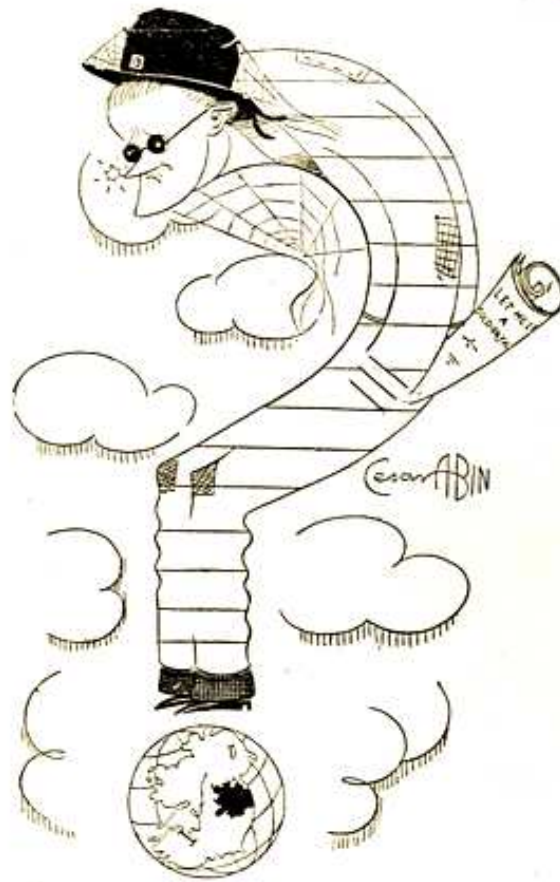


Duffy, Death, and Dublin

A Translation of “A Painful Case”



(Illustration by César Abín 1932)

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Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Introduction | 2 |
| James Joyce | 2 |
| <i>Dubliners</i> | 5 |
| General Themes of <i>Dubliners</i> in “A Painful Case” | 6 |
| Mr Duffy | 7 |
| Mrs Sinico | 10 |
| Culture-specific elements | 11 |
| Language | 12 |
| Conclusion | 15 |
| Works Cited | 16 |
| Appendix I: Translation | 18 |
| Appendix II: Original Text | 31 |

Introduction

James Joyce is a complex figure. In 1904, he left Ireland together with Nora Barnacle, and with the exception of a few visits between 1904 and 1912, he never returned. His work, however, often focuses on Ireland, Dublin in particular. In *Ulysses*, for example, protagonist Leopold Bloom lives in Dublin. Prior to *Ulysses*, Joyce finished a collection of short stories which was published as *Dubliners* in 1914. All of these stories, as the title might suggest, take place in one single city; Dublin. “A Painful Case,” the short story I have translated, can also be found in this collection.

I chose “A Painful Case” for a number of reasons. The fact that the story is situated in Dublin poses translation problems: I had to translate street names and other elements specific to Dublin in such a way that they were accurate, but did not feel “translated” to the Dutch reader. This was a challenge, as were other culture-specific elements, but this challenge was what appealed to me. The storyline itself also caught my eye. Mr Duffy, the protagonist, is a “painful case” himself, and the way the short story is written reflects this. I will elaborate on this notion further on in my analysis.

My mock commission is from the Dutch publishing house “De Bezige Bij.” This choice makes sense, because this publishing house has already published other works of Joyce. The short story will be part of its original collection; *Dubliners* will be republished and needs a new translation.

James Joyce

James Joyce was born on 2 February 1882 in Dublin. He was born as the oldest of ten siblings, two of which died prematurely of typhoid. His parents were John Stanislaus Joyce and Mary Jane Golding. At age six he entered a Jesuit boarding school, Clongowes Wood College. However, in 1891, when his father could no longer pay his tuition, he had to leave

this school. From 1893 to 1898, Joyce attended another Jesuit school, Belvedere College. He was a bright student and graduated with good grades. After graduation, he entered the University College of Dublin, which was a Jesuit institution as well. Here, he started to turn his back on Catholicism and provincial patriotism.

Around 1900, Joyce began to write papers and essays. His writing career had already started when he was nine with the poem “Et Tu, Healy” about the death of Irish politician Charles Parnell. Unfortunately, even though Joyce had the poem printed, there are no surviving copies. One of the works he wrote in 1901 was “The Day of the Rabblement,” an essay which attacked the Irish theatre, claiming it was too provincial. The essay was quite controversial and was rejected by the Jesuit college magazine that was supposed to publish it.

When he graduated in October 1902, Joyce left for Paris to study medicine. However, he soon ended his medical career and started to write for a Dublin newspaper. In April, his father sent him a telegram which said that his mother was dying. He returned to Ireland where his mother died on August 13. In 1904, Joyce started to work on “A Portrait of the Artist,” a short, semi-autobiographical work which eventually became the novel *A Portrait of the Artist of a Young Man*. His relationship with his family worsened and he took on a teaching job in a Dalkey school.

Joyce also met Nora Barnacle in 1904 and fell in love with her. Since he did not believe in the institution of marriage and it was impossible to live with Nora in Ireland without being married, the couple travelled to Europe. After visiting London and Zurich, Joyce and Nora settled in Pola, where Joyce started to teach English. In 1905, the two moved to Trieste, where their son Giorgio was born. 1905 was also the year in which Joyce tried to publish a first version of *Dubliners*. The book was surrounded by controversy and was not to be published until 1914.

Joyce moved to Rome in 1906. Here, he worked in a bank until he returned to Trieste, where he again taught English. A collection of poems, *Chamber Music*, was published and another child was born; Lucia Anna saw the light of day at July 26. In 1909, Joyce made his first visit to Ireland in five years. During this trip, Joyce experienced an emotional crisis. He later turned this crisis into *Exiles*, his only play. After a short return to Trieste to find financial support, Joyce opened a theatre in Dublin. This theatre was short-lived; it was closed in 1910, soon after Joyce's return to Trieste. Still trying to get *Dubliners* published in 1912, Joyce again made a trip to Dublin but failed to find a publisher.

1914 can be seen as Joyce's glory year. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* was published in instalments in the *Egoist*; the novel would be published in book form in 1916. *Dubliners* was finally published and Joyce started working on his magnum opus *Ulysses*. He delayed writing the novel to write *Exiles*, which was finished in the spring of 1915 and published in 1918. The writing of *Ulysses* spanned multiple years and before the novel was finished, it was already published in instalments. The entire novel was completed in 1921.

After *Ulysses*, Joyce started another ambitious project. In 1923, he started writing *Finnegans Wake*. Like *Ulysses*, the novel was published in instalments before it was finished. Sections of the novel were even published as separate books, but the novel was not completed until 1938 and published in 1939.

In 1931, Nora and Joyce travelled to London to be married "for testamentary reasons" (Litz 13). In addition, Joyce's father died and a grandson was born. These occurrences affected Joyce greatly and were reflected in his poem "Ecce Puer." Lucia, his daughter, had a mental breakdown in 1932 and never recovered. She lived in a mental institution in Switzerland and Joyce spent 1934 in Switzerland to be close to her. From 1935 onwards he again returned to France until the second World War broke out. He then fled to Zurich, where he died in 1941 after an abdominal operation.

Dubliners

As early as 1906, a publisher agreed to publish *Dubliners*. The printer however objected to printing a number of passages, but he was not the only one who disliked Joyce's work. The publishers and printers who did not want to publish *Dubliners* had different reasons for this; for instance, the stories featured real names and places and contained references to politics and religion. Moreover, they were shocked by the blasphemy in the stories. Joyce did not want to alter the content of the short stories and only after years of struggle and having been passed up by three different publishers, *Dubliners* was published in 1914.

The order of the stories in *Dubliners* is not randomly picked; Joyce has stated that he wanted to "present Dublin 'under four of its aspects; Childhood, Adolescence, Maturity and Public Life'" (qtd in Litz 53). In addition, there is an "Epilogue," consisting of only one short story, "The Dead." In "Childhood," small boys narrate the stories in a first person narrative voice, while "Adolescence" is about adolescent frustration. In "Maturity" the stories are about adults and "Public Life" describes the different aspects of public life. The "Epilogue" sums up the most important themes.

The central theme of *Dubliners* is paralysis, and more specifically "the paralysis of the individual spirit and of the community" (Litz 52). This paralysis is often accompanied by the misinterpretation of discourses, words and names. In addition, double meanings are also apparent in most stories. This can even be seen in the titles of the short stories; "The Dead" is a good example. Another aspect of *Dubliners* is the importance of certain words to certain characters. In "Eveline," for example, Frank deeply impresses Eveline with his stories. He enchants her by using words. References to myths, religion and legends can also be found in the short stories. For example, as Center suggests, the name Eveline might be derived of the biblical name Eve. While Eve is banned from Eden, Eveline stays in her own little world.

Consequently, she could be a representation of what would have happened to Eve if she did not take a bite out of the apple.

