

CHARLES UNIVERSITY IN PRAGUE

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Department of English Language and Literature



BACHELOR THESIS

***The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey – the translation
and stylistic analysis of three chapters from
the novel**

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this bachelor thesis, titled “*The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey – the translation and stylistic analysis of three chapters from the novel” is the result of my own work and that I used only the cited sources.

Prague, June 2013

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Abstract

This bachelor thesis consists of two parts. It deals with the translation of three chosen chapters from Eowyn Ivey's debut novel *The Snow Child*. The theoretical part of this thesis focuses on the problems one might encounter during such translation, demonstrating these on examples taken from the practical part. To justify the choices, theories of Dagmar Knittlová and Jiří Levý were used.

Key words

Translation, Eowyn Ivey, language register, proper names, equivalents, colloquial language, idioms, passive, non-finite verb forms, pronunciation

Abstrakt

Tato bakalářská práce se skládá ze dvou částí. Zabývá se překladem tří vybraných kapitol debutového románu *The Snow Child* spisovatelky Eowyn Iveyové. Teoretická část této práce se zaměřuje na problémy, na které může překladatel narazit a ukazuje na příkladech z praktické části jejich řešení. K odůvodnění řešení byly použity teorie Dagmar Knittlové a Jiřího Levého.

Klíčová slova

Překlad, Eowyn Ivey, jazykový rejstřík, vlastní jména, ekvivalenty, hovorová mluva, idiomy, pasivum, neurčité tvary sloves, výslovnost

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Introduction

When I started thinking what I would write as my final thesis I was very sure it would be at the Department of English Language and Literature and I also knew it would be translation. At that time, about a year ago, I was very curious to learn more about the art, having enjoyed the translation seminars and wanting to explore other possibilities than teaching. I believe that one should explore as many areas of study as he can to make absolutely sure one does the most enjoyable and fulfilling job he can. I also thought I could possibly write the next final thesis in two years at the Department of Mathematics and Mathematical Education, should there be a better topic as far as didactics is concerned.

Choosing the right book was the tricky part. However, I was fortunate enough to come across a debut novel from an Alaskan author that was really one of a kind. Eowyn Ivey tells us herself in the book “Without Mr Ransome, I would never have created my own snow child” (Ivey 411). The novel is in fact a retelling of “The Little Daughter of the Snow”, a Russian fairy tale that can be found in *Old Peter's Russian Tales* by Arthur Ransome. Everyone probably associates his name with the Swallows and Amazons series. I believe I read them all; he was one of my favourite authors when I was little. I could not therefore wait to read *The Snow Child*. The story is quite sad but magical.

The book is divided into three parts and I chose to translate one chapter from each, chapter two, fourteen and thirty-six, thus exploring different settings, characters and the language they use. The first chapter I translated demonstrates how I dealt with direct speech and informal language, whereas the other two are more descriptive. The three translated chapters in the practical part of my thesis are then followed by a theoretical part, which explains my solution to lexical, grammatical and other problems I encountered during my translation. For this I used mainly the works by Jiří Levý and Dagmar Knittlová to help me make the right decisions.

PRACTICAL PART

My translation of three selected chapters from *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey

Chapter 2

The morning was so cold that when Jack first stepped outside and harnessed the horse, his leather boots stayed stiff and his hands wouldn't work right. A north wind blew steadily off the river. He'd have liked to stay indoors, but he had already stacked Mabel's towel-wrapped pies in a crate to take to town. He slapped himself on the arms and stomped his feet to get the blood flowing. It was damned cold, and even long underwear beneath denim seemed a scant cotton sheet about his legs. It wasn't easy, leaving the comfort of the woodstove to face this alone. The sun threatened to come up on the other side of the river, but its light was weak and silvery, and not much comfort at all.

Jack climbed up into the open wagon and shook the reins. He did not look back over his shoulder, but he felt the cabin dwindle into the spruce trees behind him.

As the trail passed through a field, the horse seemed to trip on its own feet, and then it tossed its head. Jack slowed the wagon to a stop and scanned the field and distant trees, but saw nothing.

Goddamned horse. He'd wanted a nice mellow draft, something slow and strong. But horses were scarcer than hen's teeth up here, and he didn't have much to choose from—a swaybacked old mare that looked to be on her last legs and this one, young and barely broken, better suited to prancing around a ring than working for a living. Jack was afraid it would be the death of him.

Just the other day he'd been skidding logs out of the new field when the horse spooked at a branch and knocked Jack to the ground. He barely missed being crushed by the log as the horse charged ahead.

Ráno byla taková zima, že když Jack poprvé vyšel ven a zapřahal koně, jeho kožené boty byly úplně ztuhlé a ruce ho pořádně neposlouchaly. Od řeky váł vytrvalý severní vítr. Byl by rád zůstal v domě, ale už měl koláče od Mabel zabalené v utěrkách a naskládané v bedně na cestu do města. Popleskal se na rukách a zadupal nohama aby si rozproudil krev. Bylo zatraceně zima, i dlouhé spodní prádlo pod riflemi mu na nohou připadalo jako cár tenké bavlny. Nebylo lehké opustit pohodlí kamen a čelit tomu sám. Mdlé stříbřité světlo slunce vycházejícího na druhé straně řeky mu bylo pramalou útěchou.

Jack vylezl na otevřený povoz a zatřásl otěžemi. I když se neohlédl přes rameno, tušil za sebou srub, který se pomalu ztrácel mezi smrky.

Cesta vedla polem a zdálo se, že kůň klopýtá o své vlastní nohy. V tom náhle pohodil hlavou. Jack vůz zpomalil, zastavil a rozhlížel se po poli i vzdálených stromech, ale nic neviděl.

Mizerný kůň. Původně chtěl pěkného klidného tahouna, pomalého a silného. Jenže koní bylo v téhle končině jako šafránu a on si neměl moc z čeho vybírat – starou kobylu s prohnutými zády, která vypadala že mele z posledního, nebo tohohle. Byl mladý a ještě ne úplně krotký. Byl by vhodnější k předvádění v manéži než na práci. Jack se obával, že to bude jeho smrt.

Zrovna nedávno přibližoval klády z nového pole, když se kůň polekal větve a srazil Jacka k zemi. Jedna kláda ho málem rozmačkala, jak kůň vyrazil kupředu.

His forearms and shins were still tore up, and his back pained him every morning.

And there lay the real problem. Not the nervous horse, but the tired old man. The truth squirmed in the pit of his stomach like a thing done wrong. This was too much work for a man of his age. He wasn't making headway, even working every day as long and hard as he could. After a long summer and snowless autumn, he was still nowhere near done clearing enough land to earn a living. He got a pitiful little potato harvest off one small field this year, and it scarcely did more than buy flour for the winter. He figured he had enough money left from selling his share in the farm Back East to last them one more year, but only if Mabel kept selling pies in town.

That wasn't right either, Mabel scrubbing her own rough-cut floors and selling baked goods on the side. How different her life could have been. The daughter of a literature professor, a family of privilege, she could have studied her books and art and spent her afternoons consorting with other fine women. Servants and china teacups and petit fours baked by someone else.

As he rode through the end of a half-cleared field, the horse jerked again, tossed its head and snorted. Jack pulled back on the reins. He squinted and studied the fallen trees around him and beyond them the standing birches, spruce, and cottonwoods. The woods were silent, not even the twitter of a bird. The horse stamped a hoof on the hard ground and then was still. Jack tried to quiet his breathing so he could see and hear.

Something was watching him.

It was a foolish thought. Who would be out here? He wondered not for the first time if wild animals could give that feeling.

Předloktí a holeně měl ještě rozervané a záda ho bolela každé ráno.

Skutečným problémem nebyl nervózní kůň, ale starý unavený muž. Udělalo se mu z té pravdy špatně. Bylo to příliš mnoho práce na člověka jeho věku. Nedělal pokroky, přestože každý den dlouho a tvrdě pracoval, jak jen mohl. Léto bylo dlouhé a na podzim nepadal žádný sníh, ale i tak měl stále daleko k vymýcení dostatečného kusu půdy, aby se uživili. Letos sklídl žalostně málo brambor z jednoho maličkého pole. Sotva si za to pořídili víc než mouku na zimu. Usoudil, že má dost peněz z prodeje svého podílu farmy doma na východě, aby vydrželi celý další rok, ale to jedině pokud Mabel bude dál prodávat koláče ve městě.

Rovněž nebylo správné, aby Mabel uklízela vlastní nahrubo dělané podlahy a bokem prodávala pečivo. Jak odlišný mohl být její život. Dcera profesora literatury, z privilegované rodiny, bývala by se mohla věnovat studiu knih a umění a stýkat se a trávit odpoledne se ženami z lepších rodin jako ona. Byly by tam sluhové a porcelánové šálky a dezertní koláčky, které upekl někdo jiný.

Když dojel na konec zpola vymýčeného pole, kůň sebou znovu trhl, pohodil hlavou a odfrknul si. Jack zatáhl za otěže. Mhouřil oči a zkoumal popadané stromy kolem sebe i břízy, smrky a topoly, které rostly za nimi. V lese okolo bylo ticho, ani ptáci necvrlikali. Kůň si dupnul kopytem o tvrdou zem a zůstal stát. Jack se pokoušel ztišit svůj dech aby lépe viděl a slyšel.

Něco ho pozorovalo.

Hloupá myšlenka. Kdo by tu tak mohl být? Nebylo to poprvé, co ho napadlo, zda ten pocit nemá na svědomí divoká zvěř.

Dumb beasts, like cows and chickens, could stare at a man's back all day and not give a prickle on his neck. But maybe woodland creatures were different. He tried to picture a bear shuffling through the forest, pacing back and forth and eyeing him and the horse. Didn't seem likely, getting this close to winter. They should be looking to den up.

His eyes caught now and then on a stump or a shadowy spot among the trees. Shrug it off, old man, he told himself. You'll drive yourself crazy looking for something that's not there.

He went to shake the reins, but then peered one last time over his shoulder and saw it—a flash of movement, a smudge of brownish red. The horse snorted. Jack turned slowly in the wagon seat.

A red fox darted among the fallen trees. It disappeared for a minute but popped up again, closer to the forest, running with its fluffy tail held low to the ground. It stopped and turned its head. For a moment its eyes locked with Jack's, and there, in its narrowing golden irises, he saw the savagery of the place. Like he was staring wilderness itself straight in the eye.

