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# *Maximilien Holmes. How Intertextuality Influences Translation*

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# INTRODUCTION

*Murder, She wrote!* was a very popular series during the 1980s and the 1990s: it is about Jessica Fletcher, a middle-aged woman, widow and novelist of thrillers, who helps to catch the murderers of the homicides she comes across in each episode. Sometimes, it was another character – the Detective – who was able to understand the Truth, but never a policeman; amateur investigators seem better than constables. It lasts over ten years as millions of fans were fascinated by the adventures of Mrs Fletcher, a very clever person able to see what others cannot. The story is always the same: Jessica meets some people, one of them is killed. There is someone accused, but our Detective does not believe what the police think, so she starts her own investigations. Eventually, she finds the real murderer, who is arrested.

The popularity is linked to the success detective stories have had since they appeared, in the Nineteenth century. Even with many changes, the structure has always been the same as the one Mrs Fletcher's programme had. Some do not recognize the detective stories as a valid form of literature, due to its repetitive structure; but it is a genre, with its own rules like all the others. Many intellectuals have been analysing it for two centuries, finding many things which Entertaining literature in general does not have. Among the intellectuals, we could quote the German philosopher Sigfried Kracauer. Besides, what is the most exploited genre by one of the greatest directors of all time, Alfred Hitchcock? Which does *Psycho*, one of the most celebrated movie of the history of cinema, belong to?

This work focuses on the translation of Henry Cauvain's *Maximilien Heller* I did for the publisher Faligi. The main character is a clever, opium-smoking Detective with a really strong logic, who is able to solve a very complicated case of homicide. Is it a remind of another famous character? The connoisseurs of Detective stories should supposedly have no problem in thinking of Sherlock Holmes, the most famous Detective in the literary world. Was Cauvain an emulator? It may seem so for those who do not know when the two novels were written. However, as shall be explained in the following chapters, the French novelist wrote his masterpiece sixteen years before Arthur Conan Doyle

had published the first adventure of his most famous hero, *A Study in Scarlet*. So, was the emulator the English writer? It does not seem so: the inspiration is evident, but the two works are different enough that we are allowed to affirm their absolute independence of each other.

We are not critics, and anyway this work does not concern a comparative literary evaluation: both novel dealt with here are entertaining. Nevertheless, what is going to be discussed is a comparative translation of chapter three of both novels.

It seems fair to start with the reason for this choice. Even the first chapters would be very interesting: the characters are presented in similar ways, and in both they meet the friends who will be the narrators. However, chapter 3 of the novels presented more typical elements of Detective stories: crime scene, corpse, first misunderstandings and so on. This is what led to the choice of those chapters.

What about the comparative study of the translation? As stated in the thesis subtitle, the importance of Intertextuality in doing a translation is the main core of this work. Many have dealt with the importance of belonging to a genre of a text in translating; this thesis aims to show how a comparative analysis of inspiring text may be part of the “investigation” of the translator; is s/he not a researcher, in some sense a detective, trying to find out the Truth?

In the first chapter, the process of analysing both intertextuality and translations will be explained: linguistic and semiotic paradigms will be exposed to outline how the object of this study is dealt with.

Chapter two will present the genre without explaining its history, in this context, so that the focus can go directly to the main features of the genre, the ones that will be discussed in the following chapter.

In chapter three there is the analysis: the two novels will be compared, according to the interdiscursivity theory: the same features of the preceding part will come into greater focus, closely linking the two chapters.

To dig deeper, it was decided to “Break the Golden rule” of translation:

The golden rule of translation, especially literary translation, is that the translator should always work *toward* his or her native language. However, it is also true that a native speaker of the source language will generally have a greater understanding of the text and despite the

greater struggle to express that understanding in a language that he or she is less familiar with, there can be considerable value associated with the reading of a native speaker. Indeed, it is common practice for even professional translators to consult native speakers on occasions in the course of a translation (Halliday 2009: 94).

What I did was to translate the quotations from Italian and French into English, which is not my mother tongue language: it was simply a matter of completing a work, to express everything in English: all in all, English readers could have a deeper understanding. However, the challenge to translate something that could be fully understood was the reason why it was done. They were technical passages, anyway, whose word-by-word translation is the most common operation. Moreover, it offered the possibility of a deeper study of what a translation is.

In the last chapters, there is a brief synopsis of the entire novels followed by a comparison of the original text and its Italian translation, explaining in notes what was done in the process. Grammar, culture and linguistics are the human sciences which were of great use; still, not everything can be explained in a scientific way, as shall be demonstrated.

Before starting, I would like to acknowledge some debts. First of all, I would like to thank Miss Julia Thrush, who helped me to write a better English: it is anyway clear that any mistakes are mine. Other people are my friend Giancarlo and my cousin/friend Vito, who were able to bear me even when I was unbearable. Last, but not least, Chiara: because, without you, no part of this fantastic adventure in Padua could have been possible.

# CHAPTER I. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

## 1.1 Intertextuality

“Nell’etimologia della parola *testo* – da latino *textus*, «ciò che è tessuto, intrecciato» - è fin da principio implicita l’idea di un qualcosa che sia il risultato della relazione di elementi ad esso preesistenti”<sup>1</sup> (Bernardelli 2000: 1). Better words cannot be found than Andrea Bernardelli’s in order to start the discussion about intertextuality. Much has been written on the topic, so I would only like to try to give some indication to explain our way to analyse texts now. Starting from a basic concept: every new artistic work brings us to a past one, because a “New Thing” does not exist without a reference to something made in the past; if you want to separate yourself from the tradition, you have to know it deeply, and you have to understand what valid elements it possesses.

The title of a famous essay by Genette contains the best metaphor of intertextuality: it is called *Palimpsests* (Genette 1997). It was a medieval paper where the texts were written, erased and re-written with continuity. But the original texts were not totally lost, because the readers can see them as through a mirror. In the same way, we can see artistic tradition: every new text allows us to see every past text, because it contains elements of precedent works; works that influenced the author of the most recent one. This fact creates a paradox: the following creates the predecessor. Only after watching *Pitch Black* (David Twohy, 2001) can we understand the importance of John Carpenter in science fiction cinema, and not vice versa.

After this preamble, we find a new problem: do the elements of one or more past texts (from now on, *hypotext*) go directly in a following text (from now on, *hypertext*)? Or, does the mediation of the Author make some changes? We

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<sup>1</sup> “In the etymology of the word ‘text’ – from the Latin *textus*, ‘what is tissued, woven’ – has since its origins had the implicit idea of something which is the result of the relationship between elements existing before it.”

may define the first solution a kind of “cut and paste”, according to the language of computers. It does not make analysis difficult but, if someone does it, s/he creates nothing: s/he *imitates*, if s/he declares the fact, or s/he *plagiarizes*, if s/he does not declare the sources that have inspired him. In these authors there is no real artistic expression, a personal *remake* of the past works in order to create a “transcendental originality”.

The discussion is more interesting if we speak about the authors where intertextuality has the value of *transformation*, or better in which the elements and the styles of the past have changed, in accordance with the will of their authors or the age in which they are made. If we want to say with more authoritative words than ours,

“Strong works”, as well as their authors, constituting the real fulcrum of art historical evolution, establish their intertextual relations in an entirely specific way. [...] A quotation thus becomes a paradoxical means of asserting one’s originality. An obvious or acknowledged quote can refer to a text that in fact serves to conceal a given work’s real debt to its precursor, thereby becoming a sign of originality. At the same time this process “twists” the simple sense of continuity in art history (Yampolski 1998: 78).

With the word “quotation”, I mean an element that we see in texts, both the former and the latter. We call the quotation *carry-over* if taken from the hypo text and bring it into the hypertext without transformation; Yampolski’s quoted words are a good example. However, the quotation must be called an *allusion* when the element is transformed during the passage from hypo text to hypertext, and we see it in a different form. The scene in Spielberg’s *1941* (1979), when Slim Pickens shows what he has got, is an allusion to the one when the same actor shows the content of a survival kit in *Doctor Strangelove* (1963) by Stanley Kubrick, because it presents a similar situation, the actor as an intertextual body (Yampolski 1998: 193), but also elements that are different from its hypo text.

Transformation was mentioned to introduce the concept of allusion; but the best word to use in this work, as shall be seen in the following pages, is *transposition*, or better “diversification of position”, because there are many and



complex ways to transform every single element (Bernardelli 2000: 103). I also have to qualify word intertextuality, because the texts are usually the result of the relation among many texts; not by chance the final work is called “hypertext”. (Genette 1997: 7) and the theory of *interdiscursivity* (Bernardelli 2000: 47); however, it will continue to be used to give a name to the passage from a single text to another. These texts “converse” among themselves, they “have a discussion”, so their words go into the following texts. The work to be done is to isolate and analyse every single element: themes, characters, situations, each of them may pass through an intertextual operation, both in a carry-over and in an allusion, with the transpositions decided by their authors. Those who meet these artistic works, might substitute the surprise pleasure with the knowing one (Polacco 1998: 90).

Let us list the kinds of transformation that are part and force of the intertextual practice. From a quantitative point of view, the operation on a text may be a *reduction* or an *increase* (Genette 1997: 242). Obviously, the reduction is that of the quantity of a text; but,

Une [...] forme de réduction [...] ne s'appuie plus sur le texte à réduire que de manière indirecte, médiatisée par une opération mentale [...] qui est une sorte de synthèse autonome et à distance opérée pour ainsi dire de mémoire sur l'ensemble du texte à réduire, dont il faut ici, à la limite, oublier chaque détail – et donc chaque phrase – pour n'en conserver à l'esprit que la signification ou le mouvement d'ensemble, qui reste le seul objet du texte réduit : réduction, cette fois, par condensation<sup>2</sup> (Genette 1982: 279-280).

An allusion is often a condensation of an element that presents some details of the original one, but not everything of it. So, another kind of transposition should be mentioned: *pragmatic transposition*, or a changing of the facts. Usually, this act is made when the diegesys of hypotext is distant in time, geography or society to the new text, in order to give credibility to it (this operation is called *transdiegetition*).

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<sup>2</sup> “A form of reduction is based only indirectly on the original text, mediated by a mental operation which is a kind of autonomous summary, made, as we may say, by heart on the text to reduce. We have to forget every detail – and so every clause – to store the meaning, the unique object of the new text, which makes, in this way, a reduction through *condensation*.”

The fact that the protagonist of *Psycho* (1997) by Gus van Sant robbed, during the 1990s, only 40,000 dollars like the protagonist of the homonymous masterpiece by Alfred Hitchcock (1960), during the 1960s, would not have been credible. This kind of operation tries to change the sense of the text in Laurence Olivier's *Richard III*, the cue "My kingdom for a horse" means «I would give the most precious thing I have to have the possibility to escape»; in Loncraine's version (1996), set in the war-stricken England of the 1940s, the complete sense is "I would give the most precious thing I have to have the possibility to escape; and a horse is enough, though we have more modern machines to travel", with a hyperbolic effect. After the discussion about diegesys, we cannot forget about the intertextuality of characters. They may pass from a text to another one without a change of their characteristics: Ben Hur is the same hero in every cinematographic version of his story. The actor and face may change, but to be the same one; or they may be called with the same name, but they are finally different. The President of *Escape from New York* (John Carpenter, 1981) is fat, without hair and with the face of Donald Pleasence, while the one of *Escape from Los Angeles* (John Carpenter, 1996) has got the ingenuous but hard face of Cliff Robertson; but they are both a ruthless, tyrannical and violent President. Instead, King Arthur in *Excalibur* (John Boorman, 1981) is as young as his wife, in *The First Knight* (Jerry Zucker, 1997) he is an old man married to a young woman. Obviously, the unfaithful wife has a different sense for the two characters.

Another important aspect of characters is the *exploitation*: the character is valued in a way in the hypo text, while in the hypertext he may be valued better or worse. Practically, "la valorisation d'un personnage consiste à lui attribuer, par voie de transformation pragmatique ou psychologique, un rôle plus important et/ou plus «sympatique», dans le système de valeurs de l'hypertexte"<sup>3</sup> (Genette 1982: 393). An example is *2010* (Peter Hyams, 1984): Heywood Floyd, a supporting character in Kubrick's masterpiece *2001: a Space Odyssey*, becomes the protagonist of an amazing space trip, and also the spectator of a marvellous show that David Bowman (inverted respect to him: protagonist in the first movie, secondary character in the latter one) gives to his eyes. In fact, the anonymous

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<sup>3</sup> "Giving value to a character means to give it, through either a psychological or a pragmatic transformation, a more important role than he had in the system of value of the hypo text."

William Sylvester is replaced by Roy Scheider in the same role. So, the symbolic meaning changes: he starts as a vision in a scene, and he becomes the protagonist.

Before going further in the discussion, an important concept of the analysis calls for an explanation through Yampolski's words:

Intertextuality [...] works not only to establish precursors but also to deny them, a denial essential for any text to become "strong". For this reason, the initial moment must always involve the positing of at least two precursor texts. The text that impinges more heavily on its successors is repressed, becoming the object of aggression. The other text, less relevant insofar as its connection to the artist is not profound, is promoted as the repressor of the first precursor text. The connection to the first text is masked by acknowledging the connection to a second. (Yampolski 1998: 79)

This analysis, in fact, is based not only on the simple intertextuality from a single hypo text, but on two or more texts every time. A text is revealed, the other refused, as its author does not want to acknowledge it; but there is always something that reveals its presence in the work to us.

## **1.2. Translation**

Much has been written about how to translate since mankind started to express the same concepts heard in a language using the words in another one. Despite this, it is impossible to speak about a real "science" of the translation, because every text hides its own difficulties and it is located in a particular context (and a co-text), so many times theory cannot explain what to do. However, it is important to talk about the background we are going to deal with: even if it is impossible to establish a complete theory, something must be said in order to find our orientation in the labyrinth of Babel.

This section will not be a treaty of theories, but it intends to focus on the practice of translation; in other words, quoting an Italian scholar, how to *say almost the same thing* (Eco 2003). Why does he state that translators say *almost the same thing*? Answering is the aim of the following paragraphs.

The *Oxford Dictionary* defines translation as follows: “The process of changing sth that is written or spoken into another language”. Even if this is a good definition, it is not a complete or precise one: something must be explained. If it were a perfect statement of what translation is, we could simply use Google Translator, or translate any single word into another language; and translators would no longer have a reason to exist. Moreover, it is important to state that what it is going to be read is not a kind of “Bible” of translation practice: as everyone studying languages may confirm, there are many rules in each of them, but also a lot of exceptions; as someone said, translation is a “Necessary undisciplined discipline” (Halliday 2009: 20).

A good way to start a dissertation about translation may be the explanation of what two important Canadian scholars, Vignay and Dalbarnet, theorised; they explained what a translator does during his work by dividing the operations into two categories (direct and oblique), which may be summed up as in the following scheme:

Direct translation	<b>Borrowing</b>
	<b>Calque</b>
	<b>Literal translation</b>
Oblique translation	<b>Transposition</b>
	<b>Modulation</b>
	<b>Equivalence</b>
	<b>Adaptation</b>

The operations of translation according to Vigney and Dalbarnet (Translated from Podeur 2006: 29)

Josiane Podeur describes them through the following words:

#### Traduzione diretta

Il prestito: “Parola che una lingua prende in prestito da un’altra senza tradurla”.

Il calco: “Prestito di un sintagma straniero con traduzione letterale dei suoi elementi”.

La traduzione letterale: “La traduzione letterale o ‘parola per parola’ sta a designare il passaggio traduttivo che porta a un testo corretto e idiomatico senza che il traduttore debba preoccuparsi d’altro se non degli obblighi linguistici”.

#### Traduzione obliqua

La trasposizione: “Procedimento con il quale un *signifié* cambia categoria grammaticale”.

La modulazione: “Variazione ottenuta cambiando il punto di vista e spessissimo le categorie di pensiero”.

L’equivalenza: “Procedimento che rende conto di una stessa situazione ricorrendo a una espressione interamente diversa”.

L’adattamento: “Uso di un’equivalenza riconosciuta tra due situazioni”<sup>4</sup> (Podeur 2002: 20-21).

To give some examples, we have translated another table, which follows these principles:

	FRANÇAIS	ANGLAIS
BORROWING	Bulldozer	fuselage
CALQUE	économiquement faible	normal school
LITERAL TRANSLATION	l’encre est sur la table	:: the ink is on the table
TRANSPPOSITION	défense de fumer	:: no smoking
MODULATION	complet	:: no vacancies
EQUIVALENCE	comme un chien dans un jeu de quilles	:: like a bull in a China shop
ADAPTATION	cyclisme	:: cricket

Translated from Podeur 2002: 21

<sup>4</sup> Direct Translation. Borrowing: “Word which a language borrowed from a foreign language not translating it.” Calque: “Borrowed foreign syntagm literally translated in each of its elements”. Literal translation: “A literal translation, or word by word, produces a correct and idiomatic text where the translator must take care only of linguistic obligations.” Oblique Translation. Transposition: “Procedure through which a *signifié* changes its grammatical category.” Modulation: “variation obtained by changing the point of view and, very often, the categories of thinking”. Equivalence: “Procedure which maintains the same situation by resorting to a completely different expression”. Adaptation: “Use of an acknowledged equivalence between two situations.”

Another important thing must be added: “Quand il s’agit de deux phrases de même sens, on parle plus de synonymie ni de parasyonymie, mais de paraphrase”<sup>5</sup> (Podeur 2006: 15). These operations will be better explained in the last chapters. To complete the framework of the operations, it is good to quote another English scholar explaining the meaning of the chunking:

The term “Chunking” has been taken from computing, and basically means to change the size of a unit. A unit can be made bigger (chunking up) which means that as more comes into view so we move from the specific to the general, or from the part to the whole. Moving in the other direction, we chunk down from the general to the specific or from the whole to the part. [...] In chunking sideways, the mediator is looking for alternatives which can more readily access the same frame (Katan 1999: 147-148).

What Vignay, Dalbarnet and Katan have theorised is something which is very useful to understand what translators do; however, it is not enough to explain what happens during this practice. And not even the study through a single discipline can completely tell us: as Halliday states, there is no “science” of translation, since no field (or sub-discipline) of human studies may explain what a professional linguistic mediator does during this intellectual activity (Halliday 2009: 20).

Hermeneutics is a key word to use: good translators never start without a close reading of the texts they are going to deal with. Of course, they give their own interpretation of the texts they read, which might be supported or contradicted by other elements, first of all the original authors. A question should follow: what if the author is not available, because of s/he is dead or does not want to be contacted? In this case, those who translate must take their own responsibility for the text which is going to be produced, trying to understand the original thought (Halliday 2009: 36; Eco 2003: 45). Sometimes, a good translation is a way to better understand a work, since it focuses on some elements and/or favouring an interpretation, as critics do (Eco 2003: 247).

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<sup>5</sup> “When we have two clauses with the same sense, we do not talk about synonymy or parasyonymy any longer, but about paraphrasing”.

To make things worse, we may find different kinds of texts, following their own rules in the languages and cultures we are working on: the town “Catania” has its own translation in French (Katane), but not in English; a translator of tourist guides should be aware of this during his/her job. And the American way of writing scientific and academic texts, very direct and without digressions, could be very annoying to an Arab: people from the East never go “straight to the point”, preferring a kind of coil, a sort of beating around the bush before speaking about the subject (Balboni 2007: 93-95). Translating, in this case, is also adapting to the target culture.

Another thing a translator should keep in mind is the “purpose” of the original author:

Ogni testo, secondo la Reiss, è caratterizzato dalla preponderanza di una [...] funzion[e] linguistic[a], e appartiene dunque alle categorie dei testi *inhaltsbetonte*, *formbetonte* o *effekbetonte* (in cui è centrale il contenuto, la forma o l'effetto). Nel tradurre i testi *inhaltsbetonte* (articoli informativi di giornale, reportage, corrispondenze commerciali) “l'invarianza va ricercata sul piano del significato, il contenuto e le informazioni devono trovarsi senza abbreviazioni nella versione della lingua d'arrivo”. I testi *effekbetonte* devono, ovviamente, vedere mantenuto il loro effetto conativo in traduzione (si pensi alle pubblicità o alla propaganda). I testi *formbetonte* sono invece quelli in cui la “forma”, “il modo in cui l'autore dice qualcosa”, ha la massima importanza<sup>6</sup> (Morini 2007: 80).

Morini's statement must be qualified: it is generally accepted to translate poetry into prose, where the content may be maintained; even when a text changes genre or medium, the operation is considered a translation. Indeed, when a movie is inspired by a novel, it is “translated” into images and sound from written literature, and called “transposition”, thus using the same term of one of the operations described above.

What has just been said about translation are particularly interesting for a literary translator:

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<sup>6</sup> “According to Mrs Reiss, each text is characterised by the predominance of a linguistic function, and so they belong to the categories of *inhaltsbetonte*, *formbetonte* or *effekbetonte* texts (where the focus is on the content, the form or the effect). While translating *inhaltsbetonte* texts (informative newspaper articles, reportage, commercial letters), the invariance must be searched on the meaning, their content and information have to be found without abbreviations in the target text. *Effekbetonte* texts, obviously, must maintain their cognitive effect in translation (as in advertisement or propaganda). *Formbetonte* texts, instead, are the ones whose form, the way their authors say something, is what is important.”

Secondo la Reiss,[...] tutto è utile al traduttore di varietà testuali complesse come quelle letterarie: il testo letterario, ben lungi dall'essere di natura diversa rispetto al testo non letterario, può contenere testi non letterari appartenenti a varietà testuali semplici<sup>7</sup> (Morini 2007: 83).

It is time discuss an important fact translators could come across during their work: is what they are writing exactly the same as the original text, elaborated in the target language? To put it another way: is there anything in the source text which is not to be found in the target one? Is there everything, or is anything missing or changed? Sometimes, it may happen that a passage in the original text has a translation which target reader may not understand; it is possible, in some situations, to translate literally, even if target language does not have the expression used by the source text. If we translate the English idiom “Before one can say Jack Robinson” literally, we obtain “Prima che uno riesca a dire Jack Robinson”, whose meaning may easily be understood by an Italian reader (“Very fast”). Actually, its counterpart would be the adaptation “In men che non si dica”, but it is a formal register in Italian, and in some context, such as dialogues between friends, it would sound unnatural, or anyway not appropriate. In this case, on one hand, the source clause is evident even in translation; but, in the other hand, its meaning could be not immediately realized by reader (Morini 2007: 201).

However, a translator may distort the original message: it is common in bad translators, but it may occur because the source has more than one meaning, and consequently it forces to choose one of them: who may be sure about Dante’s original intention when he wrote the clause “Ché la retta via avea smarrita?” Is it cause (Since), or consequence (So) the nuance the Italian poet wanted to give to the term “Ché”? No one can answer the question: English translators must decide what is the meaning to be expressed in the target text; in any case, something is “lost in translation”, and no one can establish which is the better way to proceed.

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<sup>7</sup> “According to Reiss, everything is useful to the translator of complex textual varieties like the literary ones: the literary text is not different from non-literary text, and it may contain non-literary text belonging to simple textual varieties.”



Translating means negotiating with a foreign author: not always may the exchange be equal (Eco 2003: 93-94).

Some parts of the text may be completely deleted by linguistic mediators, because it is not possible to give the same meaning in target culture: however, this practice can be done only when the part is not important to understand the whole text, or if it is possible to be substituted by either a brief explanation or a note: in both cases, translators are defeated. In this case, and in the one described in the preceding paragraph, scholars speak about “Entropy”:

On parle d’entropie, lorsque le texte d’arrivée manifeste, par rapport au texte de départ, un appauvrissement sémantique ou stylistique plus ou moins important. Cette perte détermine un déficit d’information ou/et une altération du ton général du message traduit et concerne les procédés énonciatifs, rhétoriques et stylistiques<sup>8</sup> (Podeur 2006: 71).

To sum up this section, a translator never says *the same thing* as the original author; it is impossible, unless the source text is made up by simple sentences such as “Turn the key”. Consequently, according to most of the scholars quoted, it is impossible to establish a final Theory of translation: too many variables are involved in the procedure, and often the only way to go on is breaking the rules you have learnt until you find a particular problem. Halliday’s words are perfect to conclude this section:

Ultimately, however, it is the translator, working hard on the page and screen who mediates not just between and within languages, but also between and within cultures while being part of those cultures. Similarly, theories on translation can never truly be *supra partes* where culture is concerned, the theories themselves always have a provenance and are inevitably an integral part of the web of cultures, belonging to specific places and moments in time, in history. Despite their necessary hubris, all theories must necessarily bend to the humility of their origins: where theories of translation are concerned, that means not only formulating and sustaining macroscopic views of why and how translation occurs, but also means stooping to attempt to understand as well as possible what happens when translators translate (Halliday 2009: 159).

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<sup>8</sup> We may talk about entropy when target text, in comparison to source text, gets poorer semantically or stylistically. The loss causes a deficit of information and/or an alteration of general tone of translated message and deals with enunciative, rhetoric and stylistic procedures.

## CHAPTER 2. BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THRILLERS

### 2.1. Origin of the genre

This is not the place to deal with the story of the genre: it is not important for what will follow of the work, and as consequent this section will go on speaking about the characteristic features of the thriller.

However, it is relevant to establish a kind of “starting point” of the genre, something that leads to its creation: as in a fable, one could start by “Once upon a time, in a faraway land”. The year was 1841, the land was the U.S.A.; *The Graham’s Lady’s and Gentleman’s Magazine*, in Philadelphia, published Edgar Allan Poe’s *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, whose protagonist is a unlicensed detective called August Dupin. In this tale (and in its sequels, *The Mystery of Marie Rogêt* and *The Purloined Letter*), a citizen of Paris decides to investigate on a double homicide since the police are not able to find out the murderer, and he finally discovers the truth. Poe preempts other authors in regards to many of the features of the thriller: the amateur detective, who is very clever and by far more able than the police; the rational procedure of the investigation; a crime behind closed doors and, apparently, unfathomable; the comparison between the police and the detective (Fossati 1994: 5). According to Narcejac, the American storyteller had the genial insight that human behavior is based on laws, and this is predictable: in case of crime, correct and logical reasoning is enough to get the solution (Narcejac 1976: 19-20)

Poe influenced the author of this genre following him; among them, French novelist Henry Cauvain and British writer Arthur Conan Doyle, creator of Maximilien Heller and Sherlock Holmes respectively. Another important writer was S. S. Van Dine, pseudonym of Willard Huntington Wright, who invented the detective Phil Vance, and elaborated some rules a good thriller novelist should follow. According to him:

1. The reader must have equal opportunity with the detective for solving the mystery. All clues must be plainly stated and described.

