essere più onesti l'uno con l'altro.

*

Silence.

BERNADETTE. When I wake up, just
for a second I...

OLIVER. Forget.

BERNADETTE. Yeah.

Silence.

*

OLIVER. This one says: Fluffy, you
were the light of my life and you
loved tuna.

BERNADETTE. Jasper, a really good
cat. Often mistaken for a meatloaf.

OLIVER. Maybe that was how he died.
He was accidentally baked.

BERNADETTE. Dennis, a cat full of
joy. If he could talk, he'd sing.

OLIVER. Dan's good at / talking about
cats.

BERNADETTE. Dan's good at talking
about cats.

OLIVER. What would you put?

BERNADETTE. I'd just put how much
I loved them.

Pause.

What?

Pause.

OLIVER. You're refreshing. I find you
refreshing.

BERNADETTE. I'm not refreshing.

OLIVER. You're a lawyer.

*

Silenzio.

BERNADETTE. Quando mi sveglio,
solo per un secondo mi...

OLIVER. Dimentico.

BERNADETTE. Già.

Silenzio.

*

OLIVER. Questo dice: Fluffy, eri la luce
della mia vita e amavi il tonno.

BERNADETTE. Jasper, un gatto
davvero bravo. Spesso scambiato
per un polpettone.

OLIVER. Forse è così che è morto. È
stato cucinato accidentalmente.

BERNADETTE. Dennis, un gatto pieno
di gioia. Se potesse parlare,
canterebbe.

OLIVER. Dan è bravo a / parlare dei
gatti.

BERNADETTE. Dan è bravo a parlare
dei gatti.

OLIVER. Tu cosa ci scriveresti?

BERNADETTE. Io ci scriverei solo
quanto li ho amati.

Pause.

Cosa?

Pause.

OLIVER. Rigenerante. Ti trovo
rigenerante.

BERNADETTE. Non sono rigenerante.

OLIVER. Sei un avvocato.

BERNADETTE. I'm a family / lawyer.

OLIVER. You're a divorce lawyer.

BERNADETTE. They mean the same thing.

OLIVER. We both know which one sounds nicer.

BERNADETTE. We should go.

OLIVER. Where do you / wanna go?

BERNADETTE. I should go.

OLIVER. I'm sorry if I've...

BERNADETTE. You have nice eyes.

*

BERNADETTE. Tired?

OLIVER. Yeah.

BERNADETTE. Not in the mood to...?

OLIVER. What?

BERNADETTE. It's been a while.

OLIVER. No. I'm in... I could be.

BERNADETTE. Okay.

They breathe deeply.

Ow.

OLIVER. Sorry.

BERNADETTE. No.

OLIVER. What you want me to do?

BERNADETTE. Just...

Pause.

Yeah. Gently. Ow.

OLIVER. I'm sorry. You need to tell...

BERNADETTE. I'm running low.

BERNADETTE. Specializzata nel diritto / di famiglia.

OLIVER. Sei un avvocato divorzista.

BERNADETTE. Vogliono dire la stessa cosa.

OLIVER. Sappiamo entrambi quale suona meglio.

BERNADETTE. Dovremmo andare.

OLIVER. Dove / vuoi andare?

BERNADETTE. È meglio che vada.

OLIVER. Scusa se ho...

BERNADETTE. Hai dei begli occhi.

*

BERNADETTE. Stanco?

OLIVER. Sì.

BERNADETTE. Non dell'umore per...

OLIVER. Cosa?

BERNADETTE. È da un po'.

OLIVER. No. Ci sto... potrei.

BERNADETTE. Okay.

Respirano profondamente.

Ahia.

OLIVER. Scusa.

BERNADETTE. No.

OLIVER. Cosa vuoi che faccia?

BERNADETTE. Solo...

Pause.

Sì. Piano. Ahia.

OLIVER. Mi dispiace. Mi devi dire...

BERNADETTE. Mi sta scendendo.

OLIVER. Same.

They breathe deeply again.

BERNADETTE. Ow.

OLIVER. Let's stop.

*

OLIVER. Morning.

BERNADETTE. Morning.

OLIVER. You were talking last night.
Through the duct tape. Batman
again?

BERNADETTE. Not this time.

*

OLIVER *and* BERNADETTE *stare*
purposefully into each other's eyes.

They move their eyes theatrically as if
trying to tell a story.

This goes on for a long time.

*

OLIVER. We need to stop meeting here.
It's all a bit morbid.

BERNADETTE. Well, it's the only
place that I know that you know.

OLIVER. You've never asked where
else I know.

BERNADETTE. Well maybe I just like
revisiting the graves of dead cats.
Maybe I'm just that kind of girl.

OLIVER. Maybe we should talk about
other places that we could meet.

*

OLIVER. Anche a me.

Respirano di nuovo profondamente.

BERNADETTE. Ahia.

OLIVER. Mi fermo.

*

OLIVER. Giorno

BERNADETTE. Giorno.

OLIVER. Hai parlato ieri sera.
Attraverso il nastro adesivo. Ancora
Yoda?

BERNADETTE. Stavolta no.

*

OLIVER *e* BERNADETTE *si guardano*
intenzionalmente negli occhi.

Muovono gli occhi teatralmente come se
volessero raccontare una storia.

Vanno avanti per molto tempo.

*

OLIVER. Dobbiamo smettere di
incontrarci qui. È tutto un po'
macabro.

BERNADETTE. Beh, è l'unico posto
che so che conosci.

OLIVER. Non mi hai mai chiesto che
altri posti conosco.

BERNADETTE. Beh, forse è solo che
mi piace rivisitare le tombe dei gatti
morti. Forse sono proprio quel tipo
di ragazza.

OLIVER. Forse dovremmo parlare di
altri posti dove incontrarci.

*

BERNADETTE. Think should announce counts when see each other.

OLIVER. Waste.

BERNADETTE. Gives us an idea of where the other's at.

OLIVER. How many they've saved.

BERNADETTE. How many they've got.

Pause.

OLIVER. Say how many left after...

BERNADETTE. After count. Yeah.

*

OLIVER. Sixteen.

BERNADETTE. Twenty-seven.

*

OLIVER. Thirty-six.

BERNADETTE. Twenty.

*

OLIVER. Fifty-eight.

BERNADETTE. Twenty-three.

*

BERNADETTE. Twenty-nine.

OLIVER. Ninety-two.

*

BERNADETTE. Twenty-two.

OLIVER. One.

*

OLIVER. Forty-eight.

BERNADETTE. Penso dovremmo annunciare il conteggio quando ci vediamo.

OLIVER. Spreco.

BERNADETTE. Ci fa capire a che punto è l'altro.

OLIVER. Quante ne ha risparmiate.

BERNADETTE. Quante ne ha disponibili.

Pausa.

OLIVER. Dire quante ne rimangono dopo...

BERNADETTE. Dopo conteggio. Sì.

*

OLIVER. Sedici.

BERNADETTE. Ventisette.

*

OLIVER. Trentasei.

BERNADETTE. Venti.

*

OLIVER. Cinquantotto.

BERNADETTE. Ventitré.

*

BERNADETTE. Ventinove.

OLIVER. Novantadue.

*

BERNADETTE. Ventuno.

OLIVER. Uno.

*

OLIVER. Quarantotto.

BERNADETTE. Twenty-two.
OLIVER. You're very regular.
BERNADETTE. Try save us some.
OLIVER. Not as much as you can.
Always in twenties.
BERNADETTE. Good to have quota.
OLIVER. Don't want life run by quotas.

BERNADETTE. I'm different from you.
OLIVER. I know.
BERNADETTE. Dunderstand.

Pause.

OLIVER. What?
BERNADETTE. You're so angry.
OLIVER. Not fair. Or free.
BERNADETTE. Sometimes not about
fairness.
OLIVER. Zero?
BERNADETTE *nods.*
What a waste.

*

OLIVER. Fifteen.
BERNADETTE. Twenty-four.
OLIVER. Seen list?
BERNADETTE. Of word sanctuaries.
OLIVER. Courts are on it.
BERNADETTE. You think it's elitist.
OLIVER. I'm happy. You'll save more.

*

BERNADETTE. Ventidue.
OLIVER. Sei molto costante.
BERNADETTE. Provo a salvarcene.
OLIVER. Non più che puoi. Sempre
sulla ventina.
BERNADETTE. Bene avere una quota.
OLIVER. Non voglio vita gestita da
quote.
BERNADETTE. Sono diversa da te.
OLIVER. Lo so.
BERNADETTE. Nintendo.

Pause.

OLIVER. Cosa?
BERNADETTE. Sei così arrabbiato.
OLIVER. Non equo. Né libero.
BERNADETTE. A volte non c'entra
l'equità.
OLIVER. Zero?
BERNADETTE *annuisce.*
Che spreco.

*

OLIVER. Quindici.
BERNADETTE. Ventiquattro.
OLIVER. Visto lista?
BERNADETTE. Di santuari delle
parole.
OLIVER. Ci sono i tribunali.
BERNADETTE. Pensi sia elitario.
OLIVER. Sono felice. Avanzerei di più.

*

OLIVER. Forty-two.

BERNADETTE. Twenty-two.

Pause.

OLIVER. Special dispensation.

BERNADETTE. In courtrooms. Extra in courtrooms. I have prep, meetings.

Pause.

Sorry.

OLIVER. I miss you.

BERNADETTE. You don't.

OLIVER. I do.

BERNADETTE. I'm right here.

OLIVER. Twenty words of you.

BERNADETTE. All of me.

Pause.

OLIVER. No.

*

BERNADETTE. Twenty.

OLIVER. Eight.

BERNADETTE. Let's not fight about this. Parliament was on list.

OLIVER. Completely abusing it. Jesus.

BERNADETTE. Mmmm.

OLIVER. They're moving in.

BERNADETTE. You seem excited.

OLIVER holds his index finger up as if telling BERNADETTE to wait.

What?

Pause.

OLIVER. Quarantadue.

BERNADETTE. Ventidue.

Pausa.

OLIVER. Esenzione speciale.

BERNADETTE. In aula. Parole extra in aula. Io ho lavori preparatori, riunioni.

Pausa.

Scusa.

OLIVER. Mi manchi.

BERNADETTE. Non è vero.

OLIVER. Invece sì.

BERNADETTE. Sono qui.

OLIVER. Solo con venti parole.

BERNADETTE. Con tutta me stessa.

Pausa.

OLIVER. No.

*

BERNADETTE. Venti.

OLIVER. Otto.

BERNADETTE. Non litighiamo per questo. Parlamento era sulla lista.

OLIVER. Ne abusano completamente. Cristo.

BERNADETTE. Mmmm.

OLIVER. Si stanno trasferendo lì.

BERNADETTE. Sembri emozionato.

OLIVER alza l'indice come per dire a BERNADETTE di aspettare.

Cosa?

Pausa.

You're waiting for...

OLIVER. One Hundred Forty.

BERNADETTE. Here we go.

OLIVER. They're moving into the House of Commons, Bernadette. It's a live-in word sanctuary for the powerful. And know what they've got in there? Twenty-eight food outlets. Twenty-eight. In February they could eat at different one every day.

BERNADETTE. Not on leap years.

OLIVER. There's a parliamentary hairdresser, a parliamentary florist, a parliamentary gym complete with buffed-up parliamentary / personal trainers.

BERNADETTE. Words.

OLIVER. Don't care. That's why keeping press out. They've built a cruise ship in the middle of London, they're moving in and chatting.

BERNADETTE. Don't get it when people get excited about bad news.

OLIVER. This is what we needed.

BERNADETTE. The movement.

OLIVER. The movement. But everybody too.

BERNADETTE. Something to fight.

OLIVER. Need to talk to Julie.

Pause.

Stai aspettando...

OLIVER. Centoquaranta.

BERNADETTE. Ci siamo.

OLIVER. Si stanno trasferendo nella Camera dei Comuni, Bernadette. È un santuario di parole dove potenti vivono e lavorano. E sai cos'hanno lì dentro? Ventotto punti ristoro. Ventotto. A febbraio potrebbero mangiare in uno diverso ogni giorno.

BERNADETTE. Non negli anni bisestili.

OLIVER. C'è un parrucchiere parlamentare, un fioraio parlamentare, una palestra parlamentare completa di personal trainer / parlamentari imbellettati.

BERNADETTE. Parole.

OLIVER. Non m'importa. Ecco perché tengono giornalisti fuori. Hanno costruito una nave da crociera nel mezzo di Londra, si trasferiscono lì e chiacchierano.

BERNADETTE. Non capisco quando la gente si emoziona per le cattive notizie.

OLIVER. È quello di cui avevamo bisogno.

BERNADETTE. Il movimento.

OLIVER. Il movimento. E le persone.

BERNADETTE. Qualcosa da combattere.

OLIVER. Devo parlare con Julie.

Pausa.

BERNADETTE. Why did you and Julie break up?

OLIVER. This is big. Things could happen.

BERNADETTE (*mumbled*). Need be more honest with / each other.

OLIVER. They've fired first shot, thrown first brick.

BERNADETTE. Happy for you.

*

BERNADETTE. Good luck today.

OLIVER. I need to find my air horn.

BERNADETTE. Have you got your ear plugs?

OLIVER. Yeah, I've got them but I'm not gonna / wear them.

BERNADETTE. Please wear them.

OLIVER. I want to hear it all.

BERNADETTE. The noise.

OLIVER. The noise.

Pause.

BERNADETTE. The vote's on Wednesday?