General Themes of *Dubliners* in “A Painful Case”

In “A Painful Case,” Mr Duffy, a man with little social skills who lives more or less in isolation, meets Mrs Sinico. The two become friends, but while Mr Duffy sees their relationship as merely an intellectual relationship, Mrs Sinico thinks they are at the start of a romantic affair. When Mr Duffy discovers this, he immediately ends the friendship and returns to his structured life. Four years later, his quiet life is interrupted when he reads that Mrs Sinico has died in a train accident. At first, he is angry with her, but this quickly turns into sadness: he realises that he is alone, “an outcast from life’s feast” (Joyce 103).

Most of the themes that can be found in *Dubliners* are also apparent in “A Painful Case.” Mr Duffy is the prototype of a paralysed man, and attaches great value to words. Furthermore, there are also references to myths, religion and legends.

Mr Duffy fits the mould of the paralysed man perfectly. He is stuck in his own world and keeps people at a distance. At the first sign of physical affection, he breaks off all contact with Mrs Sinico. Their relationship is an opportunity for him to escape his structured life, but he does not seize this opportunity. Moreover, When he finally realises that he has lost something very precious, he still cannot escape from his loneliness. The story ends with the sentence “he felt that he was alone” (Joyce 103). Even though he is lonely, Mr Duffy does not make any plans to change this; his paralysis prohibits him from changing.

In addition, the importance of words can be seen clearly in “A Painful Case.” Mr Duffy wants an intellectual instead of a physical relationship with Mrs Sinico and wishes to fill her head with ideas. Furthermore, the value of words is often misinterpreted in *Dubliners*;

likewise, Mrs Sinico misinterprets Mr Duffy's words. She interprets them as an expression of his love for her, but Mr Duffy has never intended them that way.

References to legends can also be found in "A Painful Case." Emily, Mrs Sinico's first name, can be seen as a reference to another fictional character; the suffix -ly has been added to the name Emma, making Emily "Emma-like." Another famous and troubled Emma is Emma Bovary; Mrs Sinico might be an allusion to her (Lowe-Evans 397).

Mr Duffy

"A Painful Case" centres on Mr James Duffy. Apart from him, there are a nine other characters, but most of these do not play a significant role in the story and are only to be found in the newspaper report about Mrs Sinico's death. Mr Duffy is a peculiar person; he has strange habits and does not let people into his personal life. Consequently, it could be argued that Mr Duffy has a personality with autistic features. This does not only mean that he is merely unable to communicate with people, as the word "autism" is now used. He shows signs of the disease that is called autism; he cannot connect with people and does not like changes. However, even though he seems to be a social outcast, Mr Duffy still participates in society. In addition, Mr Duffy's personality influences the style of the short story.

Mr Duffy is a very odd person. He lives in a neat, plain house, where everything has a specific place. The house is located at the edge of the city because Mr Duffy wants "to live as far away as possible from the city of which he was a citizen" (Joyce 95). One evening, he meets Mrs Sinico at a concert, but instead of listening to what she has to say he tries to "fix her permanently into his memory" (Joyce 96). This is a very distant approach to someone, people usually focus on what the speaker has to say instead on what he or she looks like. In short, as Karen Lawrence and Paul Saint-Amour argue in their article about "A Painful Case,"

Mr Duffy does not want to listen to Mrs Sinico, but that he wants to “immobilize, master, and possess” her (189).

This cold, distant approach can also be seen when Mrs Sinico tries to achieve closer physical contact with Mr Duffy. When she presses her hand against his cheek, he backs out of the relationship. For him, the relationship was never meant to be a physical one, while Mrs Sinico was looking for love and affection. After Mrs Sinico’s death, Mr Duffy does not mourn about her, but feels angry; she has humiliated him by committing suicide. It is only after some time that he realises how lonely she must have been. This however quickly turns into an egocentric train of thought about his own lonely life.

All these aspects of Mr Duffy’s character add up to a personality with autistic features. He does not get close to people, both physically or in terms of his residence. When people in return approach him, he immediately withdraws himself from the relationship. Furthermore, Mr Duffy also cannot relate to people. When he attended the meetings of an Irish Socialist Party, he “felt himself a unique figure” and could not understand why the workmen had heated discussions about wages (Joyce 97-98).

Looking at his personality, Mr Duffy appears to be a social outcast. Patrick Bixby however argues that he is not outside of society, but merely at the edge of it. He gives examples to enforce this; Mr Duffy is not the artist he wants to be but works as an ordinary bank employee, he does not read the books on his bookshelves but the *Daily Mail*, and he did not become a socialist because problems arose. In fact, “If [Mr Duffy] succeeds in living at the limits of the city, he nonetheless lives within the conceptual limits of the bourgeois press, with its advocacy of normative social forms, strict Catholic morality, and conservative cultural tastes” (Bixby 114).

Mr Duffy’s personality affects the language of “A Painful Case.” The narrator tells the reader that Mr Duffy lives “at a little distance from his body” (Joyce 96), and the way he is

described reflects this. According to Lawrence and Saint-Amour, Mr Duffy is described in “a diagnostic rather than a forensic manner” (187). As a consequence, the language is distant and descriptive. For example, when Mr Duffy has ended his relationship with Mrs Sinico, the narrator states; “Four years passed. Mr Duffy returned to his even way of life...His father died; the junior partner of the bank retired” (Joyce 99). There is no emotion to be found in the cold, factual account of his father’s death. Translating “A Painful Case,” I tried to copy this diagnostic style of writing. Mr Duffy for example does not live his spiritual life with other people, “visiting his relatives at Christmas and escorting them to the cemetery when they died” (Joyce 96). The word “escorting” shows no emotion at all. I translated this as “hij bezocht zijn familie met Kerstmis en begeleidde hen naar het kerkhof als ze overleden,” in which the word “begeleidde” shows no emotional attachment as well.

In addition, most of the sentences that describe Mr Duffy start with “he” or “his.” This has to do with his autobiographical habit on which I will elaborate in the section titled “Language,” but it is also a very “case-building” way of describing someone. I tried to start these sentences in the goal text with “hij” or “him” as well. From time to time, however, this became too repetitious. For example,

He had neither companions nor friends, church nor creed. *He* lived his spiritual life without any communion with others, visiting his relatives at Christmas and escorting them to the cemetery when they died. *He* performed these two social duties for old dignity’s sake but conceded nothing further to the conventions which regulate the civic life. *He* allowed himself to think that in certain circumstances he would rob his bank but, as these circumstances never arose, his life rolled out evenly – an adventureless tale (Joyce 96)

I chose to change the sentence structure of one of the sentences, which makes the paragraph less repetitious. I translated “*He* lived his spiritual life without any communion with others”

as “Zijn godsdienstige leven deelde hij niet met anderen.” Just as the other sentences this sentence starts with a third person, but the possessive “zijn” is a discontinuation of the nominative case.

Mrs Sinico

Mrs Sinico is a middle-class woman; she attends concerts, owns a cottage on the countryside and wears expensive jackets. However, in the case of Mrs Sinico, wealth does not lead to happiness. As said before, Mr Duffy’s and Mrs Sinico’s views on their relationship differ greatly. As her husband is often at sea, Mrs Sinico is often lonely. She is looking for someone to replace him, but Mr Duffy is only looking for a friend to have intellectual conversations with. Furthermore, with the introduction of Mrs Sinico, the style of the short story changes.

Before Mr Duffy meets Mrs Sinico at a concert, the short story has “described only conditions,” and is one long enumeration of features of Mr Duffy’s house, appearance and personality (Lawrence and Saint-Amour 188). The narrative of the short story commences with the only two sentences written in direct discourse, which are uttered by Mrs Sinico; “What a pity there is such a poor house to-night! It’s so hard on people to have to sing to empty benches” (Joyce 96). For a while, Mrs Sinico connects with Mrs Duffy, which is very uncommon for him. This exceptionality is reflected in the text. Before Mrs Sinico, phrases such as “for many years” (Joyce 96) are used, while expressions such as “little by little” and “sometimes” (Joyce 97) are used to describe actions after Mrs Sinico’s introduction.

In my translation, I wanted to maintain this division of style. To achieve this, I translated the enumerating structure of the first section very literal. A feature of this enumerating style is that a great deal of sentences start with the subject of the sentence. These sentences start with a subject in my translation as well. For example, the sentences which describe Mr Duffy’s bedroom mostly start with a subject. I translated “The bed was clothed

with white bed-clothes and a black and scarlet rug covered the foot” (Joyce 95) with “Het bed was opgemaakt met wit beddengoed en een zwart met felrode deken bedekte het voeteneinde.” For the second, narrative section, my emphasis was not on the sentence structure, but on whether or not a sentence felt as “natural speech.” For example, “He kept away from concerts lest he should meet her” (Joyce 99) has become “Bang haar te ontmoeten bleef hij weg bij concerten.”

Culture-specific elements

At the start of the twentieth century, the small city of Dublin was quintessentially Irish. Moreover, Joyce had a certain fondness for the city; “‘The expression ‘Dubliner’ seems to me to have some meaning and I doubt whether the same can be said for such words as ‘Londoner’ and ‘Parisian’” (qtd. in Litz 49). However, since Joyce no longer lived in Dublin at the time of writing, he wrote letters to his brother Stanislaus in which he asked him questions about the city (Lawrence and Saint-Amour 185). This factual accuracy of the geography of Dublin poses difficulties for the translator. Moreover, there are other culture-specific elements which put the translator’s skills to the test.