He faced forward in the wagon, shook the reins, and let the horse gather to a trot, both of them eager to put the fox behind them. For the next hour, he rode hunched and cold as the wagon bumped along through miles of untouched forest. As he neared town, the horse picked up its pace, and Jack had to slow it to keep the crate from spilling out of the wagon.



Back home, Alpine wouldn't have been called a town at all. It was nothing more than a few dusty, false-fronted buildings perched between the train tracks and the Wolverine River.

Němá zvířata, jako krávy a kuřata, mohla člověku zírat na záda celý den a ničeho by si nevšiml. Možná jsou lesní stvoření jiná. Zkusil si představit medvěda, jak si to šine lesem, přechází sem a tam a sleduje Jacka a jeho koně. Nepřišlo mu to pravděpodobné, zima tu bude každou chvíli. Spíš by se měl ukládat k zimnímu spánku.

Jeho pohled tu a tam upoutal pahýl nebo potemnělé místo mezi stromy. Nevšímej si toho staříku, řekl si. Doženeš sám sebe k šílenství, budeš-li hledat něco, co není.

Chystal se zatřást otěžemi, ale ještě se naposledy ohlédl přes rameno a uviděl to – záblesk pohybu, šmouhu hnědavě červené. Kůň zafrkal. Jack se pomalu otočil na sedátku.

Mezi popadanými stromy pelášila liška. Na chvíli zmizela, ale hned se vynořila znovu, blíže lesu. Uháněla s načechraným ocasem nízko při zemi. Zastavila se a otočila hlavu. Na moment se její oči setkaly s Jackovými a on v těch úzkých zlatavých duhovkách spatřil divokost toho místa. Hleděl divočině přímo do očí.

Jack se na povozu otočil kupředu, zatřásl otěžemi a nechal koně zrychlit do klusu. Oba rádi nechali lišku za sebou. Po další hodinu jel shrbený a prochladlý, jak vůz drkotal přes míle nedotčeného lesa. Když se blížili k městu, kůň přidal na tempu a Jack ho musel přibrzdit, aby se mu bedna nevyklopila z vozu.



Doma by Alpine nikdo městem nenazval. Nebylo tu nic než pár zaprášených průčelí zdánlivě honosných domů vtěsnaných mezi železniční koleje a řeku Wolverine.

Nearby, several homesteaders had stripped the land clear of trees before abandoning it. Some went off to pan gold or work for the railroad, but most had hightailed it home with no plans of ever returning to Alaska.

Jack carried the crate of pies up the steps to the hotel restaurant, where the owner's wife opened the door for him. Well into her sixties, Betty wore her hair short and mannish and ran the place like a one-woman show. Her husband, Roy, worked for the territorial government and was rarely about.

"Good morning, Betty," Jack said.

"It's ugly as far as I can see." She slammed the door behind them. "Colder than hell, and no sign of snow. Never seen anything like it. Got some of Mabel's pies?"

"Yes, ma'am." He set them on the counter and unwrapped them from the towels.

"That woman sure can bake," she said. "Everybody's always asking after them pies."

"Glad to hear it."

She counted a few bills from the till and put them on the counter beside the crate.

"So I know I'm risking losing a few customers, Jack, but I'm afraid we won't be needing any more after today. My sister's come to live with us, and Roy says she's got to earn her keep by doing the baking."

He picked up the bills and put them in his coat pocket as if he hadn't heard what she'd said. Then it registered.

"No more pies? You sure?"

"Sorry, Jack. I know it's poor timing, with winter coming on, but..." Her voice trailed off, and she seemed uncharacteristically embarrassed.

"We could cut the price, if that would help," he said.

Nedaleko byl kus vymýcené země, který ale hospodáři posléze opustili. Někteří odešli rýžovat zlato nebo pracovat u železnice, ale většina uháněla domů s tím, že na Aljašku se už nikdy nevrátí.

Jack vynesl bednu s koláči nahoru po schodech k hostinci, kde už mu dveře podržela majitelova manželka. Šedesátnice Betty měla krátké vlasy na kluka a vedla podnik sama. Její manžel Roy pracoval na místním úřadě a byl pořád pryč.

"Dobré ráno Betty," pozdravil Jack.

"Je pěkně hnusné, jak to vidím já." Zabouchla za ním dveře. "Zima jak v morně a žádný sníh. Nikdy jsem nic podobného neviděla. Máš koláče od Mabel?"

"Jistě madam." Položil je na pult a vybalil z utěrek.

"Ta ženská ale umí péct," řekla. "Každý se na ty její koláče vždycky ptá."

"To rád slyším."

Odpočítala pár bankovek z pokladny a položila je na pult vedle bedny.

"Tedy, je mi jasný, že asi přijdu o pár zákazníků Jacku, ale obávám se, že žádné další už po dnešku nebudeme potřebovat. Moje sestra se právě přistěhovala a Roy říká, že by si na sebe měla vydělat jako naše pekařka."

Jack posbíral bankovky a zastrčil si je do kapsy pláště, jakoby neslyšel, co právě řekla. Pak mu to došlo.

"Žádné další koláče? Jseš si jistá?"

"Promiň Jacku. Je mi jasný, že teď je blbá doba, co nevidět udeří zima, ale..." Její hlas se vytratil. Byla až nebývale rozpačitá.

"Mohli bychom je prodávat levněji, jestli jde o tohle," navrhl.

“We need every penny we can get.”

“I am sorry. Can I get you a cup of coffee and some breakfast?”

“Coffee would be fine.” He chose a table by a small window that looked out over the river.

“It’s on the house,” she said as she set the cup in front of him.

He never stayed when he brought the pies into town, but this morning he wasn’t eager to get back to the homestead. What would he tell Mabel? That they had to pack up and go home with their tails between their legs? Give up, like all those before him? He stirred some sugar into the coffee and stared out the window. A man with scuffed leather boots and the dust-beaten air of a mountain camp walked along the river’s edge. He wore a bedroll on his backpack, led a shaggy husky by a rope tether and in his other hand carried a hunting rifle. Past him Jack could see a white haze shrouding the peaks. It was snowing in the mountains. Soon it would snow here in the valley, too.

“You know, they’re looking for help up at the mine.” Betty slid a plate of bacon and eggs in front of him. “You probably wouldn’t want to make it your profession, but it might get you all through a tight spot.”

“The coal mine up north?”

“Yep. Pay’s not bad, and they’ll be at it as long as they can keep the tracks clear. They feed you and bunk you, and send you home with a little extra money in your pocket. Just something to think about.”

“Thanks. And thanks for this.” He gestured toward the plate.

“Sure thing.”

A godforsaken job, coal mining. Farmers were born to work in the light and air, not in tunnels through rock.

„Potřebujeme každý cent.“

„Je mi to líto. Můžu ti nabídnout kafe a malou snídani?“

„Kafe by bylo prima.“ Posadil se ke stolu u malého okna s výhledem na řeku.

„Na účet podniku,“ řekla, když před něj stavěla hrnek.

Nikdy předtím se nezdržel, když přivezl koláče, ale dnes se mu zpátky domů vůbec nechtělo. Co řekne Mabel? Že se musí vrátit tam odkud přišli jako poražení psi? Vzdát se, jako tolik jiných před nimi? Zamíchal si do kafe trochu cukru a podíval se z okna. Nějaký muž v ošoupaných kožených botách, který se zřejmě vracel udolaný a zaprášený z horského tábora, šel po břehu řeky. Pokrývky měl svinuté na batohu, na provaze vedl přivázaného chundelatého psa husky a v druhé ruce nesl loveckou pušku. Za ním Jack viděl vrcholky hor zahalené v bělavém závoji. Na horách sněžilo. Brzy přijde sníh i do údolí.

„Víš, shánějí pomocníky do dolů.“ Betty před něj postavila talíř se slaninou a vejci. „Asi bys tam nechtěl pracovat napořád, ale mohli byste takhle překonat svízelné období.“

„Ten uhelný důl nahoře na severu?“

„Přesně. Mzda není špatná a budou kutat tak dlouho, dokud budou koleje průjezdné. Dají ti najíst a spát a pošlou tě domů s pár drobnými na přilepšenou v kapse. Stojí to za zvážení.“

„Díky. A díky za snídani.“ Ukázal na talíř.

„Jasná věc.“

Bohem zapomenutá práce, těžba uhlí. Farmáři se narodili, aby pracovali na čerstvém vzduchu a za dne, ne v temných tunelech pod skalou.

Back home, he'd seen the men return from the mines with their faces black with coal dust and coughing up dirty blood. Even if he had the will and strength, it would mean leaving Mabel alone at the homestead for days, maybe weeks, at a time.

Cash money is what they needed, though. Just a month or two might be enough to pull them through next harvest. He could stand most anything for a month or two. He ate the last bite of bacon and was ready to head out when George Benson came noisily through the restaurant door.

"Betty, Betty, Betty. What have you got for me today? Any of those pies?"

"They're fresh off the homestead, George. Have a seat and I'll bring a slice over."

George turned toward the tables and spotted Jack.

"Hello there, neighbor! I'll tell you what—your wife bakes a mean apple pie." He threw his coat over the back of a chair and patted his round belly. "Mind if I join you?"

"Not at all."

George lived about ten miles the other side of town with his wife and three boys. Jack had met him a few times at the general store and here at the restaurant. He seemed a good-natured sort and always spoke as if they were confirmed friends. He and George were about the same age.

"How's it coming out at your place?" George asked as he sat across from him.

"It's coming."

"You got any help out there?"

"Nope. Just working away on it myself. Got one or two good fields cleared. Always more to do. You know how it goes."

Doma vídával muže, jak se vrací z dolů celí černí od uhelného prachu. S prachem vykašlávali krev. I kdyby sebral dost vůle a síly, pořád by to znamenalo nechat Mabel v domácnosti na několik dnů, možná i týdnů samotnou.

Peníze však potřebovali. Možná by jeden či dva měsíce úplně stačili na to, aby vydrželi do příští sklizně. Jeden nebo dva měsíce by vydržel prakticky cokoli. Snědl poslední kousek slaniny a chystal se vyjít ven, když se ve dveřích hostince hlasitě zjevil George Benson.

"Betty, Betty, Betty. Copak pro mě dnes máš? Byly by koláče?"

