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MULTIPLE HARRY POTTERS—
NO POLYJUICE POTION REQUIRED

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Abstract

Having been translated into over 60 different languages, J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series can be found in almost every country around the world. Yet is the Harry Potter in China the same as the Harry Potter in America? Is the Harry Potter in America the same as the Harry Potter in Latin America? Different translation theories, such as Western Translation Theory, Contemporary Translation Theory, Chinese Post-Colonial Translation Theory, and Descriptive Translation Theory, provide a means to answer these questions. However, in order to analyze the texts, they must be back-translated into a common language. The back-translations, then, of the Mandarin Chinese and Spanish editions of the first chapter of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, offer insights into how language alters translations. Translations, though, are not only between different languages, but also different dialects. Therefore, this thesis also examines the first chapter of the American text, *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, in relation to the original British text. Through the analysis of back translation, this thesis shows how and why translations of a single text deviate from that text.

Table of Contents

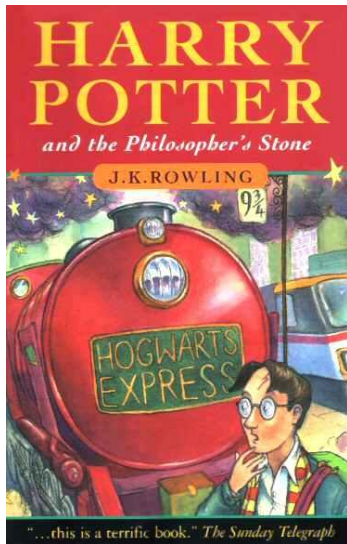
Introduction.....	1
Descriptive Translation Theory.....	4
Chinese Post-Colonial Translation Theory.....	6
Western Translation Theory.....	9
Contemporary Translation Theory.....	11
The American Translation Workshop Theory.....	11
The Content of the First Chapter-The Boy Who Lived.....	13
The American Text.....	15
The Spanish Text.....	17
The Chinese Text.....	20
Conclusion.....	26
Appendix.....	30
A Note about the Back-Translations.....	30
Spanish Back-Translation.....	30
Chinese Back-Translation.....	47
Works Cited.....	65

Multiple Harry Potters-No Polyjuice Potion Required

Introduction

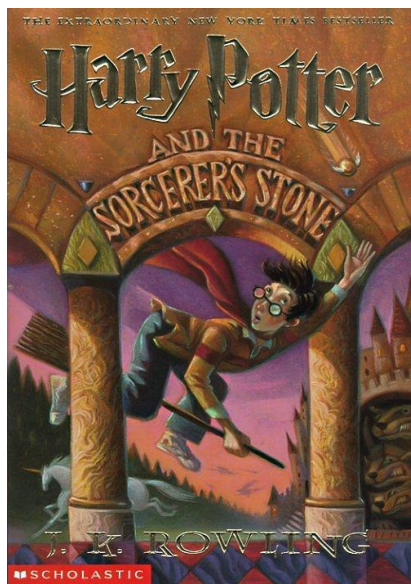
The “first chapter, first pages”—that’s what hooked American editor, Arthur Levine, from Scholastic Books, drawing him into buying the rights from J.K. Rowling to publish her first book, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone* in 1997 (Thompson), even before she was a known author in Great Britain. It was in that first chapter that Rowling created the foundation for her seven-book series that has taken the entire world by storm. Having been legally translated into over 60 different languages, and several more illegally, translators have brought Harry Potter and his world from the countryside in Great Britain to the skyscrapers in Shanghai, the beaches in Cancun, and the suburbs of New York City. Even by looking at the covers of all the different books, pictured below and on the next page, one can tell that the books may be different because they are depicting different aspects of the story..