OLIVER. Yep.

BERNADETTE. Five days. Oliver, I'm sorry if you think...

OLIVER. You don't believe in it, Bernadette. I'm not asking / you to.

BERNADETTE. It's not that I don't believe in it. Really. I do believe in it. / It's a bad law.

OLIVER. It's that you don't feel it.

BERNADETTE. Perché vi siete lasciati tu e Julie?

OLIVER. Lunga storia. Può capitare.

BERNADETTE (*borbottando*). Serve più sincerità tra / di noi.

OLIVER. Hanno sparato primo colpo, lanciato primo mattone.

BERNADETTE. Contenta per te.

*

BERNADETTE. Buona fortuna per oggi.

OLIVER. Devo trovare la mia trombetta da stadio.

BERNADETTE. Hai preso i tappi per le orecchie?

OLIVER. Sì, li ho presi ma non / li metterò.

BERNADETTE. Mettili per favore.

OLIVER. Voglio sentirlo bene.

BERNADETTE. Il rumore.

OLIVER. Il rumore.

Pause.

BERNADETTE. Si vota mercoledì?

OLIVER. Sì.

BERNADETTE. Cinque giorni. Oliver, mi dispiace se pensi che...

OLIVER. Tu non ci credi, Bernadette. Non ti sto chiedendo / di farlo.

BERNADETTE. Non è che non ci creda. Davvero. Io ci credo. / È una brutta legge.

OLIVER. È che non lo senti.

BERNADETTE. Well, I'm sorry if that's not enough / for me to just agree

OLIVER. It's not about that. Fuck the air horn, I'll just shout.

BERNADETTE. Good luck.

OLIVER. Thanks.

*

OLIVER. Six.

BERNADETTE. Twenty-four.

OLIVER. Busy Friday.

BERNADETTE. Dinner with Mum.

He shakes his head.

OLIVER. You.

BERNADETTE. I go alone?

He nods.

What's going on?

OLIVER. Big fundraiser Friday.

BERNADETTE. Zero?

He nods.

Coming with this time.

Pause. OLIVER looks uncertain.

Coming with you.

*

OLIVER. One hundred six.

BERNADETTE. One hundred twelve.

They smile at each other. Silence.

OLIVER. Beautiful.

BERNADETTE. I look?

OLIVER. Yeah.

BERNADETTE. Beh, mi dispiace se non è abbastanza / che io sia solo d'accordo.

OLIVER. Non è quello. Fanculo la trombetta, urlerò e basta.

BERNADETTE. Buona fortuna.

OLIVER. Grazie.

*

OLIVER. Sei.

BERNADETTE. Ventiquattro.

OLIVER. Occupato venerdì.

BERNADETTE. Cena con mamma.

Lui scuote la testa.

OLIVER. Tu.

BERNADETTE. Vado da sola?

Lui annuisce.

Che succede?

OLIVER. Grande raccolta fondi.

BERNADETTE. Zero?

Lui annuisce.

Vengo anch'io stavolta.

Pausa. OLIVER sembra perplesso.

Vengo con te.

*

OLIVER. Centosei.

BERNADETTE. Centododici.

Si sorridono. Silenzio.

OLIVER. Stupenda.

BERNADETTE. Io?

OLIVER. Sì.

Pause.

BERNADETTE. Thanks.

*

BERNADETTE. Neville's a prick.

OLIVER. He's funny. Big name.

BERNADETTE. Kept putting hands on me.

OLIVER. Being friendly.

BERNADETTE. He's a slimy slimeball of a man.

OLIVER. Words. And he's my friend.

BERNADETTE. Wish he wasn't. You were with her all night.

OLIVER. Who?

BERNADETTE. Your 'vandal'.

OLIVER. Just grow a backbone, Bernadette.

BERNADETTE. Sorry?

OLIVER. I said just grow a fucking.

OLIVER attempts to say backbone but no sound comes out.

BERNADETTE. Are you out?

OLIVER paces in frustration.

You're out. Well I've got loads left, Oliver. I saved my words for you, Oliver. I've got words to throw away because nobody even spoke to me at your angry freedom party.

Silence.

Octopus.

Pause. OLIVER looks at her confused.

Pausa.

BERNADETTE. Grazie.

*

BERNADETTE. Neville è un coglione.

OLIVER. È simpatico. E famoso.

BERNADETTE. Continuava a mettermi mani addosso.

OLIVER. Gesto amichevole.

BERNADETTE. È un viscido schifoso.

OLIVER. Parole. Ed è mio amico.

BERNADETTE. Vorrei non lo fosse. Sei stato con lei tutta notte.

OLIVER. Chi?

BERNADETTE. La tua "teppista".

OLIVER. Fatti furba, Bernadette.

BERNADETTE. Scusa?

OLIVER. Cazzo ho detto di farti.

OLIVER cerca di dire furba ma non esce alcun suono.

BERNADETTE. Le hai finite?

OLIVER cammina avanti e indietro frustrato.

Le hai finite. Beh, io ne ho ancora un sacco, Oliver. Le ho tenute per te, Oliver. Ho parole da buttare perché nessuno mi ha nemmeno parlato alla tua maledetta festa della libertà.

Silenzio.

Polipo.

Pausa. OLIVER la guarda confuso.

Buffalo. Shanghai. Yellow. Aliens.
Pasties. Terrorism. Creep. Wasted.
California. Rhinoceros. Lemons.

Pause.

Lemons. Lemons. Lemons.
Lemons. Lemons. Done.

Long silence.

*

BERNADETTE. Fifteen.

OLIVER. Six.

BERNADETTE. Pass the ketchup.

Pause.

Why did you and Julie break up?

Pause.

You're running low.

OLIVER. She didn't really love me any
more.

Pause.

BERNADETTE. Pass the gravy.

*

OLIVER. Thirty-two.

BERNADETTE. Twelve.

*

OLIVER. Twenty-seven.

BERNADETTE. Five.

*

OLIVER. Forty.

BERNADETTE. Fourteen.

*

OLIVER. One hundred three.

Bisonte. Shanghai. Giallo. Alieni.
Tortino. Terrorismo. Viscido.
Spreco. California. Rinoceronte.
Limoni.

Pausa.

Limoni. Limoni. Limoni. Limoni.
Limoni. Fatto.

Lungo silenzio.

*

BERNADETTE. Quindici.

OLIVER. Sei.

BERNADETTE. Passa il ketchup.

Pausa.

Perché tu e Julie vi siete lasciati?

Pausa.

Le stai finendo.

OLIVER. Non mi amava più veramente.

Pausa.

BERNADETTE. Passa la salsa gravy.

*

OLIVER. Trentadue.

BERNADETTE. Dodici.

*

OLIVER. Ventisette.

BERNADETTE. Cinque.

*

OLIVER. Quaranta.

BERNADETTE. Quattordici.

*

OLIVER. Centotre.

BERNADETTE. Seven.

*

OLIVER. Six.

BERNADETTE. Three.

*

OLIVER. Four.

BERNADETTE. Eight.

*

OLIVER. Two.

BERNADETTE *does not respond.*

Zero?

She nods.

Right.

*

OLIVER. Hi. Don't.

BERNADETTE *stops herself.*

Pause.

Let's just talk until it goes. Without trying to...

BERNADETTE. Okay.

OLIVER. I miss you.

BERNADETTE. I'm here.

Pause.

OLIVER. It feels like we've both been pretending you're not.

BERNADETTE *smiles slightly.*

BERNADETTE. That's exactly how it feels.

Pause.

OLIVER. Okay.

BERNADETTE. Sette.

*

OLIVER. Sei.

BERNADETTE. Tre.

*

OLIVER. Quattro.

BERNADETTE. Otto.

*

OLIVER. Due.

BERNADETTE *non risponde.*

Zero?

Lei annuisce.

Okay.

*

OLIVER. Ciao. Non farlo.

BERNADETTE *si ferma.*

Pausa.

Parliamo finché possiamo. Senza cercare di...

BERNADETTE. Okay.

OLIVER. Mi manchi.

BERNADETTE. Sono qui.

Pausa.

OLIVER. Sembra che entrambi abbiamo fatto finta che tu non lo sia.

BERNADETTE *accenna un sorriso.*

BERNADETTE. Sembra proprio così.

Pausa.

OLIVER. Okay.

BERNADETTE. I'm running low.

OLIVER. Okay.

BERNADETTE. I'm sorry for all of...

BERNADETTE *runs out of words.*

OLIVER. Yeah, me too.

Pause. OLIVER *lowers himself to the floor.*

BERNADETTE *follows suit. She taps the floor three times.*

S.

OLIVER *taps the floor three times.*

BERNADETTE *copies.*

OLIVER *taps the floor three times with his right hand and once with his left.*

BERNADETTE *copies.*

Eventually OLIVER *begins to tap out a rhythm on the floor.*

BERNADETTE *begins to drum with him.*

They fall silent.

*

BERNADETTE. Twenty-five.

OLIVER. Twenty-five.

Pause.

It feels different.

BERNADETTE. Meeting here?

OLIVER. Yeah. And just 'here'.

BERNADETTE. Louder.

Pause.

BERNADETTE. Le sto finendo.

OLIVER. Okay.

BERNADETTE. Mi dispiace per tutte le...

BERNADETTE *finisce le parole.*

OLIVER. Sì, anch'io.

Pausa. OLIVER *si abbassa sul pavimento.*

BERNADETTE *segue l'esempio. Batte tre volte sul pavimento.*

S.

OLIVER *batte tre volte sul pavimento.*

BERNADETTE *lo copia.*

OLIVER *batte sul pavimento tre volte con la mano destra e una volta con la sinistra.*

BERNADETTE *lo copia.*

Alla fine OLIVER *si mette a battere un ritmo sul pavimento.*

BERNADETTE *si mette a seguire il suo ritmo.*

Cala il silenzio.

*

BERNADETTE. Venticinque.

OLIVER. Venticinque.

Pausa.

Sembra diverso.

BERNADETTE. Incontrarci qui?

OLIVER. Già. E anche solo "qui".

BERNADETTE. Più rumoroso.

Pausa.

Looks like nobody's buried cats here for a while.

OLIVER. Maybe they stopped dying.

Pause.

BERNADETTE. Here it is.

OLIVER. Dennis, a cat full of joy. If he could talk, he'd sing.

BERNADETTE. Dan's good at talking about cats.

Pause.

BERNADETTE. Refreshing.

OLIVER. Yeah.

BERNADETTE. Feels refreshing.

*

OLIVER. Four.

BERNADETTE. Two.

OLIVER (*measured*). My favourite colour's yellow.

BERNADETTE. Mine's red.

*

OLIVER. Seven.

BERNADETTE. Seven.

OLIVER. Squids.

BERNADETTE. Ink.

OLIVER. Poems.

BERNADETTE. Haikus.

OLIVER. Nagasaki.

BERNADETTE. Bombs.

OLIVER. Sex.

Sembra che non abbiano più seppellito gatti da tempo.

OLIVER. Forse non ne sono più morti.

Pausa.

BERNADETTE. Eccolo.

OLIVER. Dennis, un gatto pieno di gioia. Se potesse parlare, canterebbe.

BERNADETTE. Dan è bravo a parlare dei gatti.

Pausa.

BERNADETTE. Rigenerante.

OLIVER. Già.

BERNADETTE. Lo trovo rigenerante.

*

OLIVER. Quattro.

BERNADETTE. Due.

OLIVER (*con tono pacato*). Mio colore preferito giallo.

BERNADETTE. Mio rosso.

*

OLIVER. Sette.

BERNADETTE. Sette.

OLIVER. Calamari.

BERNADETTE. Inchiostro.

OLIVER. Poesie.

BERNADETTE. Haiku.

OLIVER. Nagasaki.

BERNADETTE. Bombe.

OLIVER. Sesso.

BERNADETTE. Shower.

OLIVER. Sex.

BERNADETTE. Dreamer.

OLIVER. Batman.

BERNADETTE. Joker.

OLIVER. Dead.

BERNADETTE. Pets.

*

OLIVER. Ninety-four.

BERNADETTE. Forty-seven. So?

OLIVER. I am gonna go.

BERNADETTE. To the march.

OLIVER. I need to.

BERNADETTE. Why?

OLIVER. Not about me.

BERNADETTE. Okay.

OLIVER. Bernadette.

BERNADETTE. Yeah?

OLIVER. Before it was.

BERNADETTE. About you.

OLIVER. Yeah.

BERNADETTE. You were scared.

OLIVER. Insecure.

Pause.

BERNADETTE. It's an unjust law.

OLIVER. And now that's all it is.

Pause.

BERNADETTE. I'm coming with.

OLIVER. Babysitting again.

BERNADETTE. Doccia.

OLIVER. Sesso.

BERNADETTE. Sogna.

OLIVER. Yoda.

BERNADETTE. Darth Vader.

OLIVER. Morte.

BERNADETTE. Animali.

*

OLIVER. Novantaquattro.

BERNADETTE. Quarantasette. Quindi?

OLIVER. Ci andrò.

BERNADETTE. Alla marcia.

OLIVER. Devo farlo.

BERNADETTE. Perché?

OLIVER. Non è per me.

BERNADETTE. Okay.

OLIVER. Bernadette.

BERNADETTE. Sì?

OLIVER. Prima lo era.

BERNADETTE. Era per te.

OLIVER. Già.

BERNADETTE. Eri spaventato.

OLIVER. Insicuro.

Pausa.

BERNADETTE. È una legge ingiusta.