"Jsou úplně čerstvé, Georgi. Posad' se, já ti kousek přinesu."

George se vydal směrem ke stolům a uviděl Jacka.

"Zdravím tě, sousede! Něco ti řeknu – tvoje žena peče zatraceně dobrý jablečný koláč." Přehodil si kabát přes židli a poplácal se na břicho. "Můžu si přisednout?"

"Samozřejmě."

George bydlel asi deset mil na druhou stranu od města, měl ženu a tři kluky. Jack ho párkrát potkal v místním obchodě a tady v restauraci. Byl to dobrácký typ člověka a vždy s ním mluvil, jako by se přátelili už dávno. Oba byli zhruba stejně staří.

"Jak se vám daří?" zeptal se George, když si sedal naproti.

"Ujde to."

"Pomáhá ti někdo?"

"Kdepak. Dělán na tom sám. Mám jedno dvě pěkná pole hotová. Vždycky je co na práci. Víš jak to chodí."

“We should swap a few days here and there—me and my boys come over to your place with our draft horses, and then you lend a hand our way.”

“That’s a generous offer.”

“We could help you get some work done,” George continued, “and your wife could come over and get some girl time with Esther, talk about baking or sewing or whatever it is they talk about. She gets tired of all us men. She’d be thrilled to have you all over.”

Jack didn’t say yes or no.

“Your kids all grown and gone?” George asked.

Jack hadn’t seen that coming. He and Mabel were that old, weren’t they, that their children could be grown and having families of their own. He wondered if he looked the way he felt, like someone had stuck out a foot and tripped him.

“Nope. Never had any.”

“What’s that? Never had any, you say?”

“Nope.”

He watched George. If you said you didn’t have children, it sounded like a choice, and what kind of craziness would that be? If you said you couldn’t, the conversation turned awkward while they contemplated your manliness or your wife’s health. Jack waited and swallowed.

“That’s one way to go, I suppose.” George shook his head with a chuckle. “Heck of a lot more quiet around your place, I’ll bet. Sometimes those boys of mine like to drive me to drink. Hassling about this or that, dragging out of bed in the morning like the pox was on them. Getting a good day’s work out of the youngest one is about as easy as wrestling a hog.”

Jack laughed and eased, drank some of his coffee. “I had a brother like that. It was almost easier to just let him sleep.”

„Měli bychom si pár dnů vypomocť – já přijedu s kluky a tažnými koňmi za tebou a pak nám zas pomůžes ty.“

„To je velkorysá nabídka.“

„Mohli bychom ti hodně pomocť,“ pokračoval George, „a tvoje žena by si mohla přijít pokecat s Esther. Ženský by probrali pečení a šití nebo o čem to tak mluví. Moje žena nás mívá dost. Byla by nadšená, kdybyste přišli oba.“

Jack na to neřekl nic.

„Děti už vám odrostly?“ zeptal se George.

To Jack nečekal. On a Mabel byli koneckonců dost staří na to, aby měli už dost dospělé děti, co zakládají vlastní rodiny. Uvažoval, jestli na něm bylo vidět, jak se cítí, jako by mu někdo právě do cesty nastavil nohu aby zakopl.

„Ne. Žádné nemáme.“

„Co to? Říkáš, že nemáte děti?“

„Ne.“

Pozoroval George. Když jste řekli, že jste děti neměli, znělo to jako vaše rozhodnutí a co by to bylo za šilenství? Když jste řekli, že jste děti mít nemohli, konverzace byla najednou nepříjemná, zatímco ostatní zvažovali vaši mužnost, nebo zdraví vaší ženy. Jack polkl. A čekal.

„I tak se dá žít, řekl bych.“ George potřásl hlavou a uchechtl se. „Musí u vás být zatraceně víc klidu a ticha, to se vsadím. Někdy mě ti naši kluci doženu až k pití. Otravují s tímhle a tamtím a ráno by je tahal z postele jako těžce nemocné. A přimět nejmladšího, aby za den udělal kus práce, je asi tak snadné jako zápasit s vepřem.“

Jack se zasmál, ulevilo se mu. Napil se kávy. „Měl jsem takového bratra. Bylo skoro snazší nechat ho prostě spát.“

“Yep, that’s how some of them are, at least until they’ve got a place of their own and see what it’s all about.”

Betty came to the table with a cup and slice of pie for George.

“I was just telling Jack they’re looking for help up at the mine,” she said as she poured hot coffee. “You know, to get them through the winter.”

George raised his eyebrows, then frowned, but didn’t speak until Betty had gone back into the kitchen.

“You aren’t, are you?”

“Something to consider.”

“Christ. You lost your ever-loving mind? You and I—we’re no spring chickens, and those hell holes are for young men, if anybody at all.”

Jack nodded, uncomfortable with the conversation.

“I know it’s none of my damned business, but you seem like a good fellow,” George went on. “You know why they’re looking for men?”

“Nope.”

“They’ve had trouble keeping crews on since the fires a few years back. Fourteen, dead as doornails. Some burned up so bad you couldn’t tell ’em apart. A half dozen they never found at all. I’m telling you, Jack, it’s not worth the pennies they’d pay you.”

“I hear you. I do, but... well, I’m backed up against a wall. I’m just not sure how to work it out.”

“You need to make it through until harvest? You got seed money for the spring?”

Jack gave a wry smile. “As long as we don’t eat between now and then.”

“You’ve got carrots and potatoes sacked away, haven’t you?”

“Sure.”

“You get yourself a moose yet?”

Jack shook his head. “Never been much of a hunter.”

“Well, see here—that’s all you need to do.

„Jo, někteří už jsou takoví, minimálně do té doby, než se musí postarat o vlastní domácnost a zjistí jaké to je.“

Betty se vrátila ke stolu s hrnkem a kusem koláče pro George.

„Zrovna jsem říkala Jackovi, že hledají dělníky do dolů,“ řekla když nalávala horké kafe. „Mohlo by jim to pomoci přežít zimu, víš.“

George pozvedl obočí, pak se zamračil, ale dokud se Betty nevrátila do kuchyně, nic neřekl.

„O tom neuvažuješ, nebo jo?“

„Stojí to za zvážení.“

„Prokrista. Ztratil jsi tu svou pitomou hlavu? Ty a já – nejsme žádní mlad’oši a tyhle pekelné jámy jsou pro mladé, jestli vůbec pro někoho.“

Jack přikývl, tenhle rozhovor mu nebyl příjemný.

„Vím že mi do toho zatraceně nic není, ale připadáš mi jako dobrý chlap,“ pokračoval George. „Viš vůbec proč shánějí lidi?“

„To ne.“

„Mají totiž problém si udržet zaměstnance od té doby, co tam před pár lety hořelo. Čtrnáct, úplně tuhejch. Někteří byli tím požárem tak zohavení, že bys je nepoznal. Půl tuctu nikdy nenašli. Nestojí to za těch pár centů, co ti dají, to ti povídám Jacku.“

„Já ti rozumím, vážně, jenže... no, jsem v zoufalé situaci. Nejsem si prostě jistej, jak to zvládnem.“

„Potřebuješ to zvládnout do příští sklizně? Máš na jarní osivo?“

Jack se sarkasticky usmál. „Jo, když do té doby nebudeme jíst.“

„Máš zásoby mrkve a brambor, nebo ne?“

„Jasně že jo.“

„Už si skolil losa?“

Jack zavrtěl hlavou. „Nikdy jsem nebyl žádný velký lovec.“

„No, podívej – to je vše co musíš udělat.“

Hang some meat in the barn, and you and the wife will be set till spring. It won't be cake and caviar, but you won't starve."

Jack looked into his empty coffee mug.

"That's how it goes for a lot of us," George said. "Those first years are lean. I'm telling you, you might get sick of moose and potatoes, but you'll keep your neck safe."

"True enough."

As if it were all settled, George finished off his piece of pie in a few huge bites, wiped his mouth with the napkin, and stood. He reached a hand down to Jack.

"Better get going. Esther will accuse me of pissing the day away if I don't get on home." His handshake was steady and friendly. "Don't forget what I said, though. And when it comes to getting those fields cleared, we'd be glad to come over and help you out. Can make the day go faster to have company."

Jack nodded. "I appreciate that."



He sat alone at the table. Maybe it was a mistake isolating themselves the way they had, Mabel without a single woman friend to talk with. George's wife could be a godsend, especially if he went north to work at the mine and Mabel was left alone at the homestead.

She would say otherwise. Hadn't they left all that behind to start a new life with just the two of them? I need peace and quiet, she'd told him more than once. She had withered and shrunk in on herself, and it began when they lost that baby. She said she couldn't bear to attend another family gathering with all the silly banter and gossip. But Jack remembered more.

Budeš-li mít kus masa ve stodole, ty i tvoje žena do jara vystačíte. Nebudou to žádné hody, ale hlady neumřete."

Jack se podíval na svůj prázdný hrnek.

"Dost lidí to tak má," řekl George. "Prvních pár let je hubených. Říkám ti, že možná budeš mít losa a brambor až po krk, ale nebudete strádat."

"To je pravda."

Jako by to tím bylo vyřízeno, George dojedl svůj kus koláče několika velkými sousty, otřel si pusku do ubrousku a vstal. Podal ruku Jackovi.

"Měl bych jít. Jinak mě Esther obviní, že jsem proflákal den, jestli se včas nevrátím domů." Potřásl mu rukou, měl pevný a přátelský stisk. "Ne abys zapomněl co jsem říkal. Co se týče mýcení těch polí, rádi přijdem a pomůžem vám. Rychleji to ubíhá, když máš pomoc."

Jack přikývl. "Vážím si toho."



Zůstal sedět u stolu sám. Možná to byla chyba takhle se stranit ostatních, Mabel neměla žádnou přítelkyni, se kterou by si mohla popovídat. Georgova žena by mohla být darem z nebe, obzvlášť pokud by odešel na sever do dolů a Mabel zůstala na hospodářství sama.

Ona by ale nesouhlasila. Nenechali snad svůj starý život za sebou aby začali nový? Jen sami dva? Potřebuji ticho a klid, říkala mnohokrát. Začala chřadnout a stahovat se do sebe ve chvíli, kdy přišli o to dítě. Říkala, že by nemohla na další rodinné setkání se vším tím škádlením a klábosením. Ale bylo toho víc.