In “A Painful Case,” many streets and other geographical places are specifically named. Mr Duffy works at a bank in Baggot Street, dines in an eating house in George’s Street and attends a concert in the Rotunda (Joyce 96). In many cases, I have chosen to refrain from translating these “Dublin-specific elements.” For example, “Earlsfort Terrace” remained “Earlsfort Terrace” (Joyce 97). However, I did alter these Dublin-specific elements if they posed problems for the Dutch reader. For example, Mrs Sinico dies at the Sydney Parade Station. The head of the newspaper article thus reads “Death of a Lady at Sydney Parade” (Joyce 100). When reading “Sydney Parade,” the Dutch reader will not immediately know what is meant, because “parade” has a different connotation in Dutch; the word recalls the

image of a festive procession. As this is not the English connotation of the word, I have decided to add information to ensure that the Dutch audience understands where Mrs Sinico dies. By translating the sentence as “Vrouw dood gevonden op station Sydney Parade,” the English and the Dutch audience will read the sentence in the same way.

The short story also features culture-specific elements that are not related to Dublin. These vary from food to books and clothing, and vary in difficulty as well. Translating these, I tried to stay as close to the source text as possible, while not alienating the text from the Dutch reader. I translated the titles of books, because I found the meaning of the titles more important than a literal translation of the source text. The books in his room say something about Mr Duffy. They are dry as dust, which, as he is not too entrancing either, says something about his personality. The English title of the books will probably not spark the Dutch reader’s imagination, while the Dutch title will.

By contrast, the *Daily Mail* does not become the *Telegraaf*. In the Netherlands, foreign newspapers are also available, and even though both the *Daily Mail* and the *Telegraaf* are newspapers which are quite similar, there are differences. The Irish characteristics of the *Daily Mail* will be replaced by the Dutch ones of the *Telegraaf* if I chose to insert this Dutch culture-specific element, while the rest of my translation preserves the Irish elements of the source text. Even though the text is read by a Dutch audience, this Dutch element would be alienating

Language

Most people do not pay a great deal of attention to the stylistic aspects of *Dubliners*; in comparison with for example *Ulysses*, the style of writing is very simple (Wales 37).

However, this style has got nothing to do with Joyce’s competence; he chose to write the short stories in a simple language because it adds to the “ordinairness” of the stories themselves.

Joyce has even given this particular style of writing a name; he called it “scrupulous meanness” (qtd. in Wales 38). This scrupulous meanness can also be found in “A Painful Case.” Joyce’s style of writing can be difficult to translate, but I have found strategies to do so.

The compound “scrupulous meanness” falls apart into two words which give information about Joyce’s writing style. “Scrupulous” can be defined as the preciseness of the text and the care with which Joyce has chosen his words, but also with the fact that Joyce wanted to show the real Ireland and the unromantic life of the average citizen of Dublin (Wales 38). To describe these elements, a simple style of writing would be appropriate. The second part of the compound, “meanness,” reflects this. The text is not written in a very embellished style, it is a “‘middle’ or ‘mean’ style.” This style can even be described as plain, as “meanness” can also mean “poverty” (Wales 38). The sentence “He felt that they were hard-featured realists and that they resented an exactitude which was the product of a leisure not within their reach” is an example of Joyce’s “scrupulous meanness” (Joyce 98). Even though the sentence has got a lot of content, it is written with as little words as possible and in a very plain style. All the words are used in the everyday language, they are not high brow.

The “scrupulous meanness” in “A Painful Case” poses problems for the translator. Take for example the sentence “The lofty walls of his uncarpeted room were free from pictures” (Joyce 95). This seems a straightforward sentence, but it is not; “uncarpeted” cannot be translated to Dutch as an adjective. I have translated this sentence as “Aan de hoge muren van zijn kamer met kale vloeren hingen geen schilderijtjes,” which is wordier than the source text. This was, however, often unavoidable; I have tried to stay as concise as the source text, but sometimes I had to make concessions to keep the goal text understandable and grammatical.

Other features of the text are repetition and focalisation. As most stories in *Dubliners*, “A Painful Case” is not filled with action and plot twists. Joyce focuses on “the minutiae and rituals of everyday life, on the clichés and routine formulas of everyday speech” instead of events (Walser 38). A linguistic device that can emphasise this is repetition. The repetitions in “A Painful Case” are called “schemes,” figures of speech which organise words into regular patterns (Walser 38). Repetitions do not only mimic the repetitious rhythm of the train that kills Mrs Sinico, but also enforce the story. For example, when Mr Duffy finally expresses his feelings after Mrs Sinico’s death, he uses the word “lonely” multiple times; “Now that she was gone he understood how lonely her life must have been, sitting night after night alone in that room. His life would be lonely too until he, too, died” (Joyce 102-103). By connecting Mr Duffy and Mrs Sinico with the word “lonely,” the parallel lives of the two characters are emphasised (Walser 43-44).

When translating repetition, I did not use one specific strategy. If the Dutch sentence would be an ungrammatical sentence when repetition was maintained, I did not use repetition in my translation. In the sentences of the source text which feature repetition, this repetition often does not feel repetitious. However, when this was the case in the translated sentence, I deleted the repetition. If no problems arose, I maintained it. In the fragment mentioned above, the repetition of “alone” was not problematic; “Nu ze er niet meer was begreep hij hoe eenzaam haar leven moest zijn geweest, hoe eenzaam het was elke nacht alleen in die kamer te zitten. Zijn leven zou net zo eenzaam verlopen tot ook hij overleed.” However, this fragment has got “too” twice in the same sentence. This does not sound repetitious because the second “too” is set off from the rest of the text with commas. I have chosen to omit the repetition in the goal text to make the sentence more fluent.

Joyce also uses focalisation as a literary device for his short stories. In his book *Joyce’s Voices*, Hugh Kenner has named this the “Uncle Charles Principle,” after a character

from Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. He defines this principle as follows; "the narrative idiom does not need to be the narrator's" (Kenner 18). In "A Painful Case," the story is told through the eyes of Mr Duffy. The sentence "Her company was like the warm soil about an exotic" (Joyce 98), for example, is not the opinion of the narrator, but Mr Duffy's perception. In addition, at the start of the short story it is stated that Mr Duffy "had an odd autobiographical habit which led him to compose in his mind from time to time a short sentence about himself containing a subject in the third person and a predicate in the past tense" (Joyce 96). As the short story is in the past tense and in the third person narrative, it thus could be argued that Mr Duffy is telling the story himself, which is an extension of the Uncle Charles Principle; the narration is *not* the narrator's.

Conclusion

At first sight, "A Painful Case" may seem a simple story about a man who is unable to love, but this first sight is deceiving. The "scrupulous meanness" and the "Uncle Charles principle" used in the short story pose a great deal of translation problems for the translator. As these writing strategies are tied up with the character of Mr Duffy, they must be maintained. In addition, the distant way in which Mr Duffy is described and the frequent use of the third person "he" or "his" at the start of sentences must be applied where possible. The difference between the sections before and after the introduction of Mrs Sinico must be apparent in the goal text as well. Culture-specific elements reflect the Irish culture in my translated text, but I altered them when they alienated the text from the Dutch reader or when their connotation in Dutch differs from that in English. In "A Painful Case," there are a great deal of aspects that need to be taken into account. This can be difficult, but, as James Joyce himself has said: "Mistakes are the portals of discovery."

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Appendix I: Translation

Een pijnlijke kwestie¹

Meneer James Duffy² woonde in Chapelizod omdat hij zo ver mogelijk van de stad waarvan hij een ingezetene was wenste te leven en omdat hij alle andere voorsteden van Dublin armoedig, modern en pretentief vond. Hij woonde in een oud, somber huis waarvan de ramen uitkeken op de niet meer in bedrijf zijnde distilleerderij, of stroomopwaarts uitzicht hadden op ondiepe rivier waarlangs Dublin is gebouwd. Aan de hoge muren van zijn kamer met kale vloeren hingen geen schilderijtjes. Hij had zelf alle meubelstukken gekocht: een zwart, ijzeren ledikant, een ijzeren wastafel, vier rieten stoelen, een kledingrek, een kolenkit, een haardscherm en haardijzers en een vierkante tafel waarop een dubbele lessenaar stond. In een nis was van vurenhouten³ planken een boekenkast getimmerd. Het bed was opgemaakt met wit beddengoed en een zwart met felrode deken bedekte het voeteneinde. Een kleine handspiegel hing boven de wastafel en gedurende de dag was een witgekleurde lamp het enige ornament op de schoorsteenmantel. De boeken op de vurenhouten planken waren van onder naar boven gesorteerd op omvang. De verzamelde werken van William Wordsworth stonden aan het ene eind van de onderste plank en een editie van de *Maynooth Catechismus*,

¹ In English, the mentioned “Painful Case” refers both to the death of Mrs Sinico and the short story itself, which can be seen as a case-description of Mr Duffy. There is no word in Dutch that can convey these two meanings. My translation, “Een pijnlijke kwestie,” does have two meanings, but these differ from the meanings in the source text. “Kwestie” can also be applied to Mrs Sinico’s death, but not to Mr Duffy’s case-description; instead, it refers to the relationship of Mr Duffy and Mrs Sinico. As this is an important aspect of the source text as well, I think “kwestie” is a better option than for example “zaak,” which is not the word to describe a mental case with in Dutch and thus would only have one meaning.