OLIVER. E ora è tutto qui.

Pausa.

BERNADETTE. Vengo anch'io.

OLIVER. Non serve bambinaia.

BERNADETTE. No. For you.
OLIVER. Lawyer on a protest march.

BERNADETTE. Oliver.
OLIVER. Family lawyer.
BERNADETTE. I work at a law firm.
 During some hours.
OLIVER. And now that's all it is?
BERNADETTE. I guess that's always
 been all it is.
Pause.
 Nothing's gonna change.
 OLIVER *smiles sadly and nods.*
OLIVER. I know.

*

They breathe deeply.

BERNADETTE. Whoa.
OLIVER. Yeah, that's...?
BERNADETTE. Yeah.

Pause.

Ah.

OLIVER. Sorry.
BERNADETTE. No. Good.
OLIVER. Running low.
BERNADETTE. Really good.

*

OLIVER. Hundred thirty-seven.
BERNADETTE. Hundred thirty-seven.
 What want do today?
OLIVER. Just get it all out.

BERNADETTE. No. Per te.
OLIVER. Avvocato in marcia di
 protesta.
BERNADETTE. Oliver.
OLIVER. Avvocato di famiglia.
BERNADETTE. Lavoro in uno studio
 legale. Qualche ora.
OLIVER. E ora è tutto qui?
BERNADETTE. Credo sia sempre stato
 tutto qui.
Pause.
 Non cambierà nulla.
 OLIVER *sorride mestamente e*
 annuisce.
OLIVER. Lo so.

*

Respirano profondamente.

BERNADETTE. Piano.
OLIVER. Sì, ti...?
BERNADETTE. Sì.

Pause.

Ah.

OLIVER. Scusa.
BERNADETTE. No. Bene.
OLIVER. Le sto finendo.
BERNADETTE. Molto bene.

*

OLIVER. Centotrentasette.
BERNADETTE. Centotrentasette. Cosa
 vuoi fare oggi?
OLIVER. Sfogarmi e basta.

BERNADETTE. Get it all out?

OLIVER *begins to sing a song. [In the original production this was the Fresh Prince of Bel Air theme tune.]*

BERNADETTE *joins in.*

OLIVER *sings until he runs out of words. BERNADETTE continues alone until she too runs out of words which happens long before the song's end.*

Silence.

*

OLIVER. I need tell you something.

Pause.

BERNADETTE. Okay.

OLIVER. On day of the noise march...

BERNADETTE. Space noise march.

OLIVER. Yeah.

BERNADETTE. When you and Julie threw the...

Pause.

OLIVER. I slept with her.

Pause.

BERNADETTE. I think I knew.

OLIVER. I think I knew you knew.

Long pause.

BERNADETTE. Thanks for telling me though.

*

BERNADETTE. Sfogarti?

OLIVER *inizia a cantare una canzone. [Nella produzione originale era la sigla di Willy, il principe di Bel-Air].*

BERNADETTE *si unisce.*

OLIVER *canta finché non finisce le parole. BERNADETTE continua da sola finché anche lei non finisce le parole, il che avviene molto prima della fine della canzone.*

Silenzio.

*

OLIVER. Devo dirti una cosa.

Pause.

BERNADETTE. Okay.

OLIVER. Il giorno della marcia del rumore...

BERNADETTE. Marcia del rumore spaziale.

OLIVER. Sì.

BERNADETTE. Quando tu e Julie avete lanciato il...

Pause.

OLIVER. Ci sono andato a letto.

Pause.

BERNADETTE. Forse lo sapevo.

OLIVER. Forse sapevo che lo sapevi.

Lunga pausa.

BERNADETTE. Grazie per avermelo detto, comunque.

*

BERNADETTE. Instead of 'I love you' we could say 'lovou'.

OLIVER. Yes. Definitely. Exactly.

BERNADETTE. Great.

OLIVER. Great.

BERNADETTE. I think we're going to deal with this really well.

OLIVER. Yeah, I think we'll be completely fine.

BERNADETTE. Really / fine.

OLIVER. Really fine. And if, I mean, if we ever don't quite understand each other, what the other / is trying to

BERNADETTE. I think we will though.

OLIVER. Yeah I know we definitely will. Because we're so well / prepared.

BERNADETTE. Well prepared. / Exactly.

OLIVER. But if we don't. I mean if the time comes where we don't quite get...

BERNADETTE. Right.

OLIVER. We could say 'dunderstand'.

BERNADETTE. 'Dunderstand'.

OLIVER. Yeah.

BERNADETTE. That's a good one.

OLIVER. Thanks.

BERNADETTE. I suppose it's about finding little tricks like you said.

OLIVER. Yes. I think so. Sort of.

BERNADETTE. Sorf.

BERNADETTE. Invece che "ti voglio bene" potremmo dire "tivubi".

OLIVER. Sì. Certamente. Esatto.

BERNADETTE. Ottimo.

OLIVER. Ottimo.

BERNADETTE. Penso che gestiremo la cosa molto bene.

OLIVER. Sì, credo che andrà benissimo.

BERNADETTE. Davvero / benissimo.

OLIVER. Davvero benissimo. E se, voglio dire, se mai non ci capiremo bene, cosa l'altro / sta cercando di

BERNADETTE. Penso ci riusciremo, però.

OLIVER. Sì lo so ci riusciremo sicuramente. Perché siamo molto ben /preparati.

BERNADETTE. Ben preparati. Esatto.

OLIVER. Ma se non riusciamo. Voglio dire, se arriva il momento in cui non capiamo...

BERNADETTE. Giusto.

OLIVER. Potremmo dire "nintendo".

BERNADETTE. "Nintendo".

OLIVER. Sì.

BERNADETTE. Questa è buona.

OLIVER. Grazie.

BERNADETTE. Suppongo si tratti di trovare piccoli trucchi come hai detto tu.

OLIVER. Sì. Penso di sì. Qualcosa così.

BERNADETTE. Qualcosì.

OLIVER. Sorf.

The End

OLIVER. Qualcosì.

Fine.

Chapter Three. Translation analysis

In this chapter I will analyse my translation of *Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons* by Sam Steiner. My analysis is divided into sections according to the corresponding difficulties and challenges that I found in the source text. My commentary is mainly based on Armstrong's (2005) guidelines for a well-structured and accurate translation analysis. Armstrong (2005: 205-206) argues that a commentary should "raise significant issues relevant to an analysis and translation of the text set" and that translators are required to "comment on translation decisions taken or not taken, explaining how choices they have made adequately or inadequately reflect features and aims of the source and target texts". Therefore, the goal of this commentary is to show a reasonable degree of awareness of the translation choices I made to overcome the challenges of the source text. In doing so, my commentary also pertains to the relevant translation history I analysed in Chapter One.

Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons is a play written by Sam Steiner in 2015 that has been performed several times, especially in Britain. Over the past months, I have tried to obtain a video recording of this play, but my attempt was unsuccessful. I contacted several theatres that hosted the enactment of this play, but the ones that replied told me that they could not share the recording because of licensing agreements. I also sent Sam Steiner's agent an email, to which answered Sam Steiner himself, but unfortunately he could not provide me with such a video recording. Luckily, on YouTube there are some videos of independent actors and actresses playing *Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons*. They have been very useful to better understand those parts of the source text that seemed a bit obscure just by reading them and to acquire a more complete insight into the context and the play scene. This obscurity is also due to the fragmentation of the source text. The source text is essentially made up of bits of conversation between the two characters, Oliver and Bernadette. Therefore, the play is composed of numerous scenes and each of them is just an extract of the characters' everyday conversations. Oliver and Bernadette are a couple and consequently the register is sometimes very intimate, familiar and colloquial. Moreover, the source text does not follow the chronological order of the events.

Another factor that contributes to the source text's obscurity is that some of the conversations take place after the so-called “Quietude Bill” became effective. Because of this law, the characters are allowed to use only one hundred and forty words per day and they are forced to be concise, to imply as much as possible and to find tricks to save words, such as abbreviations. At the same time, also because of the Quietude Bill, the words the characters choose to use became very valuable and significant and it is extremely important to fully understand them.

The text I translated was published almost one year after the play *Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons* premiered at the Warwick Arts Centre, in January 2015. As is also mentioned in the foreword, it is a play designed to be read and not only the script to be performed. However, I believe it would be impossible and wrong to consider it as something detached from its physical enactment. The dialogues and the situations are described as genuine and authentic and the reader, in order to fully enjoy the narration, must try to imagine them on the stage. It is fundamental that also the translator is aware of that and he should always try to imagine what he/she is reading and to transpose it to the target culture. It is the only way to produce a target text that the audience can fully understand and enjoy.

All the topics I have mentioned so far will be discussed in further detail in the following sections. Every time I will mention a page number, I will be referring to the first and only publication of the script *Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons* by Nick Hern Books in 2015.

3.1 Source text chronological order

As I have already stated, one of the problems that could lead to a misinterpretation of the source text is the fact that it does not follow the chronological order of the events. As a matter of fact, the very first scene takes place when Bernadette and Oliver are already in a relationship and the Quietude Bill has already entered into force. On the events timeline of the narration, this should be placed halfway. This is understandable because the two characters, before starting their conversation, tell each other how many words they have left for the day. At first reading, it might be not clear why the characters pronounce two apparently random numbers and the reason why they do so and the meaning of those

numbers will be explained much later, on page 49. Moreover, in the first scene, Bernadette pronounces the made-up word “sorf”. This word does not exist in the English dictionary and, at first reading, it is impossible to understand its meaning. It is only on page 35 that we acknowledge that Bernadette and Oliver, trying to find tricks around the Quietude Bill, have come up with a series of abbreviations. These abbreviations, as I will discuss better in section 3.3, are created by joining different words. As is explained on page 35, the term “sorf” was created by joining the words “sort” and “of”, with the purpose of saving a word. Conversely, the second scene takes place much earlier in the timeline of the events, that is when Bernadette and Oliver have just started dating.

The very beginning of the story can actually be retrieved from page 42. This is the scene of Oliver and Bernadette's first encounter and conversation. It takes place in a pet cemetery, where the two characters have just attended the burial of a cat. It could be misleading for the audience to read how the characters chat timidly about topics they are already familiar with, such as their jobs or hobbies. The previous scene, also on page 42, is the one that takes place on the day that the Quietude Bill enters into force.

In the very last scene, starting from page 63, Oliver and Bernadette share their concerns about how the Quietude Bill will affect their everyday lives and conversations. It takes place a few days before the Quietude Bill becomes effective and it is the continuation of a dialogue the characters had much earlier in the book, on page 36. It is also in the last scene that we encounter again the word “sorf” of the first scene.

In general, the narration continually shifts back and forward in the timeline of the events generating a sense of confusion in the readers, who can achieve full comprehension of the text only by reading it completely more than once.

3.2 The daily word limit and the word count

As stated in the foreword by Ed Madden, the first director of the play, the daily word limit is the heart of the play. Once the Quietude Bill has become effective, the characters are only allowed to use one hundred and forty words per day. Once they finish their words, they cannot pronounce any more words. Oliver and Bernadette are therefore forced to say less than what they would normally do. They must choose carefully what they say and how they say it, in order to obtain the most from of the daily word limit. The Quietude

Bill affects every aspect of the characters' lives, from their jobs to their personal relationship.

In terms of translation, the daily word limit generated some problems in the full understanding and interpretation of the source text. As I have already stated, the scenes that take place when the Quietude Bill has already come into force are the ones where the characters start by stating the number of words they have left. The first problem arose when figuring out how the characters count their words. This is influenced by many factors. At first, I was not sure whether the number pronounced by the characters would already include the words used to say the number itself. This is something that will be clear to the reader only from page 50, where Oliver and Bernadette agree that the number they say will express how many words they have left after counting. However, in the first scene of the play it was problematic to understand their count, as Bernadette does not respect such rules.

ST	TT
<i>They speak slowly and quietly.</i>	<i>Parlano lentamente e a bassa voce.</i>
OLIVER. Thirty-four.	OLIVER. Trentaquattro.
BERNADETTE. Twenty-one.	BERNADETTE. Ventuno.
<i>Pause.</i>	<i>Pausa</i>
Day?	Giornatina?
OLIVER. Yeah. Yours?	OLIVER. Già. Tu?
BERNADETTE. Yeah. Tuesday happened again.	BERNADETTE. Sì. Martedì ha colpito ancora.
OLIVER. Sorry.	OLIVER. Spiace.
BERNADETTE. Well, sorf.	BERNADETTE. Beh, qualcosaì.
OLIVER. Fuck it.	OLIVER. Al diavolo.
<i>Pause.</i>	<i>Pausa.</i>
Talk?	Parliamo?
BERNADETTE. Eleven. You talk.	BERNADETTE. Undici. Parla tu.
OLIVER. About?	OLIVER. Di?

BERNADETTE <i>shrugs</i> . Bernadette. BERNADETTE. I know. OLIVER. I can't know you in one hundred and forty. <i>Pause</i> . BERNADETTE. Try. (P. 5)	BERNADETTE <i>fa spallucce</i> . Bernadette. BERNADETTE. Lo so. OLIVER. Non posso conoscerti con solo centoquaranta parole. <i>Pausa</i> . BERNADETTE. Provacì.
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Bernadette, in the third line, asserts that she has twenty-one words left. However, she then pronounces only eight words and states that she has got eleven left. To make the numbers work, the only explanation is that Bernadette states her first word count without considering the actual words she was using to express it. At that moment, Bernadette had nineteen words left and not twenty-one. This is the only time it happens since, as I have already stated, in every other situation the characters will communicate the number of words they have left after the count. Since the narration does not follow the chronological timeline of the events and because of the little context we are given, it is impossible to know whether this dialogue takes place before Bernadette and Oliver agree on rules about word count, or whether it is just a mistake made by the author.