The British cover depicts Harry in front of the Hogwarts Express, the train that will take him to Hogwarts, yet the cover does not reveal that this book will be about an adult. On the



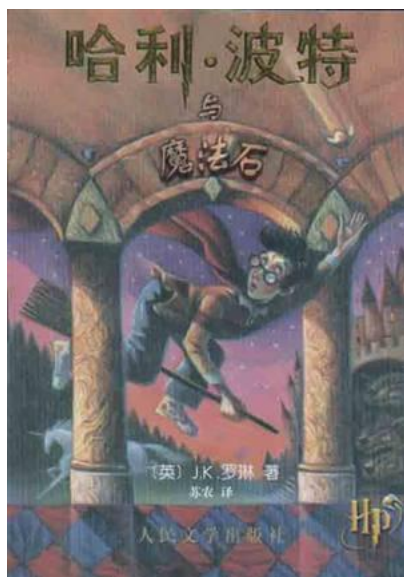
other hand, the American text makes it very clear that this book will be about a wizard. It shows Harry flying on a broomstick, catching a snitch, which is one of the four balls used in the wizard game of Quidditch, a running unicorn in the background, and Fluffy, the three-headed dog, baring his teeth out of the lower part of the Hogwarts’ castle. The Spanish cover incorporates all the elements of the original American cover such as Harry riding his broomstick, the visible snitch, the unicorn running in the background, and Fluffy still baring his teeth from under Hogwarts, but are arranged differently on the cover. Lastly, the

Chinese text uses the same image as the American text on the front cover but has the British English title on the back cover. The covers may be indicative of how different the actual texts



are from each other. The question that arises, then, is how different are they? What is really written in the foreign text on and within those covers and pages?

the plot. In the first chapter, readers are introduced to a secret wizarding world in Britain as it celebrates the downfall of Voldemort, a seemingly unstoppable mass murderer bent on becoming the most powerful wizard there is. As the foundation



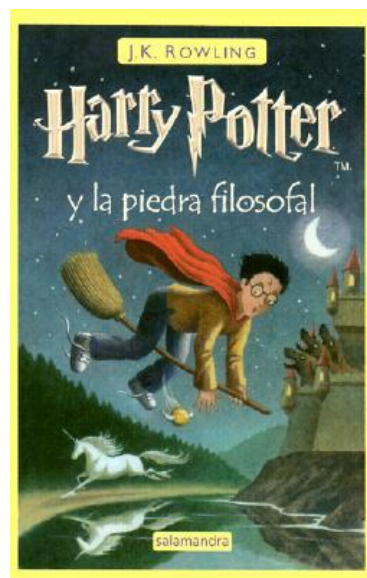
for not only the first book but the entire series, this chapter

foreshadows many of the pivotal moments later in the series.

J.K. Rowling writes on her webpage jkrowling.com in regards to the first chapter, “The trouble with that chapter was (as so often in a Harry Potter book) I had to give a lot more of information yet conceal even more.” So what happened to her first chapter once the translators began their work?

Translation is the bridge that enables people from all

Besides containing a compelling image on the cover and the creative hook that persuades readers to continue reading and buy the book, the first lines in any story also provide the building blocks of



over the world to read texts originally written in another language. But it is the building of that proverbial bridge that leads many scholars and translation theorists to differ. There are many different approaches one can take when beginning a translation. Western Translation Theory largely permeates translations done in the Western world while Chinese Post-Colonial Translation Theory is a major factor in the work of Chinese translators. Translation theorist Gideon Toury, with his Descriptive Translation Studies methodologies, has created an entire school for students of translation to learn in Western traditions. His theories, which alter the traditions of Western Translation Theory, and are also present within Western texts.

This study compares the translations of the first chapter of the British English *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, the American English *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, the Latin American *Harry Potter y la piedra filosofal (Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone)*, and the Mandarin Chinese *哈利·波特与魔法石 (Harry Potter and the Magic Stone)*. By taking the translated texts in Spanish and Chinese and back-translating them to English, the four texts and their differences can be analyzed in a common language. For our purpose, advantages would be considered a trait of a certain translation approach that increases the similarity between the source text, the British English text, and the translated text. Disadvantages will define aspects of a translation that result in unnecessary deviation from the source text. Specifically, I will analyze the different translation approaches and their advantages and disadvantages through back-translation which is the act of taking a translated text and translating it back to the original language. In this case, I will be retranslating the Mandarin Chinese and Spanish text into English.