2. No willful tricks or deceptions may be placed on the reader other than those played legitimately by the criminal on the detective himself.
3. There must be no love interest. [...]
4. The detective himself, or one of the official investigators, should never turn out to be the culprit. [...]
5. The culprit must be determined by logical deductions — not by accident or coincidence or unmotivated confession. [...]
6. The detective novel must have a detective in it; and a detective is not a detective unless he detects. His function is to gather clues that will eventually lead to the person who did the dirty work in the first chapter [...].
7. There simply must be a corpse in a detective novel, and the deader the corpse the better. No lesser crime than murder will suffice. [...]
8. The problem of the crime must be solved by strictly naturalistic means. Such methods for learning the truth as slate-writing, ouija-boards, mind-reading, spiritualistic séances, crystal-gazing, and the like, are taboo. [...]
9. There must be but one detective — that is, but one protagonist of deduction — one *deus ex machina*. [...]. If there is more than one detective the reader doesn't know who his codeductor is. [...]
10. The culprit must turn out to be a person who has played a more or less prominent part in the story — that is, a person with whom the reader is familiar and in whom he takes an interest.
11. A servant must not be chosen by the author as the culprit. [...] The culprit must be a decidedly worth-while person — one that wouldn't ordinarily come under suspicion.
12. There must be but one culprit, no matter how many murders are committed. The culprit may, of course, have a minor helper or co-plotter; but the entire onus must rest on one pair of shoulders: the entire indignation of the reader must be permitted to concentrate on a single black nature.
13. Secret societies, camorras, mafias, *et al.*, have no place in a detective story. [...]
14. The method of murder, and the means of detecting it, must be rational and scientific. [...]
15. The truth of the problem must at all times be apparent — provided the reader is shrewd enough to see it. By this I mean that if the reader, after learning the explanation for the crime, should reread the book, he would see that the solution had, in a sense, been staring him [...]
16. A detective novel should contain no long descriptive passages, no literary dallying with side-issues, no subtly worked-out character analyses, no "atmospheric" preoccupations. [...]
17. A professional criminal must never be shouldered with the guilt of a crime in a detective story. [...]
18. A crime in a detective story must never turn out to be an accident or a suicide. [...]
19. The motives for all crimes in detective stories should be personal. [...]
20. And (to give my Credo an even score of items) I herewith list a few of the devices which no self-respecting detective story writer will now avail himself of. They have been employed too often, and are familiar to all true lovers of literary crime. To use them is a confession of the author's ineptitude and lack of originality. (a) Determining the identity of the culprit by

comparing the butt of a cigarette left at the scene of the crime with the brand smoked by a suspect. (b) The bogus spiritualistic séance to frighten the culprit into giving himself away. (c) Forged fingerprints. (d) The dummy-figure alibi. (e) The dog that does not bark and thereby reveals the fact that the intruder is familiar. (f) The final pinning of the crime on a twin, or a relative who looks exactly like the suspected, but innocent, person. (g) The hypodermic syringe and the knockout drops. (h) The commission of the murder in a locked room after the police have actually broken in. (i) The word association test for guilt. (j) The cipher, or code letter, which is eventually unraveled by the sleuth.<sup>1</sup>

Van Dine's rules have been quoted to introduce some of the elements which are going to be presented. Since an order must be chosen, this section will speak about characters, setting and action; the same order will be followed during the intertextual analysis of the next chapter. Some considerations about the point of view of the genre about the world will conclude this part.

## 2.2. Characters

Reuter suggests us an important feature about all the characters of the thriller: according to him, they are simply *roles*, and their part in the novels are not psychological or sociological, but functional. Thus, their psychology never changes: the investigation must give back the same situation of the beginning of the story (Reuter 1998: 29). This does not mean that psychology is not important in the novels: drives and desires are projected into characters by readers, even if they are trivialized (Clementi 2010: 6).

Even if many characters may be part of the novel of this genre, the most important, the ones present basically in each story, are four: the Detective, a friend of his (usually, the narrator), the Murdered and the Murderer.

The first one, in particular, is the centre of the narration: everything is around this figure, who has to unveil the mystery; a thriller is the Detective's genre (Heissenbuttel 1980: 140). Usually, as said, he is an amateur: this aspect leaves realism out of the novel, and gives the reader some pleasure; and even not-realistic or unlikely events can be part of the plot. Moreover, the Detective may

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<sup>1</sup> <http://gaslight.mtroyal.ca/vandine>

not follow the legal procedure of the Police, and so his *ratio* is what makes him superior the latter, which is linked to the possibilities given by law, when an amateur may proceed even in a different way, included the legal one which the police cannot avoid (Kracauer 1976: 64-65). Irony is often the instrument to show that the amateur detective is better than its legal counterpart: usually, Sherlock Holmes mocks a police officer who is sure to be right by telling the reason of his wrong reasoning (Kracauer 1976: 84). His duty is simple:

Questo investigatore [...] costruisce “metodicamente” una spiegazione naturale dei crimini, con delle ipotesi e con dei fatti: ipotesi che ricava per induzione da fatti osservati e dalle quali deduce fatti osservabili, fatti che esamina per trarre e poi verificare le proprie ipotesi. La sua indagine in tal modo si sdoppia, nella ricerca logica (delle ipotesi), e in quella empirica (dei fatti)<sup>2</sup> (Chastaing 1980: 223).

Another important feature of this character is the fact he has not engaged: this is not because he is devoted to a Cause, but for his lack of the skill in adapting to normal social life (Kracauer 1976: 59-60). In Cauvain’s novel *The Bleeding Hand*, the detective (even if a policeman, he investigates outside his duty) falls in love with the female protagonist, but she prefers his helper’s muscles to his rational mind.

Despite this, Detective is not alone: the classic novels give him a close friend, who usually is the narrator of the story. In the case of both the detectives dealt with in the following pages, they are medicine men. They meet the protagonists by chance, and are always admired by their skills and logic: often, the point of view is theirs. They are stereotypes: intelligent men, but not as clever as their friends. Their personality does not exist: they are simple filters of the action, counterparts of the readers, who share wonder and with (Grivel 1977: 227). In any case, they hardly ever do something relevant besides tell the story.

The Murdered is what makes the story start: or better, their corpses; indeed, as said above, murder is the best crime for a detective novel. The victim is made up through a deep contradiction: he/she must be a bad character, so

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<sup>2</sup> “This investigator ‘methodically’ builds a natural explanation of the crimes, through hypotheses and facts: hypotheses he reaches by induction from observed facts and from which he deducts observable facts, which he examines to obtain and then verify his hypotheses. In this way, his investigation splits into logical research (of hypotheses) and empirical one (of facts).”

everyone can be suspected; but, at the same time, he/she must be a good person, so everyone can feel guilty. The Murdered can never be a criminal: it would be a police affair, and Detective cannot be part of the investigation (Auden 1977: 115-116).

Eventually, the Murderer is the person Detective (and the reader) is searching for. Since the criminals' guilt is the murder, they play with their own lives: as consequence, the novels deal with desperate people, having nothing to lose (Narcejac 1976: 44-45). From a psychological point of view,

L'assassino è parte fondamentale dell'immaginario del poliziesco perché consente di esplicitare così le proprie componenti sadiche, e al tempo stesso [...] di essere la vittima sacrificale delle nostre pulsioni, per cui le agisce e ci assolve al tempo stesso<sup>3</sup> (Castoldi 2010: 25).

Van Dine's quotation preempted a concept that will be better explained: no lower-class people can be guilty of the murder. It is easy to say why: each reader would address his/her suspect on one of these characters, and the suspense would get lost. A commonplace of the thriller says the Murderer is always the Butler: it is possible because he, even if not part of high-class society, participates to its life, so it is considered part of it (Žmegač 1980: 187-188).

## 2.3. Setting

Despite many places being described in all novels, only two are really worthy of analysis as meaningful parts of the narration: the place where crime happens and the city. Starting with the former, it can be said that:

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<sup>3</sup> "The killer is a fundamental part of the detective stories, since it allows to explicit our own sadist components, and at the same time to be the sacrificial victims of our drives, so that they act but we are absolved at the same time."

Τòπος del romanzo poliziesco, la scena del crimine è luogo necessario allo sviluppo del racconto investigativo in quanto collegamento immediato tra il crimine appena compiuto e l'imminente inchiesta. Testimone muto del delitto, porta in sé i segni lasciati dall'esecutore del reato e si offre all'investigatore come un crittogramma da decifrarsi perché possa essere ricostruito il passato e individuata una connessione tra gli effetti visibili e la mano che li ha causati<sup>4</sup> (Ferrara 2010: 279).

In other words, it is where everything has begins: the detective starts to collect clues inside this place (usually, a close door room), and it is here that most of the hypotheses are formulated. These hypotheses are later confirmed by the investigation.

However, the place where most of the action takes place is in the city, since most of detective stories are set there rather than in countryside. This is because “La città, a ben guardare, è anche più poetica della campagna, dal momento che la natura è un caos di forze sconosciute, mentre la città è un caos di forze conosciute e controllabili”<sup>5</sup> (Chesterton 1980: 12). In fact, despite being very chaotic, it allows the detective to control the mystery and, through his skill in investigation and reason, unveil the truth in a way that irrational forces of Nature would prevent. As said, thrillers live in a place where Reason may reach the Truth if it works at the best of its possibilities. What is not rational, is not controllable. The city offers a setting where everything obeys some laws: as a consequence, even if these laws are not the ones followed by society, everything can be analyzed through detective's rational mind. Moreover, it is the symbol of the civilization - element which this genre would like to present as the worst example of depravation - as we will discuss in the last section of this chapter.

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<sup>4</sup> “Τòπος of the detective novel, crime scene is a spot which is necessary to the development of the investigation tale since it links immediately the crime just made and the forthcoming investigation. Being a silent witness of the murder, it bears the signs left by the executor of the crime and presents itself to the detective as a cryptogram to decode to reconstruct the past and to find a connection between visible effects and the hand which caused them”.

<sup>5</sup> “The city, in same way, is more poetic than countryside, since Nature is a chaos of uncontrolled forces while the city is a chaos of known and controlled forces”.

## 2.4. Action

As regards the plot, Austin Freeman elaborates this scheme:

- 1) The statement of the problem;
- 2) the presentation of the data essential to find out the solution
- 3) the development of the investigation and the presentation of the solution
- 4) the discussion of the clues and the demonstration (Narcejac 1976: 44).

Another stimulating and interesting scheme is proposed by Chastaing:

I racconti polizieschi razionalistici possono essere rappresentati come edifici a tre piani. La ragione, al primo piano pone un problema o *enigma*; al secondo piano, poiché l'enigma appare senza soluzione, propende a trasformare l'enigma incomprensibile in enigma incredibile e, di conseguenza, in *mistero*; al terzo piano, dissolve il mistero e risolve l'enigma<sup>6</sup> (Chastaing 1980: 210).

This scheme seems more proper to discuss action in detective stories. Starting from the first floor, we meet a *corpse* in a *crime scene*: this is where and when the plot starts. The sense of mystery is based on the fact that the murder is not part of the narration: it is omitted, it lies in the past; so, it must be rebuilt through the clues and the investigation. Usually, some forces try to divert Detective, who is able to avoid the traps he finds in this first approach to the investigation; most of the clues are being found during the narration, and the protagonist is rebuilding what happened, but he is not still able to determine who and why did it. This is the riddle he has to answer to.

Then, the plot reaches the second floor: Detective and his helpers, if there are any, investigate and make some interrogations to find out the Truth. In this floor, Time loses its linear flow: flashback are frequent, and the lack of point of reference tries to make the investigation more difficult for both Detective and the

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<sup>6</sup> Rationalistic detective tales can be represented as three-floor buildings. Reason being that, on the first floor, a problem or *riddle* is proposed; on the second floor, since the problem seems to have no solution, it tends to change the inexplicable riddle into an unbelievable riddle and, as a consequence, into a *mystery*; on the third floor, the mystery is dissolved and the riddle is worked out.



reader (Reuter 1998: 28). The hardest events are experienced by the Detective, who is always able to overcome every difficulty.

Finally, he gets to the third floor: it is the climax of the plot. Detective reveals what happened on the night of the crime: it may be considered the “explicative flashback”, when everything in the story is clear and the order is rebuilt. The riddle is decoded by Detective, who explains the whole mystery in a last discourse (Kracauer 1976: 92). Reason wins on everything and everyone: the detective always finds out the Truth, and often two lovers are reunited (Kracauer 1976: 120).

What it has been said outlines the use of Time in this novels: it is never linear, flashbacks and prolepsis are frequent, due the plot they tell. However, it is also for the vision of the world detective novels would like to represent, as will be analyzed in the following section

## **2.5. Vision on the world and other elements**

Reason is the absolute winner at the end of every detective stories: its right working is what allows for the resolution of the case. Does this reflect a vision of the world? Elaborating a theory on this is the aim of the following paragraphs.

Kracauer quoted Descartes when he talks about the *cogito* dominating the *rex extensa*: Reason is the former, and the Crime the latter (Kracauer 1976: 11). When thought is free from every obstructions, it can do everything: knowledge is the absolute Good in the world. Who represents the knowledge in the thriller, but the detective himself? He is the master of Reason, the owner of the *cogito*, the one elected by Good to re-establish the order: he can never fail and no one can kill him (Kracauer 1976: 8).

Reading these introductive words, someone could think detective stories are optimistic tales about the Good always winning on the Evil; but it is not that easy. First of all, murder is a crime Police (representing the Order) should prevent, but in these novels they can never avoid. Moreover, they hate it when an amateur starts investigating to solve the mystery it was not able to avoid (Kracauer 1976: 75). The Murderer is often as clever as Detective (Moriarty is a nemesis of

Holmes), and only protagonist's ontological state allows for the happy ending. In this way, Evil is what concerns our inferior instincts, a product of civilization more than something opposing. Civilization not represented in a naturalistic way: it is like a deforming mirror where reality reflects the parody of its bad substance. According to Kracauer, what is very scary is a world where Reason without links dominates everything making things and figures weak and meaningless. Only the *cogito* is meaningful: nothing else (Kracauer 1976: 17-18).

Something else worthy of consideration is the role of Chance: Maximilien Heller can find some clues only when he is lucky enough to read a paper offered by a waiter to light a cigarette, reporting some pieces of information he can decode only because, in the past, he met the murderer in another case he was involved in. Chance is not an intellectual aspect of the novels, since it never guides the detective toward solution; but it is always present. This is simply to explain that there is something Reason cannot reach: an important clue that cannot be found, a hole which must be filled up (Kracauer 1976: 105).

Time is an aspect of this point of view. Chaos in the world must be ordered, and Time, not seen as natural flow of events, is not an exception: Detective must take everything in the right place in Space and Time, even what is given him by chance. Reason is the only instrument he can use: it is always successful, but the final portrait is not that positive.

However, being simply entertaining literature, it cannot be considered a real mirror of the world. When the reader closes the book, s/he comes back in a world where chaos dominates, and Reason can do what is able to do in detective stories only partially. What is good in this is the fact that everything may be meaningful. Of course, some elements in this kind of novels may represents real society; but it seldom happens. As written by Narcejac, the only rule of thrillers is to create fear that it will dissolve (Narcejac 1976: 162). And if someone should think that that is the reality, they had better remember Arthur C. Clarke's words: "It's only fiction, stupid!"

## **CHAPTER 3. MAXIMILIEN HELLER AND A STUDY IN SCARLET: AN INTERTEXTUAL ANALYSIS**

Most of what is concerned with an intertextual analysis of detective story novels was written during the previous chapter. Now, the focus is shifted to the novels which have been translated. The structure of this chapter will be the same as the last one (characters, setting, action). If Cauvain's book was focused on before, it was simply for a matter of mental order, not a way to demonstrate that Doyle's novel is merely a copy (and it will be proven not to be). Even if the debt with Cauvain's hero has not been recognized until now (and anyway, not in the way it should have been, compared to the more explicit recognition of Poe), Doyle invented a great character, worthy of many sequels. Nevertheless, Heller is a memorable character, too: and Holmes is his best pupil, somehow.

The quotations will be based on chapter, not on particular pages.

### **3.1. Characters**

The Detective is always the protagonist of this kind of story: his general features have been discussed above, so now the focus is on the main characters of the two novels whose third chapters were translated.

Maximilien Heller is a French philosopher, a man of great humanistic culture, a former lawyer disgusted with mankind. His logic of deduction is really acute, and nothing seems to escape his brilliant mind. His determination makes him try a non-conventional way to find the murderer: a murderer who, as it will be discussed, is his double. Instead, English Detective Sherlock Holmes' limits are listed by his friend, Doctor John Watson in the second Chapter, his features are presented by his helper, while Maximilien describes himself in the first chapter. The most important difference concerns the way they start their investigations. While Mister Holmes is invited by two policemen, Gregson and Lestrade (Chapter 3 Part I), only Chance allows Monsieur Heller to come across the case, because

the main suspect is his neighbour. The French Detective has already come across the man he was searching for in the past, his English counterpart has never met him before. Both kill an animal to test the way the murders have been executed: Maximilien kills a rabbit (Cauvain: Chapter V), while Sherlock kills a dog (Doyle: Chapter VII Part I): poison is the arm, in both cases. Moreover, both are able to take the murderer after an action scene: in France, after killing a Bear (Cauvain: Chapter X), used by Boulet-Rouge, the killer, as a bodyguard; in England, blocking Jefferson Hope trying to escape (Doyle: Chapter VII Part I). Eventually, their relationship with the police must be explained. Even if both do not have a good opinion of the Justice System, Maximilien recognises the merit it has in helping him to conclude the case, calling the police officers who arrest Boulet-Rouge “Braves gendarmes”. This is despite the fact they are not able to save him during the bear’s attack, where he must kill the beast with his own gun (Cauvain: Chapter X). Sherlock does something worse: during the whole third chapter of *A Study in Scarlet*, he mocks police, and shows his superiority by explaining what happened in the room through an impeccable deductive reasoning. In addition to this, there is a brief evolution of Maximilien, whose investigation is a way to come back to the world (Cauvain: Chapter III); nothing similar happens to Sherlock.

Speaking about their Helpers, we know they are both medicine men, and the internal narrators of the story (even if, from chapter VII of *Maximilien Heller*, you may notice a second degree narrator, Maximilien himself, writing letters to his friend). The readers never know the name of the French Doctor, while Sherlock’s friend is presented as *John Watson* in the first chapter of *A Study in Scarlet*. Their admiration is evident. Maximilien’s friend says: “Le récit de Maximilien Heller m’avait vivement frappé. J’admirais cette merveilleuse lucidité, cette observation pénétrante et sûre<sup>1</sup>” (Cauvain: Chapter VI). These words are very similar to Watson’s statement: “I confess that I was considerably startled by this fresh proof of the practical nature of my companion's theories. My respect for his powers of analysis increased wondrously” (Doyle: Chapter III part I).

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<sup>1</sup> “Maximilien Heller’s tale had really hit me. I admired that wonderful clearness of mind, that insightful and sure observation”.

As for the victims: in both cases, they are rich men, and novelists include two murders (in Cauvain's story, actually, the murderer kills two brothers, one to take his identity, even if it seems there is only one homicide until Chapter XI). Neither of them is a good person. Doyle writes about two ruthless Mormons, Cauvain about two rich brothers who are also eager and have not been speaking to each other for years. It is also important to state that *A Study in Scarlet* does not include a suspect (or better, he is not a character acting in the plot: he is negatively valorised), while in *Maximilien Heller* there is the poor domestic Guérin. It is known that he cannot be the murderer. To save him, Maximilien changes and becomes a philanthropist.

As necessary, the murderers should be discussed: they are the most different characters between the two novels. In Cauvain's novel, Boulet-Rouge is a double of Maximilien: both use two disguises (the Detective becomes a servant and a guest to Madame Bréant's dance party; the killer, Monsieur Bréhat-Kerguen and Doctor Wickson), and both are very clever and determined. In this novel, the murders are committed for money, thus violating the rule of thrillers; someone helps him to carry out this task. Doyle's killer, Jefferson Hope, is an "Avenging Angel": he starts to persecute his victims out of revenge for his fiancée's and her father's death, but he is really different from the detective searching for him; no friend actually helps him. Both are betrayed by a mistake linked to an object: Boulet-Rouge by Monsieur Bréhat-Kerguen's skeleton that he does not want to get rid of; Jefferson Hope by the ring he has taken from his beloved's finger which he loses during the first homicide. They also have an admiration for the Detective who is able to find the solution in common. This is what Boulet-Rouge says to Maximilien Heller: "J'ai mille excuses à vous faire, Monsieur. Je vous avais d'abord pris pour un agent de la Préfecture. Je viens d'apprendre que vous êtes un amateur qui vous êtes donné le plaisir de la chasse à l'homme, comme d'autres se donnent celui de la chasse aux bêtes fauves. Depuis que je sais cela, je vous estime comme l'homme le plus prodigieux que je connaisse<sup>2</sup>" (Cauvain: Chapter XI). Now, Jefferson's words to Sherlock Holmes: "If there's a vacant

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<sup>2</sup> "I owe you an apology, Mister. At the beginning, I thought you were a police officer. I have just known you are simply an amateur who devoted himself to a man's hunt as some other do the beasts' hunt. After I found this out, I repute you the most extraordinary man I have ever met."

place for a chief of the police, I reckon you are the man for it. The way you kept on my trail was a caution” (Doyle: Chapter VI Part II). Another remarking: both say the truth after their arrests. “Je vous ai promis l’histoire de ma vie<sup>3</sup>” is what the French criminal says to the judges (Cauvain: Chapter XI), while Jefferson states: “I have a good deal to say. I want to tell you gentlemen all about it” (Doyle: Chapter VI Part II). Finally, remarkable is the fact they refuse to tell the name of their accomplices: neither of them will do it.

### 3.2. Setting

In both novels, there are two main settings: city and countryside. The second one may seem to differ from the rules of Detective Stories: it shall be explain below why this is not true. There is nothing to say about the Detectives' home, present in both novels but not important in the stories. The cities are both Capitals: Paris for Cauvain, London for Doyle.

The first encounter with the corpse, in Cauvain’s novel, does not happen in the crime scene: Maximilien can analyze victim’s body in another room (Cauvain: Chapter III). The first time he arrives in the place where the murder happened is during his service as a fake manservant: most of the clues are found there. Similarly, but in the same setting, Sherlock Holmes is able to collect most of what he needs to solve the case in the crime scene, the same room he can see the corpse. What makes the two houses similar is the description of the exterior: both are decadent and old-fashioned, surrounded by loneliness; a garden precedes the hall, but only Sherlock can find something (described in the Chapter III in both novels).

The cities are both described as spots for thieves and murderers, but also the place the Detective may make order of the chaos; anyway, it is in the countryside where the majority of the plot happens. Maximilien leaves Paris to reach his “boss” in North France country; Jefferson lives most of his revenge and what originates it in American mountains. As for the French detective, he knows

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<sup>3</sup> “I promised you the story of my life”.

everything. His trip is only a way to confirm his ideas, not to collect clues: in fact, he spends most of action scenes here. So, the city is always the place where the Detective is able to find Order in Chaos: nothing happens in countryside which helps the resolution of the case, or better nothing Maximilien can deduct through his mind. In discussing Jefferson's case, the chaos starts its action in countryside, and it is only in the city (London, in this case) that an Order may be made: the Avenger finds the way to do the task he gave himself. The Detective finds out what he did and has him arrest. In both cases, Reason is not able to act in countryside, while it has the absolute power in the City.

### 3.3. Action

Many events of the two novels are the same; however, there are some differences between the adventures of our Detectives. It could be useful to start explaining the similarity in their plots and in their structures.

In the first Chapter, both Detectives meet their Helpers, two medicine men who tell their stories. Chapter III is in both cases the one when the corpse is encountered for the first time. In Chapter IV, a flashback constitutes the main part of the plot: Doyle makes a policeman speak about how he discovered the corpse, while Cauvain lets his protagonist tell how he was able to collect many clues, an inquiry he did to confirm his hypothesis and the reasoning he did to get his conclusions, with flashback concluding in the following chapter; Doyle continues with two flashbacks by Gregson in Lestrade in Chapter V and VI. In the middle, the point of view changes: Maximilien becomes the Narrator, through the letters he writes periodically to his friend, while *A Study in Scarlet* explains the events bringing Jefferson to search for a revenge. In the Chapter before the last one, the confessions of the Murderers can be read: travelling by sea is an important aspect of their lives.

So, what may be defined as difference between the two tales? First of all, Time is not used in the same way: Conan Doyle's book is divided into two parts, the second one mostly speaking about the story of Jefferson and his unlucky girlfriend and her father. The use of the flashback is more vast in this novel (five

chapters talk about the origin of the revenge). Cauvain's, in a certain sense, uses a more linear story: the longest flashback lasts less than two chapters, and, anyway, it talks about the investigation: digression is not allowed in Maximilien Heller's world. The French philosopher uses some trickeries and disguises to reach the solution, while his English colleague only tries once. In addition to this, Heller is close to his "prey" for most of his adventure, due to his knowledge of part of the truth since he sees him the first time, and he risks his life at least once (saved by his own substitution of the liquid inside a syringe some hours before he is attacked). On the other hand Holmes only sporadically is in contact with Jefferson. As compensation, all the truth is discovered by Sherlock's mind in less time than Maximilien's, who has a more complex situation to face (his murderer has more than one false identity, and only at the end does he understand Doctor Wickson and Bréhat-Kerguen, as he has known them, are the same person).

The killings, as said, are two in both cases: Jefferson kills Drebber and Stangerson to revenge, simply; Boulet-Rouge, firstly, kills Bréhat-Kerguen to take his identity, then he reaches his victim's brother, Bréhat-Lenoir, to get his fortune as the only heir. He does it by having some friends help him (Cauvain: Chapter V); only once, Jefferson is aided by an anonymous man able to escape Holmes' trap (Doyle: Chapter 5 Part I).

Finally, meetings between the protagonists and their helpers have different meanings: Maximilien Heller can see Guérin, the man he saved from execution, and the life the poor man has built after the case, since the Doctor conduces him there: the philosopher finally admits that he has his own life saved through his friend's help. John Watson, instead, can only see that his flatmate's merits are not recognized, a fact already known by Sherlock Holmes, ready for a new investigation.

What has been just said should be enough to establish that the two novels are completely independent from each another, even if the influence of the French book on the more famous English text is evident (though not recognized); anyway, it is time to change once again the point of view and go back to the translation of Chapter III of both novels, the ones when the Detectives encounter the corpse.



## CHAPTER 4. HENRY CAUVAIN'S *MAXIMILIEN HELLER*

### 4.1. Synopsis

Paris, 1845. A young Doctor is asked to visit a former thirty-year-old lawyer, Maximilien Heller, once a brilliant mind but now living alone and isolated from society. He goes to his home, a dark and unclean room in an old and almost ghostly palace; the only table is covered by papers and book-notes. He finds the patient who has just smoked opium. Their friendship does not start in the best way, as Maximilien explains he does not love medicine and academic men, and he seems not to have a reason to live. During the dialogue with the doctor, he tells him about his own life saying he was a lawyer and all the projects he had studied during the period he exiled himself from the world. The Doctor thinks he is an interesting patient and calls him “Philosopher”, but also that it would be rather difficult to lead him back to real life. The doctor is about to leave the room, after has just fallen asleep, but something happens which makes him stay.

Someone knocks at the door; a police officer would like to talk to Maximilien. Both Maximilien and the Doctor are invited to go to another flat, where the young servant Guérin lives. The officer explains that the poor man is suspected of a homicide: he is believed to have killed his employer, an old rich man called Bréhat-Lenoir. Some other policemen search his room, trying to find money Guérin is accused of having stolen. There are some abuses, but the officer does not allow his fellow colleagues to go on humiliating the suspect. Maximilien watches the scene with bewildered eyes, then the officer asks him some questions. The search carries on, but nothing is found out. The Philosopher approaches the suspect, asking him whether he is going to get married; after the positive answer of his neighbour, Heller tells him to be ready for the wedding because his will is to hunt down the real murderer. Having said that, he leaves without greeting anyone. The Doctor reaches his patient at the flat, asking why he has behaved so strangely; however, something has changed in Maximilien. He now has a kind of fire in his breast, and a new will for coming back into the world possesses him.

Even if he does not admit to being motivated by philanthropy, his new friend has an insight into his real intentions. He leaves the flat thinking Maximilien is coming back to the world. Before going home, he buys a newspaper, which contains an article speaking about the homicide of Bréhat-Lenoir and about who is going to inherit his fortune: his brother, Monsieur Bréhat Kerguen, who lives in Brittany. No Last Wills have been found.