The first scene also offers a good example of an additional problem concerning the way words are counted in the source and target text. English and Italian differ in the grammar rules involved to express and write the numbers themselves and the English language needs more words to do so. In the excerpt it is possible to notice how English numbers such as “thirty-four” and “twenty-one” are made up of two words, while the Italian equivalents “trentaquattro” and “ventuno” only count as one. This might not make a huge difference, but things change significantly if we consider bigger numbers from the same excerpt such as “one hundred and forty”. This number in English is made up of four words, while the Italian equivalent “centoquaranta” is a single word. In this particular situation, since in the Italian translation I had some extra words available, I used Malone’s strategy of amplification (1988) and I added the pieces of information “solo” and “parole”. In general, the main difference is that the English language might need multiple

words to express numbers, while Italian only uses one. Because of the peculiarities of this text, this is something I always had to take into consideration before translating.

In my translation I always tried to keep the same number expressed by the characters' word counts. At times, it was not an easy operation due to the many differences in syntax and grammar, some of which I have already discussed, between English and Italian. The following excerpt is an example of such a situation, due to a difference in lexis.

ST	TT
OLIVER. Six.	OLIVER. Sei.
BERNADETTE. Twenty-four.	BERNADETTE. Ventiquattro.
OLIVER. Busy Friday.	OLIVER. Occupato venerdì.
BERNADETTE. Dinner with Mum.	BERNADETTE. Cena con mamma.
<i>He shakes his head.</i>	<i>Lui scuote la testa.</i>
OLIVER. You.	OLIVER. Tu.
BERNADETTE. I go alone?	BERNADETTE. Vado da sola?
<i>He nods.</i>	<i>Lui annuisce.</i>
What's going on?	Che succede?
OLIVER. Big fundraiser Friday.	OLIVER. Grande raccolta fondi.
BERNADETTE. Zero?	BERNADETTE. Zero?
<i>He nods.</i>	<i>Lui annuisce.</i>
Coming with this time.	Vengo anch'io stavolta.
<i>Pause. OLIVER looks uncertain.</i>	<i>Pausa. OLIVER sembra perplesso.</i>
Coming with you.	Vengo con te.
(Pp. 54-55)	

In this situation, Oliver only has six words available to communicate to Bernadette his plan for Friday. It is necessary to use three words to translate Oliver's first lines ("busy Friday" and "you"), and therefore there are three left to translate his last line "Big

fundraiser Friday”. The main difference between English and Italian lexis essentially lies in that “fundraiser” is a single word while “raccolta fondi” is made up of two words, making it impossible to convey all the pieces of information included in the source text. In other situations, it would also be inappropriate to use a synonym for “raccolta fondi”. The only single-word synonym could be “beneficienza”, but it would not be accurate as what Oliver is organising is actually aimed at raising funds for his campaign against the approval of the Quietude Bill. Maybe the word “beneficienza” could convey the right meaning if used in the expression “serata di beneficienza”, but it would be too long as it is made up of three words. Therefore, for my translation I used Malone’s strategy of reduction (1988) and I deliberately left out a piece of information, namely the word “Friday”. In my view, this is the right decision, as it allows me to have enough words to use the expression “raccolta fondi” and it does not deprive the text of essential information, since the date of the fundraiser has already been stated in the previous lines.

Another difference between English and Italian regarding the number of words needed to express something can be found in the way verbs and pronouns can be joined together. This feature does not exist in the English language and whenever a pronoun constitutes a complement it must be written separately from the verb. Conversely, in Italian it is possible to add a particle to the end of the verb to express the complement. These are called enclitic pronominal particles and they are a very useful resource when it comes to saving words. I will provide some examples to better explain my argument.

ST	TT
OLIVER. I can’t know you in one hundred and forty. <i>Pause.</i>	OLIVER. Non posso conoscerti con solo centoquaranta parole. <i>Pausa.</i>
BERNADETTE. Try. (P. 5)	BERNADETTE. Provacì.

OLIVER. Forty-six BERNADETTE. Nine. OLIVER. Okay. Right. I need to just tell you this now... at the noise... (P. 29)	OLIVER. Quarantasei. BERNADETTE. Nove. OLIVER. Okay. Bene. Devo solo dirti questo ora... al rumore...
OLIVER. Forty-eight. BERNADETTE. Twenty-two. OLIVER. You're very regular. BERNADETTE. Try save us some. (P. 50)	OLIVER. Quarantotto. BERNADETTE. Ventidue. OLIVER. Sei molto costante. BERNADETTE. Provo a salvarcene.
BERNADETTE. Here it is. (P. 59)	BERNADETTE. Eccolo.

The first excerpt is taken from the first scene, which I have already analysed from a different perspective. Here I want to stress the emphasis on the expression “know you” which has been translated with “conoscerti”, consequently saving one word. In the same excerpt, the word “Try” has been translated with “Provaci”. In my view, this decision allows me to generate a clearer target text without using any extra words. In the second example the translation of “tell you” with “dirti” produces the same effect of saving one word. In the third and fourth examples the use of multiple enclitic pronominal particles is exploited even further and the target texts “salvarcene” and “Eccolo” count two words less than the original “save us some” and “Here it is”.

3.3 Contractions and abbreviations

Contraction is another grammatical phenomenon that influences the number of words present in a sentence. I will analyse it in a distinct section because of its importance since the characters use it intentionally to save words. Contraction is the phenomenon that involves a shortening of a word, syllable, or word group by the omission of a sound or letter. As I will explain in further detail, Oliver and Bernadette refer to this grammar rule

with the term abbreviation and not contraction. Contraction is widely used in the English spoken language, and therefore I have always had to take it into account throughout my translation. To set an example:

ST	TT
BERNADETTE. Eliot's the one that played trumpet on / your latest (P. 6)	BERNADETTE. Eliot è quello che ha suonato la tromba al / tuo ultimo
BERNADETTE. I'm scared. (P. 8)	BERNADETTE. Ho paura.

In the first example, it is clear how the target text needs more words than the original to convey the same meaning, since “Eliot’s” can only be translated with “Eliot è”. Conversely, in the second example source and target text use the same number of words. This is possible because in English it is mandatory to express the subject in every sentence, while in Italian it can be omitted, especially when it is a pronoun. As a matter of fact, Italian is a pro-drop language and it allows the omission of certain kinds of pronouns in those situations where they can be pragmatically or grammatically inferable. Luckily the structure of the second example is the most frequent in the source text, and therefore it generates few problems as far as the word count of my translation is concerned.

Oliver and Bernadette want to be prepared for when the Quietude Bill enters into force, so they discuss extensively the need to find ways around this law. They try to find tricks and stratagems to save words in their day-to-day conversations in order to maintain a good level of social interaction. For example, they try communicating with the Morse Code, but it does not work well as it is too complex and ineffectual in everyday conversations. They also attempt to communicate through eye contact, but the outcome is obviously unsuccessful and rather awkward. Eventually, Oliver and Bernadette find an easy and effective way to save words. They realise that all the contractions they normally use in their conversations only count as one word. As the following excerpt suggests, they call these contractions by the name of abbreviations.

ST	TT
BERNADETTE. What about abbreviations?	BERNADETTE. E le abbreviazioni?
OLIVER. Abbreviations?	OLIVER. Abbreviazioni?
BERNADETTE. Like can't or don't or wasn't or weren't or...	BERNADETTE. Tipo quand'è o anch'io o n'è o nient'affatto o...
OLIVER. What about them?	OLIVER. Cosa?
BERNADETTE. Do they count as one or two?	BERNADETTE. Contano come una o due parole?
OLIVER. Oh right. Well how many do they count as one word?	OLIVER. Oh giusto. Beh quante ne contano come parole unite?
BERNADETTE. We should check.	BERNADETTE. Dovremmo controllare.
OLIVER. One. So you can say 'can't' and still have one hundred and thirty-nine left.	OLIVER. Una. Quindi puoi dire "anch'io" e te ne rimangono ancora centotrentanove.
(P. 35)	

Since it is impossible to find a single-word equivalent for the examples “can’t”, “don’t”, “wasn’t” and “weren’t” provided by Bernadette, I had to find a strategy to translate them. At first, I thought that maybe any contracted word could be an adequate equivalent in Italian, therefore I considered words such as “poc’anzi” or “null’altro”. These examples do not work for several reasons, first of all because the Italian interpreter of Bernadette would have never pronounced such high-register words as an example of how to save words in everyday conversations. Moreover, a word like “don’t” is the result of the contraction of “do” and “not”. It is perfectly possible to pronounce these two words separately, but what matters is that the characters decide to contract them in order to save words. Conversely, “poc’anzi” cannot be divided and “null’altro” is very unlikely to be used in a not contracted form, especially in a conversation. Therefore, I decided to choose Italian words (such as “quand’è” and “anch’io”) that not only belong to a more informal register, but are also the result of the contractions of two words that could otherwise be pronounced separately.

In the same scene, Bernadette and Oliver also discuss the idea of creating new contractions. They both agree that it could be useful to create a code or a list of linguistic

conventions aimed at saving words. It would be like a special dialect that only they know and can use for their everyday conversations. I believe that the reference to a dialect is appropriate since, in a different scene, Oliver and Bernadette discuss how couples tend to naturally create a private and intimate language, made up of in-jokes, pet names, particular ways of phrasing concepts, etc.

ST	TT
<p>BERNADETTE. Yeah. Oliver, every couple has their own kind of little... language.</p> <p>OLIVER. Right.</p> <p>BERNADETTE. Like a dialect.</p> <p>OLIVER. Like Canadian French.</p> <p>BERNADETTE. Kind of like Canadian French but small-scale I guess.</p> <p>(P. 12)</p>	<p>BERNADETTE. Sì. Oliver, ogni coppia ha un proprio piccolo... linguaggio.</p> <p>OLIVER. Giusto.</p> <p>BERNADETTE. Come un dialetto.</p> <p>OLIVER. Tipo il francese canadese.</p> <p>BERNADETTE. Un po' come il francese canadese ma in scala ridotta, credo.</p>

Clearly, the difference is that a couple's own language is developed naturally and is influenced by factors such as the length of the relationship or the level of intimacy and by shared experiences. Conversely, Bernadette and Oliver have to come up with a series of stratagems to deal with the problems brought about by the Quietude Bill. In my view, the made-up words they create do not sound natural, maybe because they were not generated spontaneously. I will illustrate some examples of such fictional contractions.

ST	TT
<p>OLIVER. Maybe we should like... Maybe we should just create a whole load of new abbreviations? That halves our output.</p> <p>BERNADETTE. Like a code?</p> <p>OLIVER. Yes. Sort of. So, so instead of 'sort of' we could just say 'sorf'.</p>	<p>OLIVER. Forse dovremmo tipo... Forse dovremmo creare un bel po' di nuove abbreviazioni? Per dimezzare quanto diciamo.</p> <p>BERNADETTE. Tipo un codice?</p> <p>OLIVER. Sì. Qualcosa così. Tipo, tipo invece che "qualcosa così" potremmo solo dire "qualcosi".</p>

BERNADETTE. ‘Sorf’.	BERNADETTE. “Qualcosì”.
OLIVER. Yeah.	OLIVER. Già.
BERNADETTE. Or instead of ‘instead of’ we could say ‘insteaf’.	BERNADETTE. O invece che “invece che” potremmo dire “inveche”.
OLIVER. Exactly.	OLIVER. Esatto.
(Pp. 35-36)	

In this dialogue, Oliver and Bernadette come up with a series of made-up words derived from the contractions of two words that naturally form a collocation in English. The first two examples (“sorf” and “insteaf”) are created following the simple rule of eliminating the ending of the first word and the beginning of the second word and uniting them. In doing so the characters operate a contraction, but without the phenomenon of elision since there is no apostrophe. In my translation, I followed the same rule and came up with “qualcosì” and “inveche”. The translation of “sorf” was more problematic since this term is not only used in this conversation, but also in other parts of the script and it had to be suitable to different contexts. I considered other variants of translation, such as “sorta di → sordi” or “più o meno → piummeno”, as inadequate since they would not work in different contexts. The term “sort of” is also present in the first scene, as I have illustrated in section 3.1, and at the very end of the play.

ST	TT
BERNADETTE. I suppose it’s about finding little tricks like you said.	BERNADETTE. Suppongo si tratti di trovare piccoli trucchi come hai detto tu.
OLIVER. Yes. I think so. Sort of.	OLIVER. Sì. Penso di sì. Qualcosa così.
BERNADETTE. Sorf.	BERNADETTE. Qualcosì.
OLIVER. Sorf.	OLIVER. Qualcosì.
<i>The End</i>	<i>Fine.</i>
(P. 64)	

Different examples of made-up words created by contraction are the following.