He remembered the pregnant women smiling as they stroked their bellies, and the newborn infants wailing as they were passed among the relatives. He remembered the little girl who had tugged at Mabel's skirts and called her "Mama," mistaking her for another woman, and Mabel looking as if she had been backhanded. He remembered, too, that he had failed her, had gone on talking with a group of men and pretended he hadn't seen.

The Bensons' oldest son was about to be married, and soon enough there would be a baby toddling about the house. He thought of Mabel, that small, sad smile and the wince at the inside corners of her eyes that should have made tears but never did.

He nodded at Betty as he picked up the empty crate and walked out to the wagon.

Chapter 14

It was unexpected, to look forward to each day. When Mabel woke in the mornings, happy anticipation washed over her and for a moment she would not know its cause. Was this day special for some reason? A birthday? A holiday? Was something planned? Then she would remember—the child might visit.

Mabel was often at the window, but it wasn't with the melancholy weariness of the previous winter. Now she watched with excitement and hope that the little girl in the fur hat and leather moccasins would appear from the woods. The December days had a certain luminosity and sparkle, like frost on bare branches, alight in the morning just before it melts.

Mabel tempered herself. She imagined running to the girl when she appeared at the edge of the trees and throwing her arms around her, spinning her in circles. But she didn't.

Jack si pamatoval těhotné usmívající se ženy hladící si břicha a kvílící novorozence, jak si je příbuzní předávají. Pamatoval se na tu malou dívku která zatahala Mabel za sukně a řekla jí „mami,“ protože si jí spletla s jinou ženou. Mabel vypadala jako by ji právě uhodilo. Také se pamatoval na to, že ji v tom nechal, pokračoval v rozhovoru s ostatními muži a dělal že nic nevidí.

Nejstarší Bensonův syn se měl ženit, jistě brzy budou mít dítě batolící se po domě. Pomyslel na Mabel, na její malý smutný úsměv a cukání v koutcích očí, které měly plakat, ale nikdy neplakaly.

Kývl na Betty, popadl bednu a vyšel ven k vozu.

Mabel by se nikdy nenadála, že se bude těšit na každý den. Ráno, když se probudila, zaplavil ji pocit šťastného očekávání a na chvíli nevěděla, odkud se vzal. Byl nějaký důvod, aby tenhle den byl výjimečný? Narozeniny? Svátek? Měli něco v plánu? Pak si vzpomněla – dítě je možná navštíví.

Často stávala u okna, ale na rozdíl od minulé zimy nebyla tak smutná a vyčerpaná. Teď vzrušeně vyhlížela s nadějí, že se malá dívka v kožešinové čepici a kožených mokasínech vynoří z lesa. Prosincové dny byly zalité jistou třpytivou září, jako jinovatka na holých větvích, planoucí nad ránem těsně před tím, než se rozpustí.

Mabel se musela mírnit. Představovala si, jak běží vstříc děvčeti, když se objeví na pokraji stromoví, jak ji objímá a točí se spolu kolem dokola. Ale neudělala to.

She waited patiently in the cabin and pretended not to notice her arrival. When the child came indoors, Mabel did not scrub her clean, brush the leaves and lichen from her hair, wash her clothes, and dress her anew. It was true—she sometimes pictured the child wearing a lovely ruffled dress and pretty bows in her hair. Sometimes she even daydreamed about inviting Esther over for tea to show off the girl as if she were her own.

She did none of these things. They were silly fancies that had more to do with her own romantic ideas of childhood than with this mysterious girl. The only real desire she had, once she stripped away the vain and the frivolous, was to touch the child, to stroke the girl's cheek, to hold her close and deeply breathe in her scent of mountain air. But she contented herself with the child's smiles, and each morning she watched at the window, hoping this day she would come.

Mabel had not been able to find a pattern in the visits. The child came every other evening for a week or so, but then for two or three days she wouldn't appear. One morning she came and stayed with Mabel in the kitchen instead of following Jack around the barn. She watched Mabel mix bread dough, and it was as if a songbird had landed on a bedroom windowsill. Mabel did not want to frighten her away by moving too abruptly, so she emulated Jack's quiet, accepting manner. She spoke softly to the girl. She described how you had to dust the dough in flour and knead it again and again until it was right in the hands, even and elastic. She told the child that Jack's aunt had taught her how to bake bread, that she had been astounded a woman could be grown and married and not know how.

Trpělivě vyčkávala uvnitř srubu a předstírala, že si jejího příchodu nevšimla. Když dítě vešlo dovnitř, Mabel ji nedrhlala hned do čista, nevyčesávala jí z vlasů listí a lišejník, neprala jí šaty a neoblékala do nového. Byla sice pravda, že si občas představovala dítě oblečené v báječných zdobených šatech a s hezkými mašličkami ve vlasech. Občas dokonce snila o tom, že pozve Esther na čaj, aby se dívkou pochlubila jako by byla její.

Nic z toho ale neudělala. Byly to jen hloupé výplody fantazie, které více společného s jejími romantickými představami o dětství než s touhle tajemnou dívkou. Jediné po čem skutečně toužila, když si odmyslela všechnu tu marnivost a pošetilost, bylo se dítěte dotknout, pohladit děvče po tváři, přivinout ji k sobě a zhluboka se nadechnout té vůně horského vzduchu. Ale spokojila se s úsměvy dítěte. Každé ráno se dívala z okna a doufala, že dnes přijde.

Mabel se v návštěvách nedařilo najít žádný řád. Dítě přicházelo každý druhý den asi po dobu jednoho týdne a pak se dva či tři dny neukázalo. Jednoho rána dívka přišla a zůstala s Mabel v kuchyni, místo aby následovala Jacka do stodoly. Pozorovala Mabel, jak míchá těsto na chleba. Bylo to, jako když na parapet v ložnici usedne zpěvák. Mabel ji nechtěla zastrašit nějakým příliš nenadálým pohybem a tak následovala Jackova příkladu, napodobila jeho tiché, přívětivé jednání. Mluvila na dívku něžně. Vysvětlovala, jak je třeba těsto obalit v mouce a znovu a znovu ho hníst, dokud není tak akorát, stejnoměrně promísené a pružné na dotek. Řekla dítěti, že Jackova teta ji naučila péct chleba, neboť ji šokovalo, že dospělá vdaná žena nevěděla jak na to.

That evening, the girl stayed for dinner. Jack came in from the barn and Mabel and the child joined him at the table. The girl bowed her head before he had even begun saying the blessing, and Jack and Mabel's eyes met. She had grown accustomed to their ways.

Jack seemed in an uncommonly good mood, making jokes and talking about his day's work as they passed the food around the table. At one point, he turned to ask her to hand him the salt. She was focused on her own plate and didn't notice. Jack cleared his throat, then tapped lightly on the table.

This is getting silly, he announced.

The child startled. He quieted his tone.

We must call you something. Will it be "girl" forever?

The child was silent. Jack reached over her for the salt, apparently giving up on getting a name from her. Mabel waited, but Jack went back to eating.

Faina, the girl whispered.

What's that, child? Mabel asked.

My name. It's Faina.

Will you say it again, more slowly?

Fah-EE-nah.

Each syllable a quiet whisper. Mabel at first could make no sense of the foreign sounds, so many vowels without their consonants, but then she heard a gesture toward words like "far" and "tree" and a breath of air at the end, sounds that were indeed this little girl sitting at their table. Faina.

What does it mean? Mabel asked.

The girl bit her lower lip and frowned.

You must see it, to know.

Then her face brightened.

But I'll show you. Someday I'll show you what it means.

Toho večera zůstala dívka na večeři. Jack přišel ze stodoly a Mabel s dítětem se k němu připojily u stolu. Děvče sklonilo hlavu dříve, než se vůbec začal modlit. Jack s Mabel se na sebe podívali. Dívka si zvykla na jejich způsoby.

Jack se zdál být v neobvykle dobré náladě, vtipkoval a mluvil o své práci, kterou toho dne udělal, zatímco po stole kolovalo jídlo. V jednu chvíli se na dívku obrátil, aby ji požádal o sůl. Věnovala pozornost svému talíři a nevšimla si toho. Jack si odkašlal a pak lehce poklepal na stůl.

Začíná to být hloupé, prohlásil.

Díte se polekalo. Jack ztišil hlas.

Musíme ti nějak říkat. Nebo budeš napořád jen „děvče“?

Dítě bylo zticha. Jack se přes ni natáhl pro sůl, zřejmě vzdal pokus dostat z ní její jméno. Mabel vyčkávala, ale Jack se pustil znovu do jídla.

Faina, špitla dívka.

Co prosím? Zeptala se Mabel.

Moje jméno. Jmenuji se Faina.

Řekla bys to ještě jednou, pomaleji?

Fa-í-na.

Každá slabika byla jako tichý šepot a Mabel zprvu nerozuměla cizím zvukům, bylo tam tolik samohlásek, žádné souhlásky. Pak ale zaslechla náznak slov jako „vát“ a „sníh“ a povzdech na konci. Byly to zvuky, které skutečně zněly jako tahle malá holka, co seděla u jejich stolu. Faina.

Co to znamená? Zeptala se Mabel.

Dívka se hryzla do rtu a svráстила čelo.

To bys musela vidět, abys to pochopila.

Pak se její obličej rozjasnil.

Ale ukážu ti to. Jednoho dne ti ukážu co to znamená.

Faina. It is a lovely name.

Well there, Jack said. That simplifies things, doesn't it?

That night, after the child left, they said her name again and again. It began to roll easily off their tongues, and Mabel liked the way it felt in her mouth, the way it whispered in her ear—Did you see how Faina bowed her head at dinner? Isn't Faina a beautiful child? What will Faina bring next time she visits? They were like children pretending to be mother and father, and Mabel was happy.



Dawn broke silver over the snowdrifts and spruce trees, and Mabel was at the kitchen table trying to sketch the birch basket the girl had brought them. She had it propped against her wooden recipe box so that it tipped toward her, and she tried to remember how it had looked full of wild berries. It had been too long since she had drawn, and the pencil was awkward in her hands, the shading and angles of the drawing all wrong. Frustrated, she put a hand to the back of her neck and stretched.

At the sight of the girl peeking in the window, Mabel startled, but then smiled and raised her hand in greeting. When the child waved back, affection surged through her.

Faina, child. Come in, come in.