² In Dutch, “Mr.” indicates that someone is a master at law. As this is not the case with Mr. Duffy, and “Dhr” is too formal in comparison with the source text, I have decided to translate “Mr.” with “Meneer.” By substituting the common word for “man” in English with a common word for “man” in Dutch, the translated text maintains the same style as the original.

³ “White wooden” can mean two things; “made of white wood,” or “whitewooden,” which is a type of cheap wood. I have chosen to go with the second option and translated it with “vurenhouten” because this type of wood suits the style of Mr. Duffy’s room.

ingenaaid in de stoffen band van een notitieboek, stond aan het andere eind van de bovenste plank. Op de lessenaar lag altijd schrijfgerei. In de lessenaar lag een handgeschreven vertaling van Gerhart Hauptmanns *Michael Kramer*, waarin de toneelaanwijzingen met paarse inkt waren geschreven, en een bundeltje papieren dat werd bijeengehouden door een koperen klem. Op deze vellen schreef hij van tijd tot tijd een zin en in een ironische bui had hij de kop van een advertentie voor Bile Beans-laxeermiddel⁴ op het eerste vel geplakt. Bij het optillen van de klep van de lessenaar ontsnapte een zwakke geur – de geur van nieuwe cederhouten potloden of een flesje gom of een overrijpe appel die iemand er misschien had neergelegd en daarna was vergeten.

Meneer Duffy verfoeide alles wat een fysieke of mentale afwijking kon betekenen. Een middeleeuwse dokter zou hem ‘melancholisch’ noemen. Zijn gezicht, dat zijn gehele levensverhaal vertelde⁵, had dezelfde bruine kleur als de straten van Dublin. Op zijn lange en nogal flinke hoofd groeide droog, zwart haar en een bruingele snor verhulde een norske mond net niet helemaal. Ook zijn jukbeenderen gaven zijn gezicht harde trekken, maar er was geen hardheid in zijn ogen die, de wereld inkijkend vanonder bruingele wenkbrauwen, de indruk wekten dat hij een man was die altijd gespitst was op het vinden van eerlijkheid in anderen maar daarin vaak teleurgesteld werd. Hij leefde op een kleine afstand van zijn lichaam, zijn eigen daden met twijfelachtige, zijdelingse blikken bekijkend. Hij had de eigenaardige autobiografische gewoonte die hem ertoe zette zo nu en dan in zijn gedachten een korte zin te vormen over zichzelf met daarin het onderwerp in de derde persoon en het gezegde in de verleden tijd. Hij gaf nooit aalmoezen aan bedelaars en liep vastberaden, een hazelaarshouten wandelstok in de hand.

⁴ In Joyce’s time, people would know what “Bile Beans” was, but as this product is no longer produced, I decided to add information; “Bile Beans” were used as a laxative.

⁵ I have chosen to translate this phrase quite literal; I found it important to not just state that Mr. Duffy’s face shows his age, because it shows his life as well. He probably had a rough life, which has resulted in a wrinkled and tired visage.

Hij werkte al jaren als kashouder bij een bank⁶ in Baggot Street. Vanuit Chapelizod ging hij daar elke ochtend met de tram naartoe. 's Middags ging hij naar Dan Burke's en lunchte daar met een flesje bier en een schaalje met beschuitjes van pijlwortelmeel⁷. Om vier uur was hij weer vrij. 's Avonds at hij in een eethuisje in George's Street, waar hij het gezelschap van de rijkeluisjeugd van Dublin niet hoefde te verduren en het menu een bepaalde eenvoud en eerlijkheid had. Zijn avonden besteedde hij achter de piano van zijn hospita of ronddwalend in de randgebieden van de stad. Zijn liefde voor Mozart leidde hem soms naar een opera of een concert: de enige uitspattingen in zijn leven.

Hij had kennissen noch vrienden, kerk noch geloof. Zijn godsdienstige leven deelde hij niet met anderen; hij bezocht zijn familie met Kerstmis en begeleidde hen naar het kerkhof als ze overleden. Hij vervulde deze twee sociale plichten omdat het nou eenmaal zo hoorde, maar schikte zich verder niet naar de gebruiken van het burgerlijke bestaan. Hij speelde weleens met de gedachte dat hij onder bepaalde omstandigheden zijn bank zou beroven, maar omdat deze omstandigheden zich nooit voordeden ontvouwde zijn leven zich gelijkmatig - een verhaal zonder enige spanning.

Op een avond kwam hij in de Rotunda naast twee dames te zitten. De zaal, stil en zo goed als leeg, voorspelde een fiasco. De dame naast hem keek een paar keer de lege zaal rond en zei toen:

⁶ A "commercial bank" is a bank for the common man instead of companies. In Dutch, this is called a "gewone bank," but I chose to translate it with "bank," because a bank in Dutch is not usually called a "gewone bank." The word "bank" on its own is already associated with a bank for the public.

⁷ "Arrowroot" was used quite often in Great Britain, but its use has dwindled; the British readers of today also are not very familiar with this word. This is why I have decided to translate it with "pijlwortelmeel" and did not substitute it with for example "aardappelzetmeel." The Dutch name for "arrowroot" is technically the same as the English one, but I think this is too alienating for the Dutch reader.

‘Wat jammer dat het zo rustig is vanavond! Het is zo pijnlijk om voor lege stoelen⁸ te zingen.’

Hij vatte de opmerking op als een uitnodiging tot een gesprek. Het verbaasde hem dat ze zo toeschietelijk was. Terwijl ze praatten probeerde hij haar voorgoed in zijn geheugen te prenten. Toen hij hoorde dat het jonge meisje naast wie ze zat haar dochter was, schatte hij haar een paar jaar jonger dan zichzelf. Haar gezicht, dat ooit knap moest zijn geweest, had zijn intelligente uitstraling behouden. Het was een ovaal gezicht met uitgesproken trekken. De ogen waren diepblauw en niet snel van hun stuk te brengen. Hun blik leek op het eerste gezicht uitdagend maar maakte plaats voor iets wat leek op het opzettelijk verdwijnen van de pupil in de iris⁹ en wat een ogenblik lang een zeer sensibel karakter verried. De pupil herstelde zich vlug; zijn halfgesloten aard voegde zich weer naar de heerschappij van het verstand en haar astrakan jakje, dat vorm gaf aan een ietwat stevige boezem, versterkte deze uitdagende houding alleen maar.

Hij kwam haar een paar weken later opnieuw tegen bij een concert in Earlsfort Terrace en greep de momenten waarop de aandacht van haar dochter was afgeleid aan om haar wat persoonlijker te leren kennen. Ze zinspeelde een paar keer op haar man, maar hij hoorde in die zinspeling geen waarschuwing. Haar naam was mevrouw Sinico. De over-overgrootvader van haar man kwam uit Leghorn. Haar echtgenoot was kapitein op een handelsboot die tussen Dublin en Holland heen en weer pendelde. Ze hadden één kind.

Pas toen hij haar voor de derde keer toevallig tegenkwam vond hij de moed om een afspraak te maken. Ze kwam. Het was de eerste van vele ontmoetingen; ze zagen elkaar altijd 's avonds en kozen de stilste stadsdelen voor hun gezamenlijke wandelingen. Meneer Duffy

⁸ “Lege banken” would sound ambiguous, it almost seems as if one can sing for empty cash banks or empty school benches. This is why I have decided to translate it with “stoelen.”

⁹ My interpretation of this sentence is the following: the iris is the aspect of the eye that shows a sensible character. If the pupil, which shows a defiant nature, is no longer visible, sensibility takes over. This is why I translated “swoon” with “verdwijnen,” because I wanted to make clear that the pupil is no longer visible.

had echter een hekel aan stiekem gedoe en haalde haar over hem thuis uit te nodigen toen hij ontdekte dat ze genoodzaakt waren elkaar in het geheim te ontmoeten. Kapitein Sinico dacht dat het om de hand van zijn dochter ging en moedigde zijn bezoeken aan. Hij had zijn vrouw zo definitief van zijn lijst van geneugten gestreept dat hij zich niet kon voorstellen dat er ook maar iemand belangstelling voor haar kon hebben. Omdat haar man vaak weg was en de dochter buitenshuis muziekles gaf, had meneer Duffy alle gelegenheid om van het gezelschap van de dame te genieten. Geen van beide had zich ooit eerder aan een soortgelijke onderneming¹⁰ gewaagd en de onverstandigheid ervan viel zowel hem als haar niet op. Beetje bij beetje werden zijn gedachten de hare. Hij leende boeken aan haar uit, bracht haar op de hoogte van verschillende zaken, deelde zijn geestelijke leven met haar. Zij luisterde naar alles.