ST	TT
<p>BERNADETTE. Or instead of ‘see you later’ we could have errr... we could say... ‘seeuoayer’.</p> <p>OLIVER. Well, I mean that one’s a bit... You could just say ‘seeya’.</p> <p>BERNADETTE. Yeah. I like that. That’s better.</p> <p>(P. 36)</p>	<p>BERNADETTE. O invece che “ci sentiamo dopo” potremmo dire ehm... potremmo dire... “cissendopo”.</p> <p>OLIVER. Mah, cioè quella è un po’... potremmo solo dire “cissi”.</p> <p>BERNADETTE. Sì. Mi piace. Funziona meglio.</p>
<p>BERNADETTE. Instead of ‘I love you’ we could say ‘lovou’.</p> <p>OLIVER. Yes. Definitely. Exactly.</p> <p>(P. 36)</p>	<p>BERNADETTE. Invece che “ti voglio bene” potremmo dire “tivubì”.</p> <p>OLIVER. Sì. Certamente. Esatto.</p>
<p>OLIVER. But if we don’t. I mean if the time comes where we don’t quite get...</p> <p>BERNADETTE. Right.</p> <p>OLIVER. We could say ‘dunderstand’.</p> <p>BERNADETTE. ‘Dunderstand’.</p> <p>(P. 64)</p>	<p>OLIVER. Ma se non riusciamo. Voglio dire, se arriva il momento in cui non capiamo...</p> <p>BERNADETTE. Giusto.</p> <p>OLIVER. Potremmo dire “nintendo”.</p> <p>BERNADETTE. “Nintendo”.</p>

In the first example, Oliver proposes, instead of the bizarre word suggested by Bernadette, to use the word “seeya” meaning “see you later”. “Seeya” is different from the other contractions because it is not made-up. The term “seeya”, even though it should be constituted by two words “see ya”, really exists in English colloquial speech. Therefore, for my translation, I looked for a word that would express the same meaning and exist in the target language. I remembered that a few years ago it was common of youngsters to use the word “cissi” as an abbreviation for “talk to you later”. The meanings underlying the expressions “talk to you later” and “see you later” are not very far, therefore I considered “cissi” as a good equivalent for “seeya”.

In the second example, my doubt was how to translate the expression “I love you” into Italian. My uncertainty was due to little context given in the scene and to the non-chronological order of the events of the narration. Therefore, I was not sure whether the characters were already in love or just conveying that they deeply care about each other. Professor Dalziel helped me out and made me notice that the abbreviation “lovou” is not used in the English language to communicate love, it is rather used in a very familiar and intimate way to communicate to someone dear that you care about him/her. Therefore, I decided to translate it with “tivubi”. In Italian, this expression is more common in the informal written language, such as in an SMS message, but it can also be used in a colloquial speech.

In the last example, the sequence of words “do not understand” has been contracted to “dunderstand” and in the script it is always used in the sense of “I do not understand”. In my translation, I decided to opt for the word “nintendo” as the contraction of “non intendo”. I chose this solution first of all because it sounds better than any other Italian translation of “do not understand” since I thought that a contraction of “non capisco” or “non comprendo” would generate a cacophonous sound that no Italian would use in a conversation. Moreover, the word “nintendo” is a clear reference to the famous Japanese videogame company and it is a word that the characters could easily know and use. This time too, I decided to choose a word that already exists in the target language, considering it a good equivalent of the source text and, at the same time, a word that an Italian native speaker would naturally use.

3.4 Culture-bound elements

The source text never provides the reader with specific information regarding when and where the narration takes place. As far as time is concerned, the play is set in a dystopian future that is not too distant from today. The description of the social environment that emerges from the book is completely understandable by the audience, since the structure of community life, jobs, government and any aspect of people’s everyday routine is the same we can experience nowadays. The only difference lies in the approval of the Quietude Bill. With regards to the space of the narration, the play is clearly set in Britain, even though the exact location is not known. Nonetheless, the narration includes some

hints suggesting that the play could take place in London or a town nearby. The city of London is mentioned only three times in the script, once with reference to the government and the fact that the politicians are moving in the House of Common after it became a “word sanctuary” (p. 53). Oliver also mentions the city of London as the location of the marches against the Quietude Bill. In the original script also the British borough of Basildon is mentioned and referred to as the city where Julie, Oliver’s ex, wants to be in the running against those who support the Quietude Bill. In the target text, the borough of Basildon was substituted with the one of Canterbury, as I considered it to be more popular in the target culture, and hence more understandable.

The source text also includes many culture-bound elements that refer to the British world, culture and habits. In general, regarding these elements, I have often tried to look for an equivalent in the target language that makes them closer to the target culture. I therefore adopted processes of domestication, especially in those situations that I evaluated as too different from the target culture and probably impossible to understand. Conversely, when I believed that a source text element could be familiar to the target audience, and hence comprehensible, I preferred to avoid looking for an Italian equivalent. I will proceed to list and analyse my translation of these culture-bound elements.

ST	TT
BERNADETTE. So you haven’t actually told him...	BERNADETTE. Quindi in realtà non gli hai detto...
OLIVER. No. I told him we met in a Greggs. (P. 6)	OLIVER. No. Gli ho detto che ci siamo incontrati in una panetteria.

Greggs is the largest bakery chain in the United Kingdom. Due to its many shops, it is very famous all around the country. Conversely, in Italy it does not exist and I believe that hardly anyone knows about it. Therefore, I decided to domesticate the term and look for an equivalent in Italian. Greggs is specialised in savoury products and sweet items like doughnuts and it actually discontinued selling bread in 2015. For this reason, the concepts of Greggs and an Italian “panetteria” (bakery) are not alike. Maybe the term “rosticceria” would have been closer in meaning to a Greggs, but this word is less

common in Italian than “panetteria”. Nonetheless, I decided to choose the term “panetteria” because it too sells bakery products and because I imagined that the situation of an English person that chats and meets new people while waiting for his turn in a Greggs is similar to what could happen in an Italian bakery.

ST	TT
OLIVER. Hi. You look nice. High heels.	OLIVER. Ciao. Stai bene. Tacchi alti.
BERNADETTE. Yeah, you didn't tell me where we were going... so I dressed nice. Where are we going?	BERNADETTE. Sì, non mi hai detto dove andiamo... così mi sono vestita bene. Dove andiamo?
OLIVER. We're going zorbing.	OLIVER. Andiamo a fare zorbing.
BERNADETTE. What?	BERNADETTE. Cosa?
OLIVER. We're going to Frankie and Benny's.	OLIVER. Andiamo a mangiare al Frankie & Benny's.
(P. 8)	

Frankie & Benny's is a chain of Italian-American-themed restaurants in the United Kingdom. It is similar to the concept of Greggs, as it is very popular and known in the source culture, but it is absent and unfamiliar in Italian. Nevertheless, in this situation, choosing a general word such as “restaurant” would have been too vague. I then opted to employ Malone’s strategy of amplification (1988) and I added “a mangiare”, facilitating the reader in comprehending the text. As a matter of fact, I believe that without such amplification it would have been hard for the target reader to understand that Frankie and Benny’s is a restaurant. Moreover, I used the preposition “al” because it is frequently used in Italian when talking about foreign restaurant chains (for instance “mangiare al McDonald’s” or “al Burger King”).

ST	TT
OLIVER. So I don't like what you do. I know you think I don't like it and I know you hate me for that and for not understanding that your mum worked in Tesco and your dad barely worked so	OLIVER. Sì allora non mi piace quello che fai. So che pensi che non mi piaccia e so che mi odi per questo e per non capire che tua mamma lavorava in un supermercato e tuo papà lavorava a

<p>you have this thing about achievement. And I love you for that. Obviously. And I know you think you always wanted to be a lawyer but come on, like you had passions and stuff and...</p> <p>(P. 40)</p>	<p>malapena e che quindi hai questo pallino del successo. E io ti amo per questo. Ovviamente. E so che pensi di aver sempre voluto fare l'avvocato, ma dai, cioè avevi passioni e interessi e...</p>
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In this excerpt the culture-bound element is “Tesco”. Tesco is a British multinational grocery and general merchandise retailer. It is a very famous company with stores all over the world. It is also present in some European countries, but not in Italy and this is the reason why I decided not to keep the name of the brand in my translation, as I did with Greggs, and I substituted it with the general term “supermercato” (supermarket). According to Katan (1999), this substitution is an operation of chunking up since a specific word has been translated with a more general one. I operated in this way because I believe that in the target text the focus is not on the specific brand of the supermarket, rather on the fact that Bernadette's mom had a humble and low-salary job. Therefore, I assumed that the Italian “lavorava in un supermercato” (worked in a supermarket) would provide the reader with a similar idea.

ST	TT
BERNADETTE. You threw a brick through a window?	BERNADETTE. Avete lanciato un mattone contro una finestra?
OLIVER. Yep. Of an HMV.	OLIVER. Sì. Di un H&M.
BERNADETTE. You threw a brick through the window of an HMV.	BERNADETTE. Avete lanciato un mattone contro una finestra di un H&M.
(P. 31)	

Similarly to the previous examples, HMV is an English culture-bound element, completely absent in the target culture. HMV is a British music and entertainment retailer, currently operating exclusively in the United Kingdom. In Italy it does not exist and there is no music shops chain comparable to HMV, therefore I struggled to find an equivalent. Nonetheless, this excerpt is taken from the scene where Oliver tells Bernadette that he met Julie at the march against the Quietude Bill and that they threw a brick through the

window of this shop. Therefore, I believed that a valid equivalent would be a famous brand, easily recognisable as a shop that one could find while marching through the streets of London. I thought of H&M also because it sounds very similar to HMV and they are both easy and quick to pronounce by the actors.

In two scenes of the script, Bernadette and Oliver play a board game called “Articulate!”. It was developed by a British game manufacturer and it is very popular in the United Kingdom. The game has an Italian version and it is distributed in Italy as well. The gameplay and the rules make it very similar to another board game, “Taboo”, which is probably more popular in Italy. However, I decided to keep the name of “Articulate!” in my translation, first of all because it exists in our culture, then because, if the reader does not know the game, he will immediately understand its rules by the way the characters play it. I will analyse the dialogue of Oliver and Bernadette playing “Articulate!” in further detail in the next section.

ST	TT
OLIVER. Nineteen.	OLIVER. Diciannove.
BERNADETTE. Two. Hungry?	BERNADETTE. Due. Fame?
OLIVER <i>nods</i> .	OLIVER <i>annuisce</i> .
OLIVER. Want?	OLIVER. Vuoi?
BERNADETTE. Lamb.	BERNADETTE. Agnello.
OLIVER. Kind?	OLIVER. Come?
BERNADETTE <i>looks at him helplessly</i> .	BERNADETTE <i>lo guarda impotente</i> .
Zero?	Zero?
BERNADETTE <i>nods</i> .	BERNADETTE <i>annuisce</i> .
Shepherd’s pie?	Shepherd's pie?
BERNADETTE <i>pulls a disgusted expression</i> .	BERNADETTE <i>fa un’espressione di disgusto</i> .
Stew?	Stufato?
BERNADETTE <i>shakes her head</i> .	BERNADETTE <i>scuote la testa</i> .

Rogan josh? BERNADETTE <i>shakes her head and begins to mime 'kebab'.</i> Lollipop. <i>Pause.</i> Lollipop. (P. 9)	Spezzatino? BERNADETTE <i>scuote la testa e comincia a mimare 'kebab'.</i> Spiedino. <i>Pausa.</i> Spiedino.
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This dialogue troubled my translation mainly because of the names of the lamb recipes. The conversation between Oliver and Bernadette is made difficult by the fact that she has run out of words and the characters struggle to understand each other's preferences for dinner. The first culture-bound term is the shepherd's pie that, despite being a traditional British dish, is also known in Italy and its recipe can be found in an Italian cookbook. Conversely, the recipe of the Rogan josh is not popular in the target culture and it might also be not very common in English since it is an Indian recipe. Since the Rogan josh is a type of curry, I decided to translate it with "spezzatino", assuming that this word would generate in the mind of the reader an idea similar to that of the Indian dish. Finally, I believe that the term "spiedino" is a good equivalent to the English "lollipop". My concern here was that, in the previous line, Bernadette mimed the word "kebab", hoping that Oliver would understand, and in Italian the words "kebab" and "spiedino" are very different. Nonetheless, I then considered it as a misunderstanding in the source language as well since the words "lollipop" and "kebab" are very different. I evaluated "spiedino" as a suitable equivalent for "kebab" because they could be mimed in a similar way since both these dishes are served on a stick.

ST	TT
BERNADETTE. No, no. He understood. We were speaking in English. It was just as if English had been... okay imagine you've got a cheese grater. One of those cheese graters with the four different sides that grates the four different types of cheese gratings. [...]	BERNADETTE. No, no. Ha capito. Parlavamo la stessa lingua. Solo era come se fosse... Okay, immagina di avere una grattugia. Una di quelle grattugie con quattro lati diversi che grattugia il formaggio in modi diversi. [...]

(P. 13)	
BERNADETTE. Or how do you pronounce a double-L in Welsh?	BERNADETTE. O come si pronuncia una doppia L in spagnolo?
OLIVER. Okay. That one wasn't... But I guess they'll emerge.	OLIVER. Okay. Quella non era... ma credo verranno fuori.
(P. 36)	
OLIVER <i>waves at</i> BERNADETTE. <i>She waves back.</i> <i>They speak excessively slowly and loudly (Brits-abroad style).</i>	OLIVER <i>saluta con la mano</i> BERNADETTE. <i>Lei risponde al saluto.</i> <i>Parlano molto lentamente e ad alta voce (stile italiani all'estero).</i>
(P. 45)	

Regarding the first excerpt, the word “English” clearly cannot just be translated by equation into the target language. Such a decision would disorientate the reader, since an Italian-speaking character who claims that he was speaking English would mean that he was speaking a different and foreign language. It would be the opposite of what the source text wants to express. I decided to translate this line in a very general way, clearly expressing that Bernadette and her ex were speaking the same language. In the following line, the source text makes a second reference to the English language. In this situation, I adopted Malone’s strategy of reduction (1988), omitting the information about the language, in my view producing a simplified but understandable translation.