This method will consider grammar as well as vocabulary when analyzing the different translations. But first, what translation approaches are at work within the translated texts of *Harry Potter*? Is there any Western Translation Theory evident in the Chinese text? What are

Gideon Toury's theories on translation, and do those theories inform the translation in the Latin American text? Who is the Harry Potter introduced to Chinese readers and is he different from his Spanish or English counterpart?

Also, does the grammatical similarity between English and Spanish or the lack of such similarity between English and Chinese impact the translation and, if so, how so? In what ways do the different translation approaches address or ignore grammatical similarity? By analyzing the differences and similarities between the source text and the translations, I will be addressing all these questions.

Yet differences in grammar and vocabulary are only one aspect of the different translation theories. Because language is so closely linked with culture, translation theories may also reflect the way different cultures approach translation. Therefore, this study will analyze the links between language, culture, and translation approaches. Before studying how those approaches are evident in each text, the theories this paper will be focusing on must first be outlined.

Descriptive Translation Theory

Building from the roots of Russian Formalism, which “set out to produce scientific descriptions of cultural products and systems, particularly in the field of literature” (Pym 2), Descriptive Translation Theory not only refrains from setting out guidelines as to what makes a good translation, this theory looks at how people translate and what the differences are. Within this theory, it is important to realize that literary systems, also known as cultures, cannot be studied in isolation (Pym 7), especially in this globalized world, and should instead be studied as “large, heterogeneous and complex systems” called polysystems (Pym 7). By studying the

smaller systems within a polysystem, such as the literature system, one can analyze different translation techniques that are borrowed from scholars from different societies and the approaches indicative of the translator's home country. For instance, Western Translation theory, as well as the more traditional Post-Colonial translation approach, are both present in the Chinese text. Western Translation Theory, however, is not as present within the Spanish text.

Another aspect of Descriptive Translation is its focus on the structure of both the source text and the translation. Structural differences, called translation shifts, could include grammatical differences as well as a translator's decision to "translate a semantic value on a different linguistic level, or to create the correspondence at a different place in the text" (Pym 11). These differences can be meanings or words absent from the translated text, suggesting that "translators' decisions are always culture-bound" (Pym 15). Therefore, when analyzing a translation, the target culture must be kept in mind. Anton Popovic's translation shifts are useful for considering that culture is a major factor in a translator's deliberate or unconscious decision in the act of translation as the basis for the analysis of the four *Harry Potter* texts.

Popovic's concept of translation shifts, or grammatical and structural differences between a translation and the source text, serve to highlight patterns present in the translation. For instance, translation shifts are instrumental in pinpointing certain characteristics of the translated text that could indicate the adherence to a particular translation theory that may have been utilized by the translators of that text. Itamar Even-Zohar's polysystem theory, however, complements Popovic's translation shifts and emphasizes that there are many different influences within a translated work, so a translator may be simultaneously using multiple translation approaches.

Chinese Post-Colonial Translation Theory

According to Leo Tak-hung Chan, there are several different ways to approach translation from the Chinese perspective. Postcolonial translation is used throughout China although mainland China has never been physically colonized by Western countries. China has however, been host to many Western ideas that may have partly colonized the country ideologically. Those ideas include Western customs, traditions, clothing, food, but can also include techniques and methods utilized when performing certain tasks. For instance, pre-postcolonial translation approaches in China “Europeanized” the Chinese language (Chan 55-56). When translating a Western text into Mandarin Chinese, the Chinese would reflect more of a Western grammatical structure than its own. In response to the more “Europeanized” Chinese, postcolonial translation theory emerged, placing a heavy emphasis on using Chinese grammar when translating a Western text into Chinese.