**The day after, the Doctor is visited by his professor, Doctor B.: immediately, he knows it is not a visit for pleasure. Speaking about Bréhat-Lenoir's case, the old doctor says he should carry out another post-mortem examination, after the one he had carried out some days before, opposing a strange character he had to fight some years before: Doctor Wickson, a British medicine man who uses Indian methods for treatment. In order to avoid the meeting with his old enemy, he would like his pupil to substitute him; the young Doctor accepts, willing to give Maximilien Heller the possibility to investigate. And, his new friend is the first one to notice the substitution: the tired and sick man of the day before is now a hunter ready to catch his prey. It is he who asks whether he may be with the doctor to assist the autopsy. Now, his friend is sure he will live again. They arrive at Bréhat-Lenoir's home: an old building surrounded by a gloomy garden. The butler welcomes them; after answering some questions, he brings the guests to the room where the examination will be carried out. Maximilien is impatient; but, when he sees Bréhat-Kerguen from the window, his reaction is really bizarre. Some officers, witnesses in the following operation, are about to reach them; the Philosopher hides behind a curtain. Some minutes later, Wickson arrives: he assures his rival he would like to find the same results as his master. However, the British doctor finds arsenic in the blood of the corpse, against what doctor B. had found some days before. The young doctor carries out other examinations, but the result is the same. When the other officers leave the room, Maximilien comes out and explains the trick of Doctor Wickson: he had poison on his glove. They are going back home, and they try to light two cigars, but their lighter does not work; the butler fetches them a burning paper, and Maximilien is going to light his cigar, but he sees**

**something: he puts out the fire and goes outside quickly, so the servant thinks the young man is mad.**

The Doctor and the Philosopher do not see each other for a while. One day, the former meets a strange man who asks for a job. After a couple of minutes, he shows his real identity: Maximilien Heller is dressed up as a waiter to stay close to Bréhat-Kerguen. After he makes the Doctor promise not to say anything to anyone, he starts to tell what he has done during the days they did not meet. First of all, he was able to decode what he read in the burning paper: a message written by a criminal called Boulet-Rouge to an old accomplice, in order to organise a meeting. The Philosopher, who knew the man, goes to the place, a hotel whose owner is the accomplice, called Petit-Poignard by the member of the band he was part of. After an inquiry, done by threatening the bandit with a gun, he finds out that Boulet-Rouge is involved in the homicide. So, he decides to dress up as a young waiter searching for a job and goes to Bréhat-Lenoir's home to get it. Bréhat-Kerguen hesitates, but finally he hires Maximilien.

At the beginning, it seems his employer has forgotten the new servant. One day, he is called to clean the bedroom where the homicide had taken place, after the inventory. Before clearing everything, the Philosopher is able to collect some clues; moreover, he takes some drops of Bréhat-Lenoir's blood, which he instilled in a rabbit which dies some seconds later. In this way, Maximilien discovers the weapon of the crime.

Now, they know who the assassin is (Bréhat-Kerguen), and the weapon used (a powerful Indian poison); but, they do not know how, and why Doctor Wickson and Boulet-Rouge are involved. Maximilien, knowing the British Doctor is invited to a party organised by one of his friend's cousin, asks him to go there. The Philosopher shows his ability in dancing, then they go to the room where Doctor Wickson is defeating all his adversaries. Maximilien challenges him and the Doctor is defeated. Before going, they observe a parade of guests who are victims of a mysterious theft.

From this moment, the point of view changes: the story, until now told by the Doctor, starts to be narrated by Maximilien himself, in some letters sent to his new friend. The day after the party, Bréhat-Kerguen leaves to Brittany, and his

new servant goes with him. In the new palace, the Philosopher makes a new friend: a young boy, who allows him to send news to the Doctor. The guardian is a bear called Jacquot.

Then, he starts to confirm what he knows, and he makes new discoveries: a sleepwalking woman, during a night he is feeling sick, leads him into a room, where the woman repeats a dialogue which happened some years before revealing that Monsieur Bréhat-Kerguen was killed by one of his waiters, helped by her, and his identity was taken by his murderer. In the following days, Maximilien can reach a hidden room: here, he finds a skeleton (perhaps Bréhat-Kerguen's) and a syringe with a strange black liquid inside: it is the poison used by the murderer.

The philosopher substitutes the liquid with a mixture of water and ashes, saving his life in this way. The same day he speaks to the police to proceed with the murderer's arrest, the fake Bréhat-Kerguen attacks him by instilling the content of the syringe while he is sleeping. When he wakes up, he waits for the police and, then, they stop the murderer: he is Boulet-Rouge.

Before going, the bandit asks to pet Jacquot again. In reality, he frees him from the chains and orders him to attack Maximilien, who is able to kill the bear with his gun. The Philosopher is allowed to be present at the interrogatory. As soon as the killer sees him, he apologises for trying to make him be eaten by the bear since he has just found out that Maximilien is not a police officer but a simple amateur. Then, the prisoner starts to tell the story of his life, omitting details about who helped him. In particular, he explains how he had learnt Indian medicine, so he could play the role of Doctor Wickson; and, how he killed both of the Bréhat brothers.

After the murderer is executed, the Doctor (taking on the role of the narrator again) does not meet his heroic friend for a while. By chance, he sees him while walking through Paris; the Doctor invites his former patient to a walk in the countryside, they go to visit Guérin and his wife. After Maximilien's investigation, he was able to get married and start a new life in the countryside. The encounter is very emotional: Guérin cries recognising who saved his life, and shows him his new home and the little farm he built. The novel concludes when

the Philosopher speaking to his friend, shows how much he is grateful to have his life saved.

## **4.2. Translation of Chapter 3**



## LE SINGULIER DOCTEUR WICKSON

Le lendemain vers dix heures, je reçus la visite de mon savant maître, M. le docteur B... Il avait l'air soucieux et préoccupé.

« Avez-vous entendu parler de cette affaire Bréhat-Lenoir ? » me demanda-t-il après quelques moments d'entretien, et en me regardant à travers ses lunettes.

Je lui montrai le journal que j'avais acheté la veille.

« Je n'en connais que ce que cette feuille m'a appris, répondis-je.

– Ah ! mais..., savez-vous que c'est très grave, et surtout très mystérieux. J'ai été appelé hier soir pour faire l'autopsie du corps. Après de longues et patientes recherches, croiriez-vous que je n'y ai pas trouvé un atome d'arsenic ?

– Voilà qui va singulièrement dérouter la justice.

– Je crois qu'elle a du moins été fort surprise, et peu flattée de voir son système renversé du premier coup. Mais elle ne se tient pas pour battue. Je reçois ce matin cette lettre du juge d'instruction à qui j'avais envoyé mon rapport fort avant dans la soirée. Il me prie de recommencer aujourd'hui l'expertise.

– À quoi bon ?



## WICKSON, UN ECCENTRICO DOTTORE

L'indomani, verso le dieci, ricevetti la visita del mio vecchio maestro, *il dottor B.*<sup>1</sup> Aveva l'aria preoccupata e angustata.

«*Ha sentito*<sup>2</sup> parlare del caso Bréhat-Lenoir?» mi chiese dopo *i primi convenevoli*,<sup>3</sup> guardandomi dai suoi occhiali. Gli mostrai il giornale che avevo comprato *il giorno prima*.<sup>4</sup>

«*So solo quello che ho letto in questo giornale*»<sup>5</sup> gli risposi.

«Ah! *Ma non immagina cosa ci sia dietro*,<sup>6</sup> e soprattutto quanto ci sia di misterioso. *Sono*<sup>7</sup> stato chiamato ieri sera per fare l'autopsia del corpo. Ci crede che non ho trovato traccia d'arsenico, *nonostante*<sup>8</sup> lunghe e pazienti ricerche?»

«Ecco una cosa che *fa sviare*<sup>9</sup> le indagini».

«Credo che la giustizia ne sia stata molto sorpresa, e anche poco contenta, *dato che*<sup>10</sup> il suo sistema è stato battuto al primo colpo. Ma non si è *data per vinta*.<sup>11</sup> Stamattina ho ricevuto questa lettera dal *giudice*<sup>12</sup> a cui avevo inviato il mio rapporto<sup>13</sup>. Mi prega di ricominciare oggi la perizia.»

«*A che pro?*»<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In Italian, when in the presence of the title, the correspondent of Monsieur, "Signore" is not used.

<sup>2</sup> Both French and Italian use Pronouns of Formality: the former, "Vous" (plural You) and the latter "Lei" (literally, "She"). The verbs are conjugated according to them, but in Italian the gender of the listener is respected. It has been adapted it to Italian Cultural Context.

<sup>3</sup> It is the Italian term to define the brief interview and the ritual gestures when people meet each other. It may be translated as "Civilities".

<sup>4</sup> Literally, "The day before". It is possible to use a single word in French, but not in Italian.

<sup>5</sup> Modulation of the concept expressed in the French text.

<sup>6</sup> The same as note 5.

<sup>7</sup> Grammar adaptation: in Italian, the verb "to be" is the auxiliary of itself while French uses the auxiliary "Avoir" in compound tenses more often.

<sup>8</sup> Syntactic transposition: the complement of time is changed into a concessive one to better express the hard work done by Doctor B..

<sup>9</sup> The same as note 4.

<sup>10</sup> Another syntactic transposition: A French implicit declarative clause is now a causal French uses the implicit form more often when the subject is the same as the main clause..

<sup>11</sup> Adaptation of idioms.

<sup>12</sup> The words "d'instruction" were not translated since they are not important to Italian readers, and so to make the text faster to read.

<sup>13</sup> The same as the last note.

<sup>14</sup> Italian adaptation uses the Latin Word "Pro", "In favour of".

– Je n'en sais rien. Mais voici le plus curieux : savez-vous qui ils veulent m'opposer dans cette discussion ?

– Qui donc ?

– Le docteur Wickson !

– Comment ! cet intrigant personnage qui fit tant de bruit il y a dix ans, à Paris, avec ses poudres impalpables ?

– Lui-même.

– Celui que vous avez si énergiquement combattu, cher maître, au nom de la vraie science ?

– Oui ; l'Académie m'a donné raison, mais l'opinion publique m'a donné tort et s'est passionnée pour la médecine indienne. Bref, cet homme est à Paris ; par quel hasard ? je n'en sais rien. Je le croyais mort et enterré. Il est plus à la mode que jamais, et la justice, comme vous le voyez, ne craint pas de s'aider de sa prétendue science. Si ce juge avait eu un peu plus de mémoire, il ne m'aurait pas mis ainsi dans la nécessité de discuter avec un homme que j'ai si vivement combattu jadis. Vous comprenez, n'est-ce pas, qu'il m'est impossible d'aller à cette expertise, et j'ai compté sur vous pour me remplacer. Je sais que vous avez fait un travail approfondi sur la matière des poisons et que vous êtes aussi compétent que moi-même. »

Je m'inclinai devant cette flatterie un peu intéressée de l'excellent homme.

« Ainsi c'est convenu... Vous aurez l'obligeance de vous présenter, à une heure, rue Cassette, n° 102.

– C'est la demeure du défunt ?

«Non lo so. Ma *vuole sapere*<sup>15</sup> la cosa più curiosa? Sa chi vuole oppormi?»  
«*Chi*<sup>16</sup>?»

«Il dottor Wickson!»

«Come? Quel curioso personaggio che fece tanto scalpore dieci anni fa a Parigi con le sue polveri impalpabili?»

«*Proprio lui*<sup>17</sup>.»

«Colui che avete così strenuamente combattuto, mio caro maestro, nel nome della vera scienza?»

«Sì; il *mondo accademico*<sup>18</sup> mi ha dato ragione, ma l'opinione pubblica mi ha dato torto e si è appassionata alla medicina indiana. In breve, quest'uomo è a Parigi. *Come mai*?<sup>19</sup> Non lo so. Lo credevo morto e sepolto. *Oggi*<sup>20</sup> è più in voga che mai e la giustizia, come vede, non *ha timore*<sup>21</sup> di farsi aiutare dalla sua "scienza". Se questo giudice avesse avuto un po' più memoria, non mi avrebbe messo nella situazione di *dover*<sup>22</sup> discutere con un uomo che ho *aspramente*<sup>23</sup> combattuto un tempo. *Comprenderà* che non mi è possibile andare a eseguire questa perizia, e *che*<sup>24</sup> conto su di lei per rimpiazzarmi. So che ha fatto studi approfonditi in materia di veleni e che siete competente quanto me».

M'inchinai di fronte alla lusinga un po' interessata di quel grand'uomo.

«Allora è deciso. Avrà l'obbligo di presentarsi, tra un'ora, a Rue Cassette 102».

«È la casa del defunto?»

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<sup>15</sup> Modulation of the concept and transposition: instead of saying an impersonal clause, the character makes his listener more familiar through a question, as is more common in Italian.

<sup>16</sup> Elimination of "Donc", not necessary.

<sup>17</sup> To maintain the same idea, the adverb "Proprio" had to be used: it is possible to make the concept stronger in French like in English (in this case, "Même" is the French for "Himself"), but not in Italian, where the same nuance is expressed with the adverb.

<sup>18</sup> The generalisation is compulsory, due to the fact that in Italy the term "Accademia" stands for either an institute studying Italian language or an Art University.

<sup>19</sup> Adaptation of the French idiom.

<sup>20</sup> dverb was added to make the concept stronger.

<sup>21</sup> Even if the literal translation of the French verb "Craindre" is "Temere", a periphrasis with the shade of meaning "To have no scruple" was preferred, which is what the author would have presumably liked to express.

<sup>22</sup> Word added to give the idea of "nécessité", eliminated in our translation some words before.

<sup>23</sup> This adverb better expresses the rage of Dottor B than the literal translation "Vivamente", even if both are good in this context.

<sup>24</sup> Italian is more hypotactic than French: the coordination between two main clauses is here changed into coordination between two completive clauses.

– Voici une lettre que j’adresse au juge d’instruction, et dans laquelle j’invoque un prétexte quelconque pour manquer au rendez-vous. Vous la lui remettrez. »

Le docteur B... se leva, et, me serrant la main avec une certaine émotion :

« Allons, mon cher enfant, me dit-il, tâchez de convaincre les magistrats, et ne vous laissez surtout pas démonter par l’aplomb de Wickson. Songez que notre vieil honneur professionnel est entre vos mains ; défendez-le contre l’ignorance et le charlatanisme. N’oubliez pas de m’apprendre, aussitôt l’expertise finie, le résultat de la discussion. »

La voix du docteur B... tremblait un peu, tandis qu’il m’adressait ces paroles. Son œil noir et vif brillait d’un éclat qui témoignait de tout l’intérêt que mon vieux professeur portait à la lutte que j’allais engager. Wickson était le seul homme au monde pour lequel l’excellent docteur B... ressentît de la haine.

Je promis à M. B... que je ferais tous mes efforts pour assurer le triomphe de son opinion et maintenir dans tout leur éclat les principes de la vraie science.

Une heure après, j’étais chez M. Maximilien Heller.

Le philosophe me sembla plus calme que la veille ; la fièvre avait presque entièrement disparu.

«Ecco una mia lettera per il giudice, dove ho scritto un pretesto per *giustificare la mia assenza*<sup>25</sup> all'appuntamento. La darà a lui».

Il dottor B. si alzò e, stringendomi la mano con una certa emozione, mi disse:

«Andiamo, mio caro, cerchi di convincere i magistrati e soprattutto non si lasci smontare dall'audacia di Wickson. Tenga presente che il suo vecchio onore professionale è nelle sue mani; lo difenda contro *gli ignoranti e i ciarlatani*<sup>26</sup>! E non dimentichi di farmi sapere il risultato, non appena finita la perizia».

La voce del dottor B. tremava un po', mentre mi diceva queste parole. Il suo occhio nero brillava di una luce che testimoniava il vivo interesse che il mio vecchio professore *aveva*<sup>27</sup> per la lotta che *stavo per ingaggiare*<sup>28</sup>. Wickson era il solo uomo al mondo verso cui l'eccellente dottor B. *nutrì*<sup>29</sup> dell'odio. Promisi al dottor B. che *avrei fatto*<sup>30</sup> tutti gli *sforzi possibili*<sup>31</sup> per assicurare il trionfo della sua opinione e mantenere in tutto il loro splendore i principi della vera scienza.

Un'ora dopo, ero da Maximilien Heller. Il filosofo mi sembrò più calmo del giorno prima; la febbre era quasi completamente scomparsa.

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<sup>25</sup> Modulation: The idea of not going to a meeting is substituted by the one of justifying the absence.

<sup>26</sup> Another modulation: the ideas here are the people who represent them.

<sup>27</sup> In French, "L'intérêt" is "Porté"; in Italian, "L'interesse" is linked to the verb "Avere", to have.

<sup>28</sup> French "Gallicism" corresponding to the English "Going to" form (it is called "Future proche", "Next future"), composed by the verb "Aller" plus the infinitive. In Italian, simply the periphrasis "Stare per" is possible.

<sup>29</sup> It is common to link the word "Odio" to the verb "Nutrire", even if the literal translation "risentire" is possible.

<sup>30</sup> Syntactic adaptation through transposition of tenses: French, like English, expresses the idea of future in the past through the Present Conditional; instead, in Italian the same is said through the Past Conditional.

<sup>31</sup> A better way to say how much someone wants to put in all the effort he/she can. The clause "fare tutti gli sforzi" is unnatural, despite being perfect in grammar.

« Je vais mieux ce matin, me dit-il ; votre compagnie m'a été hier d'un grand soulagement. Il y a des moments, bien rares, où la solitude me fait mal. Et j'étais poursuivi hier par un souvenir, un anniversaire... terrible... Enfin passons. Avez-vous quelques détails sur cette affaire mystérieuse ? J'y ai pensé toute la nuit. Évidemment, cet homme n'est pas coupable. »

Je lui remis le numéro du journal, et il le lut avec grande attention, puis murmura :

« Je voudrais bien savoir le dernier mot de cette histoire.

– Je puis, si vous le désirez, vous introduire dans la maison où a eu lieu le crime, et vous faire assister à l'autopsie.

– Vraiment ? s'écria le philosophe en me regardant avec surprise ; et comment cela, je vous prie ? »

Je lui racontai la courte entrevue que je venais d'avoir avec M. B..., et lui dis le rôle que j'avais accepté.

«*Sto meglio<sup>32</sup> stamattina<sup>33</sup>*» mi disse. «La sua compagnia ieri mi è stata di grande conforto. Ci sono dei rari momenti in cui la solitudine mi fa male. E ieri ero ossessionato da un ricordo... terribile... *Ma andiamo avanti.<sup>34</sup>* Ha qualche dettaglio di quel caso misterioso? Ci ho pensato tutta la notte. *È evidente che<sup>35</sup>* quell'uomo non *sia<sup>36</sup>* colpevole».

Gli diedi la copia del giornale, e lui la lesse con grande attenzione; poi mormorò:

«Vorrei tanto conoscere *l'epilogo<sup>37</sup>* di questa storia».

«Se vuole, posso farla entrare nella casa in cui ha avuto luogo il crimine e farla assistere all'autopsia».

«Davvero?» gridò il filosofo guardandomi sorpreso. «E come? *Mi dica!<sup>38</sup>*»

Gli raccontai il breve *incontro<sup>39</sup> appena avuto<sup>40</sup>* col dottor B. e gli dissi il ruolo che avevo accettato.

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<sup>32</sup> The verb “Venir” is more common in French to say how someone is. Italian has the verb “Sentire”, more similar to the English “To feel”.

<sup>33</sup> In Italian the contraction of “Questa mattina” is possible (and also more common), and it becomes “Stamattina”; it is not possible in French.

<sup>34</sup> Modulation: the idea of going on is now expressed with two words. French uses less adjectives and adverbs, but Italian must add them (Podeur 2002: 50).

<sup>35</sup> Periphrasis to express the adverb “Évidemment” in Italian. The literal translation is also possible.

<sup>36</sup> Grammar adaptation: Italian uses the subjunctive more than French. In this case, also Simple Present would express the nuance, but Maximilien’s high level of culture suggests to prefer the more elegant tense used in this passage.

<sup>37</sup> After the literal translation, an intra-linguistic chunking up has been done: the periphrasis becomes the specific word.

<sup>38</sup> Both modulation and transposition: the idea of asking is now expressed as its consequence (saying something as an answer); and the exclamation is now a question.

<sup>39</sup> Generalisation of the interview.

<sup>40</sup> Another French “Gallicism”, the “Passé récent” (recent past), composed by “Venir de” plus the infinitive. Italian must express this tense through a periphrasis. To make the clause easier to read, the auxiliary was omitted.

« Eh bien, je vous accompagnerai ! dit Maximilien Heller d'un ton résolu ; il faut que je sache tout ce que cela signifie. Voilà la première fois depuis deux ans que je sors de cette chambre. Il me semble que j'entre dans une vie nouvelle. Que diriez-vous si j'arrachais cet homme à l'échafaud ? Ce serait curieux, n'est-ce pas ? je deviendrais philanthrope ! Mais non, ce n'est pas par amour de l'humanité que j'agis ainsi, c'est au contraire pour prouver à la société tout le vice de son organisation, puisque sans moi, et si les choses suivaient leur cours naturel, un innocent mourrait, condamné par la sentence des hommes. »

Je ne pus m'empêcher de sourire.

« Êtes-vous donc sûr que Guérin n'est pas coupable ?

– Oui.

– Vous vous faites fort de démontrer son innocence ?

– Oui.

– Et de trouver le véritable auteur du crime ?

– Oui. »

Il arpentait la mansarde à grands pas, comme un lion impatient de briser les grilles de sa cage.



«Bene, io *verrò con lei!*<sup>41</sup>» disse Maximilien Heller con tono risoluto. «Bisogna che io *sappia tutto*<sup>42</sup>. Per la prima volta dopo due anni io esco da questa camera. Mi sembra di *cominciare*<sup>43</sup> una nuova vita. Che direbbe se *riuscissi a sottrarre*<sup>44</sup> quell'uomo dal patibolo? Sarebbe curioso, vero? Diventerei un filantropo! Ma no, non è per amore per l'umanità che io agisco così; al contrario, è per mostrare alla società tutto *il marcio*<sup>45</sup> della sua organizzazione, perché senza di me, e se le cose seguissero il loro corso naturale, un innocente morirebbe, condannato dalla sentenza degli uomini!»

Non *riuscii a trattenere*<sup>46</sup> *un sorriso*<sup>47</sup>.

«È dunque sicuro che Guérin non sia il colpevole?»

«Sì».

«*Farà di tutto*<sup>48</sup> per dimostrare la sua innocenza?»

«Sì».

«E per trovare il vero autore del crimine?»

«Sì».

*Andava su e giù*<sup>49</sup> per la mansarda a grandi passi, come un leone impaziente di rompere le griglie della sua gabbia.

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<sup>41</sup> The nuance of the French clause is better expressed in this way; in Italian, “Accompagnare” is a more passive meaning.

<sup>42</sup> Omission to make the text faster to read.

<sup>43</sup> The metaphor of “going in” is lost, substituted by the Italian idiom “Cominciare una nuova vita” (“Starting a new life”).

<sup>44</sup> Periphrasis that better expresses the sense of possibility.

<sup>45</sup> More concrete metaphor than the vice one to state something wrong.

<sup>46</sup> Modulation maintaining the same nuance of “Not being able to”.

<sup>47</sup> Transposition: the French verb “Sourir” becomes the Italian noun “Sorriso”.

<sup>48</sup> Modulation: the idea of strength is substituted by the idea of great determination.

<sup>49</sup> Periphrasis we cannot avoid, since there is no verb expressing the same in Italian (even if there is a possible translation in Sicilian: “Tambasiare”, verb used in Camilleri’s novels).

« Oui, dit-il avec exaltation, je veux reparaître au grand jour ! Oui, je rentre aujourd'hui dans ce monde dont je m'étais volontairement exilé ! Il y a là un mystère que je veux percer, des ténèbres que je veux sonder. J'ai résolu les plus difficiles problèmes sociaux ; pourquoi ne résoudrais-je pas de même celui-là ? Je veux, le jour où les hommes dresseront l'échafaud de ce malheureux, me présenter devant eux, traînant à mes pieds le vrai coupable, le jeter en pâture au bourreau et reprendre l'innocent. Mais ne croyez pas que je m'intéresse à cet homme. Que m'importe qu'il soit tué ou non ? »

Maximilien était transfiguré. Son visage creusé et pâli par une longue souffrance s'était éclairé d'une flamme surnaturelle ; ses membres alanguis par la fièvre avaient repris toute leur vigueur. Ses gestes étaient fermes, sa belle tête se relevait fièrement.

«Sì, voglio tornare alla luce del sole» disse *esaltato*<sup>50</sup>. «Sì, oggi rientro in quel mondo dal quale mi ero volontariamente esiliato! C'è un mistero che voglio svelare, delle tenebre che voglio sondare. Ho risolto i più difficili problemi sociali; perché non *dovrei risolvere*<sup>51</sup> questo allo stesso modo? Il giorno in cui gli uomini allestiranno il patibolo per quello sciagurato, voglio presentarmi avanti a loro, trascinando ai miei piedi il vero colpevole, gettarlo in pasto al boia e riprendermi l'innocente. Ma non creda che m'interessi di quell'uomo. Che m'importa se lo uccidono o no?»

Maximilien era trasfigurato. Il suo viso pallido e smagrito dalla lunga sofferenza si era rischiarato di una fiamma sovranaturale; le sue membra indebolite dalla febbre avevano ripreso tutto il loro vigore. I suoi gesti erano sicuri, la sua bella testa era rimessa con fierezza.

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<sup>50</sup> The adjectival syntagm is substituted by a prepositional one.

<sup>51</sup> The concept gets stronger through the addition of the verb "Dovere" ("Should"), in this case.

Je me souviens encore, après tant d'années écoulées, de la vive impression que firent alors sur moi la voix et l'attitude de Maximilien Heller. J'éprouvai d'abord une sorte de surprise inquiète. Je craignis, je l'avoue, que cette emphase, ce ton prophétique ne fussent comme le signe précurseur de quelque dérangement cérébral dont j'avais cru surprendre, à plusieurs reprises, les premiers symptômes chez M. Heller. Je pris sa main : elle était froide ; son pouls battait régulièrement. Mes yeux rencontrèrent les siens. Leur expression calme et résolue me frappa. Je ne puis dire quel sentiment de bonheur, de gratitude envers la Providence envahit alors mon cœur. La vérité venait de m'apparaître ; je l'avais lue dans le clair et limpide regard de Maximilien. Je souris en pensant à l'amertume un peu forcée qu'il avait cru devoir mettre dans ses paroles. Pauvre philosophe ! en vain essayait-il de s'abuser encore sur ses véritables sentiments ! Non, ce n'était pas une haine implacable contre la société et ses lois qui lui inspirait cette résolution si belle et si généreuse. Mais Dieu venait de jeter sur sa route un malheureux à consoler, un innocent à arracher au bourreau, et le cœur de Maximilien s'était attendri de pitié en face de cet infortuné sur lequel la justice des hommes allait s'appesantir.

Ricordo ancora oggi, *a distanza di anni*<sup>52</sup>, la viva impressione che mi fecero allora la voce e l'atteggiamento di Maximilien Heller. Provai all'inizio una sorta d'inquieta sorpresa. Io temetti, lo ammetto, che quell'enfasi e quel tono profetico *fossero*<sup>53</sup> *segni premonitori*<sup>54</sup> di qualche disturbo psicologico di cui, a più riprese, avevo creduto di notare i primi sintomi in Maximilien Heller. *Lo presi per mano*<sup>55</sup>: era fredda, il suo polso batteva regolarmente. *Il mio sguardo incontrò di nuovo il suo*<sup>56</sup>. Mi colpì *la sua espressione*<sup>57</sup> calma e risoluta. Non so *esprimere*<sup>58</sup> quale sentimento di contentezza e di gratitudine verso la Provvidenza invase allora il mio cuore. La verità mi era appena apparsa: l'avevo letta nel chiaro e limpido sguardo di Maximilien. Sorrisi pensando all'amarezza un po' forzata che aveva creduto di dover mettere nelle sue parole. Povero filosofo! Invano provava a ingannarsi sui suoi veri sentimenti! No, non era l'odio implacabile contro la società e le sue leggi che ispiravano questa scelta così *generosa*:<sup>59</sup> Dio aveva appena gettato sulla sua strada un infelice da consolare, un innocente da strappare al patibolo, e il cuore di Maximilien si era *intenerito*<sup>60</sup> di fronte a questo sfortunato sul quale la giustizia degli uomini stava per far *sentire il suo peso*.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> The idea of time passing is expressed with the metaphor of distance, so by modulating.