In ruil voor zijn theorieën vertelde ze hem af en toe iets uit haar eigen leven. Met bijna moederlijke zorg spoorde ze hem aan zich volledig open te stellen: ze werd zijn vertrouweling¹¹. Hij vertelde haar dat hij een tijd lang bijeenkomsten van een of andere Ierse Socialistische Partij had bijgewoond en dat hij zich tussen de tientallen arbeiders, op een zolderkamertje dat werd verlicht door een slecht werkende olielamp, een buitenstaander had gevoeld. Toen de partij uiteenviel in drie afdelingen, elk met een eigen leider en een eigen zolderkamertje, stopte hij met het bijwonen van de bijeenkomsten. De discussies die de arbeiders hielden waren in zijn ogen beangstigend; de belangstelling die ze hadden voor de loonkwestie was buitensporig. Hij kreeg de indruk dat het hardvochtige realisten waren,

¹⁰ A logical translation would be “avontuurtje;” however, I found the connotation of this word inappropriate. “Avontuurtje” hints to a sexual affair, and even though Mrs Sinico might have feelings of lust for Mr Duffy, he in return does not. As the focal point of this short story is Mr Duffy and the story is told through his eyes, I found “avontuurtje” a bad choice. This is why I opted for “onderneming,” which still suggests an action over a longer period, but has no sexual connotation.

¹¹ The literal translation of “confessor” is “biechtvader.” However, Mrs Sinico is a woman. This is why I decided to translate this word with “vertrouweling,” which also indicates that he confesses to her, but can be used for females as well. This way, the Catholic connotation is lost, but I think it is a better option than for example “hij ging bij haar in de biecht,” in which the Catholic element is too explicit.

verontwaardigd over een precisie die het gevolg was van een vrije tijd die niet tot hun beschikking was. Een sociale revolutie, vertelde hij haar, zou in Dublin in de komende tientallen jaren nog niet uitbreken.

Ze vroeg hem waarom hij zijn gedachten niet op papier zette. Waarom? vroeg hij haar, smalend maar voorzichtig. Om te concurreren met praatjesmakers die nog geen zestig seconden onafgebroken na konden denken? Om de kritiek van een stompzinnige middenklasse¹² te ondergaan, die de zorg voor haar goede zeden aan de politie en haar schone kunsten aan impresario's toevertrouwde?

Vaak bezocht hij haar huisje buiten Dublin; de avonden brachten ze vaak met zijn tweeën door. Geleidelijk aan, terwijl hun gedachten meer en meer met elkaar verweven raakten, spraken ze over vertrouwelijkere zaken. Haar gezelschap was als de warme aarde rond een exotische plant. Dikwijls liet ze de nacht over hen heen komen door de lamp niet aan te steken. De donkere, intieme kamer, hun afzondering, de muziek die nog naklonk in hun oren verbond hen. Dit verbond bracht hem in vervoering, sleet de scherpe kantjes van zijn karakter, bracht warmte in zijn geestelijke bestaan. Soms betrapte hij zichzelf erop dat hij naar het geluid van zijn eigen stem zat te luisteren. Hij dacht dat hij zich in haar ogen tot een engelachtig figuur zou verheffen en naarmate hij het hartstochtelijke karakter van zijn metgezel steeds steviger aan het zijne bevestigde, hoorde hij de vreemde, onpersoonlijke stem die hij als die van hemzelf herkende vasthouden aan het idee van de ongeneeslijke eenzaamheid van de ziel. De stem zei dat we onszelf niet aan een ander kunnen geven: we behoren alleen onszelf toe. Aan deze gesprekken kwam een eind toen mevrouw Sinico op een avond, waarin ze de gehele tijd duidelijk erg onrustig was geweest, hartstochtelijk zijn hand pakte en deze tegen haar wang drukte.

¹² I did some research on the Dutch translation of “middle class,” and the general translation seems to be “middenklasse,” even though that sounded strange to me at first. However, since it seems to be the accepted translation, I used “middenklasse” in my translation.

Meneer Duffy was erg verrast. De interpretatie van zijn woorden ontgoochelde hem. Een week lang zocht hij geen contact; toen schreef hij haar om te vragen of ze hem ergens wilde ontmoeten. Omdat hij hun laatste gesprek niet wilde laten verstoren door hun verpeste biechtronde ontmoetten ze elkaar in een kleine theesalon in de buurt van de ingang van het park. Het was koud herfstweer, maar ondanks de kou dwaalden ze bijna drie uur door het park. Ze besloten een einde te maken aan hun afspraakjes; elk verbond, zei hij, is er eentje om te betreuren. Vanuit het park liepen ze zwijgend naar de tram, maar hier begon ze zo hevig te beven dat hij, bang voor nog een inzinking, haar snel gedag zei en vertrok. Een paar dagen later ontving hij een pakketje met daarin zijn boeken en muziek.

Er ging vier jaar voorbij. Meneer Duffy keerde weer terug naar zijn evenwichtige leven. Zijn kamer was nog steeds een afspiegeling van de orde van zijn geest. Op de muziekstandaard in de lager gelegen kamer stonden een paar nieuwe muziekstukken en op zijn planken stonden twee boeken van Nietzsche: *Aldus sprak Zarathoestra* en *De vrolijke wetenschap*. Hij schreef maar zelden iets in de bundel papieren die in zijn lessenaar lag. Een van de zinnen, die hij twee maanden na zijn laatste gesprek met mevrouw Sinico geschreven had, was: liefde tussen twee mannen is onmogelijk omdat er geen geslachtsgemeenschap mag zijn, en vriendschap tussen een man en een vrouw is onmogelijk omdat er geslachtsgemeenschap móét zijn. Bang haar te ontmoeten bleef hij weg bij concerten. Zijn vader stierf; de junior partner¹³ van de bank ging met pensioen. En nog steeds kwam hij elke ochtend per tram de stad binnen en elke avond liep hij na een bescheiden avondmaal in George's Street met de avondkrant als toetje vanuit de stad terug naar huis.

Op een avond, terwijl hij net een hap cornedbeef en kool in zijn mond wilde stoppen, bleef zijn hand in de lucht hangen. Zijn ogen vestigden zich op een bericht in de avondkrant

¹³ In Dutch, bank associates are also called “partners.” However, the word “junior” has multiple meanings. This partner can be the least experienced partner in the company, or the partner that has been hired last. As this sentence has got no context and “junior partner” is not a strange phrase to encounter in Dutch business jargon, I have decided to maintain the phrase.

die werd ondersteund door de waterkaraf. Hij legde het eten¹⁴ terug op zijn bord en las het bericht aandachtig. Toen dronk hij een glas water, schoof zijn bord opzij, vouwde de krant dubbel, legde deze tussen zijn ellebogen voor hem neer en herlas het bericht opnieuw en opnieuw. Op zijn bord begon de kool koud, wit vet af te scheiden. De serveerster kwam aan hem vragen of er iets mis was met zijn eten. Hij zei dat het heerlijk was en at met moeite een paar happen. Toen betaalde hij de rekening en verliet de zaak.

Hij liep snel verder door het schemerlicht dat zo typisch is voor november. Zijn wandelstok van hazelaarshout raakte de grond met regelmatige tussenpozen en de rand van de vaalgele *Dublin Evening Mail* stak uit een zak van zijn nauwsluitende, korte overjas¹⁵. Op de verlaten weg van de ingang van het park naar Chapelizod ging hij langzamer lopen. Zijn wandelstok raakte de grond minder krachtig en zijn ademhaling, die onregelmatig was en haast zuchtend klonk, maakte wolkjes in de winterse lucht. Toen hij bij zijn huis aankwam liep hij direct naar zijn slaapkamer, haalde de krant uit zijn zak en las het bericht opnieuw in het zwakke licht van het raam. Hij las niet hardop, maar bewoog zijn lippen zoals een priester dat doet bij het voorlezen van de stille offerandegebeden¹⁶. In het krantenbericht stond het volgende:

¹⁴ Even though the word “morsel” occurs twice in the source text, I have decided to translate the two different instances with two different words. You do not put a “hap” of food on your plate again, so this is why I chose to translate this second instance of “morsel” with “het eten.”

¹⁵ The literal translation of “reefer” is “jekker,” but I think this is too alienating for the modern Dutch reader. In addition, it has a naval connotation which the source text does not have. The OED states that a “reefer coat” and a “reefer jacket” are both short jackets, so I have decided to translate “reefer overcoat” with “korte overjas,” which is a word for coat that is not often used in Dutch, thus maintaining the connotation of “reefer overcoat.”

¹⁶ I struggled with the word “Secreto,” but after email correspondence with the RKK, I found out that there is no fixed Dutch term for this part of the Catholic mass. However, the man with whom I emailed told me “stille offerandegebeden” would be a good option. As the priest says these prayers during the pouring of water and wine in the drinking goblet, which is an offering, I chose to go with this translation.