Postcolonial Translation Theory in China expresses a resistance to Western idioms, expressions and words. In particular, the resistance has been directed toward Europeanized Chinese, which uses subjects and nouns where they are not needed (Chan 56). For instance, an English sentence needs to have a noun or pronoun, subject and verb in order for the sentence to be considered complete. In English, the sentence “I am cold” is considered complete because there is a subject, a verb, and an adjective. In this case, the pronoun is the subject. However, the Chinese language relies more heavily on context to give a sentence meaning. If the person is shivering or otherwise showing outward signs of being cold, it is perfectly acceptable to leave out the noun and just say “cold” or “very cold”. It is understood by the listener that the “I am” is implicit but just not needed. This omission of nouns and pronouns is also in the written language. Pronouns such as “he,” “she,” “it,” “they,” and “them” are not always written because it is

already assumed that it is clear to the reader what the subject is. European Chinese uses many more subject words that to traditionalists are not needed and only clutter the writing.

Passive voice sentences are used more frequently as well in Chinese translations. Sentences that are considered passive usually have the verb “to be” in the sentence. “To be” can include “is,” “was,” “been,” and “being.” All of the forms of “to be” have the potential to turn active sentences passive when preceding a verb in the past tense. English is more prone to using the passive voice than Chinese. Chinese is a much more actively voiced language. From the Chinese perspective, the shorter and more concisely something can be said, the better. For instance, in English, “The test was completed” is a perfectly good sentence. However, in Chinese, one would drop the “was” and simply say, “the test done.” In English, the Chinese version of the same sentence is awkward because it has no verb; “done” is being used to describe the status of the test. Also, verbs can be dropped altogether if doing so will shorten the sentence without confusing the listener or reader. The verb “to be” especially can be dropped because it is largely understood to be present in the sentence without needing to be verbalized or written. Because of the increased presence of pronouns and verbs in translated texts, several Chinese translation scholars felt that European grammar was slowly being absorbed into Chinese, and many decided to call for “true” Chinese.

However, the “true” Chinese has yet to be completely agreed upon. According to Shen Xiaolong, Chinese should be analyzed without Western linguistic models, or without a Western context. This is because Western theory failed, in his eyes, to adequately explain some of Chinese’s peculiarities. Some of those peculiarities, such as the “the tendency to use the various parts of speech freely, as long as what is said makes sense” (Chan 59), cannot be understood through English because English has a set grammatical structure. Chinese, however, has the

flexibility to drop nouns or verbs if the meaning of the sentence is still easily understood, therefore rendering English grammar often unhelpful in the process of back-translation because the text should be first understood through Chinese grammar before being back-translated.

Besides the grammar, spoken Chinese requires different rules than those applied to English, and those differences are reflected in how Chinese is written. Phonological harmony, or the tones of each word, is another aspect that Chinese and English do not share. Every word in the Chinese language has one of five tones associated with it. There is the “up” in which the speaker lifts his or her voice while speaking, the “down” tone where the speaker lowers his or her voice, the “valley tone” where the speaker’s voice first goes down and then up, the “flat” tone in which the speaker’s intonation remains the same, and the “no” tone where the word is spoken more softly. Too many words of one tone are not pleasant to a Chinese ear and are very difficult to pronounce. To make the sentences more pleasant to the ear, there are even sounds added to the ends of questions and statements that have no meaning, except to soften the end of the sentence. Those sounds end with a soft “a” sound such as “ma,” or “na.” Those same spoken qualities are also added into the written language. Therefore, the Chinese translator would not only be taking an English word and finding its equivalent in Chinese but also would be sensitive to how it would sound if spoken. Thus, certain words may have been removed or rearranged not only for the sentence to make sense, but also to sound right to a Chinese reader.

The grammar problem is not the only problem. Other translation theorists like Zhang Yiwu, were most concerned with linguistic colonization and Western ideological encroachment (Chan 60). He did not want Chinese to become a monotone language, either on paper or in speech. A “true” Chinese language to him would be one without Western influence, including the use of Western idioms and expressions. Zhang was not as troubled with the spoken word as

he was with the written language. He felt that the terse, short written Chinese, similar to ancient writings, should be utilized more and that that would be a better way to rid Chinese of Western ideology in writing.