<sup>53</sup> French usually link the verb “Crandre” with the adverb “Ne”: in this case, it is not the negative form (which anyway should be followed by a “pas” or other negative expressions). They call it “Ne explétif”, and took it from Latin. Even if this language is the source for both Italian and French, the latter does not include this rule, which is possible in other co-texts.

<sup>54</sup> Simply a matter of style: the literal translation into singular form is possible just the same.

<sup>55</sup> Modulation: the idea of taking his hand was changed into the one of taking him by his hand., like a father with his son.

<sup>56</sup> Another modulation, a metonymic one: instead of speaking about eyes, it was preferred to deal with someone linked with them

<sup>57</sup> Again a change of point of view: the expression is linked to the man and not to his eyes.

<sup>58</sup> A chunking sideways: a more specific synonym.

<sup>59</sup> The coordination is more fluent by using the apposition.

<sup>60</sup> The Italian term express the same concept.

<sup>61</sup> Literally, the words “S’appesentir” should be translated into “Buttarsi di peso”; but, the context is formal, so the periphrasis maintains the idea.

Un intérêt noble, élevé, puissant, donnait maintenant à sa vie une direction et un but. C'était comme un lien fort et mystérieux qui le rattachait à ce monde dont il s'était brusquement séparé, en un jour d'orgueil, de douleur peut-être...

Je laissai retomber sa main que j'avais gardée quelques instants dans la mienne.

« Dieu soit loué ! pensai-je, Maximilien vivra !... »

M. Heller ouvrit une petite armoire et en tira une longue redingote brune et un chapeau d'une forme un peu antique. Le philosophe ne paraissait avoir aucune prétention à l'élégance.

« Il va bientôt être midi, dit-il, comme pour m'expliquer l'impatience que trahissaient tous ses gestes ; il serait peut-être temps de partir.

– Soit, répondis-je ; nous aurons tout le loisir d'examiner le lieu du crime.

– Et c'est chose importante », murmura le philosophe en m'ouvrant la porte.

Un interesse nobile, alto, potente dava ora alla sua vita una via *da seguire*<sup>62</sup> e uno scopo. Era come un legame forte e misterioso che lo riconciliava a quel mondo dal quale si era bruscamente separato, in un *momento*<sup>63</sup> d'orgoglio, o forse di dolore. Lasciai cadere la sua mano *dopo averla guardata*<sup>64</sup> per qualche istante.

«Dio sia lodato!» pensai. «Maximilien vivrà!»

Heller aprì un piccolo armadio e ne *tirò fuori*<sup>65</sup> un lungo soprabito scuro e un cappello dalla forma un po' antiquata. Il filosofo non sembrava *prestare alcuna attenzione*<sup>66</sup> all'eleganza.

«Fra poco sarà mezzogiorno!» disse, *tradendo*<sup>67</sup> l'impazienza che muoveva tutti i suoi gesti. «Forse sarebbe ora di partire».

«*Andiamo*<sup>68</sup>» risposi io. «Avremo tutto il piacere di esaminare il luogo del crimine».

«E questa è la cosa importante», mormorò il filosofo aprendomi la porta.

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<sup>62</sup> Addiction to make the concept stronger.

<sup>63</sup> Chunk-down: in Italian, is more common to speak about a "Momento" of pride instead of a "Day".

<sup>64</sup> Transposition of a completive clause into a temporal, to better express the consequential actions.

<sup>65</sup> The concept must be specified through these two words, due to the word "tirare" is more generic in Italian.

<sup>66</sup> Modulation: in the French text, the character has no will; in the Italian one, Heller does not pay any attention.

<sup>67</sup> Metonymic modulation: the effect instead of the cause.

<sup>68</sup> The imperative is now an exhortation. It is a metonymic modulation (effect for cause again).

Nous montâmes en voiture. Une demi-heure après, nous étions arrêtés devant le n° 102 de la rue Cassette.

Je sonnai, et bientôt la lourde porte cochère roula sur ses gonds avec un bruit sourd. Nous entrâmes dans une cour humide et mal pavée, où l'herbe était si abondante qu'un nombreux troupeau eût pu y trouver sa pâture.

Au fond, s'élevait un grand bâtiment à quatre étages dont toutes les persiennes étaient fermées.

On arrivait par quatre ou cinq marches à une porte en chêne, percée d'un judas. Un gros fil de fer traversait la cour et servait à ouvrir la porte cochère sans qu'on fût obligé de sortir de cette maison, qui ressemblait à un château fort de lugubre apparence.

Maximilien souleva le lourd marteau de fer qui, en retombant, fit gémir les longs corridors. La meurtrière s'ouvrit et se referma brusquement, la porte s'entrebâilla, et nous pûmes apercevoir un petit vieillard, mince et fluet, en culotte courte, qui considérait avec des yeux égarés le costume bizarre et le visage plus bizarre encore du philosophe.



Montammo sulla vettura. Mezz'ora dopo, eravamo arrivati davanti al 102 di rue Cassette. Suonai, e presto il pesante portone girò sui suoi cardini con un rumore smorzato. Entrammo in un cortile umido e mal pavimentato, dove l'erba era così abbondante che numerose greggi avrebbero potuto *sfamarvisi*<sup>69</sup>. In fondo, *un edificio a quattro piani con tutte le persiane chiuse*<sup>70</sup>. Dopo quattro o cinque passi, *vi era*<sup>71</sup> una porta di *legno*<sup>72</sup> *con*<sup>73</sup> *un piccolo foro per vedere al suo esterno*<sup>74</sup>. Un grosso filo di ferro attraversava il cortile e serviva ad aprire il portone senza uscire di casa, che sembrava un castello dal *lugubre aspetto*.<sup>75</sup>

Maximilien sollevò il pesante *batacchio*<sup>76</sup> che, ricadendo, fece tremare i lunghi corridoi. La feritoia si aprì e si richiuse bruscamente, la porta si socchiuse, e noi potemmo vedere un *vecchietto*<sup>77</sup>, gracile e minuto, con i pantaloni corti, che *guardava*<sup>78</sup> con *lo sguardo*<sup>79</sup> stranito il bizzarro *abbigliamento*<sup>80</sup> del filosofo e il suo viso ancora più strano.

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<sup>69</sup> In this modulation, the idea of finding something is substituted by the idea of feeding. As consequence, there is no reference to the specific semantic field.

<sup>70</sup> In both these clauses, there is the ellipsis of the verb, in order to avoid the relative clause which would get the text more difficult.

<sup>71</sup> Modulation: the active idea of moving on is now the passive one of what there is at the end.

<sup>72</sup> Chunk-up: the reader could not know what a "Quercia" is, due its specific semantic field of botanic.

<sup>73</sup> Transposition: the characteristic is expressed by a complement and not by the verb.

<sup>74</sup> The chunk-down was compulsory: there is not a specific translation, so we opted to put its definition.

<sup>75</sup> "Lugubre" cannot be a gradual adjective in Italian.

<sup>76</sup> This time, it is Italian having a single word for the French periphrasis.

<sup>77</sup> Italian can use suffixes which expresses the nuance of something diminished (the so-called "Diminutivi"); the same nuance, in French, is expressed by the adjective "Petit" ("Little").

<sup>78</sup> Chunking-up: "Guardare" is more generic than "Considerer".

<sup>79</sup> Metonymic modulation: the part for the action ("Glance" for "Eyes").

<sup>80</sup> Chunking-up: "Abbigliamento" is a generic word, whose hyponyms include the "Costume".

« Monsieur, lui dis-je pour calmer son effroi, M. le docteur B... ne pouvant assister à l'expertise qui a lieu aujourd'hui, m'a prié de le remplacer.

– Ah ! très bien, Monsieur, fit le petit homme en ouvrant la porte pour nous laisser passer... Excusez-moi, mais nous sommes si bouleversés par cet horrible accident !... Ce pauvre M. Bréhat-Lenoir, ce bon maître !... Lui qui avait tant peur des assassins et qui se barricadait avec tant de soin dans sa chambre !... C'est affreux, n'est-ce pas, Messieurs ? Donnez-vous la peine d'entrer dans cette salle ; lorsque ces messieurs de la justice seront arrivés, je viendrai vous prévenir. »

Il nous introduisit dans une grande pièce tendue de tapisseries anciennes dont le dessin était presque complètement effacé. Quatre fenêtres donnaient sur un jardin triste et sombre, planté de grands arbres et entouré de murs élevés couverts de lierre.

Le philosophe s'avança vers une de ces fenêtres et appuya contre les vitres son front pâle.

«Signore, non abbia timore!» gli dissi per calmarlo. «Il dottor B., non potendo assistere alla perizia che ha luogo oggi, mi ha pregato di sostituirlo».

«Ah! Molto bene, Signore» fece l’omino aprendo la porta per farci entrare, «Scusatemi, ma siamo *ancora*<sup>81</sup> così scombussolati da quest’orribile *avvenimento*<sup>82</sup>! *Il*<sup>83</sup> povero signor Bréhat-Lenoir, quel buon *uomo*<sup>84</sup>! Lui che aveva tanta paura degli assassini e che si barricava con tanta cura nella sua camera! È terribile, *vero*<sup>85</sup>? *Accomodatevi pure*<sup>86</sup> in quella sala; quando *arriveranno*<sup>87</sup> quei signori della giustizia, verrò ad avvertirvi».

Ci *fece entrare*<sup>88</sup> in una grande stanza con una tappezzeria antica, il cui disegno era quasi completamente cancellato. Quattro finestre davano su un giardino triste e cupo, *con grandi alberi*<sup>89</sup> e circondato da mura coperte da edera. Il filosofo *avanzò*<sup>90</sup> verso una di quelle finestre e appoggiò la sua fronte pallida contro il vetro.

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<sup>81</sup> Addition to make the nuance stronger.

<sup>82</sup> “Accident” is more specific than the less negative nuanced “Avvenimento”; this chunking-up was necessary because the literal translation is not very common in an informal context to speak about homicides.

<sup>83</sup> Transposition between determiners where a demonstrative adjective is changed into an article, sounding more natural in an Italian Direct Speech.

<sup>84</sup> Chunking-up to modernize the concept: nowadays, the concept of “Master” and “Servant” are not in use any longer.

<sup>85</sup> Equivalence: what Italian expresses with the fake question “Vero?”, it is expressed with a question using the same verb in French (more similar to English, in this sense).

<sup>86</sup> Modulation: the idea of coming in is substituted by the invite to get comfortable; the sense of hospitality of the man is maintained.

<sup>87</sup> The change of Tense is justified by the idea of doing something immediately, better expressed through the use of the same tense of the Main Clause.

<sup>88</sup> Compulsory periphrasis: literal translation “Introdurre” is not used with human beings in Italian.

<sup>89</sup> Another compulsory periphrasis: a single word for the concept in target language does not exist.

<sup>90</sup> Reflexive in French, not in Italian.

Nous restâmes ainsi dix minutes environ, moi, l'observant en silence tout en me promenant dans la salle, lui, le corps agité par une impatience fébrile, le front contracté, les yeux fixes et brillants.

Un pas lourd et inégal retentit bientôt dans le corridor. Maximilien releva vivement la tête ; le moindre bruit paraissait faire sur lui une grande impression.

On ouvrit la porte qui communiquait au jardin, le sable craqua et un homme de forte stature, un peu courbé, aux cheveux blanchis, passa rapidement sous les fenêtres.

À la vue de cet homme, le philosophe tressaillit et se recula vivement comme s'il eût posé le pied sur un serpent.

« Qu'avez-vous donc ? lui demandai-je, étonné de cette émotion singulière.

– Ce n'est rien... ce n'est rien... me répondit-il d'une voix sourde. J'ai eu, je crois, un éblouissement. »

Il reprit sa position près de la fenêtre et suivit des yeux l'inconnu, qui après avoir traversé le jardin en ligne diagonale sortit par une porte cachée sous le lierre. Nous attendîmes quelques minutes encore.

Restammo così per dieci minuti circa: *io l'osservavo in silenzio camminando per la sala, lui era agitato da un'impazienza febbrile, la sua fronte era corrugata, i suoi occhi fissi e lucidi.*<sup>91</sup> Un passo pesante e irregolare risuonò presto nel corridoio. Maximilien alzò *subito*<sup>92</sup> la testa; il minimo rumore sembrava fare su di lui una grande impressione.

La porta che comunicava *con il*<sup>93</sup> giardino si aprì, e un uomo dalla stazza robusta, un po' gobbo e con i capelli bianchi passò rapidamente sotto le finestre. Alla vista di quell'uomo, il filosofo trasalì e *fece qualche passo indietro*<sup>94</sup>, come se avesse messo i piedi su un serpente.

«Cos'ha?» gli domandai, stupito da questa emozione singolare.

«Non è niente... non è niente...» mi rispose con voce smorzata. «Ho avuto, credo, un mancamento».

Riprese *quindi*<sup>95</sup> la sua posizione *vicino alla*<sup>96</sup> finestra e seguì *con*<sup>97</sup> gli occhi lo sconosciuto, che dopo aver attraversato il giardino in *diagonale*<sup>98</sup>, uscì da una porta nascosta sotto l'edera. Attendemmo ancora qualche istante.

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<sup>91</sup> To give the same nuance in Italian, it was preferred using an "Explicit" form (with conjugated verbs) instead of the "Implicit" of the original: Italian prefers using subordinates, French is more paratactic.

<sup>92</sup> Modulation: the idea of energetic action is substituted by the immediateness of time.

<sup>93</sup> Syntactic adaptation: in Italy, the doors communicate "with", in France "à". Communicate means, in this case, "Let the passage to".

<sup>94</sup> A single Italian word does not exist to express the idea of "Reculer"; there is a little entropy, because the source text better expresses the energy of the action.

<sup>95</sup> Addition to make the concept stronger.

<sup>96</sup> Grammar adaptation: "Près de" is the same as "Vicino a".

<sup>97</sup> The same as the latest note: complement of way is expressed with the preposition "Con" in Italian.

<sup>98</sup> Deletion of the word "Ligne", redundant in Italian when used with "Diagonale".

Bientôt la figure pâlotte du petit intendant, M. Prosper, apparut à la porte de la salle.

« Ces messieurs ne m'ont-ils pas appelé ? » demanda-t-il timidement.

Le brave homme avait un désir évident d'entamer la conversation, et moi-même j'étais assez disposé à lui adresser quelques questions.

« Il fait bien chaud ici ! lui dis-je ; ne pourriez-vous pas ouvrir cette fenêtre ? »

Il grimpa sur une chaise avec l'agilité d'un écureuil et fit ce que je lui demandais.

« Voilà une heure ! dit-il en jetant un coup d'œil sur une grande pendule en cuivre placée sur la cheminée. Ces messieurs sont en retard.

– Dites-moi franchement, monsieur l'intendant, fis-je en le regardant dans les yeux, croyez-vous que l'homme arrêté hier soit coupable ? »

Poco dopo apparve alla porta la figura minuta dell'intendente Prosper.

«I signori mi hanno chiamato?» chiese timidamente.

Il brav'uomo aveva un evidente desiderio di intavolare una conversazione, e anch'io ero molto propenso a *fargli*<sup>99</sup> qualche domanda.

«Fa molto caldo qui!» gli dissi; «Non potrebbe aprire questa finestra?»

Salì sulla sedia con l'agilità di uno scoiattolo e fece quello che gli *avevo chiesto*<sup>100</sup>.

«È già passata un'ora!»<sup>101</sup> disse gettando *l'occhio*<sup>102</sup> su *un orologio*<sup>103</sup> in rame *sul camino*<sup>104</sup>. «Quei signori sono in ritardo».

«Mi dica sinceramente, signor intendente» gli feci io guardandolo negli occhi. «Crede che l'uomo arrestato ieri sia colpevole?»

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<sup>99</sup> Chunking-up: in Italian, no one “Indirizza” a question. French may also use the verb “Poser”.

<sup>100</sup> Changing tense again: translating, it was interpreted that Cauvain meant to express the consecution of the two actions by using two different tenses. Anyway, a literal translation (“Fece quello che gli chiedevo”) is also possible, even if it expresses the idea that the actions are contemporary.

<sup>101</sup> Adaptation, but also equivalence: the two clauses have the same meaning.

<sup>102</sup> Deletion: literal translation (“Un colpo d’occhio”) possible.

<sup>103</sup> In Italian, “Watch” and “Clock” (“Montre” and “Pendule” in French) are both translated into “Orologio”: when necessary, some pieces of information are added (“Da polso” and “A pendolo”).

<sup>104</sup> The word “Placé” is deleted in target text for its redundancy in Italian.

Le front du petit vieillard s'illumina ; il écarquilla ses yeux gris, et prenant une prise de tabac avec toute la majesté et toute la grâce d'un marquis de l'ancien régime :

« Monsieur, me dit-il de sa voix flûtée, il est bien grave d'accuser un homme, lorsqu'on n'a pas entre les mains des preuves certaines et évidentes. Tout ce que je puis affirmer, c'est qu'il y a contre ce Guérin les plus accablantes présomptions. Il me semble encore l'entendre me dire dans son patois : « Il y a d'rats dans m'chambre... faut qu'j'aille chez l'rebouteux acheter de l'arsenic ! »

– Il vous a vraiment dit cela ? demanda vivement Maximilien...

– Aussi sûr que je vous parle...

– C'est singulier ! »

Et le philosophe retomba dans sa rêverie.

« Mais quelle est donc, ajoutai-je encore, cette histoire de testament qu'on a mêlée à tout ceci ? »



*Gli occhi grigi*<sup>105</sup> del vecchietto s'illuminarono *spalancandosi*<sup>106</sup> e, prendendo un po' di tabacco con tutta la grazia e la maestà di un marchese dell'antico regime, disse con la sua voce armoniosa:

«Signore, è grave accusare un uomo, quando non si hanno tra le mani degli *indizi*<sup>107</sup> certi ed evidenti. Tutto quello che posso *dire*<sup>108</sup>, è che contro questo Guérin ci sono *le prove più schiaccianti*<sup>109</sup>. Mi sembra ancora di sentirmi dire nella sua *parlata*<sup>110</sup>: - *C'ho i ratti in camera, bisogna che vado dall'erbaio a comprare lo veleno!*<sup>111</sup>»

«Le ha davvero detto questo?» domandò bruscamente Maximilien.

«Tanto sicuro *da parlargliene*<sup>112</sup>».

«*Che strano!*<sup>113</sup>»

E il filosofo piombò nuovamente *nei suoi pensieri*<sup>114</sup>.

«Ma che è dunque» aggiunse ancora, «*questa storia del testamento?*<sup>115</sup>»

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<sup>105</sup> Metonymic chunking-down: the part of the all (The eyes are a part of the front). In Italy, the metaphor of something enlightened concerns eyes. Moreover, the Old man's eyes are mentioned later: so, we could compensate what we had lost.

<sup>106</sup> Due to the fact that the Italian verb had taken the subject of the second clause, the second verb was translated with the gerund: the subjects are now the same, making the translation possible.

<sup>107</sup> Literal translation with "Prove" possible, but in judiciary contexts, it is more common to speak about "Indizi" ("Clues").

<sup>108</sup> Chunking-up: "Dire" is a hyponym of "Affermare" and it sounded more natural in this context.

<sup>109</sup> Actually, the translation is more than a modulation. This distortion is anyway possible since the intendant seems to be sure of Guérin's guilt.

<sup>110</sup> This chunking-up is what was since a "Patois" is not simply a "Dialecto": the more general term seemed more appropriate.

<sup>111</sup> Invention of some grammar mistakes, exaggerating what had been done in translating Chapter II, where Guérin speaks with his real "patois". Maybe, there is a distortion concerning Cauvain's intentions; but the sense of parody of a not good mother tongue speaker should have been maintained.

<sup>112</sup> Subordinate completive clause has a non-conjugated tense, but the infinite: possible because the subject is the same.

<sup>113</sup> Equivalence between two expressions: in both ways, it is clear that Maximilien does not believe what Prosper is saying.

<sup>114</sup> Even if the equivalent is right, nevertheless the French expression is more precise and stronger in defining someone going deep in his/her thoughts and not caring any longer about what is happening around. It is an obliged entropy.

<sup>115</sup> Deletion since the text is comprehensible anyway, and easier to read.

Le visage de belette du petit intendant prit une expression malicieuse.

« Ah ! voici... me répondit-il. Vous savez que mon maître était, sauf votre respect, un fier original. Il était brouillé, depuis près de quarante ans, avec son frère, M. Bréhat-Kerguen, un autre caractère bizarre qui n'est jamais sorti de son trou de Bretagne et que nous avons vu ce matin pour la première fois.

– Ah ! il est ici ?

– Il vient de passer à l'instant sous ces fenêtres ; vous avez dû l'apercevoir. »

Le philosophe murmura quelques mots inintelligibles.

« Oui, continua l'intendant, il est arrivé ce matin. Qui l'avait prévenu ? Je n'en sais rien. Il a l'air d'une bête sauvage et ne m'a adressé que quatre mots pour me dire qu'il ne pourrait pas assister à l'autopsie, que cela lui ferait trop de mal, etc., et il est parti.

– Il y a donc une porte de sortie dans ce jardin ?

Il viso *furbetto*<sup>116</sup> del piccolo intendente prese un'espressione maliziosa.

«Ah! Ecco» mi rispose. «Lei sa che il mio padrone era, *con rispetto parlando*<sup>117</sup>, *un vero sdegnoso*<sup>118</sup>. Aveva litigato più di quarant'anni fa con suo fratello, Bréhat-Kerguen, un altro *tipo*<sup>119</sup> bizzarro che non è mai uscito dalla sua tana in Bretagna e che noi abbiamo visto per la prima volta stamattina».

«Ah! È qui?»

«È appena passato sotto queste finestre; *dovreste averlo visto*<sup>120</sup>».

Il filosofo mormorò delle parole incomprensibili.

«Sì» continuò l'intendente, «è arrivato stamattina. *Chi poteva prevederlo*<sup>121</sup>? Non ne so nulla. Ha l'aria di una bestia selvaggia e non mi ha detto che *poche*<sup>122</sup> parole, *che non avrebbe potuto assistere all'autopsia*<sup>123</sup>, che gli avrebbe fatto troppo del male, *e via dicendo*<sup>124</sup>, ed è uscito».

«Dunque, c'è una *porta*<sup>125</sup> in questo giardino?»

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<sup>116</sup> Syntactic transposition: nominal syntagm is changed into an adjective.

<sup>117</sup> Semantic equivalent.

<sup>118</sup> Again a semantic equivalent.

<sup>119</sup> Modulation: the character of the man is assimilated to the man himself.

<sup>120</sup> Equivalent in meaning, though the tense is changed.

<sup>121</sup> Little distortion: "Prevenir" is more likely the French for "Come before"; anyway, the sense of something unexpected is respected

<sup>122</sup> In this context, "Quatre" ("Four") stands for "A few". A little entropy; but in Italian, the use of "quattro" speaking about talking has a more positive nuance ("Scambiare quattro chiacchiere").

<sup>123</sup> The deletion of the reporting clause makes the text less complex.

<sup>124</sup> A Latin word did not seem to sound natural in a servant's mouth, so the translation was done through a periphrasis.

<sup>125</sup> The deletion is due to the fact that Italian specifies "Porta d'uscita" less often than French does.

– Oui, sur la rue de Vaugirard, près de l’hôtel du *Renard-Bleu*. – Or donc, pour finir, tout le monde se figurait que, vu la haine qu’il portait à son frère, mon maître le déshériterait. Jugez donc ! un homme qui ressemble plus à un loup qu’à une créature humaine ; un homme qui a épousé sa servante !... M. Castille, neveu de M. Bréhat-Lenoir, comptait bien empocher la succession... Mais croiriez-vous qu’on a eu beau faire venir le juge de paix, remuer les paperasses du défunt, fouiller son secrétaire, on n’a pas trouvé la moindre trace des dispositions dernières de mon maître ? De sorte que ses millions vont à ce vieux fou de Bréhat-Kerguen ! Et moi qui ai servi monsieur avec tant de zèle pendant vingt ans, qui n’ai fait que quelques pauvres économies... vous comprenez... »

Maximilien l’interrompt :

« Est-ce qu’on a mis les scellés à la chambre de votre maître ?

«Sì, sulla *rue de Vaugirard*<sup>126</sup>, vicino all’hotel del *Renard-Bleu*. Dunque, per finire, tutti s’immaginavano che, visto l’odio che *serbava*<sup>127</sup> al fratello, il mio padrone lo *avrebbe diseredato*<sup>128</sup>. *Giudichi lei*<sup>129</sup>: un uomo che sembra più un lupo che un *essere*<sup>130</sup> umano; un uomo che ha sposato la sua serva! Il signor Castille, nipote *del defunto*<sup>131</sup>, contava di intascarsi l’eredità. Ma ci crede che *abbiamo fatto*<sup>132</sup> venire il giudice di pace, abbiamo rovistato tra le carte del *signor Bréhat-Lenoir*<sup>133</sup>, abbiamo frugato nel suo *mobiletto*<sup>134</sup>, ma non abbiamo trovato la minima traccia delle ultime disposizioni del mio padrone? *E così*<sup>135</sup> i suoi milioni vanno a quel vecchio pazzo di Bréhat-Kerguen! Ed io che *l’ho*<sup>136</sup> servito con tanto zelo per vent’anni non ho fatto che *piccole*<sup>137</sup> economie... Lei comprende...»

Maximilien l’interruppe:

«*La stanza del vostro padrone è stata sigillata?*<sup>138</sup>»

<sup>126</sup> Talking about toponymy of streets and other spots, and since it has no real importance in the story, the transcription of their names was the translating choice for this passage.

<sup>127</sup> Chunking-down: speaking about “Odio” (“Hate”), Italian prefers the more specific verb “Serbare” to the generic “Portare”.

<sup>128</sup> The change of tense is justified by the different ways to express the Future in the Past in the two languages: Present Conditional in French, Past Conditional in Italian.

<sup>129</sup> Equivalent. Simply, our translation, it was preferred to substitute “Donc” with a “Lei”, thus making the nuance stronger.

<sup>130</sup> “Essere” as a noun, is more common than “Creatura”, talking about human beings.

<sup>131</sup> Generalisation: the anaphor is anyway clear to understand.

<sup>132</sup> The French subject pronouns “On” is often substituted by the Italian “Noi” in Italian; as said, subject can be omitted.

<sup>133</sup> Compensation of the precedent loss: this time, the anaphor is substituted by the exaphor.

<sup>134</sup> Chunking-up: most of Italian readers of today could not know what a “Segretario” is, possibly making confusion with the “Assistent”, which in Italian could be named through the same term.

<sup>135</sup> Grammar adaptation: it is a way to express the consequence in Italian.

<sup>136</sup> The pronouns is an anaphor to make the text faster.

<sup>137</sup> Speaking about money, it is logical that “Pauvre” means “A few”; so, it was chosen to make the metaphor explicit, due to the fact that it is not common to associate the adjective “Povero” and the noun “Economia”, literal translations of the two French words.

<sup>138</sup> Modulation: in French clause, someone keeps seals to the room, while in Italian translation the room is sealed; impersonal subject in the first clause, impersonal agent in the second one.

– Oui, pardine ! et j’en ai été établi le gardien, ce qui me cause quelques inquiétudes, car, enfin... la responsabilité... vous savez... Ah ! il fallait entendre, ce matin, le juron qu’a poussé ce sanglier de Bréhat-Kerguen en apprenant que les scellés étaient mis à la chambre de son frère !

– Vraiment ! fit Maximilien.

– Ah ! bon Dieu ! quel juron ! et pour calmer sa colère il a été s’enfermer dans sa chambre en grommelant. »

On entendit dans la rue le roulement d’une voiture qui s’arrêta devant la porte cochère.

« Voici la justice ! » fit l’intendant.

Maximilien m’adressa un signe que je compris.

« Monsieur l’intendant, dis-je au petit homme que ce titre flattait visiblement, voudriez-vous nous indiquer où se trouve la chambre dans laquelle a lieu l’expertise ?