VROUW DOOD GEVONDEN OP STATION SYDNEY PARADE
EEN PIJNLIJKE KWESTIE

Vandaag heeft de waarnemende lijkschouwer (in verband met de afwezigheid van meneer Leverett) van het City of Dublin Ziekenhuis een autopsie uitgevoerd op het lichaam van de 43-jarige mevrouw Emily Sinico, die gisteravond op het station van Sydney Parade om het leven is gekomen. Uit aanwijzingen bleek dat de overleden vrouw omver is gereden door de locomotief van de stoptrein van tien uur uit Kingstown terwijl ze de spoorlijn probeerde over te steken. Hierbij liep ze fatale verwondingen aan haar hoofd en rechterzij op.

James Lennon, die de locomotief bestuurde, verklaarde dat hij al vijftien jaar bij de spoorwegmaatschappij werkt. Toen hij het fluitje van de conducteur hoorde zette hij de trein in beweging en bracht deze ongeveer twee seconden later weer tot stilstand na het horen van hard gegil. De trein reed langzaam.

P. Dunne, kruier, verklaarde dat hij een vrouw zag die de spoorlijn probeerde over te steken terwijl de trein op het punt stond om te vertrekken. Hij rende schreeuwend naar haar toe, maar voordat hij haar kon bereiken werd ze gegrepen door het stootblok van de locomotief en viel ze op de grond.

Jurylid – U zag de vrouw vallen?

Getuige – Ja.

Politieagent Croly getuigde dat hij de overledene, die dood leek, op de grond aantrof toen hij aankwam. In afwachting van de ambulance had hij had het lichaam naar de wachtruimte laten brengen.

Agent 57E bevestigde dit.

Dokter Halpin, operatieassistent van het Hoofd Chirurgie in het City of Dublin Ziekenhuis, verklaarde dat de overledene twee van haar onderste ribben had gebroken en

ernstige kneuzingen aan de rechterschouder had opgelopen. De verwondingen waren niet ernstig genoeg om een gezond persoon te doen overlijden. Hij meende dat haar dood door een shock en een plotselinge hartstilstand teweeg was gebracht.

Meneer H.B. Patterson Finlay, namens de spoorwegmaatschappij, betreurde het ongeluk zeer. De maatschappij had altijd alle mogelijke voorzorgsmaatregelen genomen om mensen ervan te weerhouden de spoorlijnen over te steken op andere plaatsen dan waar toegestaan, zowel door waarschuwingen in elk station te hangen als door het plaatsen van gepatenteerde spoorbomen. De overledene had de gewoonte om 's avonds laat van perron naar perron de spoorlijn over te steken en gelet op een aantal andere details van de zaak vond hij niet dat de spoorwegbeambten enige blaam trof.

Kapitein Sinico, woonachtig in Leoville, Sydney Parade Avenue, de echtgenoot van de overledene, legde ook een verklaring af. Hij verklaarde dat de overledene zijn vrouw was. Aangezien hij pas de volgende ochtend vanuit Rotterdam was aangekomen, was hij tijdens het ongeluk niet in Dublin. Ze waren twintig jaar gelukkig getrouwd geweest totdat het gedrag van zijn vrouw twee jaar geleden buitensporig werd.

Juffrouw Mary Sinico zei dat haar moeder de laatste tijd gewoonlijk 's avonds het huis verliet om sterke drank te gaan kopen. Als getuige hiervan had ze vaak geprobeerd op haar moeder in te praten en had haar aangespoord bij een bond voor geheelonthouding te gaan. Ze was pas een uur na het ongeluk thuisgekomen.

De uitspraak van de jury kwam overeen met het medische bewijs en Lennon werd vrijgesproken.

De waarnemende lijkschouwer zei dat het een uiterst pijnlijke kwestie was en betuigde zijn steun aan Kapitein Sinico en diens dochter. Hij verzocht de spoorwegen dringend om drastische maatregelen te nemen zodat een soortgelijk ongeluk in de toekomst voorkomen kon worden. Niemand kon als schuldige worden aangewezen.

Meneer Duffy sloeg zijn ogen op en tuurde uit het raam naar het landschap dat er deze avond troosteloos bij lag. De rivier stroomde rustig langs de distilleerderij en uit de ramen van een paar huizen langs Lucan Road scheen licht. Wat een einde! De volledige beschrijving van haar dood deed hem walgen en hij walgde ervan dat hij ooit verheven zaken met haar had besproken. De afgezaagde uitdrukkingen, de betekenisloze uitingen van sympathie, de omzichtige woorden van een verslaggever overgehaald om de details van een afgezaagde, vulgaire dood te verzwijgen deden zijn maag draaien. Ze had niet alleen zichzelf vernederd; ze had hem vernederd. Hij zag de uitgestrektheid van haar verdorvenheid, slecht en stinkend. Zijn zielsverwant! Hij dacht aan de strompelende stakkers die hij had gezien met hun door de barman te vullen blikjes en flesjes. Goeie God, wat een einde! Klaarblijkelijk was het leven niet geschikt voor haar, zonder doel om voor te leven, een makkelijke prooi voor verslaving, een van de bouwvallen waarop beschaving is gestut. Maar dat ze zo laag had kunnen zinken! Was het mogelijk dat hij zichzelf volkomen voor de gek had gehouden? Hij herinnerde zich haar uitbarsting van die ene avond en dichtte er een nog wredere betekenis aan toe. Hij had geen moeite meer met het rechtvaardigen van de weg die hij was ingeslagen.

Terwijl het langzaam donker werd en zijn gedachten afdwaalden dacht hij haar hand op de zijne te voelen. De schok die hem eerst in zijn maag had getroffen, stelde nu zijn zelfbeheersing op de proef. Hij trok snel zijn jas aan, zette zijn hoed op en ging naar buiten. De koude lucht kwam hem op de drempel al tegemoet en waaide in de mouwen van zijn jas. Toen hij langs de pub bij Chapelizod Bridge kwam liep hij naar binnen en bestelde een hete punch.

De eigenaar serveerde de drank haast onderdanig maar waagde het niet een gesprek aan te knopen. De vijf of zes arbeiders in de pub bespraken de waarde van het landgoed van

een edelman¹⁷ in County Kildare. Met tussenpozen dronken ze uit hun enorme pintglazen en rookten, terwijl ze geregeld op de grond spuugden en af en toe zaagsel over de fluimen veegden met hun zware schoenen. Meneer Duffy zat op zijn stoel en staarde naar hen zonder ze echt te zien of te horen. Na een tijdje verlieten ze de pub en hij bestelde nog een punch. Hij dronk er maar weinig van. Het was heel rustig in de pub. Hangend op de bar las de eigenaar de *Evening Herald* en geeuwde. Zo nu en dan was er een tram te horen die buiten langs de verlaten weg voorbij zoefde.

Terwijl hij daar zat en zijn leven met haar herbeleefde en afwisselend de twee personen voor wie hij haar nu aanzag opriep, realiseerde hij zich dat ze dood was, dat ze niet langer bestond, dat ze een herinnering was geworden. Hij begon zich ongemakkelijk te voelen. Hij vroeg zich af wat hij nog meer had kunnen doen. Hij had niet door kunnen gaan met een klucht¹⁸ vol bedrog; hij had niet openlijk met haar kunnen leven. Hij had gedaan wat hem het beste leek. Hoe kon hij nou schuldig zijn? Nu ze er niet meer was begreep hij hoe eenzaam haar leven moest zijn geweest, hoe eenzaam het was elke nacht alleen in die kamer te zitten. Zijn leven zou net zo eenzaam verlopen tot ook hij overleed, ophield te bestaan, een herinnering werd – als iemand hem tenminste zou herinneren.

Het was na negenen toen hij de pub weer verliet. De nacht was koud en mistroostig. Hij ging het park binnen bij de eerste ingang waar hij langs kwam en liep langs de dorre bomen. Hij liep over de deprimerende paden waar ze vier jaar geleden samen hadden gelopen. In het duister leek ze dicht bij hem te zijn. Af en toe dacht hij haar stem te horen, voelde hij haar hand de zijne raken. Hij stond stil en luisterde. Waarom had hij haar bij het leven

¹⁷ The OED states that the term “gentleman” can be “applied to a person of distinction without precise definition of rank.” I however chose to translate it with “edelman;” “heer” would be less defining in terms of rank, but to make the contrast between the working men and the gentleman more apparent, I chose “edelman.”

¹⁸ I interpreted “comedy of deception” as word play on “comedy of errors.” Since “comedy of errors” more or less translates as “klucht” in Dutch, I chose to translate “comedy of deception” as “klucht vol bedrog.”

vandaan gehouden? Waarom had hij haar ter dood veroordeeld? Hij voelde zijn moraal in stukken uiteen vallen.