Western Translation Theory

According to Professor Maria Tymoczko, Western Translation Theory can be best described as

markedly Eurocentric. Indeed, [it] grows out of a rather small subset of European cultural contexts based on Greco-Roman textual traditions, Christian values, nationalistic views about the relationship between language and cultural identity, and an upper-class emphasis on technical expertise and literacy. (3)

Therefore, Western Translation Theory values the “correctness” or accuracy of a translation, particularly regarding fidelity to the original text. Tymoczko also highlights several other established aspects of Western Translation, such as the necessity of translators to serve as mediators in interlingual and intercultural situations (4). However, translators do not always mediate or facilitate communication; in some cases, translators are required as a reminder that there is a difference between the cultures of the two people communicating (Tymoczko 5). For instance, a student in the United States who is fluent in both English and Spanish but speaks Spanish in the home and English at school, may opt to read the Spanish translation of *Harry Potter* as a way to remain connected to his or her Spanish roots. In this case, the translator and the translation provide the means for the student to maintain his or her cultural identity or cultural roots.

The second assumption that Tymoczko illustrates is that Western Translation theory focuses on Western texts that are in written form (6). Western Translation Theory places more weight on the translation of a “fixed written text” (6) because the theory focuses on Western literary productions. Thus, this particular theory would not be a good one to use when analyzing Eastern works because they are not Western texts.

Tymoczko also points out the assumption that Western Translation Theory approaches the process of translation as “a sort of ‘black box’: an individual translator decodes a given message to be translated and recodes the same message in the second language” (7). This metaphor again emphasizes the translator would be the decoder of the black box. The translator, who has been conditioned through social contexts (7), tries to “accurately” portray the same message in the translated text that the source text, or “black box,” includes. Whether or not this kind of exact translation can be achieved by translators, this idea is one of the principles of Western Translation Theory. This individualist approach to translation also emphasizes the individualistic approach in Western culture because the translator is considered to be a single person at work. This theory reinforces the above stated idea of a strong link between language and culture.

Besides placing emphasis on creating an “accurate” translation that seeks equivalencies and that focuses on mainly written texts and the written language, Western Translation Theory also seeks to define translation. Creating a definition, one that encompasses all the anomalies of translation, would seem to be impossible. One definition was created by Gideon Toury, a founder of the Descriptive Translation Approach. His definition describes translation as “any target language text which is presented or regarded as such within the target system itself, on whatever grounds” (Tymoczko 11). The target language would be the language that a text is

being translated into. This idea took the focus of Western Translation Theory away from its Eurocentric roots and allowed translations to be defined in terms of their particular cultures, leading the way to other western translation theories such as the American Translation Workshop Approach, which is a division of Contemporary Translation Theory.

The American Translation Workshop—Contemporary Translation Theory

There are three main fields of Contemporary Translation Theory, intralingual translation, interlingual translation, and intersemiotic translation (Gentzler 1). Intralingual translations include the rewording of signs in the source language with signs or meanings from the same language. Changes made to the British English version of *Harry Potter* by the American text would be most equivalent to Intralingual translations. Interlingual translation, on the other hand, is the act of taking signs or meanings of the source language and interpreting them to put them in another language. This method, which is used for the Spanish and Chinese versions of Harry Potter discussed below, is better known as “translation proper” (Gentzler 1). Intersemiotic translation entails the transfer of the meanings or signs from the source language into other sign systems that may be non-verbal such as art or music (Gentzler 1).