– Au premier, à droite, au fond du couloir ! » me répondit-il précipitamment.

Et il s’élança vers la porte en entendant le coup de sonnette retentissant qui venait d’ébranler les vieilles murailles.

Nous montâmes rapidement le grand escalier de bois et entrâmes dans un cabinet dont les fenêtres s’ouvraient sur le jardin. Le corps était étendu sur une table en bois blanc et enveloppé dans un drap.

Au fond de ce cabinet était la porte couverte de scellés qui communiquait avec la chambre du défunt.

«Sì! E ho dovuto anche scegliere il guardiano, e la cosa mi ha un po' inquietato, perché, sa, alla fine, la responsabilità... Ah! Dovevate sentire, stamattina, le bestemmie che ha buttato quel *porco*<sup>139</sup> di Bréhat-Kerguen *quando ha saputo*<sup>140</sup> che erano stati messi i sigilli alla camera del fratello!»

«Davvero?» fece Maximilien.

«Oh, mio Dio! E che bestemmie! E per *placare*<sup>141</sup> la sua ira si è chiuso nella sua stanza brontolando».

Sentimmo nella via *una vettura*<sup>142</sup> che si arrestò davanti al *portone*<sup>143</sup>.

«Ecco la giustizia!» fece l'intendente.

Maximilien mi *fece*<sup>144</sup> un cenno che compresi al volo.

«Signor intendente» dissi all'omino che era *visibilmente lusingato da quel titolo*<sup>145</sup>, «vorrebbe indicarci dove si trova la camera nella quale ha luogo la perizia?»

«*Primo piano*<sup>146</sup>, in fondo al corridoio a destra» mi rispose precipitosamente.

E si lanciò verso la porta, sentendo il *campanello*<sup>147</sup> che aveva appena fatto tremare le vecchie mura. Noi salimmo rapidamente la grande scalinata di legno ed entrammo in uno *studio*<sup>148</sup> le cui finestre davano sul giardino. Il corpo era disteso su un tavolo di legno bianco e avvolto in un lenzuolo. In fondo a questo studio c'era la porta coperta da sigilli che comunicava con la camera del defunto.

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<sup>139</sup> Cultural adaptation: in Italy, who behaves in a really impolite way is a pig, while in French is commonly identified as a razor.

<sup>140</sup> The Explicit form was preferred, making clear the temporal nuance of the subordinate clause.

<sup>141</sup> Chunking-down: the verb “Placare” is more used than the exact translation “Calmare”, speaking about “Ira”.

<sup>142</sup> Deletion, since the sense was comprehensible anyway.

<sup>143</sup> Italian has a single word while French has to use a periphrasis.

<sup>144</sup> Chunking-up: In Italy, the gesture is “Fatto” (“Done”), not “Indirizzato”, as a literal translation would be.

<sup>145</sup> Modulation: the title is subject in the first clause, agent in the second one.

<sup>146</sup> The addition is necessary: in Italian, it should not be clear what Prosper is talking about.

<sup>147</sup> The metonymy of the ring instead of the act of ringing is possible in Italian, not in French: target text may change in a single word.

<sup>148</sup> Due to the similarity with the Italian term indicating the WC, it was preferred to translate with a synonym: literal translation is therefore possible, but it may generate ambiguity.

Maximilien Heller se cacha derrière un des grands rideaux de la fenêtre : il pouvait ainsi tout voir sans être vu. Au même instant, la porte du cabinet s'ouvrit et le procureur du roi, le juge d'instruction et son greffier firent leur apparition.

Le petit intendant les introduisit dans le cabinet avec un sourire agréable qui se changea en une grimace de stupéfaction quand il vit que j'étais seul dans la pièce.

Mais le procureur du roi lui ayant fait, avec une dignité toute magistrale, un signe impérieux de se retirer, il obéit sur-le-champ et sans me demander l'explication de la disparition de Maximilien, explication que j'avais de bonnes raisons de redouter.

Je saluai ces messieurs et leur remis la lettre où M. B... s'excusait de ne pouvoir assister à l'expertise.

« Ah ! sacrebleu ! s'écria le juge d'instruction en se fourrant précipitamment une prise de tabac dans le nez... j'avais oublié que M. Wickson n'était pas précisément dans les papiers de M. B... Que voulez-vous ? c'est si vieux !... et j'ai tant d'affaires dans la tête ! Veuillez m'excuser, Monsieur, auprès de votre digne maître, quoique cependant je ne doive pas trop me repentir de cette faute, puisqu'elle me procure le plaisir de faire votre connaissance. »



Maximilien Heller si nascose dietro una delle grandi tende della finestra: poteva vedere tutto senza essere visto. In quel momento, la porta dello studio si aprì e fecero *il loro ingresso*<sup>149</sup> il procuratore del re, il giudice e il suo scribacchino. Il piccolo intendente li fece entrare nello studio con un sorriso gentile che si mutò in una smorfia di stupefazione quando vide che ero solo nella stanza. Ma il procuratore del re *gli aveva fatto*<sup>150</sup>, con magistrale dignità, un perentorio cenno di uscire, e lui obbedì *seduta stante*<sup>151</sup> e senza chiedermi spiegazioni sulla scomparsa di Maximilien, spiegazioni che avevo motivo di temere. Salutai *i nuovi arrivati*<sup>152</sup> e diedi loro la lettera *con cui*<sup>153</sup> il dottor B. si scusava di non poter assistere alla perizia.

«Oh! *Cribbio!*<sup>154</sup>» esclamò il giudice sniffando precipitosamente un po' di tabacco. «Avevo dimenticato che Wickson non *fosse*<sup>155</sup> esattamente *il miglior amico*<sup>156</sup> del dottor B.! Che vuole *farcì*<sup>157</sup>? *Sono*<sup>158</sup> vecchio! E ho tante cose per la testa! Porga le mie scuse al suo onorevole maestro, seppur non debba pentirmi più di tanto di questo errore perché mi da *l'onore*<sup>159</sup> di fare la sua conoscenza».

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<sup>149</sup> Equivalence of meaning: anyway, literal translation possible.

<sup>150</sup> Strangely, Italian translation sounded more natural by transposing in a paratactic clause.

<sup>151</sup> Cultural adaptation of the concept of going out quickly.

<sup>152</sup> Modulation caused by the fact that a literal translation would be very strange in Italian; the anaphor maintains the same sense.

<sup>153</sup> Syntactic transposition: complement of place is substituted by a complement of manner.

<sup>154</sup> Adaptation of exclamations.

<sup>155</sup> As signaled by Podeur, Subjunctive is more common in Italian than in English, even if Indicative is more and more used (Podeur 2002: 41). But the context, very formal, caused the choice of the more elegant Subjunctive, as above.

<sup>156</sup> Equivalence: the irony is maintained.

<sup>157</sup> Addition since the literal translation “Che vuole?” could sound impolite in Italian.

<sup>158</sup> The impersonality of original clause is substituted by a more natural, in target language, personal one, in a kind of modulation.

<sup>159</sup> A little distortion: but, even if the word by word translation is a possibility, it is more formal to tell someone of being honoured of meeting, in Italian.

Il m'adressa un aimable sourire en disant ces mots.

Le procureur du roi, grand personnage au visage austère et pâle, encadré de favoris noirs, à la main aristocratique, au maintien glacial, examinait gravement les dispositions prises la veille par M. B...

Le corps était ouvert suivant toutes les règles de l'art, et les intestins et viscères du défunt étaient placés dans des bocaux séparés.

« Eh mais ! je n'ai pas déjeuné ! s'écria tout à coup le juge d'instruction de sa voix retentissante : il serait bientôt temps que ce docteur Wickson arrivât ! Nous sommes ici pour son bon plaisir et je trouve étrange qu'il nous fasse attendre. D'autant plus... »

Un coup de sonnette interrompit le digne magistrat.

« Le voici !... » dit-il en baissant la voix.

Le procureur du roi redressa sa haute taille, le juge d'instruction remonta son faux col. Quant à moi, je me sentais ému comme un conscrit qui va au feu. Pour me donner du cœur, je pensai à mon vieux maître qui avait placé en moi toute sa confiance, et qui devait, à cette heure, attendre avec tant d'impatience le résultat de cette expertise.

Un silence profond régnait dans le cabinet. Pas un mot ne fut échangé entre nous, jusqu'au moment où M. Prosper, ouvrant la porte, annonça de sa voix grêle :

« Monsieur le docteur Wickson ! »

Mi *sorrise*<sup>160</sup> amabilmente, *pronunciando*<sup>161</sup> queste parole. Il procuratore del re, grande personaggio dal viso duro e pallido, *con*<sup>162</sup> i basettoni neri, la mano aristocratica e dal contegno glaciale, esaminava *tutto serio*<sup>163</sup> le disposizioni prese il giorno prima dal dottor B. Il corpo era aperto *secondo tutti i crismi del caso*<sup>164</sup>, e gli intestini e le viscere del defunto erano posti in contenitori separati.

«Eh, ma io non ho pranzato!» esclamò tutto a un tratto il giudice con la sua voce roboante. «Sarebbe *anche ora*<sup>165</sup> che il dottor Wickson arrivasse! Siamo qui per *un suo capriccio*<sup>166</sup> e trovo strano che ci faccia attendere. *D'altro canto*<sup>167</sup>...»

Il suono del campanello interruppe il magistrato.

«Eccolo» disse abbassando la voce.

Il procuratore del re *si rialzò in*<sup>168</sup> tutta la sua alta statura, il giudice rialzò il suo colletto. Quanto a me, mi sentivo impaurito come *un agnello mandato tra i lupi*<sup>169</sup>. Per *farmi coraggio*<sup>170</sup>, pensai al mio vecchio maestro, che aveva *riposto*<sup>171</sup> in me tutte *le sue speranze*<sup>172</sup> e che, in quel momento, *attendeva*<sup>173</sup> con impazienza il risultato di quella perizia. Un profondo silenzio regnava nello studio. *Nessuno di noi disse una parola*<sup>174</sup> *finché*<sup>175</sup> Prosper, aprendo la porta, annunciò con la sua voce stridula:

«Il dottor Wickson!»

<sup>160</sup> It seemed that the periphrasis was useless, so it was deleted.

<sup>161</sup> Chunking-down: the formality imposed a more precise verb.

<sup>162</sup> The adjectival syntagm is now a complement, in a transposition exploiting the Italian use.

<sup>163</sup> Other transposition where the adverbial syntagm is changed into a adjectival one.

<sup>164</sup> Equivalence expressing the care in working.

<sup>165</sup> Equivalence which expresses the anxiety of the character.

<sup>166</sup> Chunking-down.

<sup>167</sup> The same of the latest note.

<sup>168</sup> Possible, but really strange. It would be word-by-word translation. The equivalence maintains the meaning.

<sup>169</sup> The metaphor of someone entering into a bad situation is more common through the lamb among wolves in Italian; it was translated by equivalence. Word-by-word translation would maintain the idea, but it would not be the best way to use Italian.

<sup>170</sup> Equivalence in the idea of trying to be stronger.

<sup>171</sup> Chunking-down.

<sup>172</sup> Another chunking-down.

<sup>173</sup> Deletion of the verb “Devoir”: the anxiety seemed anyway clear.

<sup>174</sup> Transposition and changing of syntactic role between subject and object; this operation was possible since the verb “Changer” was chunked-up into a more generic Italian “Dire”.

<sup>175</sup> Deletion: the rest of the clause was redundant.

Un homme d'environ cinquante ans, à la stature herculéenne, au teint rouge, aux cheveux blond ardent, s'avança vers nous et nous dit avec un léger accent britannique :

« Je vous demande mille pardons, Messieurs, de m'être fait attendre si longtemps au rendez-vous que je vous ai donné. Mais, au moment de sortir de chez moi, j'ai été appelé auprès d'un homme qui se mourait...

– Et que vous avez sauvé, sans doute ? fit le juge d'instruction qui liait vite connaissance.

– Précisément, répondit l'Anglais avec un flegme imperturbable, je l'ai sauvé. »

Il promena, en disant ces mots, un regard autour de lui et parut surpris de ne pas apercevoir M. B...

« Mais, dit-il, je ne vois pas cet honorable médecin qui doit me faire l'honneur de discuter mon opinion ? »

Je lui dis le motif que M. B... avait prétexté pour ne pas se trouver au rendez-vous. Il sourit imperceptiblement.

Un uomo di circa cinquant'anni, dalla statura *imponente*<sup>176</sup>, dal colorito rossastro e i capelli di un biondo *acceso*<sup>177</sup> venne verso di noi e disse con un leggero accento britannico:

«Vi *porgo*<sup>178</sup> umilmente le mie scuse per essermi fatto attendere per così tanto all'appuntamento che vi ho dato. Ma, al momento di uscire da *casa mia*<sup>179</sup>, sono stato chiamato *per andare*<sup>180</sup> da un uomo che *stava per morire*<sup>181</sup>».

«E che voi avete forse salvato?» fece il giudice, che *faceva presto conoscenza*<sup>182</sup>.

«Esattamente!» rispose l'Inglese con la *sua*<sup>183</sup> flemma imperturbabile. «L'ho salvato!»

Camminava dicendo queste parole, *guardando*<sup>184</sup> attorno a lui, e parve sorpreso di non vedere il dottor B.

«Ma dov'è quell'onorevole dottore che deve farmi l'onore di discutere la mia opinione?»

Gli dissi il *pretesto*<sup>185</sup> che il dottor B. aveva inventato per non andare all'appuntamento. Sorrise impercettibilmente.

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<sup>176</sup> Literal translation exists (“Erculeo”), but the preference was to eliminate the metonymy and make the meaning explicit.

<sup>177</sup> Equivalence: the metaphor of fire is anyway maintained.

<sup>178</sup> Little distortion caused by adaptation: “Chiedere” (“Asking”) for apologies would be possible, but formal context prefer the more material verb “Porgere” (“To hand”).

<sup>179</sup> Grammar adaptation: “Uscire da me” would be too informal, in Italian.

<sup>180</sup> Transposition from adverbial syntagm into a subordinate implicit clause.

<sup>181</sup> Periphrasis better expressing the action which is going to happen.

<sup>182</sup> Equivalence: in both cases, it is obvious how the man is easy to link to other people.

<sup>183</sup> It is really bizarre that Italian, in this case, uses more commonly the possessive adjective than French, when usually it is the opposite.

<sup>184</sup> Transposition from nominal syntagm into a verb.

<sup>185</sup> To compensate the loss of the French verb “Prétexter”, which has no counterpart in Italian, we used the cognate noun and made a little distortion of the following verb.

« Vous voudrez bien m’excuser, Monsieur, me dit-il en pesant sur les mots, auprès de M. B... pour l’outrecuidance que j’ai à venir contester des expériences qu’il a faites avec tant de soin et de science. Mais j’ai profondément étudié cette matière des poisons, surtout des poisons arsenicaux. Voilà pourquoi j’ai proposé à la justice une seconde enquête. Mon plus cher désir, croyez-le bien, est de trouver mes conclusions conformes à celles de votre savant et respectable maître. »

Je m’inclinai froidement et proposai de commencer les expériences sans plus tarder ; le visage déconfit de mon juge d’instruction à jeun m’inspirait une sincère pitié.

Les deux magistrats prirent place aux pieds du corps, du côté de la porte ; le docteur Wickson et moi à gauche, en face de la fenêtre.

Malgré tout mon désir d’épargner à la délicatesse de mes lecteurs le récit de cette autopsie, je dois entrer dans quelques détails indispensables.

La tâche de la médecine légale était devenue bien plus facile depuis quelques années, grâce à l’invention de l’Anglais Marsh. Ce chimiste avait trouvé une manière ingénieuse de découvrir la trace des plus petites quantités d’arsenic dans les corps.

Voici, en quelques mots, en quoi consiste son appareil : C’est un simple flacon de verre dans lequel se dégage du gaz hydrogène. On y introduit la substance à examiner. L’arsenic se combine avec le gaz hydrogène et cette combinaison s’échappe par l’orifice effilé du flacon. On allume alors le jet de gaz, et l’on tient au-dessus de la flamme une soucoupe de porcelaine blanche. Si la matière renferme la moindre parcelle d’arsenic, des taches noires se déposent sur la porcelaine.

«*Porga le mie scuse*<sup>186</sup> al dottor B. per la presunzione che ho di venire a contestare *i risultati*<sup>187</sup> che ha ottenuto con tanta cura e attenzione» mi disse *rimarcando*<sup>188</sup> le parole. «Ma io ho *fatto studi approfonditi*<sup>189</sup> sui veleni, in particolare sull'arsenico. Ecco perché ho proposto alla giustizia una seconda inchiesta. Mi creda, il mio più grande desiderio è trovare i miei risultati conformi a quelli del vostro saggio e rispettabile maestro».

M'inchinai freddamente e proposi di iniziare senza più tardare: il volto avvilito del giudice a digiuno m'ispirava una sincera pietà. I due magistrati presero posto ai piedi del corpo, a fianco alla finestra; il dottor Wickson ed io, invece, a sinistra, di fronte alla finestra.

Malgrado il mio profondo desiderio di risparmiare ai miei lettori *i dettagli*<sup>190</sup> di quest' autopsia, devo entrare in qualche particolare indispensabile.

*Il compito della medicina legale era diventato molto più semplice da qualche anno, grazie all'invenzione dell'inglese Marsh. Questo chimico aveva trovato una maniera ingegnosa di scoprire la traccia delle più piccole quantità di arsenico nei corpi. Ecco, in poche parole, in cosa consiste il suo marchinegno: è un semplice flacone di vetro nel quale si libera dell'idrogeno. Vi s'introduce la sostanza da esaminare. L'arsenico si combina con l'idrogeno e questa combinazione fuoriesce dall'orifizio affilato del flacone. Si accende allora il getto del gas, e si tiene un piattino di porcellana bianca sopra la fiamma. Se la materia contiene la minima quantità di arsenico, delle macchie nere si formano sulla porcellana.*<sup>191</sup>

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<sup>186</sup> The literal translation of the reflexive verb is less formal in Italian, so this periphrasis was used..

<sup>187</sup> Metonymic modulation: the effect instead of the cause.

<sup>188</sup> Italian has a single verb to express the concept.

<sup>189</sup> A series of transposition: the verb becomes a periphrasis, the adverb an adjective referred to the object complement.

<sup>190</sup> Little distortion: only for the more common use of this expression. For this reason, there is the use a synonym in the main clause.

<sup>191</sup> This paragraph was perfectly translated word-by-word, strangely enough in a literary translation; it could happen during Scientific translations.

Le docteur Wickson tira des grandes poches de son manteau un de ces flacons. Mais je crus remarquer que le verre n'en était pas très pur, et je le priai de se servir de celui que j'avais apporté. Il l'examina longtemps avec un soin méticuleux, puis finit par l'accepter en dissimulant la mauvaise humeur qu'il ressentait.

Je m'approchai alors des bocal où étaient contenus les viscères afin de les découvrir ; mais l'Anglais me prévint et défit avec une sorte d'impatience la couverture cachetée.

Je remarquai qu'il garda ses gants blancs, tout en se livrant à ce travail.

« Messieurs, dit-il d'une voix solennelle en s'adressant aux magistrats, mais sans lever les yeux, vous connaissez sans doute les effets de cet appareil. Je vais diriger un jet de gaz contre ces vitres. S'il y a de l'arsenic dans la portion des viscères que j'ai enfermée dans le flacon, la vitre se noircira aussitôt. »

Il s'avança vers la fenêtre voisine de celle où se tenait caché le philosophe et dirigea le jet de gaz enflammé sur la vitre.

Nous ne pûmes réprimer une exclamation de surprise. Le verre s'était soudainement couvert de taches noires. En même temps une forte odeur d'ail se répandait dans la chambre et révélait la présence du toxique.

Mon pauvre professeur était battu du premier coup ! Le juge d'instruction fixa sur moi un regard poliment ironique :

« Oh ! oh ! dit-il, voilà qui est grave, et bien en faveur de l'accusation !



Il dottor Wickson tirò fuori dalle grandi tasche del suo mantello uno di questi flaconi. Ma mi *sembro*<sup>192</sup> che il vetro non fosse del tutto puro, e gli chiesi di servirsi di quello che avevo portato io. Lo esaminò *per un po'*<sup>193</sup> con cura meticolosa, *alla fine*<sup>194</sup> accettò dissimulando il cattivo umore. Mi *avvicinai allora ai*<sup>195</sup> contenitori in cui vi erano le viscere con l'intenzione di scoprirli; ma l'Inglese mi anticipò e si sbarazzò con una certa impazienza della copertura sigillata. Notai che guardò i suoi guanti bianchi, dedicandosi *completamente*<sup>196</sup> al *suo*<sup>197</sup> lavoro.

«Signori, voi *forse*<sup>198</sup> conoscete gli effetti di quest'apparecchio» disse con voce solenne indirizzandosi ai giudici, ma senza alzare gli occhi, «Sto per dirigere un getto di gas contro questo vetro. Se c'è dell'arsenico nella porzione di viscere che ho *immerso*<sup>199</sup> nel flacone, il vetro si annerirà presto!»

Andò verso la finestra vicina a quella in cui si teneva nascosto il filosofo e diresse il getto del gas infiammato sul vetro. Non riuscimmo a trattenere un'esclamazione di sorpresa. Il vetro si era immediatamente coperto di macchie nere. Allo stesso tempo, un odore forte di aglio si spandeva nella camera e rivelava la presenza del tossico. Il mio povero vecchio professore era stato battuto al primo colpo! Il giudice mi lanciò uno sguardo garbatamente ironico e disse:

«Oh! Oh! Ecco qualcosa di importante, e assolutamente a favore dell'accusa!»

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<sup>192</sup> A single word, a bit distorting the message, but making text faster.

<sup>193</sup> The exact opposite: Italian uses more words instead of the single one in French.

<sup>194</sup> Transposition: verb substituted by a complement.

<sup>195</sup> Grammar adaptation: "S'approcher de" becomes "Avvicinarsi a".

<sup>196</sup> In French, the adverb "Tout", next to a gerund, means "Completely, With all the best someone can".

<sup>197</sup> Transposition of determiners: from demonstrative to possessive.

<sup>198</sup> One of the most common mistakes of Italian translators is caused by this expression, very similar to the Italian "Senza dubbio" ("Without any doubt"). Its real meaning is "Maybe": the exact translation of the mistakable clause is "Sans aucun doute" in French.

<sup>199</sup> Distortion: it sounded more technical in Italian than the literal "Chiuso".

– Cette expérience ne sera concluante à mes yeux, fis-je observer, que si on me permet de la recommencer moi-même. »

L'Anglais, que son succès avait laissé impassible, me tendit le flacon avec un geste plein de grâce.

Je fis l'expérience : la vitre se noircit encore et avec une intensité qui prouvait l'abondance de la substance toxique. Je recommençai trois ou quatre fois : même résultat.

Le rideau derrière lequel se trouvait Maximilien Heller remua légèrement. Je tressaillis, car il me sembla que l'œil de l'Anglais s'était un instant fixé avec inquiétude de ce côté. Ce ne fut qu'un éclair, car il reprit son sourire habituel, et se tournant vers les magistrats :

« Il me semble cette fois que l'expérience est décisive, dit-il. Et veuillez remarquer, ajouta-t-il avec un certain air de triomphe, que je me suis servi de l'appareil du docteur B...

– Je n'ai rien à objecter, fis-je assez vexé de ce résultat si prompt et si inattendu.

– Alors, Monsieur, dit le procureur du roi qui prenait pour la première fois la parole, vous êtes prêt à signer le procès-verbal et le rapport qui conclut à la présence du poison dans le corps du défunt ? »

Je m'inclinai en signe d'assentiment.

« Greffier, continua le magistrat en se tournant vers un petit bonhomme noir qui griffonnait dans un coin, veuillez apporter le rapport et le procès-verbal : ces messieurs vont les signer. »

«Per quanto mi riguarda<sup>200</sup>, quest'esperimento non potrà dirsi concluso<sup>201</sup> se non quando mi si permetterà di ricominciare in prima persona» feci osservare.

L'Inglese, impassibile *al successo*<sup>202</sup>, mi passò il flacone con un gesto *aggraziato*<sup>203</sup>. Feci l'esperimento: il vetro si annerì ancora e con un'intensità che provava l'abbondanza della sostanza tossica. Ricominciai tre o quattro volte: stesso risultato.

La tenda dietro la quale si trovava Maximilien Heller si mosse leggermente. Io trasalii, perché mi sembrò che l'occhio dell'Inglese si fosse posato per un istante da quel lato, *inquieto*<sup>204</sup>. Non fu che un abbaglio, perché questi riprese il suo sorriso abituale, e girandosi verso i magistrati disse:

«Mi sembra che stavolta la *perizia*<sup>205</sup> sia decisiva. E notate» aggiunse con una certa aria di trionfo, «che mi sono servito dell'apparecchio del dottor B.»

«Non ho nulla da obiettare» feci io molto seccato da questo risultato così rapido e inatteso.

«Allora, dottore» disse il procuratore del re che prendeva parola per la prima volta, «è pronto a firmare il verbale e il rapporto che stabilisce la presenza del veleno nel corpo del defunto?»

M'inchinai in segno d'assenso.

«Cancelliere» continuò il magistrato voltandosi verso un ometto nero che scribacchiava in un angolo. «Porti il rapporto e il verbale: questi signori li *firmeranno*<sup>206</sup>».

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<sup>200</sup> Equivalence of idioms.

<sup>201</sup> Periphrasis remarking the concept.

<sup>202</sup> Transposition: all the clause is changed into a complement.

<sup>203</sup> Use of a single word instead of a periphrasis: as often stated, it is easier to read. However, there was a little entropy of "Plein."

<sup>204</sup> Transposition: a complement is now an adjective.

<sup>205</sup> Chunking-down: the Italian "Perizia" is more precise than the French "Expérience", and more appropriate in this context; moreover, the use of the Hyperonym allows to avoid the repetition of the word "Esperimento".

<sup>206</sup> In this case, the translation "Stanno per firmarli" would sound bizarre in Italian, though perfect in grammar: it justifies the transposition of the tense.

Le docteur Wickson signa – sans ôter ses gants – et je signalai à mon tour. L'Anglais paraissait avoir peine à contenir la joie intérieure qu'il ressentait.

Il me salua gravement et je lui rendis son salut d'assez mauvaise grâce. Avant de sortir, Wickson me chargea encore une fois de vouloir bien assurer M. B... de toute sa respectueuse sympathie.

« Monsieur de Ribeyrac, dit en sortant le juge d'instruction à son majestueux collègue, vous venez déjeuner avec moi, n'est-ce pas ? Je meurs de faim. »

Ce jour-là, les étudiants qui fréquentaient le cours de M. B... ne surent à quoi attribuer les distractions continuelles, l'agitation fébrile et la mauvaise humeur de leur vieux professeur.

Je fis quelques pas sur le palier, à la suite de ces messieurs, et les saluai une dernière fois.

M. Prosper les reconduisit jusqu'à la porte, puis revint vers moi d'un air mystérieux ; il grillait de savoir ce qui s'était passé : mais je ne crus pas devoir l'en informer.

« J'ai quelques dispositions dernières à prendre, lui dis-je en remontant l'escalier. Veuillez me laisser seul encore une demi-heure dans le cabinet où est le corps.

Il dottor Wickson firmò senza togliersi i guanti, poi firmai a mia volta. L'Inglese sembrava *soffrire*<sup>207</sup> nel trattenere la gioia interiore che provava. Mi salutò *educatamente*<sup>208</sup> e gli resi il saluto *in maniera sgarbata*<sup>209</sup>. Prima di uscire, Wickson mi incaricò ancora una volta di assicurare il dottor B. di tutta la sua rispettosa simpatia.

«Signor de Ribeyrac» disse uscendo il giudice al suo collega, «viene a pranzare con me, vero? Muoio di fame».