The second excerpt is taken from the scene where Oliver and Bernadette try to come up with possible abbreviations to save words in their everyday conversations. Oliver suggested that they should just say “how?” instead of the complete question “how are you?”, but Bernadette disagrees as she considers “how?” to be too vague. She argues that it could refer to any how-related question, such as “how do you pronounce a double-L in Welsh?”. The pronunciation of the double-L in Welsh is completely obscure to the Italian culture. I believe that only those who study or work in the field of linguistics can be acquainted with such concept. Moreover, the focus in this passage is not on how the double-L is actually pronounced in Welsh, rather on the aforementioned ambiguity of the abbreviation “how?”. Therefore I could have translated “double-L in Welsh” by equation, but because of the obscurity of this concept I decided to make the target text clearer to

the audience. I immediately thought of the “double-L in Spanish” as a more familiar concept to the target reader, considering the linguistic affinity between Italian and Spanish. The sounds of the double-L in Welsh and Spanish are not alike at all, but since this is not the main point of the passage, I opted for an option closer to the target culture.

In the third example, the culture-bound element is the reference to the British abroad. I also consider this reference to be far from what the average target audience could imagine when reading it. As a matter of fact, I believe that an Italian reader who thinks about how British people behave abroad, maybe on holiday, does not immediately figure them speaking very slowly and loudly. Conversely, it seemed to me as a more appropriate image of how Italians are seen abroad, especially with reference to the excessively loud tone of voice. Once again, I opted for an option that would generate a clear and understandable image in the reader’s mind, without manipulating excessively the source text.

A final consideration regarding the translation of culture-bound elements has to be made in relation to the specific kind of source text I chose. Since *Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons* is a theatrical text, I was not given the possibility to insert any footnotes in my translation. Footnotes are a very useful resource, as they allow the translator to keep a culture-bound element in the target text and to explain it to the audience. In my view, keeping some of the culture-bound elements in the target text is necessary to produce dialogues that sound realistic and plausible because, as stated by Osimo (2011), an implausible dialogue line would have a negative impact on the actor’s work and even disable the identification with the part he/she is playing. I believe that, if I could have, in some cases I would have opted for this option, for instance for the explanation of Greggs, “Articulate!” and Rogan josh. Unfortunately, footnotes are appropriate for different kinds of text, such as narratives, and cannot be used in the script of a play. The impossibility to insert footnotes in my translation contributed to my decision of opting more often for strategies of domestication rather than foreignization.

3.5 Wordplays and idioms

As I stated in section 1.6, idioms and wordplays are an inalienable part of communication and are widely used in most existing languages. Since my source text is essentially a collection of conversations between Oliver and Bernadette, the language they adopt is often familiar and intimate characterised by the features of colloquial speeches. Therefore, the characters generally speak in a spontaneous way. This is evident also because of the considerable amount of swear words pronounced in their speeches. As a matter of fact, throughout the whole text the word “fuck” and its variant “fucking” are used thirteen times. They are often used when the characters argue about the Quietude Bill or their relationship. For instance, on page 21, Bernadette and Oliver have a huge fight about the way she drives and Bernadette pronounces the word “fucking” three times in just a few sentences, together with other swear words. In my translation, I did not mitigate these terms and I looked for Italian slang equivalents instead. Dealing with the translation of swear words, I based my considerations on Nida’s principle of equivalent effect (Nida 1964), according to which the translator must find “the closest natural equivalent to the source-language message” (Nida 1964: 166). This is fundamental to achieve naturalness in the target text, and to trigger the same impact on the target audience as the source text did on the original audience. I believe that it was important to keep such swear words in my translation, or otherwise the arguments between Oliver and Bernadette would not have sounded natural or have conveyed the sense of anger and disappointment felt by the characters.

Every time I met a wordplay or idiom in the source text, I approached it according to the translation theory analysed in section 1.6. I did not focus on the single words constituting them, but rather I considered these sequences of words as a whole in order to grasp the figurative meaning and translate it properly into the target language. I will proceed to analyse the single wordplays and idioms encountered in the source text.

ST	TT
BERNADETTE. No obviously you’re the same. But what, okay, what if, when there are more people around and when there are smells and billboards and	BERNADETTE. No ovviamente sei lo stesso. Ma e se, okay, e se, quando ci sono più persone intorno e quando ci sono gli odori e i cartelloni pubblicitari

<p>cinemas and like fastfood restaurants and rock music and people on the streets selling burgers...</p> <p>[...]</p> <p>OLIVER. I don't really eat many burgers and I'm quite good at shutting out street sellers. Like shutting them down. Downtown.</p> <p>(Pp. 7-8)</p>	<p>e i cinema e tipo i ristoranti fast-food e la musica rock e la gente per strada che vende hamburger...</p> <p>[...]</p> <p>OLIVER. Non mangio poi tanti hamburger e sono abbastanza bravo a divincolarmi tra i venditori ambulanti. Cioè a svincolarmi. In un vicolo.</p>
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This excerpt is taken from the scene where Oliver and Bernadette are at the pet cemetery again and talk about their relationship. They have just started dating and Bernadette seems to be still insecure about committing. She is worried about what their life together might be like, especially in public or in the presence of their friends. On the other hand, Oliver tries to calm her by saying that he is showing her his true self. Oliver's wordplay is based on the use of phrasal verbs "shut out" and "shut down" and on the alliteration of "down" and "downtown". These three elements are linked together not only under the aspect of meaning but also because of how they sound. Phrasal/prepositional verbs are a characteristic feature of the English language and I did not find any equivalent Italian verbs that could be suitable for this situation. At first I thought of recreating the wordplay in Italian starting from the word "venditori ambulanti" ("street sellers"), maybe trying to generate irony by calling them "venditori petulanti" ("annoying") but then I could not connect it to the third element ("downtown"), also because it refers to the fact that the image described takes place in the city centre. Finally, I came up with the verb "divincolarsi" and its variant "svincolarsi", which can be easily connected to the word "vicolo" ("alley"). By doing so, I believe I recreated equivalence to the original in every way, first of all because the Italian words all contain the sound "vi", and because the verbs express the same concept as the original (that is to avoid the street sellers), also because the word "vicolo" highlights the concept of hiding and that the scene is taking place in the city centre.

ST	TT
OLIVER. I hate words like really. [...]	OLIVER. Odio le parole come davvero. [...]
OLIVER. The only time anyone has ever meant the word ‘really’ is when Eva Cassidy sings it in ‘Over the Rainbow’.	OLIVER. L'unica volta che qualcuno ha mai usato seriamente la parola “davvero” è quando Luca Carboni la canta in “Mi ami davvero”.
BERNADETTE. Oliver.	BERNADETTE. Oliver.
OLIVER. She goes: Reeaaaaally.	OLIVER. Quando dice: Davveroooo.
(P. 19)	

In this scene, Oliver plays Bernadette his last work and asks for her opinion. She replies that she really loves it and Oliver expresses his opinion about the word “really”. He believes that adding “really” is a word people use to convince their interlocutor that they genuinely mean what they are saying. In his view, when one states that he/she really loves something is like saying “Please believe that I like this thing” (p. 19). Oliver then makes a joke and asserts that the only time the word “really” has been pronounced and meant is when Eva Cassidy sings it in Over the Rainbow. He also utters this word the same marked way it is pronounced in the song (“Reeeeeaaally”). The word “really” is pronounced many times in the source text and, on page 30, it is uttered again in the same marked way. Therefore, I had no other option than to translate the word “really” by substituting it with the Italian equivalent “davvero”. Then I had to find an Italian song where not only the word “davvero” plays a central role, but is also pronounced in a marked way as “really” in Over the Rainbow. The song “Mi ami davvero” by Luca Carboni meets all the aforementioned requirements. The cultural difference lies in the level of fame of the two songs, since Over the Rainbow is much more popular, but I believe that the Italian song is known enough to understand the reference.

ST	TT
<p><i>They are playing Articulate.</i></p> <p>OLIVER. Ready.</p> <p>BERNADETTE. Yep. Ready.</p> <p>OLIVER. Okay right, right. Band. They're a band. They were big in the eighties. Absolutely awful, music-wise. Not damp damp damp.</p> <p>BERNADETTE. Wet Wet Wet.</p> <p>(P. 9)</p>	<p><i>Giocano ad Articulate.</i></p> <p>BERNADETTE. Pronti.</p> <p>OLIVER. Sì. pronti.</p> <p>BERNADETTE. Okay giusto, giusto. Una band. Sono una band. Andavano molto negli anni Settanta. Veramente squisiti, dal punto di vista musicale. Squisiti come zeppole.</p> <p>OLIVER. Led Zeppelin.</p>

This excerpt is taken from the scene where the characters play “Articulate!”. As I have already mentioned in the previous section, “Articulate!” is a board game where the players have to describe words from six different categories to their team as quickly as possible. The score is determined by the number of words a team manages to guess. In the source text, Oliver has to make Bernadette guess the name of the rock band Wet Wet Wet. He provides her with a few details about their music and then uses a wordplay that allows Bernadette to figure out the name of the band. The wordplay is based on the repetition of a word (as in the rock band’s name) and on the connection between the words “damp” and “wet”. I immediately recognized that I had to change band in my target text, first of all because the Scottish rock band may be more popular in the United Kingdom than it is in Italy, and then because a connection between their name and the word “damp” would not have been possible nor understandable in the target language. Therefore, I looked for a different band named with a repeated name and checked if I could invent a wordplay about it. At first I thought of Duran Duran. I considered the word “duran” as the abbreviation of “durante” and I thought of a wordplay with a synonym. Oliver could have said “Non mentr mentr”, considering “mentr” as the abbreviation of “mentre”, synonym to “durante”. However, this solution did not completely convince me as I believe that it would be unlikely for an Italian person to formulate such a description playing “Articulate!”. I then individuated the name of the very famous band Led Zeppelin and modified the previous lines to make a wordplay about it. I changed the reference to the years they were big, from the eighties to the seventies and I also adapted the part

where Oliver says that they were awful, since it is definitely not the case. I translated “awful” with “deliziosi” (adorable, or also delicious) because they are a brilliant band and to make a wordplay with “zeppole”, the word that gives Bernadette the right hint to guess the band. “Zeppole” are typical Italian pastries consisting of a deep-fried dough ball, usually filled with custard. I therefore considered “zeppole” as the core of my wordplay because they are delicious and they sound similar to “Zeppelin”.

ST	TT
OLIVER. You talk in your sleep.	OLIVER. Parli nel sonno.
BERNADETTE. What did I say?	BERNADETTE. Cosa ho detto?
OLIVER. It was pretty hard to tell. Something about a bad man stealing your pens. Think it was a bad man. Could've been Batman.	OLIVER. Difficile da dire. Qualcosa a proposito di un maestro di yoga che ti ruba le penne. Penso che fosse un maestro di yoga. Forse era Maestro Yoda.
<i>Pause.</i>	<i>Pausa.</i>
BERNADETTE. It was Batman.	BERNADETTE. Era Yoda.
(P. 10)	

The wordplay from this excerpt is based on the similar sound produced by the words “bad man” and “Batman”. In this scene, Oliver tells Bernadette that, the previous night, he heard her talking in her sleep. He was sleepy too and could understand exactly what she was saying. He heard the words “bad” and “man”, and the next morning he assumed she was actually pronouncing “Batman”, hence the wordplay. In Italian, a simple translation by equivalence would not have worked, therefore I had to find a different famous character and a related wordplay to generate a similar situation in the target language. My translation proposal plays on the alliteration of Master Yoda, the famous character from Star Wars, and “maestro di yoga” (yoga instructor). I believe that equivalence has been achieved since the source and the target text generate a similar wordplay, as well as the same image in the readers’ minds. Because of this change, I also had to modify another part of my translation, which is indirectly related to the one I have just discussed.

ST	TT
OLIVER. Seven.	OLIVER. Sette.
BERNADETTE. Seven.	BERNADETTE. Sette.
OLIVER. Squids.	OLIVER. Calamari.
BERNADETTE. Ink.	BERNADETTE. Inchiostro.
OLIVER. Poems.	OLIVER. Poesie.
BERNADETTE. Haikus.	BERNADETTE. Haiku.
OLIVER. Nagasaki.	OLIVER. Nagasaki.
BERNADETTE. Bombs.	BERNADETTE. Bombe.
OLIVER. Sex.	OLIVER. Sesso.
BERNADETTE. Shower.	BERNADETTE. Doccia.
OLIVER. Sex.	OLIVER. Sesso.
BERNADETTE. Dreamer.	BERNADETTE. Sogna.
OLIVER. Batman.	OLIVER. Yoda.
BERNADETTE. Joker.	BERNADETTE. Darth Vader.
OLIVER. Dead.	OLIVER. Morte.
BERNADETTE. Pets.	BERNADETTE. Animali.
(P. 60)	

In this scene, Oliver and Bernadette are playing a game where they have to say something related to what the partner has just said. Bernadette pronounces the word “dreamer” and Oliver immediately connects it to “Batman”, referring to the scene where they discuss the fact that she talks in her sleep. I adapted my translation to make it coherent to the aforementioned scene, and I substituted Batman with Yoda. In the following line, Bernadette connects the word of Batman to that of his sworn enemy, Joker. I, therefore, adapted my translation and substituted Joker with Darth Vader. He is Yoda’s enemy and can also be easily connected to the following line, where Oliver connects it to the concept of “death”.