The American Translation Workshop approach falls into the second field of Contemporary Translation Theory, focusing the most on interlingual translation approaches. In this “practice-oriented workshop approach to translation” (12), translators learn their techniques through the act of translating rather than by prescribing to a particular theory. According to scholar Edwin Gentzler, American “literary translation is still considered a secondary activity, mechanical rather than creative” (7). That said, scholars of the American Translation approach do not question the importance of an accurate translation. In an attempt to summarize just how

important translating each word accurately is to this particular approach, Gentzler alludes to Paul Engle's theory in the following quotation:

As this world shrinks together like an aging orange and all peoples in all cultures move closer together (however reluctantly and suspiciously) it may be that the crucial sentence for our remaining year on earth may be very simply: TRANSLATE OR DIE. The lives of every creature on the earth may one day depend on the instant and accurate translation of one word (Gentzler 9).

Thus, in this translation approach, special attention must be paid to each word translated into English so that it accurately conveys the meaning of the original.

This approach's methodology focuses on three main assumptions, drawn from theorist I.A. Richards' *Practical Criticism* written in 1929. The first is that scholars of this approach have attempted to create rules and principles with regard to reading and writing to facilitate the argument that a more accurate form of communication exists. The second aspect deals with the fact that translation is two-fold: taking in the message of the source text and then conveying it in another text. The third is that translation is the closest form of reading because the "perfect rearticulation of the experience in a perfect interpretation/translation is the goal" (13-14).

The first part of Richards' work on this theory, focusing on a more accurate form of communication, would serve to facilitate the ultimate goal of creating translations equivalent to the source text. Richards intended to equate every aspect of the literature in the original language, including "direction of thought, correct evocation of feeling, an exact apprehension of tone and a precise recognition of intention," and put them all in the proper order of the original source text (Gentzler 14). Thus, the act of translating exactly is not just finding an equivalent

word but also making that word convey the same meaning. I discovered that this approach is problematic for back-translations.

The Content of Chapter 1—The Boy Who Lived

Before discussing the translations of the text, reviewing the content of the first chapter, “The Boy Who Lived,” is important for context. Set in a small neighborhood outside of an unnamed English city in Surrey, where every house is neatly trimmed and well-taken care of, it is made clear that no one on this street, Privet Drive, would tolerate anyone outside the norm. Perhaps the people who most dislike anyone or anything eccentric are the Dursleys, who live at number 4 Privet Drive, and who are introduced to the reader as being proud that they are “perfectly normal” (7 [British text]). Mr. Dursley is a plump man with a large mustache. He works at Grunnings, a drill company, where he spends his time yelling at his secretary and most everyone else. Mrs. Dursley, his wife, is his physical opposite in that she is tall and thin, with a very long neck which she is described as using to spy over the neatly trimmed hedges at her neighbors (7 [British text]). Their spoiled son, Dudley, a one-year-old, is considered by his parents to be the perfect child (7 [British text]), despite his frequent tantrums and outbursts.

Since the Dursleys abhor anything abnormal, Mr. and Mrs. Dursley pretend that Mrs. Dursley does not have a sister and do not mention her at all. Her sister, Lily, is a witch and so Mrs. Dursley has estranged herself from her. In fact, they know that Lily, and her husband, James Potter, also have a son, named Harry, who is about the same age as Dudley, but they have never seen the child. However, Lily and James have been killed by the mass-murdering wizard, Voldemort, immediately prior to the start of the story, though the Dursleys are unaware that they are dead.

Voldemort is a wizard bent on becoming the most powerful and feared wizard of all time. After committing murders of other wizards for about 11 years, Voldemort attempted to kill the entire Potter family. He successfully murdered Lily and James, but when he turned to kill Harry, the curse rebounded off Harry and destroyed Voldemort's physical body, ending his reign of terror.

Now orphaned, Harry is taken to live with his estranged relatives on Privet Drive because he has no other family. As the headmaster of the British wizarding school, Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, Albus Dumbledore sends Hagrid to fetch Harry from his parents' now destroyed home and bring him to the Dursleys'. Dumbledore is described as an old man with twinkling blue eyes behind half-moon glasses (12 [British text]). He arrives on Privet Drive to see that Professor McGonagall, the head of the Gryffindor House in Hogwarts and also one of the professors, has been there all day disguised as a tabby cat. Professor McGonagall, a severe-looking woman (12 [British text]), has been watching the Dursleys all day and considers them to be the worst sort of people for Harry to live with (15 [British text]). As Hagrid arrives, carrying the one-year-old Harry, Dumbledore insists that it is the best place for Harry because the Dursleys are Harry's only family.