Quel giorno, gli studenti che frequentavano il corso del dotto B. non seppero a cosa attribuire le continue distrazioni, l'agitazione febbrile e il cattivo umore del loro vecchio professore.

Feci qualche passo sul pianerottolo, *seguendo*<sup>210</sup> quegli uomini, e li salutai per l'ultima volta. Prosper li riaccompagnò fino alla porta, poi tornò verso di me con aria misteriosa: *moriva dalla voglia*<sup>211</sup> di sapere cos'era successo, ma *non mi sentii in dovere*<sup>212</sup> di informarlo.

«Ho ancora *qualche*<sup>213</sup> formalità da espletare» gli dissi risalendo le scale. «*Sarebbe così gentile*<sup>214</sup> da lasciarmi solo ancora una mezz'oretta nello studio dove si trova il corpo?»

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<sup>207</sup> Word-by-word translation has a different nuance in Italian (more or less “Be merciful”).

<sup>208</sup> Little distortion: but, it seemed that Cauvain would have liked to express the contrast between the state of mind of the two characters.

<sup>209</sup> Equivalence.

<sup>210</sup> Transposition from complement to verb.

<sup>211</sup> There is no Italian counterpart, so forcing the use of a periphrasis.

<sup>212</sup> Equivalence.

<sup>213</sup> Transposition, with a little distortion.

<sup>214</sup> Equivalence better expressing the politeness of the require.

– Comment donc ! Monsieur ; restez aussi longtemps qu'il vous sera agréable, me dit le petit intendant de son ton mielleux. Moi, je monte dans la chambre de M. Bréhat-Kerguen..., pour voir si rien ne lui manque. Il a fermé sa porte à double tour, le vieux madré, et m'a fait jurer que je n'avais pas une seconde clef... Eh ! eh ! continua-t-il en tirant un trousseau de clefs de sa poche, je le lui ai juré. Mais il faut tout de même que je jette un coup d'œil dans sa chambre : M. Castille m'a bien recommandé de ne pas laisser détériorer l'immeuble de la succession. »

Au moment où j'ouvris la porte du cabinet, le petit vieillard, dont décidément le défaut dominant était une incroyable curiosité, glissa un regard dans la pièce, pour s'assurer que Maximilien Heller était toujours là, puis il secoua la tête de l'air d'un homme qui se dit : « J'ai eu une lubie », et grimpa au second étage.

Le philosophe avait quitté sa cachette et examinait minutieusement les bocal et le flacon qui avaient servi à l'expertise.

Il releva lentement la tête et me dit avec un étrange sourire :

« Allons ! vous n'avez pas été heureux, docteur, et décidément il y a empoisonnement... Mais aussi pourquoi diable ne lui avez-vous pas fait ôter ses gants ? »

Je le regardai, étonné de cette question.

« Venez ici », me dit-il.

Il m'indiqua du doigt le bord de la table.

« Eh bien ? »

– Regardez... plus près... ne voyez-vous rien à cette place ? »

Je distinguai sur le bois quelques grains d'une fine poussière blanche.

«Certo, signore. Resti pure quanto *vuole*<sup>215</sup>» mi disse l'intendente con un tono *che ne denotava la falsità*<sup>216</sup>. «Io salgo nella camera di Bréhat-Kerguen, per vedere se *gli serve qualcosa*<sup>217</sup>. Ha chiuso la porta con un doppio giro di *chiave*<sup>218</sup>, il vecchio marpione, e mi ha fatto giurare che non ne avessi un doppione... Eh! Eh!» disse tirando fuori dalla tasca un mazzo di chiavi, «Io gliel'ho giurato. Ma *devo*<sup>219</sup> *comunque*<sup>220</sup> dare *un'occhiata*<sup>221</sup> alla sua camera: il signor Castille mi ha caldamente raccomandato di non lasciar deteriorare l'immobile dell'eredità».

Al momento in cui aprii la porta dello studio, il vecchietto, il cui difetto principale era un'incredibile curiosità, gettò uno sguardo nella stanza, per assicurarsi che Maximilien Heller fosse sempre là, poi scosse la testa con l'aria di un uomo che dice a se stesso: «*Me lo sono sognato*<sup>222</sup>», e salì al secondo piano.

Il filosofo aveva abbandonato il suo nascondiglio ed esaminava accuratamente i contenitori e i flaconi usati per l'esperimento. Rialzò lentamente la testa e mi disse con uno strano sorriso:

«Andiamo! Non è stato fortunato, dottore, e sicuramente *siamo di fronte a*<sup>223</sup> un avvelenamento. Ma perché diavolo non gli ha fatto togliere i guanti?»

Lo guardai, stupito da questa domanda.

«Venga qui» mi disse.

M'indicò col dito il bordo del tavolo.

«Ebbene?»

«Guardi più da vicino... Non vede *qui*<sup>224</sup>?»

*Riuscì a distinguere*<sup>225</sup> sul legno dei granelli di una fine polvere bianca.

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<sup>215</sup> A single word; using this verb better shows the intendant's real thoughts.

<sup>216</sup> This periphrasis is a way to explain Prosper's falsity.

<sup>217</sup> Modulation, but also transposition: from a negative point of view to a positive; and, from the idea of something missing to the one of something needed.

<sup>218</sup> Most of the readers could not know the meaning of the literal translation "Mandato", so it was translated with a periphrasis.

<sup>219</sup> Distortion: but the sense of something which should be done is maintained.

<sup>220</sup> Equivalence.

<sup>221</sup> Italian can translate in a more precise way; anyway, word-by-word translation can be accepted ("Un colpo d'occhio").

<sup>222</sup> Equivalence: word-by-word translation seemed exaggeratedly high-register.

<sup>223</sup> Another equivalence.

<sup>224</sup> Again, an equivalence.

<sup>225</sup> This periphrasis shows better Doctor's efforts.

« De l'arsenic ! fis-je stupéfait.

– Justement, reprit Maximilien. Or, comment pouvez-vous expliquer la présence du poison sur cette table ? Ce n'est pas vous qui l'y avez mis, n'est-ce pas ? Donc... c'est l'autre !

– Voilà un singulier soupçon !

– Avez-vous remarqué qu'il a gardé ses gants pendant l'opération ?

– Oui.

– Avez-vous remarqué qu'il a fréquemment posé, par un geste machinal, sa main droite à cette même place où vous voyez la poussière blanche ? qu'à un certain moment, il a porté la main à ses lèvres, puis l'en a éloignée par un vif mouvement de répulsion ?

– Non.

– C'est juste... vous n'étiez pas ici en observation... Mais je l'ai remarqué, moi, ainsi que plusieurs autres choses singulières ; comme celle-ci, par exemple : pourquoi a-t-il voulu déboucher lui-même les bocaux ? pourquoi a-t-il coupé lui-même les viscères avec des ciseaux tirés de sa propre trousse ? Vous avez eu, docteur, en sa bonne foi une confiance qui d'ailleurs vous honore, mais qui, selon moi, était mal placée.

– Ainsi, vous croyez...

– Je crois, ou plutôt je suis persuadé que la justice et vous êtes tombés dans un piège. Cet homme avait mis de l'arsenic dans ses gants, dont sans doute l'extrémité était percée ; il empoisonnait tout ce qu'il touchait.



«È arsenico!»<sup>226</sup>» dissi stupefatto.

«Bravo!»<sup>227</sup> replicò Maximilien. «Adesso, come può spiegare la presenza del veleno su questo tavolo? Non è stato lei a mettercelo, giusto? Dunque... è stato l'altro!»

«Brillante deduzione!»<sup>228</sup>»

«Ha notato che ha guardato i guanti durante l'operazione?»

«Sì».

«Ha notato che, *sistematicamente*<sup>229</sup>, ha posato la mano destra nel punto in cui vede la polverina bianca? Che, a un certo punto, si è portato le mani alle labbra e poi l'ha allontanata con un gesto di *viva*<sup>230</sup> repulsione?»

«No».

«Certo, non era qui *per osservare*<sup>231</sup>. Ma io l'ho notato, proprio io, assieme a numerose altre cose singolari. Come questa, ad esempio: perché ha voluto tagliare lui stesso le viscere con delle forbici che ha tirato fuori dalla sua borsa? *Nella sua buona fede, dottore, gli ha dato una fiducia che le fa onore, ma che in questo caso era mal riposta*<sup>232</sup>».

«Dunque lei crede...»

«Io credo, o piuttosto sono convinto, che lei e la giustizia siate caduti in una trappola. Quell'uomo aveva messo dell'arsenico nei suoi guanti, le cui punte erano probabilmente forate: lui avvelenava tutto quello che toccava».

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<sup>226</sup> It sounded more natural the use of the verb "To be".

<sup>227</sup> Equivalence of meaning: in both cases, Maximilien would like to tell his friend that he is right.

<sup>228</sup> The equivalence is not perfect: the clause was distorted to state the deductive skills of the detective.

<sup>229</sup> Chunking-down: "Sistematicamente" is more precise than "Fréquemment", but remarks the regularity of the action.

<sup>230</sup> The adjective "Viva", originally attribute of "Movement", now is given to "Répulsion", remarking the fear the Doctor might have had of killing himself accidentally.

<sup>231</sup> Transposition: a complement transformed into an implicit subordinate.

<sup>232</sup> Equivalence.

– Je ne vois pas quel intérêt il aurait eu à nous tromper si indignement.

– L'intérêt !... l'intérêt !... vous parlez comme un juge d'instruction ! s'écria l'étrange personnage en haussant les épaules. Que m'importe l'intérêt, à moi ?... Je n'essaie pas de le rechercher, car c'est dans cette voie ténébreuse que la justice s'égare toujours. Je ne cherche qu'une seule chose : *les faits*. Quand je les aurai tous dans ma main, alors, au milieu de ces invraisemblances qui semblent d'abord si bizarres, vous verrez la vérité luire, plus éclatante que le soleil. »

Il redressa sa haute taille, son œil brilla comme un diamant.

« La vérité ! s'écria-t-il en désignant d'un geste énergique la porte couverte de scellés, elle est derrière cette porte... Et le jour où je pourrai pénétrer là, je la sauverai. »

Puis, enfonçant son chapeau sur ses yeux, il sortit, et je l'entendis descendre l'escalier d'un pas rapide.

Je sortis après lui.

Au bas de l'escalier, je le retrouvai causant avec M. Prosper ; il lui dit quelques mots à voix basse, me prit le bras avec un de ces gestes brusques qui lui étaient habituels, et s'avança vers la porte.

Je lui offris un cigare et battis le briquet ; mais l'amadou ne s'enflamma pas, car le temps était très humide.

« Attendez, attendez ! me cria le serviable intendant en fouillant précipitamment dans ses poches, j'ai votre affaire. »

Il me remit un papier que j'allumai, et que je tendis à Maximilien.

Celui-ci le porta à ses lèvres pour enflammer le tabac. Mais tout à coup ses yeux s'ouvrirent démesurément, il souffla vivement la flamme, mit le papier dans sa poche, et s'enfuit avec une telle précipitation, que M. Prosper ne put s'empêcher de dire :

« Pauvre jeune homme ! la tête n'y est plus guère ! »

«Non vedo quale interesse avesse avuto per ingannarci così sdegnosamente!»

«L'interesse!... L'interesse!... Parla come un giudice! Esclamò lo strano personaggio alzando le spalle. *Ma chi se ne frega*<sup>233</sup> dell'interesse? Non provo a cercarlo, perché è in questa via tenebrosa che la giustizia si perde sempre. Io *cerco solo una cosa*<sup>234</sup>: *i fatti*. Quando li avrò tutti in mano, allora, nel mezzo di queste *cose inverosimili*<sup>235</sup> che sembrano all'inizio così bizzarre, lei vedrà la verità luccicare, più splendente del sole».

Si rialzò, e il suo occhio brillò come un diamante.

«La verità» esclamò indicando energicamente la porta coperta dai sigilli, «è dietro quella porta! E il giorno in cui potrò entrare *là*...<sup>236</sup>»

Poi uscì, infilandosi il cappello sugli occhi, e lo sentii scendere *rapidamente*<sup>237</sup> le scale. Io uscii dopo di lui.

Lo trovai in fondo alle scale a parlare con Prosper; gli disse qualche parola a bassa voce, mi afferrò il braccio con uno di quei gesti bruschi che gli erano abituali, e si diresse verso la porta. Io gli offrii un sigaro e gli porsi l'accendino, *ma non vi fu fiammella*<sup>238</sup>, poiché il tempo era molto umido.

«Aspettate! Aspettate!» gridò il servizievole intendente frugando precipitosamente nelle sue tasche, «*ho qualcosa che fa al caso vostro*<sup>239</sup>!»

Mi diede un foglio a cui diedi fuoco, e che allungai verso Maximilien. Questi avvicinò le labbra per accendere *il sigaro*<sup>240</sup>; *ma tutt'a un tratto*<sup>241</sup>, i suoi occhi si aprirono *a dismisura*<sup>242</sup>, soffiò sulla fiamma, si mise il foglio in tasca, e corse via *così precipitosamente*<sup>243</sup> che Prosper non poté evitare di dire: «Povero ragazzo! *Non ci sta più con la testa*<sup>244</sup>!»

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<sup>233</sup> Another equivalence: in his anger, it seemed to forget formality.

<sup>234</sup> Transposition: an apparent negative clause translated into a positive one.

<sup>235</sup> Periphrasis.

<sup>236</sup> Deletion to give a faster rhythm.

<sup>237</sup> Transposition: from complement of manner to adverb of manner.

<sup>238</sup> Modulation: in both cases, they can light their cigars.

<sup>239</sup> Equivalence.

<sup>240</sup> Metonymic modulation: The whole for the part.

<sup>241</sup> Equivalence.

<sup>242</sup> The opposite transposition of note 237: an adverb of manner is now a complement of manner.

<sup>243</sup> This time, it was the same of note 237 again.

<sup>244</sup> Equivalence.

## CHAPTER 5. ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE'S *A STUDY IN SCARLET*

### 5.1. Synopsis

London, 1878. A young medicine man, John Watson, is searching for a flat to share with someone. One of his friends brings him to 221B Baker Street, where he meets Sherlock Holmes, a very eccentric man who is able to understand - at first sight - his new acquaintance has been in Afghanistan, surprising him. Holmes is working on a chemical test to quicken investigations, and looks quite delighted by the idea of sharing the flat with John, so they decide to become flatmates.

A few days later, Watson starts to examine his new friend. He lists which are his horse-hobbies and his limits: he knows practically nothing about Literature (even if his knowledge of Sensational Literature is immense), Philosophy and Politics; he is very good at playing violin and as swordsman and boxer, and his knowledge of Sciences is very vast, even though is not systematic. In a discussion between them, what Sherlock's job is emerges: he is a private investigator, called when no one else is able to understand a crime. His theory is based on observation and deduction: when John tells him he reminds him Poe's Dupin, his flatmate affirms the character is not as phenomenal as his author thought; the same is for Gaboriau's Lecoq, irritating his interlocutor. Then, suddenly, they receive a visitor: a man giving Holmes a mail, a man identified immediately by the investigator as a retired sergeant of Marines, surprising his new friend once again.

**After explaining how he understand the fact, Holmes asks Watson for having the mail read: it was from Detective Tobias Gregson, writing due to a homicide at Lauriston Garden. The police officer would like the amateur detective to go there and investigate: the two friends go out immediately. During the trip, Holmes never talks about the case, because he thinks his conjectures may cause him to make some mistakes during his analysis. The place is lugubrious, surrounded by a garden: Holmes goes on to observe the ground and the path, with no haste, but with great cure. Welcome by**

Gregson, they go inside the house, one of whose doors has been closed for weeks; so, they reach the dining-room, where the murder took place. The corpse belonged to a forty-years-old man, his hand are clenched and his arms splayed wide, showing how grievous his death struggle was. Sherlock Holmes analyses the body with great detail, while asking for pieces of information. As soon as the corpse is lifted after the examination, a ring falls down: it is a wedding-ring. Lestrade, another police officer present in the room, states a woman was there. The documents in his pockets allow for his identification: he is Enoch J. Drebber. Another letter, found on his body, is addressed to Joseph Stangerson. Holmes and Gregson are having a brief argument, when Lestrade cries out upon finding a word written on the wall with blood: RACHE. The finder come to the conclusion that a woman called Rachel did it, interrupted by Sherlock's laughter. He now starts to examine the room through a tape measure and a magnifying glass. Having concluded this operation, HOLEMS asks for the constable who found the body, mister John Rance, obtaining his address. Then, he explains what happened in the room, in particular the height and the weight of the murderer and what he wore. In addition, Holmes has been able to figure out that the killer smoked a Trichinopoly cigar, and he got there in a four-wheeled cab, whose horse had a new shoe in its left foreleg. He comes out saying what the weapon was (poison), and that miss Rachel is not the murderer: RACHE is the German for "Revenge", leaving all the present astonished.

Watson does not think Holmes is as sure as he pretend to be; but the explanation of how the Detective has come to his conclusion is very convincing. While talking, they get to Rance's home, who is happy to tell what happened. Twice, during his tale, Holmes scared the constable by anticipating what he did and saw. At the end, John Rance says he met a man matching with Sherlock's idea about the killer, admitting he did not do anything, making his interlocutor angry. It is clear to him the murderer came back to fetch the ring.

In order to catch the murderer, Holmes plans a trick: he writes to a newspaper to say he has the ring; he prepares a fake copy, and waits for someone to come request the ring. An old woman comes to their home: after a quick

dialogue, Watson gives her the ring; when she leaves, Holmes follows her, but it is useless since she was not who she seemed, and escapes her pursuers.

During the days after, the news spreads, Sherlock sends someone to search for clues and information; suddenly, Gregson comes to his flat to say the guilt has been arrested, and tells the story of the operation, telling where Drebbler is portrayed as a vicious man. After this, Lestrade arrives to give him bad news: Stangerson has also been killed, in the same way of Drebbler, but after suspect's arrest.

Lestrade explains how the second corpse was discovered, saying a box of pills was found in the second crime scene. Holmes takes one, cuts it into two parts and gives one of these to a dog: no reaction. Then, he gives the second. After some seconds, the dog dies. Now, he is able to say who the murderer is; he asks to have the cabman help him in his duty. Sherlock declares that the man, Jefferson Hope, is actually the murderer. A brief fight follows and the killer is blocked.

A long flashback, set in America twenty years before, explains why Mister Hope killed the two men. John Ferrier and a small girl are the only survivors of a group of twenty-one; they are now in a desert, without any apparent possibility to live on. Some Mormons find them and give them food and recuperate: but, they will be forever Mormons like them. John adopts the girl: she is to be Lucy Ferrier.

John is a good guide and hunter, so when Mormons travel in search for a land, he concludes that he is given a fertile ground to build a farm and a home, soon becoming a mansion. What is bizarre is that he wants to stay celibate, though Mormons have usually more than one wife. In the meanwhile, Lucy grows up to be more and more beautiful. The first to notice her development is a young man called Jefferson Hope, who starts to frequent Ferrier's home. Before going on one of his travels, the boy assures the girl he would claim her as his own once he returned.

John would like her adopted daughter to wed Jefferson because, even if he cannot tell it, he does not like Mormons' customs. Some rumors about how they get their wives have been spread: rumors regarding killings and kidnapping in territories where no Indians have been seen. One morning on his way to work, he is visited by the Prophet: Lucy must choose which boy she will marry between

Drebber's and Stangerson's sons within a month. Before leaving, he reminds him the promise he made. Lucy hears the discussion and is afraid, so they plan how to escape.

Immediately, Ferrier goes to Salt Lake City to send a message to Jefferson, to tell him of the danger in which they are. Back home, he meets Drebber and Stangerson, who are brutally sent away by the man. Since the same night, a sort of countdown starts: every day, a message tells them how many days remain. Days go by. At the very last night remaining, Jefferson knocks on their door; after packing and being able to avoid the sentinels, they go on through mountains.

The second day of their escape, Hope goes to hunt some animals. As he comes back to his companions, he finds only a piece of paper which says John is dead; the horses, the girl and everything they have, has disappeared. Some days after, he comes across a Mormon, who informs him about the destiny of the girl, now Drebber's wife; but some days pass, and she dies. In front of her corpse, he promises to avenge both: two attempts follow, both failing. He goes away to get money, coming back after five years: both Drebber and Stangerson are no longer there. So, he goes on searching for them.

Coming back to present days. Jefferson starts his tale: he has an aortic aneurism, so he is going to die. He explains how he was able to follow the two men to England, becoming a cabman to earn a living. He was hired by Drebber, who was not able to recognize him; but he could never tell him apart from Stangerson. Suddenly, some days before leaving to America again, Drebber had to set a business of his; Jefferson heard him with an unknown man (the suspect, who wanted to protect his younger sister Drebber had tried to seduce), then he goes inside the flat of Lauriston Garden with him and reveals who he is. He ordered Drebber, at gunpoint, to eat a part of a pill of which one half was poisoned. The Mormon took the wrong piece and died. Then, he went to Stangerson, telling how he had killed his friend: but this second Mormon reacted badly so Jefferson was forced to kill him with a knife. He does not tell the name of the fake old woman who helped him.

In the end, Watson is astonished that his friend does not receive the merits he deserves in this case; but Holmes was already aware of this. Watson promises he will write something to make the Truth emerge.



## **5.2. Translation of Chapter 3**

## THE LAURISTON GARDEN MYSTERY

I confess that I was considerably startled by this fresh proof of the practical nature of my companion's theories. My respect for his powers of analysis increased wondrously. There still remained some lurking suspicion in my mind, however, that the whole thing was a pre-arranged episode, intended to dazzle me, though what earthly object he could have in taking me in was past my comprehension. When I looked at him he had finished reading the note, and his eyes had assumed the vacant, lack-lustre expression which showed mental abstraction.

"How in the world did you deduce that?" I asked.

"Deduce what?" said he, petulantly.

"Why, that he was a retired sergeant of Marines."

"I have no time for trifles," he answered, brusquely; then with a smile, "Excuse my rudeness. You broke the thread of my thoughts; but perhaps it is as well. So you actually were not able to see that that man was a sergeant of Marines?"

"No, indeed."

## IL MISTERO DI LAURISTON GARDEN

Confesso che ero considerevolmente sbigottito da quest'*ulteriore*<sup>1</sup> dimostrazione della natura pratica delle teorie del mio amico, e con ciò il mio rispetto per la sua acutezza di analisi *cresceva*<sup>2</sup>. Comunque, rimaneva ancora, nella mia mente, qualche latente sospetto che tutta la cosa fosse un episodio *arrangiato*<sup>3</sup> *apposta*<sup>4</sup> per impressionarmi, *sebbene non riuscissi ad afferrare quale motivo lo spingesse a ingannarmi*<sup>5</sup>. Quando lo guardai, lui aveva finito di leggere la nota, e i suoi occhi avevano assunto l'espressione vaga e spenta tipica di *una mente distratta*<sup>6</sup>.

“Come *diamine*<sup>7</sup> l'*ha*<sup>8</sup> capito?” chiesi.

“*Capito*<sup>9</sup> cosa?” mi rispose petulante.

“*Che*<sup>10</sup> era un *ex*<sup>11</sup> sergente della Marina?”

“Non ho tempo per le sciocchezze” rispose bruscamente. Poi, *sorridendo*<sup>12</sup>: “Perdoni la mia rudezza, *ma*<sup>13</sup> lei ha interrotto il filo dei miei pensieri; ma forse è *meglio così*<sup>14</sup>. Dunque davvero non è riuscito a vedere che quell'uomo era un sergente della Marina?”

“No, veramente!”

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<sup>1</sup> Little distortion: “Ulteriore” means “Another one”.

<sup>2</sup> It seemed redundant to also translate the term “Wonderously”, which is the English for the periphrasis “A dismisura”.

<sup>3</sup> The deletion of the prefix “pre-” creates a little entropy of the nuance of something done before.

<sup>4</sup> Transposition: adverb for verb.

<sup>5</sup> Equivalence: the lack of understanding is anyway expressed.

<sup>6</sup> Inverting transposition: a noun becomes an adjective and viceversa.

<sup>7</sup> Italian use that interjection to express the meaning of the English syntagm.

<sup>8</sup> English does not use Formal pronouns: anyway, their friendship has not yet lasted long, so they should still be formal in their relationship.

<sup>9</sup> The transposition of the tense is caused by grammatical reason. The Italian spoken language uses the “Passato prossimo” more than the Historical Past (Passato Remoto), so it repeats the Past participle, instead of the verb.

<sup>10</sup> Omission of the useless “Why”.

<sup>11</sup> Chunking-up: anyway, the man is not a sergeant any longer.

<sup>12</sup> Transposition of a prepositional syntagm into a gerund, more natural between Italian speakers.

<sup>13</sup> The clauses maintain the same sense of coordination, and the rhythm of a dialogue.

<sup>14</sup> Little distortion: a more literal translation could have been “Va bene così”.

"It was easier to know it than to explain why I knew it. If you were asked to prove that two and two made four, you might find some difficulty, and yet you are quite sure of the fact. Even across the street I could see a great blue anchor tattooed on the back of the fellow's hand. That smacked of the sea. He had a military carriage, however, and regulation side whiskers. There we have the marine. He was a man with some amount of self-importance and a certain air of command. You must have observed the way in which he held his head and swung his cane. A steady, respectable, middle-aged man, too, on the face of him--all facts which led me to believe that he had been a sergeant."

"Wonderful!" I ejaculated.

"Commonplace," said Holmes, though I thought from his expression that he was pleased at my evident surprise and admiration. "I said just now that there were no criminals. It appears that I am wrong--look at this!" He threw me over the note which the commissionaire had brought.

"Why," I cried, as I cast my eye over it, "this is terrible!"

"It does seem to be a little out of the common," he remarked, calmly.

"Would you mind reading it to me aloud?"

This is the letter which I read to him

“È più facile sapere che spiegare come *lo*<sup>15</sup> so. Se *le chiedessero*<sup>16</sup> di dimostrare che due più due fa quattro, potrebbe trovare qualche difficoltà, *eppure*<sup>17</sup> ne è sicuro. Anche dall'altra parte della strada sono riuscito a vedere una grande ancora blu tatuata sul dorso della mano di quell'uomo. E la cosa già mi *puzza*<sup>18</sup> di *marinaio*<sup>19</sup>. Aveva un contegno da militare, comunque, e basette *regolari*<sup>20</sup>. Ecco che abbiamo *l'uomo di mare*<sup>21</sup>. Era un uomo abbastanza sicuro di sé e una certa aria di comando. Deve aver osservato il modo in cui *andava a testa alta*<sup>22</sup> e maneggiava il suo bastone. Sulla sua faccia, *si vedeva*<sup>23</sup> un uomo sobrio e rispettabile di mezza età – tutti fatti che mi hanno indotto a pensare che fosse stato un sergente.”

“*Grandioso!*<sup>24</sup>” esclamai.

“*Niente di speciale*<sup>25</sup>”, disse Holmes, sebbene io pensassi, in base alla sua espressione, che fosse compiaciuto dalla mia evidente ammirazione e dalla mia sorpresa. “Ho appena detto dell'assenza di criminali. Sembra che abbia torto – guardi qui!” Mi allungò la nota che il commissionario aveva portato.

“*Ma come*<sup>26</sup>?” gridai non appena posai lo sguardo su di esso “è terribile!”

“Sembra appena fuori dall'ordinario” rimarcò lui, *calmo*<sup>27</sup>. “*Le dispiacerebbe*<sup>28</sup> leggermelo ad alta voce?”

Questa è la lettera che gli lessi:

<sup>15</sup> The anaphor of the clause makes the text faster to read and more natural in Italian, which avoids repetitions in general.

<sup>16</sup> Different use of passive form determines the transposition: even “Se fosse chiesto a lei” could be a good translation, but sounded unnatural in a direct speech, despite formality.

<sup>17</sup> “Yet”, at the beginning of a clause, is usually translated into “Tuttavia”; but, the opponent coordination is maintained. The change is simply a matter of writing style.

<sup>18</sup> Modulation of senses: smell takes the place of touch.