The child brought the smell of snow in with her, and the air in the cabin cooled and brightened. Mabel unwrapped the scarf from her neck, took her mittens, fur hat, and the wool coat. The child let her do this, and Mabel hugged the clothes to her breast, felt the chill of winter, the coarse wool, and the silky brown fur. She draped the scarf over the back of her hand and marveled that her sister's dewdrop stitch would adorn this little girl.

Faina. To je nádherné jméno.

Tak vida, řekl Jack. To všechno zjednodušuje, nebo ne?

Tu noc, když dítě odešlo, vyslovovali její jméno znovu a znovu. Po chvíli jim šlo snáze na jazyk a Mabel se líbilo jej vyslovovat, znělo jí v uchu jako tichý šepot – Všiml sis jak Faina sklopila hlavu u večeře? Není Faina krásné dítě? Co jim Faina přinese příště až přijde? Byli jako děti, které si hrají na maminku a tatínka a Mabel byla šťastná.



Úsvit dodal sněhovým závějím a smrkovým stromům stříbřité nádechy. Mabel seděla u kuchyňského stolu a pokoušela se načrtnout březový košík, který jim dívka přinesla. Podepřela si ho dřevěnou skřínkou s recepty tak, aby se nakláněl směrem k ní a snažila se vzpomenout si, jak vypadal ještě plný planých bobulí. Bylo to nezvyklé, držet v ruce tužku a příliš dlouho, co naposledy kreslila. Stínování, úhly, všechno špatně. Frustrovaná, položila si jednu ruku za krk a protáhla se.

Vylekala se, když spatřila děvče, jak nakukuje dovnitř oknem, ale pak se usmála a zvedla ruku na pozdrav. Když jí dítě také zamávalo na oplátku, zmocnil se jí pocit velké náklonnosti.

Faino, dítě. Pojď dál, pojď.

Dítě sebou přineslo vůni sněhu a vzduch ve srubu to oživilo, byl příjemně chladný. Dívka se nebránila, když jí Mabel odmotala šálu z krku, vzala jí palčáky, kožešinovou čepici a vlněný kabát. Mabel oblečení přitiskla na svoji hrud' a ucítila chlad zimy, hrubou vlnu a hedvábnou hnědou kožešinu. Přehodila si šálu přes hřbet ruky a obdivovala sestřin pletací vzor ve tvaru kapky, který krásně maloval malé děvče.

What were you doing?

The child stood at the table with one of the pencils in her hand.

I was drawing, Mabel said. Would you like to see?

She set the child's outdoor clothing on a chair and left the door cracked open, so a draft could move through the cabin and cool the girl. Then she pulled a chair out for her and sat beside her.

This is my sketchpad. And these are my pencils. I wanted to draw a picture of the basket you gave us. See?

Mabel held up the drawing.

Oh, the child said.

It's not very good, is it? I'm afraid I've lost any skill I might have had.

I think it is very nice.

The child skimmed her fingers across the paper surface and rounded her lips in wonder.

What else can you draw? she asked.

Mabel shrugged.

Anything I set my mind to, I suppose. Although it won't necessarily look the way it ought.

Could you draw a picture of me?

Yes. Oh, yes. But I must warn you, I've never been very good at portraits.

Mabel put the child's chair near the window so the winter light shone on the side of her face and lit up her blond hair. For the next hour, Mabel glanced from sketch paper to child and back again, and waited for the girl to protest, but she never complained or moved. She was stoic, her chin slightly raised, her gaze steady.

With each stroke of the pencil, it was as if Mabel had been granted her wish, as if she held the child in her arms, caressed her cheek, stroked her hair.

Co jsi tu dělala?

Dítě stálo u stolu a drželo v ruce jednu z tužek.

Kreslila jsem, odpověděla Mabel. Chtěla bys to vidět ?

Odložila dívčino oblečení na ven na židli a nechala dveře pootevřené, aby do srubu mohl průvan a chladil děvče. Pak přitáhla další židli a sedla si vedle ní.

To je můj náčrtník. A tohle jsou moje tužky. Chtěla jsem nakreslit obrázek toho košíku, který jsi nám dala. Vidíš?

Mabel zvedla svůj výkres.

Oh, řeklo dítě.

Není to moc dobré, že? Obávám se, že jsem pozbyla veškeré šikovnosti, kterou jsem kdy měla.

Myslím, že je to moc pěkné.

Dítě přejelo prsty po papírovém povrchu a ústa se jí zakulatila v údivu.

Co ještě umíš nakreslit? Zeptala se dívka.

Mabel pokrčila rameny.

Hádám, že cokoli si umanu. Jen to nebude vždy vypadat tak jak by mělo.

Mohla bys nakreslit mě?

Ano. Ach ano. Ale musím tě varovat, že portréty mi nikdy moc nešly.

Mabel postavila židli pro dítě blízko okna, aby zimní světlo dopadalo na její tvář a ozářilo její blondáté vlasy. Po celou další hodinu Mabel přelétala pohledem od náčrtu na papíře k dívce a zpět a čekala, kdy dívka něco namítne, ale ona si ani jednou nepostěžovala, ani se nepohnula. Seděla klidně, s bradou mírně pozdvihnutou a pevně upřeným pohledem.

S každým tahem tužky, jako by se plnilo Mabelino přání, jako by držela dítě v náručí, laskala její tváře a hladila její vlasy.

She drew the gentle curve of the child's cheekbones, the peaks of her small lips, the inquisitive arch of her blond eyebrows. Self-contained, wary and brave, innocent and knowing... something in the turn of her head, the tilt of her eyes, hinted at a wildness Mabel wanted to capture, too. All these details she took in and memorized.

Would you like to see?

Is it finished?

Mabel smiled.

As well as I can for today.

She turned the sketchpad toward the child, not knowing what reaction to expect.

The child took in a breath, then clasped her hands in delight.

Do you like it?

Oh, yes! Is that me? Is that what I look like?

Have you never seen yourself, child?

The girl shook her head.

Never? Not in a mirror? Well, I have just the thing. Much better than any drawing I can manage.

Mabel went to the bedroom and came back with a hand mirror.

Do you know what this is? It's a little glass, and you can see yourself in it.

The child shrugged her small shoulders.

There, do you see? That's you.

The girl peered into the mirror, her eyes wide and her face somber. She reached out and touched the shining surface with one fingertip, then touched her own hair, her face. She smiled, turned her head side to side, brushed her hair away from her brow, all the while watching in the mirror.

Would you like to have the picture I drew of you?

Faina smiled and nodded.

Nakreslila milou křivku jejích lícních kostí, vrcholky uprostřed jejích malých rtíků a zvědavý oblouk jejího blondatého obočí. Uzavřená, ostražitá a statečná, nevinná a zkušená zároveň... něco v tom jak dívka otáčela hlavou a klopila oči Mabel naznačovalo divokost, kterou rovněž chtěla zachytit. Všechny tyhle detaily zaznamenala a zapamatovala si je.

Chceš se podívat?

Je to hotové?

Mabel se usmála.

Pro dnešek jsem udělala, co jsem mohla.

Natočila skicák k dítěti, netušila jakou reakci má čekat.

Bylo slyšet krátký nádech, pak dítě radostně sprásklo ruce.

Líbí se ti to?

Ó ano! To jsem já? Takhle já vypadám?

Nikdy jsi se neviděla, dítě?

Dívka zavrtěla hlavou.

Nikdy? Ne v zrcadle? Tedy, já jedno mám. Bude to lepší, než jakákoli kresba, kterou svedu.

Mabel odešla do ložnice a vrátila se s malým zrcátkem.

Víš co tohle je? Je to malý kousek skla ve kterém se můžeš vidět.

Dítě pokrčilo malými ramínky.

Tady, vidíš? To jsi ty.

Dívka zírala do zrcátka, oči do široka otevřené a pohled zádumčivý. Vztáhla prst a dotkla se špičkou lesklého povrchu, pak svých vlasů a obličeje. Usmála se, otáčela hlavu ze strany na stranu, sčísala si vlasy pryč z čela a celou dobu se pozorovala v zrcátku.

Chtěla by sis nechat ten obrázek co jsem nakreslila?

Faina se usmála a přikývla.

Mabel folded the portrait until it was a square small enough to fit in the child's pocket.



When the little girl was gone and dinner finished, Mabel knitted by the woodstove. Outside, the wind tore down the river valley, and she thought she could hear another sound, too. A mournful baying.

“Is that the wind, Jack?”

He stood at the window, looking out into the blackness.

“Nope. I think it's those wolves upriver. I heard howling the other night, too.”

“Would you stoke up the fire? I feel I've caught a chill.”

She watched him put birch logs to the fire, the flames catching on the papery bark and flickering light against the cabin walls. Then he went to the window and looked for some time out into the night, the way she always did.

“Is she safe?” Mabel asked. “That wind's blowing so savagely. And the wolves.”

“I expect she's all right.”

They stayed up unusually late. Jack went outside several times to get more wood, despite the stack of logs just inside the door, and Mabel continued to knit, though her hands were tired and her eyes burned. Finally they could stay awake no longer and crawled into their bed together. They fell asleep to the sound of the wind blowing down the valley.

Chapter 36

He wasn't always there. Some days Mabel crept through the snow and down to the creek behind the cabin, and the creature wouldn't show himself. There'd be only the trickle of water through snow and ice.

Mabel poskládala portrét do čtverečku dost malého na to, aby se vešel dítěti do kapsy.



Když bylo po večeři a dívka odešla, Mabel pletla u kamen. Venku se vítr hnal dolů říčním údolím a jí se zdálo, že slyší ještě něco dalšího. Naříkavé vytí.

„Je tohle vítr, Jacku?“

Stál u okna a díval se ven do tmy.

„Kdepak. Myslím, že jsou to vlci nahoře proti proudu řeky. Slyšel jsem vytí tuhle v noci také.“

„Přiložil bys do ohně? Mám pocit, že jsem prochladla.“

Pozorovala ho přidávat do ohně březová polena, a jak plameny polapily tenoučkou kůru, světlo se mihotalo na zdech srubu. Pak šel k oknu a díval se nějakou chvíli ven do noci způsobem, jakým to vždy dělávala ona.

„Je v bezpečí?“ zeptala se Mabel. „Ten vítr vane tak prudce. A ti vlci.“

„Hádám, že je v pohodě.“

Zůstali vzhůru nezvykle dlouho. Jack vyšel ven několikrát pro dřevo i přesto, že měli zásobu polen hned za dveřmi a Mabel dál pletla, ačkoli měla ruce unavené a oči ji pálily. Nakonec už nemohli více zůstat vzhůru a zalezli společně do postele. Usnuli za zvuku větru, který se hnal údolím.