Toen hij de top van Magazine Hill bereikte stopte hij en volgde de rivier met zijn ogen tot aan Dublin, waar de lichten rood en gastvrij brandden. Hij keek naar beneden langs de helling en zag een paar liggende, menselijke silhouetten in de schaduw van de parkmuur aan de voet van de heuvel. Deze onbetrouwbare en heimelijke geliefden deden hem wanhopen. Hij trok de oprechtheid van zijn leven in twijfel; hij voelde zich uitgesloten van het feest des levens. De enige persoon die van hem scheen te hebben gehouden had hij het leven en geluk ontzegd: hij had haar veroordeeld tot schande, tot dood door schaamte. Hij wist dat de liggende wezens naar hem keken en hem weg wilden hebben. Niemand wilde hem hebben: hij was uitgesloten van het feest des levens. Zijn ogen richtten zich op de grijs glimmende rivier die richting Dublin slingerde. Voorbij de rivier zag hij een goederentrein Kingsbridge Station verlaten, door het donker rijdend als een worm met een brandend hoofd, onafwendbaar en moeizaam. Hij verdween langzaam uit het zicht, maar hij hoorde het moeizame gedreun van de locomotief nog steeds de lettergrepen van haar naam herhalen.

Hij liep dezelfde weg terug met het ritme van de locomotief nog in zijn oren bonzend. Hij begon te twijfelen aan de echtheid van zijn herinneringen. Hij stond stil onder een boom en liet het ritme wegsterven. Hij kon haar in het donker niet in zijn buurt voelen en hoorde haar stem evenmin. Hij wachtte een paar minuten en luisterde. Hij hoorde niets; de nacht was volkomen stil. Hij luisterde opnieuw: volkomen stil. Hij voelde dat hij alleen was¹⁹.

¹⁹ Although it sounds a little translated, I have decided to translate the last sentence of the source text quite literal. I have thought about incorporating the word “eenzaamheid,” but this would change the meaning of the sentence. Both “Lonely” and “alleen” do not say anything about how Mr Duffy feels about this, while “eenzaamheid” suggests that he dislikes this feeling. In addition, for example “Hij voelde de eenzaamheid” does not indicate that the spirit of Mrs Sinico has left him, while “Hij voelde dat hij alleen was” does.

Appendix II: Original Text

A Painful Case

Mr James Duffy lived in Chapelizod because he wished to live as far as possible from the city of which he was a citizen and because he found all the other suburbs of Dublin mean, modern and pretentious. He lived in an old sombre house, and from his windows he could look into the disused distillery or upwards along the shallow river on which Dublin is built. The lofty walls of his uncarpeted room were free from pictures. He had himself bought every article of furniture in the room: a black iron bedstead, an iron washstand, four cane chairs, a clothes-rack, a coal-scuttle, a fender and irons and a square table on which lay a double desk. A bookcase had been made in an alcove by means of shelves of white wood. The bed was clothed with white bed-clothes and a black and scarlet rug covered the foot. A little hand-mirror hung above the washstand and during the day a white-shaded lamp stood as the sole ornament of the mantelpiece. The books on the white wooden shelves were arranged from below upwards according to bulk. A complete Wordsworth stood at one end of the lowest shelf and a copy of the *Maynooth Catechism*, sewn into the cloth cover of a notebook, stood at one end of the top shelf. Writing materials were always on the desk. In the desk lay a manuscript translation of Hauptmann's *Michael Kramer*, the stage directions of which were written in purple ink, and a little sheaf of papers held together by a brass pin. In these sheets a sentence was inscribed from time to time and, in an ironical moment, the headline of an advertisement for *Bile Beans* had been pasted on to the first sheet. On lifting the lid of the desk a faint fragrance escaped -- the fragrance of new cedarwood pencils or of a bottle of gum or of an overripe apple which might have been left there and forgotten.

Mr Duffy abhorred anything which betokened physical or mental disorder. A mediæval doctor would have called him saturnine. His face, which carried the entire tale of his years, was of the brown tint of Dublin streets. On his long and rather large head grew dry

black hair and a tawny moustache did not quite cover an unamiable mouth. His cheekbones also gave his face a harsh character; but there was no harshness in the eyes which, looking at the world from under their tawny eyebrows, gave the impression of a man ever alert to greet a redeeming instinct in others but often disappointed. He lived at a little distance from his body, regarding his own acts with doubtful side-glances. He had an odd autobiographical habit which led him to compose in his mind from time to time a short sentence about himself containing a subject in the third person and a predicate in the past tense. He never gave alms to beggars and walked firmly, carrying a stout hazel.

He had been for many years cashier of a private bank in Baggot Street. Every morning he came in from Chapelizod by tram. At midday he went to Dan Burke's and took his lunch -- a bottle of lager beer and a small trayful of arrowroot biscuits. At four o'clock he was set free. He dined in an eating-house in George's Street where he felt himself safe from the society of Dublin's gilded youth and where there was a certain plain honesty in the bill of fare. His evenings were spent either before his landlady's piano or roaming about the outskirts of the city. His liking for Mozart's music brought him sometimes to an opera or a concert: these were the only dissipations of his life.

He had neither companions nor friends, church nor creed. He lived his spiritual life without any communion with others, visiting his relatives at Christmas and escorting them to the cemetery when they died. He performed these two social duties for old dignity's sake but conceded nothing further to the conventions which regulate the civic life. He allowed himself to think that in certain circumstances he would rob his hank but, as these circumstances never arose, his life rolled out evenly -- an adventureless tale.

One evening he found himself sitting beside two ladies in the Rotunda. The house, thinly peopled and silent, gave distressing prophecy of failure. The lady who sat next him looked round at the deserted house once or twice and then said;

– What a pity there is such a poor house to-night! It's so hard on people to have to sing to empty benches –

He took the remark as an invitation to talk. He was surprised that she seemed so little awkward. While they talked he tried to fix her permanently in his memory. When he learned that the young girl beside her was her daughter he judged her to be a year or so younger than himself. Her face, which must have been handsome, had remained intelligent. It was an oval face with strongly marked features. The eyes were very dark blue and steady. Their gaze began with a defiant note but was confused by what seemed a deliberate swoon of the pupil into the iris, revealing for an instant a temperament of great sensibility. The pupil reasserted itself quickly, this half-disclosed nature fell again under the reign of prudence, and her astrakhan jacket, moulding a bosom of a certain fullness, struck the note of defiance more definitely.

He met her again a few weeks afterwards at a concert in Earlsfort Terrace and seized the moments when her daughter's attention was diverted to become intimate. She alluded once or twice to her husband but her tone was not such as to make the allusion a warning. Her name was Mrs Sinico. Her husband's great-great-grandfather had come from Leghorn. Her husband was captain of a mercantile boat plying between Dublin and Holland; and they had one child.

Meeting her a third time by accident he found courage to make an appointment. She came. This was the first of many meetings; they met always in the evening and chose the most quiet quarters for their walks together. Mr Duffy, however, had a distaste for underhand ways and, finding that they were compelled to meet stealthily, he forced her to ask him to her house. Captain Sinico encouraged his visits, thinking that his daughter's hand was in question. He had dismissed his wife so sincerely from his gallery of pleasures that he did not suspect that anyone else would take an interest in her. As the husband was often away and the

daughter out giving music lessons, Mr Duffy had many opportunities of enjoying the lady's society. Neither he nor she had had any such adventure before and neither was conscious of any incongruity. Little by little he entangled his thoughts with hers. He lent her books, provided her with ideas, shared his intellectual life with her. She listened to all.

Sometimes in return for his theories she gave out some fact of her own life. With almost maternal solicitude she urged him to let his nature open to the full: she became his confessor. He told her that for some time he had assisted at the meetings of an Irish Socialist Party where he had felt himself a unique figure amidst a score of sober workmen in a garret lit by an inefficient oil-lamp. When the party had divided into three sections, each under its own leader and in its own garret, he had discontinued his attendances. The workmen's discussions, he said, were too timorous; the interest they took in the question of wages was inordinate. He felt that they were hard-featured realists and that they resented an exactitude which was the product of a leisure not within their reach. No social revolution, he told her, would be likely to strike Dublin for some centuries.

She asked him why did he not write out his thoughts. For what, he asked her, with careful scorn. To compete with phrasemongers, incapable of thinking consecutively for sixty seconds? To submit himself to the criticisms of an obtuse middle class which entrusted its morality to policemen and its fine arts to impresarios?

He went often to her little cottage outside Dublin; often they spent their evenings alone. Little by little, as their thoughts entangled, they spoke of subjects less remote. Her companionship was like a warm soil about an exotic. Many times she allowed the dark to fall upon them, refraining from lighting the lamp. The dark discreet room, their isolation, the music that still vibrated in their ears united them. This union exalted him, wore away the rough edges of his character, emotionalized his mental life. Sometimes he caught himself listening to the sound of his own voice. He thought that in her eyes he would ascend to an

angelical stature; and, as he attached the fervent nature of his companion more and more closely to him, he heard the strange impersonal voice which he recognized as his own, insisting on the soul's incurable loneliness. We cannot give ourselves, it said: we are our own. The end of these discourses was that one night, during which she had shown every sign of unusual excitement, Mrs Sinico caught up his hand passionately and pressed it to her cheek.