<sup>19</sup> Metonymic chunk-down: the worker on the sea for the sea itself. It indicates better the former job of the man.

<sup>20</sup> Deletion and transposition: “Side” is not important to understand, and “Regulation” is changed into the correspondent adjective.

<sup>21</sup> The periphrasis is also a chunking-up.

<sup>22</sup> It has been interpreted that Doyle wanted to express the proud way of being, that Italian expresses through this expression.

<sup>23</sup> Addition: an Italian nominal clause, in this co-text, sounded strange.

<sup>24</sup> Chunking-side: an Italian exclamation to express an admiring aptitude.

<sup>25</sup> Modulation: the sense of “It is normal” is maintained.

<sup>26</sup> Adaptation of an expression of surprise.

<sup>27</sup> Transposition of an adverb into an adjective, anyway referred to the same character.

<sup>28</sup> Equivalence of polite expressions.

*My dear Mr. Sherlock Holmes,*

*There has been a bad business during the night at 3, Lauriston Gardens, off the Brixton Road. Our man on the beat saw a light there about two in the morning, and as the house was an empty one, suspected that something was amiss. He found the door open, and in the front room, which is bare of furniture, discovered the body of a gentleman, well dressed, and having cards in his pocket bearing the name of 'Enoch J. Drebbler, Cleveland, Ohio, U.S.A.' There had been no robbery, nor is there any evidence as to how the man met his death. There are marks of blood in the room, but there is no wound upon his person. We are at a loss as to how he came into the empty house; indeed, the whole affair is a puzzler.*

*If you can come round to the house any time before twelve, you will find me there. I have left everything in statu quo until I hear from you. If you are unable to come I shall give you fuller details, and would esteem it a great kindness if you would favour me with your opinion.*

*Yours faithfully,*

*Tobias Gregson.*

*Mio caro Sherlock Holmes,*

*c'è stato un incidente durante la notte al numero 3 di Lauriston Gardens<sup>29</sup>, dopo Brixton Road. Uno dei nostri di ronda lì<sup>30</sup> ha visto una luce all'incirca alle due di notte<sup>31</sup>, e dato che la casa era disabitata<sup>32</sup>, ha sospettato che qualcosa non andava<sup>33</sup>. Ha trovato la porta aperta, e nel salotto, che è senza<sup>34</sup> mobili, ha scoperto il corpo di un gentiluomo ben vestito, con in tasca<sup>35</sup> un biglietto da visita con su scritto<sup>36</sup> "Enoch J Drebber, Cleveland, Ohio, U.S.A."<sup>37</sup> Non c'era stato nessun furto, né alcun indizio su come l'uomo abbia trovato<sup>38</sup> la morte. Vi sono tracce di sangue nella stanza, ma nessuna ferita sul cadavere<sup>39</sup>. Non abbiamo idea di<sup>40</sup> come sia arrivato in questa casa disabitata; anzi, tutta la faccenda è un enigma. Se potesse fare un giro nella casa a qualsiasi ora prima delle dodici, mi incontrerà<sup>41</sup> qui. Ho lasciato tutto nello status quo finché non ho sue notizie<sup>42</sup>. Se non può venire, le darò informazioni dettagliate<sup>43</sup>, e le sarei immensamente grato<sup>44</sup> se potesse darmi la sua opinione.*

*Cordiali saluti<sup>45</sup>*

*Tobias Gregson*

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<sup>29</sup> Italian and English formulate addresses in different ways. It would have been possible to maintain the source language order in the target language by adding the word "Numero".

<sup>30</sup> Equivalence.

<sup>31</sup> Cultural adaptation: hours when there is dark outside are linked by the expression "Di notte" in Italian; English refers to "Morning" hours from midnight to midday.

<sup>32</sup> Chunking-down: an empty house is "Disabitata", in Italian.

<sup>33</sup> Transposition: positive form becomes a negative one.

<sup>34</sup> Transposition again: the expression substituted by a single word (definition of "Senza" is "Bare of").

<sup>35</sup> Third consecutive transposition: verbal syntagm transformed into a prepositional one.

<sup>36</sup> As note 35.

<sup>37</sup> From direct to reported speech: a modulation.

<sup>38</sup> Adaptation: Death is met in English, but "Trovata" ("Found") in Italian.

<sup>39</sup> Chunking-down.

<sup>40</sup> Equivalence.

<sup>41</sup> Chunking-side: in both cases, they will be together there.

<sup>42</sup> Equivalence.

<sup>43</sup> Chunking-down: in Italian, these word means "Full of details".

<sup>44</sup> Equivalence.

<sup>45</sup> Cultural adaptation: the politeness formulas are quite different.

"Gregson is the smartest of the Scotland Yarders," my friend remarked; "he and Lestrade are the pick of a bad lot. They are both quick and energetic, but conventional--shockingly so. They have their knives into one another, too. They are as jealous as a pair of professional beauties. There will be some fun over this case if they are both put upon the scent."

I was amazed at the calm way in which he rippled on. "Surely there is not a moment to be lost," I cried, "shall I go and order you a cab?"

"I'm not sure about whether I shall go. I am the most incurably lazy devil that ever stood in shoe leather--that is, when the fit is on me, for I can be spry enough at times."

"Why, it is just such a chance as you have been longing for."

"My dear fellow, what does it matter to me. Supposing I unravel the whole matter, you may be sure that Gregson, Lestrade, and Co. will pocket all the credit. That comes of being an unofficial personage."

"But he begs you to help him."

"Yes. He knows that I am his superior, and acknowledges it to me; but he would cut his tongue out before he would own it to any third person. However, we may as well go and have a look. I shall work it out on my own hook. I may have a laugh at them if I have nothing else. Come on!"



“Gregson è il più furbo di Scotland Yard” rimarcò il mio amico. “Lui e Lestrade sono *i migliori del gruppo*<sup>46</sup>. Sono svelti ed energici, ma convenzionali, troppo convenzionali. *E si lanciano i coltelli l’un l’altro*<sup>47</sup>. Sono gelosi come *belle ragazze*<sup>48</sup>. Ci sarà *da divertirsi*<sup>49</sup>, se *si mettono i bastoni tra le ruote*<sup>50</sup>.”

Alla calma in cui continuava a mormorare, *rimasi stupefatto*<sup>51</sup>. “Sicuramente non c’è un momento da perdere” gridai. “Vado a ordinarle una carrozza?”

“Non sono sicuro *se andare o no*<sup>52</sup>. Sono il più incurabile pigrone che ci sia mai stato *sulla faccia della terra*<sup>53</sup>. Ecco perché, *quando mi va a genio*<sup>54</sup>, posso essere abbastanza energico”.

“Ma come, non è giusto la chance che *desidera da tempo*<sup>55</sup>?”

“Mio caro amico, che m’importa? Supponendo che io sveli il mistero *per intero*<sup>56</sup>, stia certo che Gregson, Lastrade e company si *prenderanno*<sup>57</sup> tutto il merito. Ecco *che significa essere*<sup>58</sup> un personaggio non ufficiale.”

“Ma le sta chiedendo di aiutarlo.”

“Certo. Lui sa che *gli*<sup>59</sup> sono superiore e me lo riconosce. *Ma preferirebbe accecarsi che vedere qualcun altro prendere meriti*<sup>60</sup>. A ogni modo, possiamo andare e dare un’occhiata. *Risolverò il caso con le mie sole forze*<sup>61</sup>. Posso prendermi gioco di loro, *se non altro*<sup>62</sup>. Andiamo.”

<sup>46</sup> Little distortion: there is an entropy, since the irony of being the best in a bad group is not evident.

<sup>47</sup> Little modulation: the knives are inside the two policemen in English; but they are thrown at each other in Italian. Anyway, there is an equivalence of expression: the metaphor exists in target language, too.

<sup>48</sup> Chunking-side: in both metaphors, women are jealous among each other.

<sup>49</sup> Transposition noun to verb.

<sup>50</sup> Equivalence of idioms: both mean the two men will obstacle each other.

<sup>51</sup> Equivalence.

<sup>52</sup> In Italian, it is compulsory to make explicit the meaning of “Whether”, saying “If... or not”.

<sup>53</sup> Even equivalent, the two idioms do not have the same nuance. However, it was preferred to translate idiom with idiom.

<sup>54</sup> Equivalence.

<sup>55</sup> Little distortion: it is more a matter of something waited for.

<sup>56</sup> Transposition: adjectival syntagm transformed into a prepositional one.

<sup>57</sup> Chunking-up: in Italian, merits are “Taken” by those who does not deserve them.

<sup>58</sup> Modulation: something happening in a certain situation becomes something having a meaning.

<sup>59</sup> Transposition: from adjective to pronoun.

<sup>60</sup> Controversial translational passage: there is not a real counterpart but the same rhetoric use of language of the original text had to be maintained. So, a modulation was made (“To make himself blind” instead of “Cutting his eye out”), but the metaphor of the second part was made explicit.

<sup>61</sup> This time, there was a preference for making the whole metaphor explicit.

<sup>62</sup> Equivalence.

He hustled on his overcoat, and bustled about in a way that showed that an energetic fit had superseded the apathetic one.

"Get your hat," he said.

"You wish me to come?"

"Yes, if you have nothing better to do." A minute later we were both in a hansom, driving furiously for the Brixton Road.

It was a foggy, cloudy morning, and a dun-coloured veil hung over the house-tops, looking like the reflection of the mud-coloured streets beneath. My companion was in the best of spirits, and prattled away about Cremona fiddles, and the difference between a Stradivarius and an Amati. As for myself, I was silent, for the dull weather and the melancholy business upon which we were engaged, depressed my spirits.

"You don't seem to give much thought to the matter in hand," I said at last, interrupting Holmes' musical disquisition.

"No data yet," he answered. "It is a capital mistake to theorize before you have all the evidence. It biases the judgment."

"You will have your data soon," I remarked, pointing with my finger; "this is the Brixton Road, and that is the house, if I am not very much mistaken."

"So it is. Stop, driver, stop!" We were still a hundred yards or so from it, but he insisted upon our alighting, and we finished our journey upon foot.

Si mise subito il soprabito e si precipitò in un modo che mostrava *come il pigro avesse ceduto il passo all'energico*<sup>63</sup>.

“Prenda il suo cappello” disse.

“Vuole che venga?”

“Sì, se non ha niente di meglio da fare”. Un minuto dopo eravamo in una *carrozza*<sup>64</sup> *che sfrecciava*<sup>65</sup> per Brixton Road.

*C'erano nebbia e nuvole quella mattina*<sup>66</sup>, e sui tetti incombeva un velo opaco *che sembrava*<sup>67</sup> il riflesso delle strade color fango sotto. Il mio compagno era *di ottimo umore*<sup>68</sup>, e chiacchierava animatamente dei violini di Cremona, e della differenza tra uno Stradivari e un Amati. Quanto a me, ero silenzioso, perché *la giornata uggiosa*<sup>69</sup> e il triste caso in cui eravamo impegnati abbattevano il mio spirito.

“Non sembra darsi molto pensiero della vicenda” dissi infine, interrompendo la disquisizione musicale di Holmes.

“*Non ho ancora dati*<sup>70</sup>” rispose. “È un errore madornale *fare supposizioni*<sup>71</sup> prima di *avere*<sup>72</sup> le prove. Condiziona il giudizio.”

“Avrà presto i suoi dati”, commentai, indicando col dito. “Se non erro, questa è Brixton Road e quella è la casa”.

“Proprio così. Freni, freni!” Eravamo ancora a un *centinaio di metri*<sup>73</sup>, ma lui insistette perché smontassimo, e finimmo il nostro viaggio a piedi.

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<sup>63</sup> Modulation: the concept is completely changed into its contrary, by changing subject with object and viceversa, and by changing the verb in its opposite.

<sup>64</sup> The technical term “Hansom”, “Having two wheels”, was deleted: the detail is not important to understand the text.

<sup>65</sup> Transposition: from gerund to relative clause, often possible in both languages.

<sup>66</sup> Modulation: even literal translation possible.

<sup>67</sup> As note 65.

<sup>68</sup> Equivalence.

<sup>69</sup> Chunking-up: bad weather makes a day dull.

<sup>70</sup> Transposition: nominal clause changed into a predicative clause.

<sup>71</sup> The definition instead of the term.

<sup>72</sup> Transposition into an implicit clause.

<sup>73</sup> Despite the adaptation, the distances were more or less the same, expressed in meters or in yards. Anyway, it was an approximation, as in the target text.

Number 3, Lauriston Gardens wore an ill-omened and minatory look. It was one of four which stood back some little way from the street, two being occupied and two empty. The latter looked out with three tiers of vacant melancholy windows, which were blank and dreary, save that here and there a "To Let" card had developed like a cataract upon the bleared panes. A small garden sprinkled over with a scattered eruption of sickly plants separated each of these houses from the street, and was traversed by a narrow pathway, yellowish in colour, and consisting apparently of a mixture of clay and of gravel. The whole place was very sloppy from the rain which had fallen through the night. The garden was bounded by a three-foot brick wall with a fringe of wood rails upon the top, and against this wall was leaning a stalwart police constable, surrounded by a small knot of loafers, who craned their necks and strained their eyes in the vain hope of catching some glimpse of the proceedings within.

Il numero 3 di Lauriston Gardens aveva un *aspetto minaccioso e malefico*<sup>74</sup>. *Faceva parte*<sup>75</sup> di un gruppo di quattro edifici leggermente arretrati rispetto alla strada, di cui due erano abitati e due vuoti. Il più avanzato colpiva l'attenzione con tre file di finestre vuote *che mettevano malinconia e tristezza*<sup>76</sup>, tranne qualcuna qua e là con il cartello "Affittasi" che sembrava aver sviluppato una sorta di cataratta sui pannelli. Un piccolo giardino *cosparso*<sup>77</sup> con piante d'aspetto malaticcio separava ognuna di queste case dalla strada, giardino attraversato da uno stretto viottolo di color giallastro *che sembrava fatto*<sup>78</sup> di ghiaia e argilla. Tutto era umido per la pioggia che era caduta durante la notte. Il giardino era attorniato da un muro di mattoni di *circa un metro*<sup>79</sup> con sopra una ringhiera di legno, e *su*<sup>80</sup> questo muro stava appoggiato un vigoroso agente di polizia, circondato da un groviglio di curiosi, che allungavano il collo e aguzzavano *la vista*<sup>81</sup> nella vana speranza di farsi una vaga idea *di quello che succedeva dentro*.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Equivalence.

<sup>75</sup> Another equivalence.

<sup>76</sup> Transposition: a relative clause substitutes the adjectives referred to the building.

<sup>77</sup> Little distortion, making the metaphor explicit.

<sup>78</sup> Little distortion, too.

<sup>79</sup> This time, meters were used, instead of feet, as an Italian would.

<sup>80</sup> Little distortion: literally, it would be translated into "Contro".

<sup>81</sup> Metonymic chunk-down: the sense takes the place of the organ.

<sup>82</sup> Equivalence.

I had imagined that Sherlock Holmes would at once have hurried into the house and plunged into a study of the mystery. Nothing appeared to be further from his intention. With an air of nonchalance which, under the circumstances, seemed to me to border upon affectation, he lounged up and down the pavement, and gazed vacantly at the ground, the sky, the opposite houses and the line of railings. Having finished his scrutiny, he proceeded slowly down the path, or rather down the fringe of grass which flanked the path, keeping his eyes riveted upon the ground. Twice he stopped, and once I saw him smile, and heard him utter an exclamation of satisfaction. There were many marks of footsteps upon the wet clayey soil, but since the police had been coming and going over it, I was unable to see how my companion could hope to learn anything from it.

Still I had had such extraordinary evidence of the quickness of his perceptive faculties, that I had no doubt that he could see a great deal which was hidden from me.

At the door of the house we were met by a tall, white-faced, flaxen-haired man, with a notebook in his hand, who rushed forward and wrung my companion's hand with effusion. "It is indeed kind of you to come," he said, "I have had everything left untouched."

Avevo immaginato che Holmes si fosse precipitato nella casa per immergersi nello studio del caso: niente sembrava più lontano dalle sue intenzioni. Con un'aria di *nonchalance*<sup>83</sup> che, date le circostanze, mi sembrava ai limiti dell'ostentazione, gironzolava su e giù per il marciapiede, *fissando*<sup>84</sup> *con aria assente*<sup>85</sup> il terreno, il cielo, le case di fronte e le ringhiere. *Finite*<sup>86</sup> le sue osservazioni, procedette lentamente verso il viottolo, o meglio il mucchietto d'erba che costeggiava il viottolo, tenendo gli occhi inchiodati al suolo. Si fermò *due volte*<sup>87</sup> e *una volta*<sup>88</sup> lo vidi sorridere, e gli sentii proferire un'esclamazione di soddisfazione. C'erano molte tracce di passi nel terreno argilloso; ma dato che la polizia andava e veniva, non riuscii a capire come il mio amico sperasse di scoprire qualcosa *da lì*<sup>89</sup>. Nondimeno, avevo avuto una tale prova della straordinaria velocità delle sue capacità percettive che non avevo dubbi che lui potesse vedere cose che mi erano nascoste.

*Un uomo alto, dal viso chiaro e biondo, ci venne incontro alla porta*<sup>90</sup>, *portando*<sup>91</sup> un block-notes in mano; si affrettò a venire e a stringere *calorosamente*<sup>92</sup> la mano al mio compagno. “È stato gentile a venire” disse. “Ho lasciato tutto *esattamente com'era*<sup>93</sup>.”

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<sup>83</sup> Transcription: it is a French word, and it is used in both languages.

<sup>84</sup> Transposition of tense: gerund instead of simple past. Moreover, the coordinate clause in now a subordinate.

<sup>85</sup> Transposition: complement instead of adverb.

<sup>86</sup> This transposition is possible for the Latin origins of Italian: it takes this construction from the former, called “Absolute ablative”.

<sup>87</sup> Compulsory chunking-side: Italian cannot express the same concept with a single word, while English could choose between “Twice” and “Two times”, even if the latter is more used.

<sup>88</sup> Similarly to note 87, Italian has to use two words.

<sup>89</sup> Transposition: from complement of agent to complement of place. Interesting is the fact that, in both cases, Italian would use the same preposition.

<sup>90</sup> Transposition: from passive to active form.

<sup>91</sup> Transposition again: verb instead of preposition.

<sup>92</sup> Third consecutive transposition: adverb of manner substitutes complement of manner.

<sup>93</sup> Equivalence.

"Except that!" my friend answered, pointing at the pathway. "If a herd of buffaloes had passed along there could not be a greater mess. No doubt, however, you had drawn your own conclusions, Gregson, before you permitted this."

"I have had so much to do inside the house," the detective said evasively. "My colleague, Mr. Lestrade, is here. I had relied upon him to look after this."

Holmes glanced at me and raised his eyebrows sardonically. "With two such men as yourself and Lestrade upon the ground, there will not be much for a third party to find out," he said.

Gregson rubbed his hands in a self-satisfied way. "I think we have done all that can be done," he answered; "it's a queer case though, and I knew your taste for such things."

"You did not come here in a cab?" asked Sherlock Holmes.

"No, sir."

"Nor Lestrade?"

"No, sir."

"Then let us go and look at the room." With which inconsequent remark he strode on into the house, followed by Gregson, whose features expressed his astonishment.



“Eccetto quello” rispose il mio amico, indicando il viottolo. “Se una mandria di bufali *fosse passata*<sup>94</sup> di lì non avrebbe potuto fare più confusione, mio caro Gregson. *Non dubito*<sup>95</sup>, comunque, che abbia tratto le sue conclusioni, prima di *permettere*<sup>96</sup> ciò.”

“Ho avuto molto da fare in casa” disse *l’investigatore*<sup>97</sup> evasivamente. “Il mio collega Lestrade è qui. Ho fatto affidamento su di lui per *badarvi*<sup>98</sup>.”

Holmes si voltò verso di me e alzò sarcastico le sopracciglia. “Con due uomini come lei e Lastrade sul campo, *dubito che si possa scoprire qualcosa di nuovo*.<sup>99</sup>”

Gregson si sfregò le mani in modo autocompiacente. “Penso che abbiamo fatto tutto quello che può essere fatto,” rispose; “è comunque un caso singolare, e so che *è pane per i suoi denti*<sup>100</sup>.”

“*Lei è venuto qui in carrozza?*<sup>101</sup>” chiese Sherlock Holmes.

“No.”

“Nemmeno Lestrade?”

“*Nemmeno lui*<sup>102</sup>.”

“Allora andiamo e diamo un’occhiata alla stanza.” Con quest’incongruente commento, procedette a grandi passi nella casa, seguito da Gregson, il cui volto *tradiva*<sup>103</sup> lo sbigottimento.

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<sup>94</sup> Grammar adaptation: movement verbs, in Italian, have “Essere” as auxiliary in the “Passato prossimo”, a tense build similarly to English “Present perfect”.

<sup>95</sup> Transposition making explicit what Holmes means (“I have no doubt”).

<sup>96</sup> Transposition: from implicit to explicit.

<sup>97</sup> In order to express the difference between the “Good” detective and the “Bad” ones, it has been chosen to translate as “Investigatore” only the second case, and to transcript “Detective”, which is also used in Italian, only when speaking about Sherlock Holmes. It is not a way to give less importance to our mother tongue: only a homage to the language of the hero.

<sup>98</sup> As a kind of compensation of what happens in note 87 and 88, most of English phrasal verbs have a Italian counterpart of a single word.

<sup>99</sup> Equivalence.

<sup>100</sup> This use of an idiom compensates the entropy we had in note 61.

<sup>101</sup> Transposition from negative to positive form.

<sup>102</sup> Simply a matter of style.

<sup>103</sup> Another metaphoric distortion containing a metaphor, compensating another entropy.

A short passage, bare planked and dusty, led to the kitchen and offices.

Two doors opened out of it to the left and to the right. One of these had obviously been closed for many weeks. The other belonged to the dining-room, which was the apartment in which the mysterious affair had occurred. Holmes walked in, and I followed him with that subdued feeling at my heart which the presence of death inspires.

It was a large square room, looking all the larger from the absence of all furniture. A vulgar flaring paper adorned the walls, but it was blotched in places with mildew, and here and there great strips had become detached and hung down, exposing the yellow plaster beneath.

Opposite the door was a showy fireplace, surmounted by a mantelpiece of imitation white marble. On one corner of this was stuck the stump of a red wax candle. The solitary window was so dirty that the light was hazy and uncertain, giving a dull grey tinge to everything, which was intensified by the thick layer of dust which coated the whole apartment.

Un breve passaggio, spoglio e polveroso, conduceva alla cucina e ai servizi. Due porte vi si aprivano, *una a destra e una a sinistra*<sup>104</sup>. Una di queste era rimasta evidentemente chiusa per settimane. L'altra *era quella della*<sup>105</sup> sala da pranzo, che era *dove*<sup>106</sup> era avvenuto il misterioso fatto. Holmes entrò, e io lo seguii con nel cuore quella sensazione sommersa che ispira la presenza della morte.

Era una grande stanza quadrata, che sembrava *ancora più grande*<sup>107</sup> per via della mancanza di mobili. Una carta da parati vistosa e volgare adornava le mura, ricoperta in certi tratti di muffa, e qua e là grosse strisce erano state staccate e pendevano, mostrando l'intonaco giallo sotto. Di fronte alla porta v'era uno sfarzoso camino, *la cui struttura portante*<sup>108</sup> era di imitazione di marmo bianco. Su un angolo, v'era appiccicato il moncone di una candela di cera rossa. L'unica finestra era così sporca che la luce era fosca e indistinta, dando una tinta grigio opaco a tutto, intensificata dal sottile strato di polvere che ricopriva tutta la stanza.

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<sup>104</sup> Equivalence.

<sup>105</sup> Modulation: in Italian, something may "Appartenere" only to a human being, or to an animal.

<sup>106</sup> The deletion was done to avoid the repetition of the word "Stanza", which is part in the translation of dining-room.

<sup>107</sup> Equivalence.

<sup>108</sup> Little distortion. The sense of something showy is maintained just the same.

All these details I observed afterwards. At present my attention was centred upon the single grim motionless figure which lay stretched upon the boards, with vacant sightless eyes staring up at the discoloured ceiling. It was that of a man about forty-three or forty-four years of age, middle-sized, broad shouldered, with crisp curling black hair, and a short stubbly beard. He was dressed in a heavy broadcloth frock coat and waistcoat, with light-coloured trousers, and immaculate collar and cuffs. A top hat, well brushed and trim, was placed upon the floor beside him. His hands were clenched and his arms thrown abroad, while his lower limbs were interlocked as though his death struggle had been a grievous one. On his rigid face there stood an expression of horror, and as it seemed to me, of hatred, such as I have never seen upon human features. This malignant and terrible contortion, combined with the low forehead, blunt nose, and prognathous jaw gave the dead man a singularly simious and ape-like appearance, which was increased by his writhing, unnatural posture. I have seen death in many forms, but never has it appeared to me in a more fearsome aspect than in that dark grimy apartment, which looked out upon one of the main arteries of suburban London.

Lestrade, lean and ferret-like as ever, was standing by the doorway, and greeted my companion and myself.

"This case will make a stir, sir," he remarked. "It beats anything I have seen, and I am no chicken."

"There is no clue?" said Gregson.

"None at all," chimed in Lestrade.

Tutti questi dettagli io li osservai in seguito. In quel momento, la mia attenzione era concentrata sulla figura macabra e immobile che giaceva distesa sulle assi, *con gli occhi spalancati*<sup>109</sup> verso il soffitto. Era un uomo di circa quaranta tre o quaranta quattro anni, di taglia media, spalle larghe, con capelli neri crespi e ondulati e una barba corta e spinosa. Era vestito con un cappotto in pettinato e gilè, pantaloni chiari, colletto e polsini immacolati. Un cappello anch'esso di pettinato, ben spazzolato e pulito, era sul pavimento, di fianco a lui. *I suoi pugni*<sup>110</sup> erano stretti e le braccia *rivolte verso l'esterno*<sup>111</sup>, mentre i suoi arti inferiori erano chiusi, come *se avesse combattuto dolorosamente la morte*<sup>112</sup>. Sulla sua faccia irrigidita *vi si leggeva*<sup>113</sup> orrore e, mi sembrava, odio, come non ne avevo mai visti su un volto umano. Questa maligna e terribile contorsione, unita alla fronte bassa, al naso smussato, alla mascella *in avanti*<sup>114</sup>, dava al morto un singolare aspetto *scimmiesco*<sup>115</sup>, accresciuto dalla postura innaturale. Ho visto la morte in tante forme, ma mai mi era apparsa tanto spaventosa come in quell'oscura e sudicia stanza che dava su una delle principali arterie dei sobborghi di Londra.

Lestrade, magro come un'acciuga come *nessun altro*<sup>116</sup>, *stava*<sup>117</sup> all'uscio; salutò il mio compagno e *poi*<sup>118</sup> me.

“Questo caso farà scalpore” rimarcò. “Non ho mai visto nulla del genere, e non sono certo *di primo pelo*<sup>119</sup>.”

“Non c'è nessun inizio?” chiese Gregson.

“Assolutamente nessuno” ribatté Lestrade.

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<sup>109</sup> Equivalence.

<sup>110</sup> Another metonymy which compensates for entropy.

<sup>111</sup> Equivalence.

<sup>112</sup> Equivalence built through a series of transpositions.

<sup>113</sup> Another Italian metaphor: in this language, what is noticed in a face is “Read”.

<sup>114</sup> This word was the hardest passage to translate: it exists a literal translation into Italian, “Prognata”; and it sounded very natural, pronounced by a medicine man. But, most of Italian readers would not understand. Since the orientation is more “Target oriented” (Podeur 2008: 28), a paraphrasis was chosen.

<sup>115</sup> The meanings of both “Ape” and “Simious” are contained in this single Italian word.

<sup>116</sup> Equivalence, even built with an entropy: but, making explicit “As no one ever” would be a useless addition.