Nebyl tam vždy. Byly dny, kdy se Mabel připlížila sněhem dolů k potoku za srubem a stvoření se ne a ne ukázat. Jen pramínek vody stékal po sněhu a ledu.

But if she sat, patient and silent, at the base of the spruce tree, eventually he might appear. His small brown head would peek up from a pool of open water in the creek, or his tail would disappear over a snowy hummock.

This November day, the river otter did not keep her waiting. She heard ice splinter, a splash, and then he was just the other side of the small creek. She expected him to dash across a log or run humpbacked down the bank as he always did. Instead he paused at the water's edge, turned toward her, and stood up on his hind legs. He was remarkably still, supported by his thick tail, his front paws dangling at his chest. For longer than Mabel could hold her breath, the otter stared at her with his eyes like deep eddies. And then he dropped to all fours and scampered down the creek.

Farewell, old man, until we meet again.

She had no way to know its age or gender, but there was something in the light-colored chin and long, coarse whiskers that reminded her of an old man's beard. From a distance the otter gave a comical, mischievous impression, but when it slithered close Mabel could smell fish blood and a wet chill.

She told no one of the otter. Garrett would want to trap it; Faina would ask her to draw it. She refused to confine it by any means because, in some strange way, she knew it was her heart. Living, twisting muscle beneath bristly damp fur. Breaking through thin ice, splashing in cold creek water, sliding belly-down across snow. Joyful, though it should have known better.

It wasn't just the river otter. She once spied a gray-brown coyote slinking across a field with his mouth half open as if in laughter.

Ale když zůstane sedět, trpělivě a v tichosti u kořenů smrku, třeba se nakonec ukáže. Jeho malá hnědá hlavička vykoukne z tůně otevřené vody v potoce, nebo jeho ocas zmizí za pahorkem sněhu.

Tenhle podzimní den ji vydra čekat nenechala. Slyšela tříštění ledu, šplouchnutí a pak ji uviděla přímo na druhém břehu malého potoka. Čekala, že přeběhne kládu, nebo poběží shrbeně po břehu, jako to vždy dělávala. Místo toho se vydra zastavila, otočila se k ní a postavila se na zadní. Byla neobyčejně klidná, opřená o svůj tlustý ocas, přední tlapky jí visely u hrudi. Déle, než byla Mabel schopna zadržovat dech, na ni vydra zírala svýma očičkami, která připomínala maličké hluboké víry. Pak klesla na všechny čtyři a odhopkala dolů potokem.

Sbohem, starý pane, než se zase setkáme.

Nemohla tušit pohlaví vydry, ani její věk, ale něco na té světlé bradě a dlouhých hrubých vousech jí připomínalo plnovous starého muže. Zdálo se, že vydra vypadala komicky, uličnicky, ale když se přiblížila k Mabel, byla cítit rybí krví, chladem a vlhkem.

Nikomu o vydře neřekla. Garrett by ji chtěl chytit do pasti, Faina by chtěla její obrázek. Odmítala vydru lapit jakýmkoli způsobem, protože se jí nějakým zvláštním způsobem zdálo, že to bylo její srdce. Byla živoucím, kroucím se svalem pod štětinatou provlhlou srstí. Prorážela tenký led, ráchala se ve studené vodě potoka a klouzala se na břicho dolů po sněhu. Byla tak plná radosti, ačkoli by měla být moudřejší.

A nebyla tu jen vydra. Jednou tajně sledovala šedohnědého kojota jak se plíží polem s tlamou napůl otevřenou jakoby se smál.

She watched Bohemian waxwings like twilight shadows flock from tree to tree as if some greater force orchestrated their flight. She saw a white ermine sprint past the barn with a fat vole in its mouth. And each time, Mabel felt something leap in her chest. Something hard and pure.

She was in love. Eight years she'd lived here, and at last the land had taken hold of her, and she could comprehend some small part of Faina's wildness.



The seasons of the past six years had been like an ocean tide, giving and taking, pulling the girl away and then bringing her back. Each spring Faina left for the alpine high country where the caribou migrated and the mountains cupped eternal snow, and Mabel no longer wept, though she knew she would miss her.

Homesteaders called that bittersweet season when the river ice gives way and the fields turn to mud "breakup," but Mabel found something tender and gentle in it. She said goodbye to the girl just as the bog violets bloomed purple and white along the creeks and cow moose nuzzled their newborns, just as the sun began to push winter out of the valley.

And then, when the days stretched long, the land softened and warmed and the farm thrived. Beyond the barn, beneath a cottonwood tree, there was the picnic table Jack and Garrett had built, and often on top of it during the summer there would be a moonshine jar filled with wildflowers. Most Sundays, they shared a meal with the Bensons, sometimes here, sometimes at their homestead. When the weather was fine and the bugs miraculously scarce, they ate outdoors.

Pozorovala brkoslavy táhnoucí ze stromu na strom jako stíny při soumraku. Zdálo se, že nějaká větší moc řídí jejich let. Zahlédla bílého hranostaje sprintovat kolem stodoly s tlustým hrabošem v tlamě. Uvnitř hrudi jí pokaždé něco poskočilo. Bylo to něco drsného, ale čistého.

Byla zamilovaná. Po osmi letech co tu bydlela jí zem konečně uchvátla a ona dokázala porozumět malému kousku Faininy divokosti.



Roční období posledních šesti let byla jako dmutí oceánu, dávala i brala, táhla dívku pryč a zase ji přinášela zpět. Každé jaro Faina odešla do kraje vysokých hor, kde migrují karibu a hory chovají ve svém náručí věčný sníh. Mabel už neplakala, i když věděla, že jí děvče bude chybět.

Hospodáři tu dobu, kdy led pustí řeku ze svých spárů a pole jsou samé bláto, nazývají rozvratem, ale Mabel v ní nacházela něco něžného a jemného. Dala dívce sbohem, právě když bílé a purpurové květy violek rozkvetly podél potoků, čerstvě narozená mláďata losů se lísala ke svým matkám a slunce vyhnalo zimu pryč z údolí.

Potom, když se dny prodloužily a zem byla měkká a teplá, farma vzkvétala. Za stodolou pod topolem byl piknikový stůl, který Jack a Garrett vyrobili, a v létě na něm často stávala láhev od whisky plná lučních květin. V neděli většinou jedli s Bensonovými, někdy tady a někdy na jejich hospodářství. Když bylo krásné počasí a hmyzu zázračně pomálu, jedli venku.

Jack and George would build an alder fire in a pit early in the morning and then roast a hunk of meat from a black bear Garrett had shot in the spring. Esther would bring potato-and-beet salad; Mabel would bake a fresh rhubarb pie and spread a white tablecloth. Then the two women would walk together arm in arm and pick fireweed and bluebells. In the background they would hear the men talking and laughing as the flames in the pit sputtered and flared with the bear-fat drippings. When Mabel went into the cabin to get plates and silverware, Jack would sometimes come up behind her, softly pull back the wisps of her hair, and kiss her neck. "You've never been more beautiful," he would say.

Harvest would come, and sometimes during those long, exhausting days, it would be as Mabel once imagined—she and Jack together in the field as they gathered potatoes into burlap sacks or cut cabbages from their stalks, and even as she wiped sweat from her face and tasted grit between her teeth, she tried to breathe in the sweetness of the moment. At night they would rub each other's sore muscles and jokingly complain of their aches, Mabel always more than Jack, though she knew his pain was so much worse.

Then, when the days shortened and the first frost came, they whispered their blessings and prayed for snow. Mabel would try to guess how much Faina had grown since they had last seen her, and she would sew wool stockings and long underwear and sometimes a new coat, always blue wool with white fur trim and snowflakes embroidered down the front.

Each time the girl arrived, she was taller and more beautiful than they had remembered, and she would bring gifts from the mountains.

Jack s Georgem založili v jámě oheň z olšového dřeva už brzy ráno a opékali kus masa z medvěda baribala, kterého Garrett na jaře skolil. Esther přinesla bramborový salát s řepou, Mabel upekla čerstvý rebarborový koláč a prostřela bílý ubrus. Pak si ženy vyšly ruku v ruce natrhat vrbovky a zvonky. Za sebou v dálce slyšely muže si povídat a smát se u prskajícího ohně v jámě, do jehož plápolajících plamenů odkapával tuk z medvědího masa. Když se Mabel vrátila do srubu pro talíře a příbory, Jack někdy přišel za ní, zlehka odtáhl prameny jejích vlasů a políbil ji na krk. „Nikdy jsi nebyla krásnější,“ říkával.

Přišly žně a někdy během těchto dlouhých vyčerpávajících dní bylo vše tak jak si to Mabel představovala – ona a Jack spolu na poli sbírali brambory do pytlů nebo uřezávali kapusty ze stopek a i když si utírala obličej od potu a chutnala šterk mezi zuby, zhluboka se nadechla, aby zachytila idylu té chvíle. Večer si vzájemně mnuli své bolavé svaly a žertem si stěžovali na své bolístky. Mabel si vždy naříkala více než Jack, i když věděla, že jeho bolest je mnohem horší.

Potom, když se dny zkracovaly a přišly první mrazíky, šeptali svá přání, modlili se aby přišel sníh. Mabel se snažila uhádnout, jak moc Faina vyrostla od doby, co ji viděli naposled. Šila pro ni vlněné punčochy a dlouhé spodní prádlo a někdy i nový kabát, vždy z modré vlny lemovaný bílou srstí a vpředu vyšíváný sněhovými vločkami.

Pokaždé když se dívka vrátila z hor, byla vyšší a krásnější než si ji pamatovali a nesla jim dary.

One year it was a sack of dried fish, another it was a caribou hide, tanned supple and scented with wild herbs. She would hug them and kiss them and say she had missed them, and then she would run off into the snowy trees she called home.

Mabel no longer shouted Faina's name into the wilderness or tried to think of ways to make her stay. Instead, she sat at the table and by candlelight sketched her face—impish chin, clever eyes. Then she tucked these sketches into the leather-covered children's book that told the story of the snow maiden.

Winter after winter, Faina returned to their cabin in the woods, and in all that time, no one else ever saw her. It suited Mabel fine. Just as with the otter, she came to guard the girl as a secret.