Mr Duffy was very much surprised. Her interpretation of his words disillusioned him. He did not visit her for a week; then he wrote to her asking her to meet him. As he did not wish their last interview to be troubled by the influence of their ruined confession they meet in a little cakeshop near the Parkgate. It was cold autumn weather but in spite of the cold they wandered up and down the roads of the Park for nearly three hours. They agreed to break off their intercourse: every bond, he said, is a bond to sorrow. When they came out of the Park they walked in silence towards the tram; but here she began to tremble so violently that, fearing another collapse on her part, he bade her goodbye quickly and left her. A few days later he received a parcel containing his books and music.

Four years passed. Mr Duffy returned to his even way of life. His room still bore witness of the orderliness of his mind. Some new pieces of music encumbered the music-stand in the lower room and on his shelves stood two volumes by Nietzsche: *Thus Spake Zarathustra* and *The Gay Science*. He wrote seldom in the sheaf of papers which lay in his desk. One of his sentences, written two months after his last interview with Mrs Sinico, read: Love between man and man is impossible because there must not be sexual intercourse, and friendship between man and woman is impossible because there must be sexual intercourse. He kept away from concerts lest he should meet her. His father died; the junior partner of the bank retired. And still every morning he went into the city by tram and every evening walked home from the city after having dined moderately in George's Street and read the evening paper for dessert.

One evening as he was about to put a morsel of corned beef and cabbage into his mouth his hand stopped. His eyes fixed themselves on a paragraph in the evening paper which he had propped against the water-carafe. He replaced the morsel of food on his plate and read the paragraph attentively. Then he drank a glass of water, pushed his plate to one side, doubled the paper down before him between his elbows and read the paragraph over and over again. The cabbage began to deposit a cold white grease on his plate. The girl came over to him to ask was his dinner not properly cooked. He said it was very good and ate a few mouthfuls of it with difficulty. Then he paid his bill and went out.

He walked along quickly through the November twilight, his stout hazel stick striking the ground regularly, the fringe of the buff *Mail* peeping out of a side-pocket of his tight reefer overcoat. On the lonely road which leads from the Parkgate to Chapelizod he slackened his pace. His stick struck the ground less emphatically and his breath, issuing irregularly, almost with a sighing sound, condensed in the wintry air. When he reached his house he went up at once to his bedroom and, taking the paper from his pocket, read the paragraph again by the failing light of the window. He read it not aloud, but moving his lips as a priest does when he reads the prayers *Secreto*. This was the paragraph:

DEATH OF A LADY AT SYDNEY PARADE

A PAINFUL CASE

Today at the City of Dublin Hospital the Deputy Coroner (in the absence of Mr Leverett) held an inquest on the body of Mrs Emily Sinico, aged forty-three years, who was killed at Sydney Parade Station yesterday evening. The evidence showed that the deceased lady, while attempting to cross the line, was knocked down by the engine of the ten o'clock

slow train from Kingstown, thereby sustaining injuries of the head and right side which led to her death.

James Lennon, driver of the engine, stated that he had been in the employment of the railway company for fifteen years. On hearing the guard's whistle he set the train in motion and a second or two afterwards brought it to rest in response to loud cries. The train was going slowly.

P. Dunne, railway porter, stated that as the train was about to start he observed a woman attempting to cross the lines. He ran towards her and shouted, but, before he could reach her, she was caught by the buffer of the engine and fell to the ground.

A juror – You saw the lady fall?

Witness – Yes.

Police Sergeant Croly deposed that when he arrived he found the deceased lying on the platform apparently dead. He had the body taken to the waiting-room pending the arrival of the ambulance.

Constable 57E corroborated.

Dr. Halpin, assistant house surgeon of the City of Dublin Hospital, stated that the deceased had two lower ribs fractured and had sustained severe contusions of the right shoulder. The right side of the head had been injured in the fall. The injuries were not sufficient to have caused death in a normal person. Death, in his opinion, had been probably due to shock and sudden failure of the heart's action.

Mr. H. B. Patterson Finlay, on behalf of the railway company, expressed his deep regret at the accident. The company had always taken every precaution to prevent people crossing the lines except by the bridges, both by placing notices in every station and by the use of patent spring gates at level crossings. The deceased had been in the habit of crossing

the lines late at night from platform to platform and, in view of certain other circumstances of the case, he did not think the railway officials were to blame.

Captain Sinico, of Leoville, Sydney Parade, husband of the deceased, also gave evidence. He stated that the deceased was his wife. He was not in Dublin at the time of the accident as he had arrived only that morning from Rotterdam. They had been married for twenty-two years and had lived happily until about two years ago, when his wife began to be rather intemperate in her habits.

Miss Mary Sinico said that of late her mother had been in the habit of going out at night to buy spirits. She, witness, had often tried to reason with her mother and had induced her to join a League. She was not at home until an hour after the accident.

The jury returned a verdict in accordance with the medical evidence and exonerated Lennon from all blame.

The Deputy Coroner said it was a most painful case, and expressed great sympathy with Captain Sinico and his daughter. He urged on the railway company to take strong measures to prevent the possibility of similar accidents in the future. No blame attached to anyone.

Mr Duffy raised his eyes from the paper and gazed out of his window on the cheerless evening landscape. The river lay quiet beside the empty distillery and from time to time a light appeared in some house on the Lucan road. What an end! The whole narrative of her death revolted him and it revolted him to think that he had ever spoken to her of what he held sacred. The threadbare phrases, the inane expressions of sympathy, the cautious words of a reporter won over to conceal the details of a commonplace vulgar death attacked his stomach. Not merely had she degraded herself; she had degraded him. He saw the squalid tract of her vice, miserable and malodorous. His soul's companion! He thought of the hobbling wretches

whom he had seen carrying cans and bottles to be filled by the barman. Just God, what an end! Evidently she had been unfit to live, without any strength of purpose, an easy prey to habits, one of the wrecks on which civilisation has been reared. But that she could have sunk so low! Was it possible he had deceived himself so utterly about her? He remembered her outburst of that night and interpreted it in a harsher sense than he had ever done. He had no difficulty now in approving of the course he had taken.

As the light failed and his memory began to wander he thought her hand touched his. The shock which had first attacked his stomach was now attacking his nerves. He put on his overcoat and hat quickly and went out. The cold air met him on the threshold; it crept into the sleeves of his coat. When he came to the public-house at Chapelizod Bridge he went in and ordered a hot punch.

The proprietor served him obsequiously but did not venture to talk. There were five or six working-men in the shop discussing the value of a gentleman's estate in County Kildare. They drank at intervals from their huge pint tumblers and smoked, spitting often on the floor and sometimes dragging the sawdust over their spits with their heavy boots. Mr Duffy sat on his stool and gazed at them, without seeing or hearing them. After a while they went out and he called for another punch. He sat a long time over it. The shop was very quiet. The proprietor sprawled on the counter reading the Herald and yawning. Now and again a tram was heard swishing along the lonely road outside.

As he sat there, living over his life with her and evoking alternately the two images in which he now conceived her, he realized that she was dead, that she had ceased to exist, that she had become a memory. He began to feel ill at ease. He asked himself what else could he have done. He could not have carried on a comedy of deception with her; he could not have lived with her openly. He had done what seemed to him best. How was he to blame? Now that she was gone he understood how lonely her life must have been, sitting night after night alone

in that room. His life would be lonely too until he, too, died, ceased to exist, became a memory – if anyone remembered him.

It was after nine o'clock when he left the shop. The night was cold and gloomy. He entered the Park by the first gate and walked along under the gaunt trees. He walked through the bleak alleys where they had walked four years before. She seemed to be near him in the darkness. At moments he seemed to feel her voice touch his ear, her hand touch his. He stood still to listen. Why had he withheld life from her? Why had he sentenced her to death? He felt his moral nature falling to pieces.

When he gained the crest of the Magazine Hill he halted and looked along the river towards Dublin, the lights of which burned redly and hospitably in the cold night. He looked down the slope and, at the base, in the shadow of the wall of the Park, he saw some human figures lying. Those venal and furtive loves filled him with despair. He gnawed the rectitude of his life; he felt that he had been outcast from life's feast. One human being had seemed to love him and he had denied her life and happiness: he had sentenced her to ignominy, a death of shame. He knew that the prostrate creatures down by the wall were watching him and wished him gone. No one wanted him; he was outcast from life's feast. He turned his eyes to the grey gleaming river, winding along towards Dublin. Beyond the river he saw a goods train winding out of Kingsbridge Station, like a worm with a fiery head winding through the darkness, obstinately and laboriously. It passed slowly out of sight; but still he heard in his ears the laborious drone of the engine reiterating the syllables of her name.

He turned back the way he had come, the rhythm of the engine pounding in his ears. He began to doubt the reality of what memory told him. He halted under a tree and allowed the rhythm to die away. He could not feel her near him in the darkness nor her voice touch his ear. He waited for some minutes listening. He could hear nothing: the night was perfectly silent. He listened again: perfectly silent. He felt that he was alone.