<sup>117</sup> The Italian verb “Stare” does not allow the continuous form, so the transposition of tense was compulsory.

<sup>118</sup> A sequence of the greetings for the structure of original text was interpreted, and for the use of two different pronouns.

<sup>119</sup> Equivalence: the animal semantic field is present in both texts.

Sherlock Holmes approached the body, and, kneeling down, examined it intently. "You are sure that there is no wound?" he asked, pointing to numerous gouts and splashes of blood which lay all round.

"Positive!" cried both detectives.

"Then, of course, this blood belongs to a second individual presumably the murderer, if murder has been committed. It reminds me of the circumstances attendant on the death of Van Jansen, in Utrecht, in the year '34. Do you remember the case, Gregson?"

"No, sir."

"Read it up--you really should. There is nothing new under the sun. It has all been done before."

As he spoke, his nimble fingers were flying here, there, and everywhere, feeling, pressing, unbuttoning, examining, while his eyes wore the same far-away expression which I have already remarked upon. So swiftly was the examination made, that one would hardly have guessed the minuteness with which it was conducted. Finally, he sniffed the dead man's lips, and then glanced at the soles of his patent leather boots.

"He has not been moved at all?" he asked.

"No more than was necessary for the purposes of our examination."

"You can take him to the mortuary now," he said. "There is nothing more to be learned."

Gregson had a stretcher and four men at hand. At his call they entered the room, and the stranger was lifted and carried out. As they raised him, a ring tinkled down and rolled across the floor. Lestrade grabbed it up and stared at it with mystified eyes.

Sherlock Holmes si avvicinò al corpo e, inginocchiandosi, lo esaminò attentamente. “Siete sicuri che non ci siano ferite?” chiese, indicando i numerosi schizzi e chiazze di sangue tutt’intorno.

“Certo!” dissero entrambi gli investigatori.

“Dunque, sicuramente questo sangue appartiene a un secondo individuo – presumibilmente l’assassino, *se di assassinio si può parlare*<sup>120</sup>. Mi ricorda le circostanze legate alla morte di Van Jansen a Utrecht, nel ’34. Ricorda il caso, Gregson?”

“No, *veramente*<sup>121</sup>.”

“Sì documenti – dovrebbe davvero. Non c’è niente di nuovo sotto il sole. Tutto è stato fatto prima.”

Mentre parlava, le sue dita si muovevano veloci, qua, là, dappertutto, tastando, premendo, sbottonando, esaminando, mentre i suoi occhi *avevano ripreso*<sup>122</sup> quell’espressione *assente*<sup>123</sup> che vi avevo già notato. L’esame fu così veloce che difficilmente si poteva immaginare la minuziosità con cui era stato condotto. Infine, annusò le labbra del morto e diede un’occhiata alle suole dei suoi stivali di pelle.

“Non è stato proprio mosso?” chiese.

“Non più di quanto fosse necessario ai nostri esami.”

“Potete portarlo all’obitorio adesso. Non c’è nient’altro da *scoprire*<sup>124</sup>.”

Gregson aveva *vicino*<sup>125</sup> quattro uomini con una barella. *Appena li chiamò*<sup>126</sup>, questi entrarono nella stanza, e lo sconosciuto fu alzato e portato via. Non appena lo sollevarono, un anello cadde tintinnando e rotolò sul pavimento. Lestrade lo afferrò e lo osservò con occhi increduli.

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<sup>120</sup> Equivalence again.

<sup>121</sup> Another personal interpretation.

<sup>122</sup> Loss of the metaphor, not existing in Italian while talking about eyes.

<sup>123</sup> Equivalence: even in Italian, someone absent may be defined “Faraway”, but not an expression.

<sup>124</sup> Transposition from active to passive form.

<sup>125</sup> Equivalence.

<sup>126</sup> Syntactic transposition: from a complement of time to a time clause.

"There's been a woman here," he cried. "It's a woman's wedding-ring."

He held it out, as he spoke, upon the palm of his hand. We all gathered round him and gazed at it. There could be no doubt that that circlet of plain gold had once adorned the finger of a bride.

"This complicates matters," said Gregson. "Heaven knows, they were complicated enough before."

"You're sure it doesn't simplify them?" observed Holmes. "There's nothing to be learned by staring at it. What did you find in his pockets?"

"We have it all here," said Gregson, pointing to a litter of objects upon one of the bottom steps of the stairs. "A gold watch, No. 97163, by Barraud, of London. Gold Albert chain, very heavy and solid. Gold ring, with masonic device. Gold pin--bull-dog's head, with rubies as eyes.

Russian leather card-case, with cards of Enoch J. Drebber of Cleveland, corresponding with the E. J. D. upon the linen. No purse, but loose money to the extent of seven pounds thirteen. Pocket edition of Boccaccio's 'Decameron,' with name of Joseph Stangerson upon the fly-leaf. Two letters--one addressed to E. J. Drebber and one to Joseph Stangerson."

"At what address?"

"American Exchange, Strand--to be left till called for. They are both from the Guion Steamship Company, and refer to the sailing of their boats from Liverpool. It is clear that this unfortunate man was about to return to New York."

"Have you made any inquiries as to this man, Stangerson?"

"I did it at once, sir," said Gregson. "I have had advertisements sent to all the newspapers, and one of my men has gone to the American Exchange, but he has not returned yet."



“C’è stata una donna qui” gridò. “È la fedina di una donna”

*Così dicendo*<sup>127</sup>, lo mise sul palmo della mano. Noi tutti ci radunammo attorno a lui e lo guardammo fisso. Non potevano esserci dubbi che quel cerchietto piatto di oro un tempo avesse adornato il dito di una sposa.

“Questo complica *le cose*<sup>128</sup>. E Dio<sup>129</sup> sa *quanto fossero complicate già prima*.<sup>130</sup>”

“È sicuro che non le semplifichi?” osservò Holmes. “Non c’è niente da scoprire *standolo a guardare*<sup>131</sup>. Che avete trovato nelle sue tasche?”

“È tutto lì,”<sup>132</sup> disse Gregson, indicando un mucchietto di oggetti sul *gradino inferiore*<sup>133</sup> della scala. “Un orologio d’oro, numero 97163, di Barraud, di Londra. Una catenella d’oro in stile Albert, molto solida e robusta. Un anello d’oro, con un simbolo massonico. Una spilla d’oro – la testa di un Bulldog, con rubini come occhi. Un portacarte in pelle russa con biglietti da visita di Enoch J. Drebbler di Cleveland, corrispondente a E.J.D. sul lino. Niente portafogli, ma monete sparse per l’ammontare di sette sterline e trenta. L’edizione tascabile del *Decameron* di Boccaccio, con il nome Joseph Stangerson nel retro della copertina. Due lettere – una indirizzata a E. J. Drebbler e una a Joseph Stangerson.”

“A quale indirizzo?”

“American Exchange, a Strand – da *lasciare*<sup>134</sup> *fino a quando sarebbero state reclamate*<sup>135</sup>. Erano entrambe della Guion Steamship Company, e riferivano della partenza dei loro battelli da Liverpool. È chiaro che questo sventurato *stesse per*<sup>136</sup> tornare a New York.”

“Ha fatto delle ricerche su questo Stangerson?”

“Le ho fatte subito,” disse Gregson. “Ho messo annunci su tutti i giornali, e uno dei miei uomini è andato alla American Exchange, ma non è ancora tornato.”

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<sup>127</sup> Transposition again: from explicit to implicit clause.

<sup>128</sup> Chunking-up.

<sup>129</sup> Metonymic chunking-down: the “Owner” instead of the place.

<sup>130</sup> Equivalence made by transposing a coordinate into a subordinate. All the clauses are more common in Italian.

<sup>131</sup> Modulation: definition instead of the term.

<sup>132</sup> Another modulation: from Having to There being.

<sup>133</sup> Little distortion.

<sup>134</sup> Transposition from active to passive form.

<sup>135</sup> Another transposition: from implicit to explicit form.

<sup>136</sup> It is the same as the French “Future Proche”.

"We simply detailed the circumstances, and said that we should be glad of any information which could help us."

"You did not ask for particulars on any point which appeared to you to be crucial?"

"I asked about Stangerson."

"Nothing else? Is there no circumstance on which this whole case appears to hinge? Will you not telegraph again?"

"I have said all I have to say," said Gregson, in an offended voice.

Sherlock Holmes chuckled to himself, and appeared to be about to make some remark, when Lestrade, who had been in the front room while we were holding this conversation in the hall, reappeared upon the scene, rubbing his hands in a pompous and self-satisfied manner.

"Mr. Gregson," he said, "I have just made a discovery of the highest importance, and one which would have been overlooked had I not made a careful examination of the walls."

The little man's eyes sparkled as he spoke, and he was evidently in a state of suppressed exultation at having scored a point against his colleague.

"Come here," he said, bustling back into the room, the atmosphere of which felt clearer since the removal of its ghastly inmate. "Now, stand there!"

He struck a match on his boot and held it up against the wall.

“L’ha mandato a Cleveland?”

“Abbiamo telegrafato stamane.”

“In che termini *ha posto*<sup>137</sup> la questione?”

“Abbiamo semplicemente dato i dettagli delle circostanze, e detto che saremmo stati lieti di ogni informazione che potesse aiutarci.”

“Non ha chiesto i particolari di ogni punto che le sembrava cruciale?”

“Ho chiesto di Stangerson.”

“Nient’altro? Non c’è alcun evento su cui sembra impernarsi l’intero caso? Telegraferà ancora?”

“Ho detto tutto quello che ho da dire” disse Gregson *in tono*<sup>138</sup> offeso.

Sherlock Holmes ridacchiava tra sé e sé, e sembrava stesse per fare qualche appunto, quando Lestrade, che era stato nel salotto mentre noi tenevamo la conversazione nella hall, riapparve in scena, sfregandosi le mani in maniera compiaciuta.

“Ho fatto una scoperta della massima importanza, che non sarebbe stata rilevata se non avessi fatto un esame accurato delle mura.”

Gli occhi dell’uomo luccicavano mentre parlava, ed era in evidente stato di esultanza contenuta *per aver segnato*<sup>139</sup> un punto contro il suo collega.

“Venite” disse, tornando nella stanza, la cui atmosfera era diventata *meno tetra*<sup>140</sup> *con la rimozione*<sup>141</sup> del suo orrendo occupante. “Adesso, mettetevi lì.”

Accese un fiammifero sul suo stivale e lo alzò vicino al muro.

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<sup>137</sup> Italian cannot do a transposition from noun to verb as easily as English; so, a translation was done by using the most common verb introducing the word “Domanda”, “Question”.

<sup>138</sup> Chunking- down.

<sup>139</sup> Transposition of tense: infinite for gerund.

<sup>140</sup> Modulation: instead of “Clearer” the room is now “less gloomy”.

<sup>141</sup> Transposition: from complement of time to complement of manner.

"Look at that!" he said, triumphantly. "I have remarked that the paper had fallen away in parts. In this particular corner of the room a large piece had peeled off, leaving a yellow square of coarse plastering. Across this bare space there was scrawled in blood-red letters a single word

RACHE."

"What do you think of that?" cried the detective, with the air of a showman exhibiting his show. "This was overlooked because it was in the darkest corner of the room, and no one thought of looking there. The murderer has written it with his or her own blood. See this smear where it has trickled down the wall! That disposes of the idea of suicide anyhow. Why was that corner chosen to write it on? I will tell you. See that candle on the mantelpiece. It was lit at the time, and if it was lit this corner would be the brightest instead of the darkest portion of the wall."

"And what does it mean now that you have found it?" asked Gregson in a depreciatory voice.

“Guardate lì!” disse trionfante.

Ho notato che la carta era in parte staccata. In quel particolare angolo della stanza una grossa porzione era stata tirata via, evidenziando un quadrato giallo di intonaco grezzo. In questo spazio vuoto vi era scarabocchiata una singola parola di color rosso sangue:

RACHE

“Che ne pensate?” gridò l’investigatore con l’aria dello showman che si esibisce nel suo *spettacolo*<sup>142</sup>. “Nessuno l’ha rilevato<sup>143</sup> perché era nell’angolo più oscuro della stanza, e nessuno ha pensato *di guardare*<sup>144</sup> lì. L’assassino l’ha scritto *col*<sup>145</sup> *suo*<sup>146</sup> stesso sangue, *come si vede da*<sup>147</sup> quelle macchie che gocciolano dal muro. La cosa risolve l’idea del suicidio, in qualche modo. Perché è stato scelto quell’angolo per scriverci sopra? Ve lo dico io. *Vedete quella candela sul camino?*<sup>148</sup> Era illuminato in quel momento, e se illuminato quest’angolo sarebbe stato il più luminoso invece che il più oscuro del muro.”

“E che significa quello che *ha* scoperto?” disse Gregson in tono di *disapprovazione*<sup>149</sup>.

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<sup>142</sup> Even if in Italian the English term is common, we preferred use its counterpart to avoid the repetition of “Show”.

<sup>143</sup> Modulation: from “Overlook” to “Not seen”.

<sup>144</sup> Grammar adaptation: English uses gerund after a preposition, while Italian has infinite. This explains the transposition of tense.

<sup>145</sup> Even if no longer in use in formal Italian, it is still common in oral.

<sup>146</sup> Third person Italian possessive determiner does not depend on gender: it is the same in both. So, the use of two adjectives has been avoided.

<sup>147</sup> Modulation, but also transposition: the imperative is changed into a subordinate. And the point of view changes from personal into impersonal.

<sup>148</sup> Transposition from a statement into a question.

<sup>149</sup> Again a transposition, a syntactic one: from verb to complement.

"I really beg your pardon!" said my companion, who had ruffled the little man's temper by bursting into an explosion of laughter. "You certainly have the credit of being the first of us to find this out, and, as you say, it bears every mark of having been written by the other participant in last night's mystery. I have not had time to examine this room yet, but with your permission I shall do so now."

As he spoke, he whipped a tape measure and a large round magnifying glass from his pocket. With these two implements he trotted noiselessly about the room, sometimes stopping, occasionally kneeling, and once lying flat upon his face. So engrossed was he with his occupation that he appeared to have forgotten our presence, for he chattered away to himself under his breath the whole time, keeping up a running fire of exclamations, groans, whistles, and little cries suggestive of encouragement and of hope. As I watched him I was irresistibly reminded of a pure-blooded well-trained foxhound as it dashes backwards and forwards through the covert, whining in its eagerness, until it comes across the lost scent. For twenty minutes or more he continued his researches, measuring with the most exact care the distance between marks which were entirely invisible to me, and occasionally applying his tape to the walls in an equally incomprehensible manner. In one place he gathered up very carefully a little pile of grey dust from the floor, and packed it away in an envelope. Finally, he examined with his glass the word upon the wall, going over every letter of it with the most minute exactness. This done, he appeared to be satisfied, for he replaced his tape and his glass in his pocket.

"They say that genius is an infinite capacity for taking pains," he remarked with a smile. "It's a very bad definition, but it does apply to detective work."

“Mi *scuso*<sup>150</sup> tanto” disse il mio amico, che aveva turbato il temperamento dell’uomo *scoppiando in una fragorosa risata*<sup>151</sup>. “Ha sicuramente il merito di essere stato il primo di noi a scoprire questo e, come dice, tutto ci *suggerisce*<sup>152</sup> che è stato scritto dall’altro partecipante del mistero di ieri notte. Non ho ancora avuto tempo di esaminare questa stanza, ma col suo permesso lo farò adesso.”

Mentre parlava, estrasse dalla tasca un metro a nastro e una lente perfettamente rotonda. Con questi due *strumenti*<sup>153</sup> girava veloce e *senza far rumore*<sup>154</sup> nella stanza, fermandosi talvolta, inginocchiandosi ogni tanto, e distendendosi una volta faccia a terra. Era così assorto nella sua occupazione che sembrava aver dimenticato la nostra presenza, poiché blaterava *sottovoce*<sup>155</sup> tutto il tempo *con un crescendo*<sup>156</sup> di esclamazioni, gemiti, fischi e gridolini di incoraggiamento e speranza. Mentre lo guardavo, mi ricordava irresistibilmente un cane da volpe purosangue e ben addestrato *che*<sup>157</sup> corre su e giù per la macchia, mugolando nella sua impazienza, finché non si imbatte nell’odore perduto. Continuò le sue ricerche per venti minuti *circa*<sup>158</sup>, misurando con la massima esattezza la distanza tra indizi che erano completamente invisibili per me, e talvolta mettendo il suo metro sul muro nella stessa incomprensibile maniera. A un certo punto raccolse molto cautamente un cumulo di polvere grigia dal pavimento e lo *avviluppò*<sup>159</sup>. Infine, analizzò con la sua lente la scritta sul muro, ispezionando ogni lettera con la medesima minuziosità. Fatto questo, sembrò soddisfatto, *e*<sup>160</sup> si rimise il nastro e la lente in tasca.

“*Si dice*<sup>161</sup> che il genio sia l’infinita capacità di darsi pena”, rimarcò con un sorriso. “È una pessima definizione, ma si adatta *perfettamente*<sup>162</sup> al lavoro del detective.”

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<sup>150</sup> Equivalence.

<sup>151</sup> Equivalence again.

<sup>152</sup> Distortion: “To Bear” is translatable into “Condurre”, but a periphrasis should be used.

<sup>153</sup> Chunking-up.

<sup>154</sup> Transposition: an adverb changed into a clause.

<sup>155</sup> Transposition again: an adverbial syntagm is now a complement of manner.

<sup>156</sup> Third consecutive transposition: a verb transformed into a complement. It is also a modulation.

<sup>157</sup> Transposition of subordination: a relative clause substitutes a time clause.

<sup>158</sup> Equivalence, but little distortion: “Circa” means “more or less”.

<sup>159</sup> Equivalence again.

<sup>160</sup> Transposition: from subordination to coordination.

<sup>161</sup> Modulation: from a personal to an impersonal point of view.

<sup>162</sup> This addition allows for the same nuance of the use of the auxiliary “Does” in the Source text.

Gregson and Lestrade had watched the manoeuvres of their amateur companion with considerable curiosity and some contempt. They evidently failed to appreciate the fact, which I had begun to realize, that Sherlock Holmes' smallest actions were all directed towards some definite and practical end.

"What do you think of it, sir?" they both asked.

"It would be robbing you of the credit of the case if I was to presume to help you," remarked my friend. "You are doing so well now that it would be a pity for anyone to interfere." There was a world of sarcasm in his voice as he spoke. "If you will let me know how your investigations go," he continued, "I shall be happy to give you any help I can. In the meantime I should like to speak to the constable who found the body. Can you give me his name and address?"

Lestrade glanced at his note-book. "John Rance," he said. "He is off duty now. You will find him at 46, Audley Court, Kennington Park Gate."

Holmes took a note of the address.

"Come along, Doctor," he said; "we shall go and look him up. I'll tell you one thing which may help you in the case," he continued, turning to the two detectives. "There has been murder done, and the murderer was a man. He was more than six feet high, was in the prime of life, had small feet for his height, wore coarse, square-toed boots and smoked a Trichinopoly cigar. He came here with his victim in a four-wheeled cab, which was drawn by a horse with three old shoes and one new one on his off fore leg. In all probability the murderer had a florid face, and the finger-nails of his right hand were remarkably long. These are only a few indications, but they may assist you."



Gregson e Lestrade avevano guardato le operazioni del loro amico, che non era un poliziotto, con considerevole curiosità e *una punta di*<sup>163</sup> disprezzo. Era evidente che *non riuscivano a comprendere il fatto*<sup>164</sup> che io avevo iniziato a realizzare: le più *apparentemente insignificanti*<sup>165</sup> azioni di Sherlock Holmes erano tutte dirette verso un preciso e pratico fine.

“Che ne pensa?” chiesero entrambi.

“Sarebbe come derubarvi dei meriti del caso se *avessi l’arditezza*<sup>166</sup> di aiutarvi” notò il mio amico. “State facendo così bene che sarebbe un peccato se qualcuno interferisse”. *Il suo tono era pieno di sarcasmo*<sup>167</sup>. “*Fatemi sapere come procedono le vostre indagini*<sup>168</sup>” continuò, “Sarò felice di darvi tutto l’aiuto che posso. Nel frattempo vorrei parlar con l’agente che ha trovato il corpo. Potreste darmi nome e indirizzo?”

Lestrade *lesse dal*<sup>169</sup> suo taccuino. “John Rance” disse. “È fuori servizio adesso. Lo troverà al 46 di Audley Court, a Kennington Park Gate.”

Holmes *annotò*<sup>170</sup> l’indirizzo.

“Venga, Dottore” disse. “Andremo a trovarlo. Vi dirò una cosa che può aiutarvi nel caso” continuò, voltandosi verso i due investigatori. “C’è stato un omicidio, e l’assassino è<sup>171</sup> un uomo. È alto più di un metro e ottanta, *ancora nel pieno delle forze*<sup>172</sup>; ha i piedi piccoli per la sua altezza, indossava grossi stivali squadrati e fuma sigari *indiani*<sup>173</sup>. È venuto qui con la sua vittima in una carrozza a quattro ruote, trainata da un cavallo con tre ferri vecchi e uno nuovo nella zampa anteriore. *Molto probabilmente*<sup>174</sup> l’assassino ha la faccia rubiconda, e le unghie della sua mano destra sono considerevolmente lunghe. Sono solo un paio di indicazioni, ma possono *esservi d’aiuto*<sup>175</sup>.”

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<sup>163</sup> Metaphor used to express the concept in Italian.

<sup>164</sup> Equivalence.

<sup>165</sup> Personal interpretation.

<sup>166</sup> Equivalence.

<sup>167</sup> Equivalence built through some transpositions.

<sup>168</sup> Syntactic transposition from a conditional clause to a main clause.

<sup>169</sup> Equivalence.

<sup>170</sup> Equivalence again.

<sup>171</sup> Cultural and grammar adaptation: in Italian, something started in the past but still continuing is linked to the Present tense. In this case, whoever murdered the man is still his murderer.

<sup>172</sup> Modulation: being young is seen as being at his best physical state.

<sup>173</sup> Chunking-up: Trichinopoly has no meaning, for an Italian modern reader.

<sup>174</sup> Transposition from prepositional syntagm to an adverbial one.

<sup>175</sup> Equivalence.

Lestrade and Gregson glanced at each other with an incredulous smile.

"If this man was murdered, how was it done?" asked the former.

"Poison," said Sherlock Holmes curtly, and strode off. "One other thing, Lestrade," he added, turning round at the door: "'Rache,' is the German for 'revenge;' so don't lose your time looking for Miss Rachel."

With which Parthian shot he walked away, leaving the two rivals open-mouthed behind him.

Lestrade e Gregson si guardarono l'un l'altro con un sorriso incredulo.

“Se quest'uomo è stato assassinato, come è stato *ucciso*<sup>176</sup>?” chiese il primo.

“Veleno” disse Sherlock Holmes seccamente, uscendo a grandi passi.

“E un'altra cosa, Lestrade” aggiunse, voltandosi alla porta. “ ‘Rache’ *vuol dire 'Vendetta' in tedesco*<sup>177</sup>; quindi, non perda tempo cercando la signorina Rachel.”

Con questa *frecciatina*<sup>178</sup> se ne andò, lasciando i due rivali a bocca aperta dietro di lui.

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<sup>176</sup> Chunking-down.

<sup>177</sup> Equivalence.

<sup>178</sup> Another equivalence: the metaphoric use is maintained.

## CONCLUSIONS

It is time to reveal what was learnt during the composition of this dissertation, and comment about it. The very first chapter was focused method of analysis: speaking about Translation seemed very natural, but what about intertextuality? Even if the examples given were from cinema, intertextuality regards all mind works in the world, influencing each other, even if authors do not recognize that they were influenced by someone else. In this case, Doyle's scholars never spoke about Cauvain, but the similarities between the two heroes and the very close structures of *Maximilien Heller* and *A Study in Scarlet* reveal that the English writer's inspiration was not only the quoted Edgar Allan Poe, but also the less famous French novelists. This would be surely interesting in a dissertation on intertextuality based on Yampolski's theory we exposed in the first chapter. The real question is why it was discussed in a thesis on translation?

It is commonplace that if a work belongs to a certain genre it orients the way translators work and the words they use. "Scena del crimine" is a well-known expression among Italian readers of thriller, used to say where a homicide happened. The American serial "C. S. I." even has this title in the Italian title. And the borrowed English word "Detective" is more common than its Italian counterpart "Investigatore". All the features discussed in chapter 2 are examples of this aspect: "Scoprire l'assassino", in a Detective story, is more common than "Scoprire chi ha commesso l'omicidio", even if the latter would be a better way to express the concept. There are some typical expressions and terms that can no longer be avoided while working on the translation of a thriller. Yet, this again does not explain why a closer intertextual analysis would have helped in translating.

Despite having more or less the same characters and setting, and really similar action, the two chapters were written in really different languages: the Neo-Latin French and the Germanic English. Except the commonplaces quoted above, the difficulties in translation were not the same. Many difficulties linked to the passage from English to Italian were solved through Equivalences, sometimes by making entropies, sometimes by compensating what was lost. Strangely

enough, this allowed for less operations in the translating work. Instead, the closer proximity between French and Italian, paradoxically, was the source of many more operations. Despite the fact that an entire paragraph could have been translated word-by-word, it never happened during the other translation. What was really interesting in both parts was the reflection about the operation being carried out: a kind of “Thinking-aloud” protocol (Halliday 2009: 65-77) which confirmed that translator’s instinct is often the guide. As stated by Sherlock Holmes in the chapter that was translated for this dissertation, “It was easier to know it than to explain why I knew it”. Nevertheless, it actually worked, but, would it be the same without a theoretical background about translation?

The French novel was translated before the English one, and it was done on the entire text, even if only one chapter was presented here. Before dealing with *A Study in Scarlet* (not read yet until the end of the translation of Cauvain’s thriller), the hypo text was already known. There was an awareness of the intertextuality, and indeed most of the features of Maximilien can be found in Doyle’s hero. When translating English chapter, some interpretation needed to be done. This was possible through the knowledge regarding the original French hypo text. As Halliday suggests us:

The study of translation is so dependent on subjective understanding, is itself dependent on *translation*, that it can never be fully systematic, it can never be a science, not even a pragmatic opposed to a pure one (Halliday 2009: 23).

Subjective understanding was based on the knowledge of Cauvain’s work; no science suggested taking this path, but it was done. This is the advantage a close intertextual analysis one to. So, it was already known that the Detective was genial, while no one around him is able to understand what is happening: the sense of his superiority is always expressed (in English text, also through the opposition between Detective and Investigator). In the same way, there was an attempt to express the fear of the Doctors with them. Sometimes, it was not a matter of technic or words but a knowledge of something more, something that could not be found without the original text. Of course, even intertextuality of the genre helped in the orientation, as expressed above: but, what made it possible to

compensate the lack was certainly the knowledge of what the two texts had in common.

Now, some questions could arise in reader's mind: is the knowledge of all the hypo texts necessary to translate in general, and Cauvain's novel in particular? Absolutely not. Many translators before worked on Doyle's novel, and most had never read *Maximilien Heller* and their results were excellent anyway.

Another good question: Can one consider themselves a more aware translator, or in any case more knowledgeable of the English text? Another negative answer: no one can really know what the author wanted to say exactly. Maybe someone can pick up an aspect while another colleague can pick up others, but the whole will never be reached. Analysis may be a good way to reduce this distance, but there will always be something missing. And what is more, as Freud stated, "Traduttore traditore" (in Italian even in the original German text): despite the intentions, translators will be unfaithful to author's thinking, in particular if they cannot communicate with each other. Pirandello was aware no one could really understand the core of what he was writing: his activity as director shows he tried to reduce this distance.

And, reducing distances is the main duty of a translator: there are people far away even if geographically close. We have seen things someone could even imagine: we must show to other. Knowledge has no nationality and no language: everyone should be able to get to it. Babel creates some barriers, but never opposes to those willing to go beyond them. Simply, it challenges us: will we be able to win?

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