Jeden rok to byl pytel sušených ryb, jiný kůže z karibu, vyčiněná, vláčná a provoněná divokými bylinami. Objala je, políbila, pravila že jí scházeli a odběhla mezi zasněžené stromy, které byly jejím domovem.

Mabel už více nechodila divočinou a nevolala Fainu, ani nepřemýšlela, jak ji přimět, aby zůstala s nimi. Místo toho seděla u stolu při svitu svíček a črtala její obličej – rošťáckou bradu, chytré oči. Svě nákresy schovala do dětské knihy vázané v kůži, která vyprávěla příběh o děvčeti sněhu.

Zimu za zimou se Faina vracela k jejich srubu v lese a po celou tu dobu ji nikdy nikdo jiný neviděl. Mabel to skvěle vyhovovalo. Tak jako vydru, střežila dívku jako své tajemství.

THEORETICAL PART

Stylistic analysis of my translation

Lexical and stylistic aspect

Choosing the language register

First I had to determine whether the language in the book was formal or informal. The two protagonists originally come from fine families and that is why they tend not to use many colloquialisms. However, when Jack goes to town, he meets people who lived in Alaska for a longer time, are more skilled at earning their living there and their language is more simple and features more colloquial expressions. This can be seen in chapter two, where the whole conversation in the hotel restaurant is full of informal language. I elaborate on this further in my analysis.

Proper names

When it comes to proper names, the first thing I had to decide was how to deal with the names of the characters in the novel as they appear in many syntactic functions throughout the story.

Firstly, according to Ústav pro jazyk český, more specifically its page Naše řeč¹, translators vary in their opinions on how to treat names in literature. I decided against substituting the first names of the characters for their Czech equivalents. They are international and easy to pronounce for a Czech reader. It is also very clear from the beginning of the story that the names of Jack and Mabel, the two protagonists, do not provide any additional information and are simply two ordinary names for an ordinary old couple. Moreover, the names Mabel and Garrett, unlike Jack or George, do not seem to have a commonly used Czech equivalent so I thought it was better to leave them unchanged in order to maintain the coherence of the translation.

I did pay closer attention to the name of the little girl, Faina. It is suggested by the girl herself that her name means something. Unfortunately, we are not actually given the answer to this in the book, so I looked the name up. I learned that the name is of Russian origin, which does not surprise me, since the whole novel took inspiration from a Russian fairy tale. The origin could then be further traced to the Greek mythology, where according to some myths, “Phaenna” is also one of the Graces along with many others, despite the fact that mostly, there seem to be only three of them². The word “phaeinos” means “shining” or “radiant”³. During my search I stumbled upon a page that suggested the name of the little girl meant “light”, which almost misled me into believing that “not heavy” was meant by that. Surprisingly, this would fit the story also. Having read the whole story, I am aware that the girl walks on the snowy ground almost as if she actually walked on top of the snow that covers it. However, Mabel also talks of the shine the girl seems to emit when outside and she is also the reason why Mabel finds a new meaning in her life. Faina lightens up the lives of many characters in the story in fact.

¹ <http://nase-rec.ujc.cas.cz/archiv.php?art=6399> [7 May 2013]

² <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charites> [6 May 2013]

³ <http://www.behindthename.com/name/phaenna> [6 May 2013]

Nebudou se překládat jména, která sama o sobě mají sice sémantický obsah (König, Pokorný), ale takový, který není součástí významové výstavby díla. (Levý 116)

I was not sure, if this rule should be applied to Faina's name. I am aware that there are names of characters in many works of famous authors which are insinuating, such as Old Shatterhand in Karl May's novels. The protagonist there is known for defeating his opponents with a single punch. This name is not translated in the Czech translation of Karl May's novels, so I abandoned the idea of renaming the girl "Záře" to reflect her role and character. I find that she should be named Faina in order to keep the translation coherent. Finally, as I already mentioned, the story is based on an old fairy tale from Russia and its adaptation "The Little Daughter of the Snow" by Arthur Ransome and that is why I think the name should be kept as it is, since it is unusual in comparison to the other names in the book, the girl actually teaches the old couple to pronounce it correctly.

Having established all this, I then added the correct Czech suffix according to the syntactic role of any of the names discussed above whenever they appeared in the text.

Examples:

Just the other day he'd been skidding logs out of the new field when the horse spooked at a branch and knocked **Jack** to the ground.

Zrovna nedávno přibližoval klády z nového pole, když se kůň polekal větve a srazil **Jacka** k zemi.

Most Sundays, they shared a meal **with the Bensons**, sometimes here, sometimes at their homestead.

V neděli většinou jedli s **Bensonovými**, někdy tady a někdy na jejich hospodářství.

Names of places, geographical names

The situation was slightly different with the geographical names in the book. Here I had to use various techniques, which I will now illustrate.

The story takes place in Alaska, more specifically in the wilderness, where the two protagonists seek to find a new home. Since this is name that describes one of the states of United States of America that is largely known and its Czech translation "Aljaška" is commonly used, I translated it and added the appropriate inflectional suffix.

Example:

Some went off to pan gold or work for the railroad, but most had hightailed it home with no plans of ever returning to **Alaska**.

Někteří odešli rýžovat zlato nebo pracovat u železnice, ale většina uháněla domů s tím, že na **Aljašku** se už nikdy nevrátí.

Zejména v případech našemu čtenáři neznámých názvů přidávají překladatelé obecný klasifikátor, který název zařadí do příslušné pojmové oblasti, např.: Wyoming : stát Wyoming, (Knittlová et al. 92)

There is a town and a river mentioned in the story. These two I did not translate I decided to add the appropriate generic term for each. However, I wondered, whether the name of river should be translated or not. The Czech word for a wolverine is „rosomák“. Having read the whole book, I did not to translate the name. There is a scene in the book, where a girl and a boy go on a hunt and see one of these creatures. However, it did not seem to me that the river was named after them, since they are not very significant in the story and really appear there just the one time. Since I kept changing my mind about which chapters to translate, it turned out, in the end, that the only case of the river I had to deal with was the one where the author herself added the generic term, because it is the first time the river is mentioned.

Example:

...perched between the train tracks and the **Wolverine River**.
...vtěsnaných mezi železniční koleje a řeku **Wolverine**.

There is an example where I actually did not add the generic term and that is the case of the town Alpine in the story. This is because it is clear from the meaning of the sentence that Alpine is a town.

Example:

Back home, **Alpine** wouldn't have been called a **town** at all.
Doma by **Alpine** nikdo **městem** nenazval.

The most complicated was the term “Back East” in the story. Upon first impression I thought it described the geographical position of the farm Jack was talking about. However, the fact that it was written in capital letters struck me as odd and I wondered if it could be the name of the farm. After searching the Internet for a clue I realised I came across a term that is actually used in the states.

Elizabeth Black explains this in her article.

The term originated in the frontier days to designate where settlers had come "from." Back East was the settled area of the country. Anything west was the frontier. ... The term carries the sense of giving up on the frontier and moving "back," a chicken-hearted thing to do. A true pioneer sticks it out. ... For sure, going Back East was a cowardly act, a virtual rejection of one's humble beginnings.

Having discovered this, I had to come up with an appropriate Czech expression. The old couple in the story came from families of a higher social status than the ones they met in Alaska, when they moved there to start a new different life. I realized that the two expressions “back home” and “Back East” that appear in the novel essentially both refer to the same thing, the more civilized place, east of Alaska, where they used to live. To make this clear to the Czech reader, who is probably not aware of the meaning of “Back East” I used the word “doma” in both cases but kept the notion of “east” where it was explicitly used by the author so that the translation would be as varied as the original text.

Example:

He figured he had enough money left from selling his share in the farm **Back East** to last them one more year...

Usoudil, že má dost peněz z prodeje svého podílu farmy **doma na východě**, aby vydrželi celý další rok

Currency

In my translation, there are only colloquial expressions as regards the currency. There are numbers of Czech words for different amounts of money, some of them referring to a specific amount and some carrying the meaning of either “few” or “a lot”. Some are historic and some can be found in fairy tales. I would have had plenty to choose from.

Převádět cizí měnu není možné, protože měna je charakteristická vždy pro určitou zemi a koruny by nám lokalizovaly překlad do našeho prostředí. (Levý 124)

However, taking into consideration what Levý says, I did not translate this. Luckily, the expression “penny” is generally understood to be a colloquial term for a cent in American English and so I followed this practice.

Example:

I’m telling you, Jack, **it’s not worth the pennies** they’d pay you.

Nestojí to za těch pár centů, co ti dají, to ti povídám Jacku.

Animals and plants

There are many different animals in the story. Not only did I come across the English word for some of them for the first time in my life, but there was also the question of translating them correctly. If one studies biology, one learns species names for plants and animals one would never use in everyday speech. We either use a common name or we drop part of the technical term. We tend to say “pampeliška” instead of “smetánka lékařská” and just “liška” instead of “liška obecná”.

Example:

Then the two women would walk together arm in arm and pick **fireweed** and **bluebells**.
Pak si ženy vyšly ruku v ruce natrhat **vrbovky** a **zvonky**.

The important message in the above example is the fact that two women went to pick some flowers. From the context we can suppose that the flowers are later to be placed in the vase on the table. The author is being specific as to what kind of flowers. It is essential that we notice the names for these flowers in English are quite simple. This is probably because they are common in the area. However, the words “fireweed” translates as “vrbovka úzkolistá”, something I had to research on the Internet, as the dictionary, I used, did not have this entry. On the other hand, “bluebell” means any kind of flower in the shape of a bell and so it was clear I should use the Czech word “zvonek” here. It would seem rather silly to use a species name for one and a common name for the other, so I decided to drop the Czech adjective in the translation of “fireweed” to keep the sentence consistent.

Translating the word “said”

Většině profesionálních překladatelů je dnes již jasné, že v angličtině je stereotypní opakování slovesa „said“ v uvozovacích větách dáno tím, že anglická literatura tu prostě má jinou konvenci, a zpravidla v tomto případě sloveso uvozovací věty různě obměňují. (Levý 144)

Aware that the word “said” is very frequent in English, I made sure I used many different variations in my Czech translation and did not do this just in the reporting clauses.

Examples:

“Good morning, Betty,” Jack **said**.
„Dobré ráno Betty,“ **pozdravil** Jack.