As far as idioms are concerned, the source text presents only two. The first idiom, on page 15, is “break a leg”. This is a very famous expression that has to be translated

with Malone’s strategy of substitution (1988) into “buona fortuna”. The second idiom is included in the following excerpt.

ST	TT
BERNADETTE. Wish he wasn’t. You were with her all night.	BERNADETTE. Vorrei non lo fosse. Sei stato con lei tutta notte.
OLIVER. Who?	OLIVER. Chi?
BERNADETTE. Your ‘vandal’.	BERNADETTE. La tua “teppista”.
OLIVER. Just grow a backbone, Bernadette.	OLIVER. Fatti furba, Bernadette.
BERNADETTE. Sorry?	BERNADETTE. Scusa?
OLIVER. I said just grow a fucking.	OLIVER. Cazzo ho detto di farti.
OLIVER <i>attempts to say backbone but no sound comes out.</i>	OLIVER <i>cerca di dire furba ma non esce alcun suono.</i>
(Pp. 55-56)	

In this scene, Oliver and Bernadette are fighting because she believes that Oliver spent the night with his ex. Oliver, attempting to deny it, tells Bernadette to grow a backbone, which is an idiom that means that she should begin behaving in a courageous manner and have more self-confidence. This idiom too must be translated with Malone’s strategy of substitution (1988) and I believe that the Italian idiom “farsi furbi” is a good equivalent. Besides being an expression used to end a discussion one does not want to have, it is often used by the youngsters in everyday conversations and arguments.

In conclusion, translating for theatre is a complex activity that involves an awareness of multiple codes, both in and around the written text, and that involves unique problems that are not found in any other type of translation process. This section attempts to give an explanation of the strategies adopted during the process of translation. These choices were made considering the theory of translation examined in Chapter One and, in this chapter, they have been singularly analysed and commented, along with the examples and excerpts from the source and target texts.

Conclusion

The idea for this thesis was generated by the desire to offer my own translation proposal of the book *Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons* by Sam Steiner. This volume was published for the first time in 2015 by Nick Hern Books but, to date, has never been translated into Italian. When I first read the synopsis of this book on the internet, I was immediately intrigued by it. I then decided to purchase this volume to better analyse it. At first reading, I was fascinated by the setting and the plot of this book. Being a fan of stories that take place in a dystopian future, I enjoyed immensely how the author has managed to recreate a setting that is totally like that of today, with the only difference that the Quietude Bill has come into force. Because of this law, people are only allowed to speak one hundred and forty words every day and this has incredible repercussions on everyone's personal life and relationships. This dystopian world is described through the point of view of only two characters, Oliver and Bernadette. They meet for the first time in a pet cemetery, get to know each other better, start dating and finally go to live together. However, their life will be immensely affected by the entry into force of the Quietude Bill, which will make them change the way they communicate and handle their relationship. When I found out that this volume had never been translated into Italian before, I thought this would be a challenging but fascinating task. I, therefore, shared my thoughts with my thesis supervisor, Professor Dalziel, and we agreed that it would be an interesting work for my dissertation.

The aim of my translation project was to produce a text that is enjoyable and understandable to the target readers. The goal was to transpose into Italian all the peculiarities of the source text, especially the linguistic features. The main topic of the original text is to convey the struggle brought to the characters' everyday life by the entry into force of the Quietude Bill. Therefore, the majority of the most important scenes are those that take place after the entry into force of such law. These scenes are easily recognizable by the fact that they start with the characters stating how many words they have got left for the day. In my translation of these scenes, I have always managed to respect the source text word count, even in the most difficult situations analysed in Chapter Three. I operated this way because I wanted to convey in Italian this sense of difficulty in communicating of the characters. I thought that if I did not respect the

parameters in the word count of the source text, the Italian text would be oversimplified and the message of the original would be lost. This generated many problems in the translation project, especially in those scenes where the characters have few words left and there is little availability of translation choices. The necessity was always to choose the words that best suit the situation described, but even in these cases the translation was made problematic by the many differences in grammar, syntax and lexis between the source and the target text.

Another important feature of the source text is the way Oliver and Bernadette talk to each other. Since they are in a long-term relationship and live together, their way of communicating is generally intimate and colloquial. As a matter of fact, their conversations include a large number of swear words, wordplays and slang words. Moreover, being the source text a script, the dialogues between Bernadette and Oliver represent the majority of the text itself. My translation project was aimed at recreating the same situations in the target language. The necessity was to produce a text made up of dialogues that sounded natural to the Italian reader, and not like the adaptation of a text that was originally conceived in a different language. In my view, this is particularly hard to do when working with this kind of colloquial language. In this respect, the fragmentation of the source text also generated some problems in the production of a fluent and natural target text. As I have already stated, the source text is made up of dialogues and basically each dialogue corresponds to a different scene. Nonetheless, these conversations, and the narration in general, are not inserted in the book following the chronological order of the events. This clearly generates a sense of misunderstanding and can be misleading for the reader, who might need to read the text completely more than once in order to fully comprehend it. Many dialogues consist of only a few lines, and this, together with the limited word count the characters have available, often provides the reader with little context and makes it harder for him/her to have a clear image of what is going on in the scene.

Another aspect regarding the source text language that generated problems in the translation project is the presence of many wordplays and idioms. As I have already stated, Oliver and Bernadette share a colloquial language, typical of a long-term relationship and characterised by many slang terms and wordplays. These were particularly difficult to translate, especially those that make references to the English

culture. In all these situations, my translation aimed at generating a similar situation in the target text, trying to produce solutions that are equivalent to the source text in all respects. Moreover, as argued by Sam Steiner in the foreword of *Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons*, this book was mainly conceived to be read and should not be considered as the exact script of the homonymous play. However, as stated by Sam Steiner, it would be impossible and wrong to detach completely the script from the play. As a matter of fact, these two elements are to be considered as coexistent, as they affect and shape each other. My translation project always aimed at respecting the parameters of performability of the source text. While translating, I always took into consideration the relationship between the play and its physical enacting and, in any situation, I tried to imagine in my mind how the scene I had just translated would look if it were really enacted on the stage. In my view, this is the right way to approach these kinds of source texts and translations.

In order to achieve these results with my translation project, I analysed and studied a large number of publications and articles regarding many aspects of translation studies. This constitutes the theoretical backbone of my project and it is explained in Chapter One of the present thesis. Before starting my translation, I gathered the theoretical information that I considered fundamental and essential for a positive outcome of my project. I initially focused on the concept of equivalence and I have analysed it under the points of view of the most relevant scholars, such as Vinay and Darbelnet, Jakobson, Nida, Catford, etc. I also studied how to properly translate culture and culture-bound elements. In this respect, I found the theories of Malinowski, Jakobson, Katan and Venuti particularly interesting and useful for the purposes of my translation. Parts of the theoretical background of my dissertation are also the topics regarding the role of the translator and the analysis of the various strategies that he can adopt. In particular, I focused on the translation strategies of domestication and foreignization. These are the two strategies I also took into account the most during my translation. In this regard, I tried to produce a target text that is not too far from the original but also to keep those culture-bound parts of the source text that can be understood by the target audience. I clearly also spent some time studying the proper way to analyse and translate properly the particular kind of publication that is my source, namely the script of a play.

In general, I believe that my translation project has managed to produce an enjoyable text for the target audience. All the translation strategies and the decisions I

adopted are explained thoroughly in Chapter Three. In this chapter, which is essentially the commentary of my translation, I collected all the thoughts, problems and considerations I came across while translating. For all these situations, an explanation is provided, along with numerous examples and excerpts of the source and the target text.

This thesis is intended to offer my translation proposal of *Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons* by Sam Steiner. I hope that those who read my thesis will appreciate my translation and also find a clear and accurate work of analysis. This work does not intend to be the ideal nor definitive translation of *Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons*. Conversely, the wish is to bring greater fame to this talented author who, unfortunately, is almost unknown in Italy, hoping that one day his plays will be published in Italian as well.

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Riassunto

Nel presente lavoro mi sono occupato della traduzione dall'inglese all'italiano dell'opera *Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons* di Sam Steiner, pubblicata da Nick Hern Books nel novembre 2015. Il libro è da ritenersi il copione dell'omonima opera teatrale che ha visto il proprio debutto nel gennaio 2015 al Warwick Arts Center, diretta proprio da Sam Steiner. Le componenti principali della mia tesi sono costituite da un capitolo dedicato agli aspetti della teoria della traduzione rilevanti ai fini del mio lavoro, dalla traduzione vera e propria e da un capitolo in cui vengono analizzate le problematiche incontrate durante il processo traduttivo.

La scelta dell'opera è nata dopo un interessante dibattito con la mia relatrice, la Professoressa Dalziel. La docente, durante un suo ricevimento, ha condiviso con me la sua conoscenza e passione per il mondo del teatro e mi ha introdotto alla realtà delle traduzioni di opere teatrali. Durante i miei due anni di studi magistrali ho seguito corsi di traduzione specializzata dall'inglese all'italiano e viceversa. Tuttavia, l'argomento della traduzione di opere teatrali non è mai stato affrontato direttamente con i docenti e io stesso non avevo mai avuto modo di cimentarmi in precedenza. La scelta di quest'opera specifica come testo di partenza per il mio progetto di traduzione è stata quasi casuale. Non avevo mai letto alcun libro scritto da Sam Steiner, né mi era capitato di assistere ad una sua rappresentazione teatrale. Navigando su internet alla ricerca di un'opera interessante e che non fosse mai stata tradotta in italiano, mi sono imbattuto nella sinossi di *Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons*. Avendo subito suscitato la mia curiosità, ho deciso acquistare il libro e di analizzarlo più attentamente.

Sam Steiner è un drammaturgo e sceneggiatore di Manchester. Oltre a *Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons*, le sue opere teatrali includono *A Table Tennis Play* (2019); *You Stupid Darkness!* (2019) e *Kanye the First* (2017). Sam Steiner è cofondatore della compagnia teatrale itinerante Walrus.

Come già anticipato, il testo da me tradotto è la trasposizione su libro dell'opera teatrale omonima. È importante sottolineare come, cronologicamente, il debutto dell'opera teatrale al Warwick Arts Center sia antecedente alla stesura e pubblicazione del libro. L'autore, nell'introduzione del suo lavoro, afferma che egli stesso non si aspettava che la sua opera avrebbe visto la luce sotto forma di testo scritto e pubblicato,

in quanto non la ha mai considerata come qualcosa di statico e invariabile ma, al contrario, come la volubile riflessione del lavoro suo e della sua compagnia teatrale.

L'opera è ambientata in Inghilterra, in un futuro distopico non specificato, ma non lontano dai giorni nostri. Ogni aspetto della società è identico a quella odierna, con la differenza che è stata approvata la Quietude Bill (la legge sul silenzio). Tale legge impone a chiunque un limite massimo di centoquaranta parole da utilizzare in una giornata; una volta finite, si rimane letteralmente senza parole e non è più possibile emettere alcun suono. Anche l'ambientazione dell'opera non viene mai espressa chiaramente dall'autore. È tuttavia possibile desumere che si tratti di Londra, in quanto nel testo vengono fatti diversi riferimenti a questa città. Per esempio, nell'opera viene specificato che le marce e i cortei di protesta contro la Quietude Bill avvengono nel cuore di Londra. Vengono inoltre menzionati alcuni celebri luoghi della capitale britannica, come per esempio Westminster.

I protagonisti dell'opera sono Oliver e Bernadette, due ragazzi che nel corso della narrazione si conoscono, si innamorano e vivono insieme gli effetti e le ripercussioni della Quietude Bill su ogni ambito della loro vita, da quella pubblica a quella privata. Oliver lavora come musicista mentre lei è un avvocato. La loro età non è specificata, tuttavia si può supporre che siano giovani e che abbiano circa trenta anni. Dopo l'entrata in vigore della Quietude Bill, comunicare diventa incredibilmente difficile e i protagonisti si trovano spesso nella situazione di avere molto da dire ma di non poterlo fare, oppure nel paradossale contrario di avere molte parole a disposizione, ma nulla da dirsi. In ogni caso, Oliver e Bernadette devono prestare molta attenzione alle parole che pronunciano e il loro impegno è sempre quello di scegliere termini precisi e adatti, in quanto capirsi con poche parole è ora essenziale nella loro vita. I due protagonisti cercano anche stratagemmi e soluzioni ai problemi derivati dalla Quietude Bill. Per esempio, per risparmiare parole, cercano di comunicare con il codice Morse o semplicemente con lo sguardo, ma con pessimi risultati. Cercano inoltre di costruirsi un linguaggio proprio, composto da parole inventate che derivano dall'unione di due o più parole. Questo gli permette, in determinati casi, di risparmiare parole, ma sicuramente il loro modo di comunicare e di vivere non sarà mai più come quello di prima.