What were doing? The child stood at the table with one of the pencils in her hand. I was drawing, Mabel **said**.

Co jsi tu dělala? Dítě stálo u stolu a drželo v ruce jednu z tužek. Kreslila jsem, **odpověděla** Mabel.

That night, after the child left, they **said** her name again and again.
Tu noc, když dítě odešlo, **vyslovovali** její jméno znovu a znovu.

More equivalents

Zejména u sloves je posun k specifičnosti v překladech z angličtiny do češtiny téměř pravidlem. Souvisí to s typologickým rozdílem mezi nominální angličtinou a verbální češtinou. Anglická slovesa mají blíže k relátorům, spojovacím prvkům mezi jmennými nositeli významu, zatímco v české větě je základním nositelem významu sloveso. (Knittlová et al. 48)

Just like with the verb “to say” in reporting clauses where I had to come up with more synonyms in order to compensate for the different conventions in English and Czech language I sometimes translated the same English word using two distinct Czech ones to express the difference in meaning. This is illustrated on the example below.

Examples:

He went to shake the reins, but then peered one last time over his shoulder and **saw** it—a flash of movement,...

Chystal se zatřást otěžemi, ale ještě se naposledy ohlédl přes rameno a **uviděl** to – záblesk pohybu,...

...and there, in its narrowing golden irises, he **saw** the savagery of the place.

...a on v těch úzkých zlatavých duhovkách **spatřil** divokost toho místa.

Informal and colloquial language, intensification

Intenzifikátory damn a goddam jsou převáděny do češtiny adverbialním nebo adjektivním horrorativem. (Knittlová et al. 75)

Some of the colloquial terms were easy to translate. After checking for possible options in the dictionary I could simply enjoy choosing the Czech word, which best suited the sentence in question.

Examples:

It was **damned** cold, ...
Bylo **zatraceně** zima, ...

Goddamned horse.
Mizerný kůň.

“Christ. **You lost your ever-loving mind?** You and I—we’re no spring chickens, and those hell holes are for young men, if anybody at all.”
„Prokrista. **Ztratil jsi tu svou pitomou hlavu?** Ty a já – nejsme žádní mlad’oši a tyhle pekelné jámy jsou pro mladé, jestli vůbec pro někoho.“

Other expressions proved to be difficult. The one I spent most time thinking about is the last example above. It is clear I had to transform the whole sentence. There is a Czech equivalent for “loosing one’s mind”, which I could not use because of the adjective “ever-loving”. During the search for the meaning of “ever-loving” I went as far as asking some of my friends and acquaintances in England. I was told it has the meaning of “stupid” and is probably used there for emphasis. Taking this advice I changed “mind” to “head” and chose a translation of “stupid” that best fits the sentence.

Idioms

Kde slovo nemá význam samo o sobě, nýbrž jen jako součást celku, překládá se celek bez ohledu na významy jednotlivých slov. (Levý 129)

Obecně platí, že idiomy, frazeologismy, přirovnání ... překládáme českým ekvivalentem. (Krijtová 29)

When it comes to idioms, most in the excerpt are quite common in both languages, that is to say, there is a Czech equivalent. I found some of them in the dictionary and researched possible translations in the *English-Czech Dictionary of Idioms*. For example, the expression “to be on one’s last legs” can be translated in the following ways: “být na pokraji svých sil”, “mlít z posledního”, “být v posledním tažení/ v koncích/ na mizině”. First I ruled out “být na mizině” since it has the connotation of not having any money left and thus cannot be used with an animal.

It can be seen in the examples below that I chose the second one to keep the translation more varied, because it does not feature the verb “to be”.

Examples:

...a swaybacked old mare that looked **to be on her last legs**...
...starou kobylu s prohnutými zády, která vypadala **že mele z posledního**...

But horses were **scarcer than hen's teeth** up here...
Jenže koní bylo v téhle končině **jako šafránu**...

Fourteen, **dead as doornails**.
Čtrnáct, **úplně tuhejch**.

Grammatical aspect

The passive

Trpný rod čeština v beletrii v podstatě nepoužívá, pokud nejde o případy, kdy se autor záměrně vyhýbá explicitnímu vyjádření činitele. (Knittlová et al. 123)

Bearing this in mind, I tried to avoid overusing the passive voice. In the following example, it is clear that the agent of the action is known and expressed in the prepositional phrase that follows the verb in question. I could therefore transform the sentence into active voice just as Knittlová suggests.

Examples:

He barely missed **being crushed** by the log as the horse charged ahead.
Jedna kláda ho málem **rozmačkala**, jak kůň vyrazil kupředu.

When the little girl **was gone** and dinner finished...
Když bylo po večeři a dívka **odešla**...

Back home, Alpine **wouldn't have been called** a town at all.
Doma **by** Alpine nikdo městem **nenazval**.

Non-finite verb forms

Větné kondenzory jsou v angličtině běžné, což souvisí s jejím nominálním charakterem, hutností a ekonomičností vyjadřování. Čeština naopak používá na místě infinitivních, gerundijních a participiálních čili tzv. nominálních tvarů slovesných raději určitých tvarů slovesných, a tedy vět, ať už hlavních či vedlejších, připojených syndeticky nebo asyndeticky, tj. se spojovacím výrazem nebo bez něho. (Knittlová 95)

Gerund

Examples:

Esther will accuse me **of pissing the day away** if I don't get on home.
Jinak mě Esther obviní, **že jsem proflákal den**, jestli se včas nevrátím domů.

One morning she came and stayed with Mabel in the kitchen **instead of following** Jack around the barn.
Jednoho rána dívka přišla a zůstala s Mabel v kuchyni, **místo aby následovala** Jacka do stodoly.

Here I used a subordinate clause, instead of the gerund construction.

Participle

Example:

He stood at the window, **looking** out into the blackness.
Stál u okna a **díval se** ven do tmy.

Instead of using the transgressive I used the finite verb form in active voice.

Phonological problem

From time to time, translators come across a story, where one character from abroad visits the others and has trouble mastering the pronunciation of the names of his friends, as is the case in one of the Harry Potter books.⁴ Or, more simply, one of the character's names is of foreign origin and is hard to pronounce. Either way, the translator has to deal with some sort of simplified phonetic transcription, whenever the characters teach each other how to pronounce it. The transcription varies in different languages, because it is not possible to use the IPA⁵ since readers would not understand it, unless they are trained in linguistic disciplines.

In chapter fourteen of *The Snow Child*, the little mysterious girl finally reveals her name to Mabel and Jack and teaches them the correct pronunciation. The old couple then hears some resemblance of each syllable to an English word. And these words have something in common with the nature of the child as can be deduced from the text. This is why the translation was particularly difficult. Not only did I have to find two appropriate words in the Czech language that would contain the phonemes I needed, they would also, at the same time, have to convey the same meaning. Below is my translation.

Example:

Fah-EE-nah.

Each syllable a quiet whisper. Mabel at first could make no sense of the foreign sounds, so many vowels without their consonants, but then she heard a gesture toward words like “far” and “tree” and a **breath of air at the end**, sounds that were indeed this little girl sitting at their table. Faina.

Fa-í-na.

Každá slabika byla jako tichý šepot a Mabel zprvu nerozuměla cizím zvukům, bylo tam tolik samohlásek, žádné souhlásky. Pak ale zaslechla náznak slov jako „vát“ a „sníh“ a **povzdech na konci**. Byly to zvuky, které skutečně zněly jako tahle malá holka, co seděla u jejich stolu. Faina.

I will now explain the reasons for my solution. The name, Faina, has three syllables as follows: /fʌ/, /iː/, and /nʌ/. For an English reader, these are represented in the text as “fah”, “ee” and “nah” respectively. Here the double “ee” in capital letters indicates the second syllable should be probably long, or stressed. So I used short vowels for the first and third syllable, and a long “i” for the middle one. I used the dashes just like in the source language.

I then proceeded to find two Czech words that could be used in the place of “far” and “tree”. Literal translation was no good here, because it did not provide me with the phonemes I needed. I had to look for words, which would at least retain the same notion about the little girl.

⁴ In Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire, one of the main protagonists, Hermione, teaches a foreign student the correct pronunciation of her name.

⁵ International Phonetic Alphabet.

For the word “far”, I used the word “vát”, “to blow” in English, because it reminds me of the wind that blows in Alaska in the book, long journey and faraway places. Using “v” instead of “f” is a resolution to the problem that I could not find an appropriate word beginning with “f”. Since “v” and “f” are both labiodental fricatives and the only difference between them is that the first is voiced and the second voiceless, I believe this is a good compromise.

The second syllable is represented by the word “tree” in the original text. We can see that there is no sound of “t” or “r” in the name of Faina, so I did something similar in my translation. We know from the book, that Alaska is a place where there is snow for a considerable part of the year, the girl only appears in the winter and finally, the title of the novel is, after all, *The Snow Child*. Hence, the word “snih”, “snow” in English.

Formal aspect

The three translated chapters contained different kinds of direct speech. In chapter two, I simply changed the English quotation marks to the Czech ones. In chapter fourteen and thirty-six, I was surprised to find that the author did not use any quotation marks at all whenever there is a dialogue with Faina. I obliged to this and left the conversation without the quotation marks, because the lack of them indicates the transience of the girl and her mysterious origin and background, it is almost as if she communicates by using thoughts rather than speech.

Conclusion

While I was working on this final thesis I had the opportunity to experience the ups and downs of the translation process. Sometimes it seemed easy and I translated a few sentences in an instant, usually realising I made a few serious mistakes five minutes later and having to correct them according to the theory I learned in the books by Levý and Knittlová. Other times I contemplated various possibilities for days at a time, researching the internet and discussing the problem with English speaking friends in order to understand what meaning the author wanted to convey as much as possible and thus choosing the best Czech equivalent.

Many times I could not help but wonder, whether I chose the right chapters from the book. Those were the times when I was not doing very well. In the end, I was glad I chose my favourite chapters, because they also provided me with many interesting problems as regards the translation. I would go as far as describing some of those problems as obstacles but even so, I enjoyed it very much.

For the theoretical part I chose to discuss those matters I found most interesting or particularly difficult for me to resolve, and I hope some of them will prove useful for the potential reader of this thesis.

I myself became acquainted with the methods of translation and explored something exciting outside my major branch of study, which I am very grateful for.

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