L'opera può anche essere letta come una critica sociale della classe politica e di quelle leggi considerate limitanti per le libertà individuali. Questo avviene soprattutto

tramite le parole di Oliver, in quanto è molto più contrario a questa legge di quanto non lo sia Bernadette. Oliver, infatti, organizza e partecipa a cortei di protesta e a manifestazioni contro l'entrata in vigore della Quietude Bill. Spesso, nell'opera, pronuncia dure parole di denuncia contro la classe politica e contro questa legge che, a suo parere, svantaggia maggiormente i poveri e i meno fortunati in quanto sono quelli che hanno più bisogno di parole per chiedere aiuto, per sostenere colloqui e ottenere lavoro, per dimostrare quanto valgono.

Oliver e Bernadette hanno punti di vista differenti riguardo la Quietude Bill anche in relazione alle loro diverse estrazioni sociali ed occupazioni. Oliver lavora come musicista e questa legge rappresenta una forte limitazione per il suo lavoro, in quanto il linguaggio e la comunicazione ne costituiscono l'essenza. Nell'opera, Oliver e Bernadette discutono anche sugli esiti che la Quietude Bill potrebbe avere sul mondo della musica. In questa conversazione, Oliver si dimostra ovviamente più preoccupato di quanto non lo sia Bernadette, che cerca di rassicurarlo dicendogli che il mondo della musica e della registrazione può trovare modi di adattarsi a tale situazione, magari dividendo le sessioni di registrazione delle canzoni in due o più giornate. Bernadette invece si dimostra più accondiscendente nei confronti di questa legge e sembra accettarla con più leggerezza. Bernadette lavora come avvocato e probabilmente il suo approccio alla Quietude Bill è lo stesso che avrebbe verso qualunque altra nuova legge. Bernadette riconosce che non si tratta di una buona legge, ma la ritiene comunque una legge che è stata approvata in maniera perfettamente legale e regolare e, per questo, deve essere rispettata e seguita da tutti. Contrariamente a Oliver, Bernadette non ritiene che questa legge sia da considerare come una forma di censura, in quanto tutte le persone hanno a disposizione lo stesso numero di parole. Oliver è anche molto critico nei confronti dei rappresentanti delle sfere del potere che hanno promosso l'entrata in vigore della Quietude Bill, e la sua rabbia nei loro confronti raggiunge il culmine quando scopre che questi hanno intenzione di istituire dei "word sanctuaries" (santuari di parole), ovvero dei luoghi nei quali la Quietude Bill non ha effetto e le persone possono parlare liberamente. Ovviamente, il Parlamento rientra nella lista di questi "santuari" e Oliver è quantomeno adirato dal sapere che i parlamentari si stanno letteralmente trasferendo nella Camera dei Comuni, dove possono disporre di tutte le parole che vogliono, oltre che delle comodità e dei servizi offerti da questa struttura. Un altro motivo di litigio per i protagonisti dell'opera è portato dal fatto

che il governo ha stabilito che alcune persone potranno godere di un'esenzione speciale. Per queste persone, le parole utilizzate sul posto di lavoro non verranno sottratte alle centoquaranta disponibili giornalmente. Gli avvocati sono tra coloro che potranno godere di questa speciale esenzione. Oliver è molto turbato da questa situazione, in quanto trova ingiusto che venga dedicato un trattamento speciale a persone che ricoprono determinati ruoli, anche se è felice del fatto che Bernadette avrà modo di risparmiare parole a lavoro e di poterle quindi spendere per parlare con lui.

Il testo di partenza è fondamentalmente una raccolta di dialoghi tra Oliver e Bernadette, mentre le parti descrittive sono molto rare e mirano a dare indicazioni sull'organizzazione della scena o sul modo di parlare dei personaggi. Oliver e Bernadette utilizzano i dialoghi per comunicare al proprio partner ed al lettore i loro pensieri ed i loro sentimenti. Tuttavia, tutto questo è spesso reso più difficile dalla Quietude Bill che non permette loro di esprimere pienamente ciò che hanno in mente. Questo può portare, in certe situazioni, a una generale mancanza di contesto che, insieme alla marcata frammentazione del testo di partenza, può generare un senso di confusione nel lettore. Inoltre, l'autore non presenta i fatti seguendo l'ordine cronologico degli eventi. Per esempio, quella che cronologicamente dovrebbe essere la prima scena dell'opera, ovvero quella in cui Oliver e Bernadette si incontrano per la prima volta, inizia nel libro a pagina 42. In generale, nel testo di partenza si verifica un continuo spostamento avanti e indietro nel tempo che il lettore può trovare molto confusionario e portare alla necessità di leggere l'intera opera più di una volta per comprendere appieno la narrazione.

La mia tesi si apre con un capitolo dedicato all'introduzione all'opera e al mio lavoro in generale. In questa sezione viene presentata una panoramica generale sul testo di partenza e sull'autore. Ci si sofferma inoltre sul metodo seguito nella mia trattazione, sull'ipotesi di lavoro proposta e sui capitoli che compongono il corpo del lavoro.

Nel Capitolo Uno viene analizzata la teoria della traduzione che ho trovato rilevante e fondamentale per il mio progetto di traduzione. Prima di scrivere questo capitolo, ho letto e studiato molte pubblicazioni e saggi riguardanti diversi argomenti di linguistica e traduzione. Nel fare ciò, ho iniziato esaminando quei libri che discutevano di traduzione ad un livello più generale per poi passare a quelli che sono più rilevanti per il mio lavoro, come le pubblicazioni riguardanti la traduzione per il teatro. Il Capitolo Uno è suddiviso in sezioni dedicate alle varie tematiche approfondite. Nella prima sezione viene presentata

una sintesi del concetto di equivalenza nella traduzione, il quale viene analizzato considerando le opinioni e le teorie di famosi linguisti e studiosi come Vinay e Darbelnet, Jakobson, Nida, Catford, Newmark e House. La seconda sezione riguarda il nesso tra lingua e cultura. Si evidenzia come questi due aspetti siano inseparabili poiché culture diverse vedono la loro realizzazione ed espressione in lingue diverse. Nord è indubbiamente da considerarsi uno degli studiosi che ha analizzato più approfonditamente il rapporto tra cultura e lingua. Egli sostiene che la comunicazione avviene in situazioni, limitate nel tempo e nello spazio, che non sono universali, ma sono inserite in un habitat culturale, che a sua volta condiziona la situazione (Nord 2005a). Questo aspetto è fondamentale e deve sempre essere tenuto in considerazione quando si traduce. Nel mio testo di partenza erano presenti numerosi elementi legati alla cultura anglosassone e le teorie di Nord e altri studiosi sono risultate utili per una traduzione consapevole di tali elementi. Nella terza sezione del primo capitolo viene analizzato il ruolo del traduttore. Si sottolinea come un traduttore debba conoscere perfettamente la cultura e la lingua di partenza e quelle di arrivo per essere in grado di eseguire una buona traduzione. Tuttavia questo non è sufficiente. Secondo numerosi studiosi (tra cui Hatim e Mason 1990) un traduttore può anche essere considerato un mediatore tra lingue e culture diverse per via della sua visione bi-culturale, che gli permette di comprendere pienamente similitudini e differenze tra le lingue e le culture. La sezione seguente è dedicata alle strategie applicabili durante un progetto di traduzione. Si sottolinea il fatto che tradurre sia spesso una questione di problem-solving e che il traduttore possa ricorrere a numerose strategie in tale processo di risoluzione dei problemi. In questa parte vengono presentate e analizzate le strategie traduttive di Malone e Baker, che sono anche quelle a cui ho fatto ricorso più frequentemente durante la mia traduzione. Successivamente, un'intera sezione viene dedicata alle strategie traduttive della addomesticazione e dello straniamento. Queste due strategie sono state introdotte per la prima volta da Venuti nel 1995. Viene offerta una spiegazione di tali strategie, principalmente dai punti di vista di Venuti e di Nida. Questi due studiosi hanno opinioni opposte a riguardo, poiché Nida ritiene che il lettore di arrivo debba essere messo al primo posto e, di conseguenza, è più favorevole alla strategia dell'addomesticamento, mentre Venuti è più a favore della strategia dello straniamento, sostenendo di voler sviluppare un tipo di teoria e pratica della traduzione che resista alla tendenza di dominio della lingua di destinazione. Viene poi offerta una

sezione dedicata all'analisi della teoria della traduzione riguardo il giusto procedimento per trattare i giochi di parole e le espressioni idiomatiche. Come ho già detto, il testo di partenza è composto essenzialmente da dialoghi tra Oliver e Bernadette e, di conseguenza, il registro non è molto formale e talvolta addirittura colloquiale. Pertanto, il testo di partenza comprende anche numerosi giochi di parole ed espressioni idiomatiche. Questi elementi sono sempre difficili da tradurre da una lingua ad un'altra, in quanto numerosi sono i fattori impliciti che devono essere presi in considerazione per produrre un buon testo di arrivo. L'ultima sezione del primo capitolo affronta il concetto della traduzione di testi teatrali, il quale è altamente specifico per il mio tipo di testo di partenza. La traduzione di testi teatrali deve affrontare problemi unici poiché coinvolge molti fattori non linguistici. Come afferma Bassnett-McGuire (1985), i testi teatrali esistono solo in un rapporto con la loro rappresentazione scenica. Come già affermato, il testo di partenza della mia traduzione è un libro scritto e progettato per essere letto, ma sarebbe impossibile e sbagliato distaccarlo completamente dal concetto della sua messa in scena.

Il Capitolo Due è dedicato alla traduzione vera e propria. Per il mio lavoro di tesi, il libro *Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons* è stato tradotto integralmente. Questo capitolo è organizzato in due colonne, con il testo di partenza a sinistra e il testo di arrivo a destra e pertanto risulta facile per il lettore esaminare e confrontare i due testi.

Il Capitolo Tre offre un'analisi del mio progetto traduttivo. In questo capitolo viene presentata una panoramica generale sul progetto e successivamente vengono prese in considerazione le particolari situazioni e condizioni del testo di partenza che hanno generato maggiori difficoltà nel lavoro di traduzione. Questo capitolo si pone l'obiettivo di dimostrare un ragionevole grado di consapevolezza delle scelte traduttive da me adottate per superare i problemi del testo di partenza. Anche questo capitolo è suddiviso in sezioni e la prima è dedicata all'analisi dell'ordine non cronologico della narrazione. Questa sezione analizza prima di tutto il modo in cui i personaggi contano le parole, poi si concentra sulle principali differenze tra inglese e italiano in termini di numero di parole necessarie per esprimere un qualunque concetto. Nella mia traduzione ho sempre cercato di mantenere lo stesso numero espresso dai personaggi all'inizio delle loro conversazioni. A volte non è stata un'operazione facile a causa delle molte differenze nella sintassi e nella grammatica tra inglese e italiano. Questa sezione presenta anche molti estratti del

testo di partenza e di arrivo, che vengono usati come esempi per giustificare le mie argomentazioni. La sezione successiva analizza il tema delle contrazioni e delle abbreviazioni utilizzate nel testo di partenza. Come ho anticipato, Oliver e Bernadette cercano di inventare un proprio linguaggio per risparmiare parole, includendo anche alcune parole inventate che sono il risultato di contrazioni di due o più parole esistenti. Questa sezione analizza come vengono create queste contrazioni e come tradurle correttamente nella lingua d'arrivo. La quarta sezione del capitolo prende in considerazione gli elementi culturali del testo di partenza. Vengono forniti molti esempi di tali elementi, insieme a una spiegazione della loro traduzione, delle strategie adottate e degli effetti che volevo produrre nel lettore di arrivo. L'ultima sezione di questo capitolo è dedicata alla traduzione di giochi di parole ed espressioni idiomatiche. Questa parte si basa anche sul capitolo 1.6, dove viene analizzata la relativa teoria della traduzione. Il linguaggio adottato da Oliver e Bernadette è spesso familiare e intimo e presenta spesso caratteristiche del linguaggio colloquiale. Infatti, i loro discorsi contengono una quantità considerevole di parolacce, giochi di parole ed espressioni idiomatiche. In ognuno di questi casi ho cercato di non concentrarmi sulle singole parole che li costituiscono, ma ho analizzato queste sequenze di parole nel loro insieme per cogliere il significato figurato e tradurlo correttamente nella lingua di arrivo.

Il quinto capitolo consiste nelle conclusioni della tesi. Questo capitolo cerca di riassumere l'intero lavoro discutendo il risultato del mio progetto di traduzione e i risultati che ha generato. Ci si sofferma principalmente ad analizzare la mia traduzione di *Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons* e vengono offerte le considerazioni finali su tale opera e sulla sua traduzione in italiano. In questo capitolo, si cerca anche di riassumere quello che è stato il lavoro di analisi della traduzione, cercando di dare ulteriore conferma della consapevolezza del traduttore nella scelta delle strategie traduttive più adeguate. Il capitolo successivo consiste nella bibliografia ed unisce tutte le pubblicazioni, i libri e gli articoli che sono stati tenuti in considerazione nel presente lavoro di tesi.

La presente tesi vuole offrire la mia proposta di traduzione dell'opera *Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons* di Sam Steiner. Mi auguro che coloro che leggeranno la mia opera possano apprezzare la mia traduzione e che trovino chiaro il mio lavoro di analisi e di strutturazione della tesi. Si tratta di un lavoro che non ha l'ambizione di porsi come la versione ideale di tale traduzione. L'augurio del laureando è anzi quello di portare

maggior notorietà a questo talentoso autore che, purtroppo, è quasi sconosciuto in Italia. La speranza è quella che un giorno le sue opere vengano pubblicate in Italia, in modo da essere fruibili a tutti, e che possano conseguentemente trovare lo spazio che meritano nei teatri italiani.