Hagrid, a half-giant, stands twice as tall and five times as wide as a normal person. He is the gamekeeper of Hogwarts and was personal friends with Harry's parents, Lily and James. Once Hagrid gives Harry to Dumbledore, Dumbledore leaves Harry on the Dursley's doorstep with a letter explaining everything. The exact contents of the letter are not revealed. Harry is then left there to be found in the morning by Mrs. Dursley who takes him in.

The American Text

One question concerning the American version that may come to mind is whether or not *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* is truly a translation from the British English text *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. Scholastic's editor Arthur Levine altered several words even in the first chapter of the American text in an attempt to "make sure [any] kid reading the book would have the same literary experience that a British kid would have" (Thompson). However, due to the similarity between the two languages, several Americans criticized Levine's decision to make those *superficial* changes. *Superficial* is here in italics because according to the American Translation Workshop approach, outlined above, even the slightest word substitution is significant. According to Peter Gleick, writing for the *New York Times*, changing words such as "jumper" to "sweater" or "philosopher" to "sorcerer" impacts the "British-ness" of the book and separates the American book unnecessarily from the British text. Gleick also goes so far as to say that, "As for Harry Potter's latest adventures, my children and I will wait for the British version coming by mail." Thus, to Gleick, these changes significantly altered his experience of the book.

It stands to reason then, that, in Gleick's opinion, the American text is a translation. He questions Levine's decision to "translate the books from 'English' to 'American'." Also, in keeping with Western Translation Theory and the American Translation Workshop Approach, the American text will be considered a translation of the original British text.

There are three notable changes apparent from the first words in each text. The first, which affects all the texts analyzed in this paper, is possibly the most obvious: the title changes. From *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, to *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, to *Harry Potter y la piedra filosofal*, to 哈利·波特与魔法石 (*Harry Potter and the Magic Stone*),

there are many differences. Levine may have changed “philosopher” to “sorcerer” in order to imply a stronger sense of magic to entice the American audience. The second change can be found in the dialogue. For example, the infant Dudley learns a new word in the first chapter: “shan’t.” In the American text, Dudley learns the word “won’t,” which is the American way of expressing the fact that someone will not do something. That alteration gets the same point across but with a little less British “flavor,” as Gleick would put it. The third notable change is the “sherbet lemon” that Dumbledore offers McGonagall as they await Hagrid in front of the Dursley’s house. In the American text, the same “muggle sweet” (Rowling, 13[British text]) is translated into a “lemon drop” which may not convey the same idea. For example, a sherbet lemon is a hard candy that has a creamy, almost fizz-like center where as a lemon drop is a hard candy coated with a light dusting of confectionary sugar. These two hard candies are similar but are altered to reflect the target culture. Thus, the American English text is a translation of the British text because it changes words and phrases to make comprehension of the text easier for the reader.

Gleick, who might agree with Paul Engle’s statement that the translation of a single word could hold the fate of the world in its balance, argues that Levine and Scholastic’s decision to make such changes in order to circumvent misunderstandings reinforces the sentiment that “[Americans] are pretending that other cultures are, or should be, the same as ours. By insisting that everything be Americanized, we dumb down our own society rather than enrich it” (Gleick). Gleick’s views seem to support the American Translation Workshop Approach, a subset of Contemporary Translation Theory, in that the focus is upon translating every word exactly or, in this case, not translating at all due to the similarity between the two dialects of English. While this sentiment may resonate with some, Gleick fails to recognize that the replacement of

unfamiliar British terms with more familiar American phrases may not substantially change the meaning. Gleick also does not acknowledge that the American audience is different from the British audience and may need words changed for added clarification. Perhaps *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* would not have been as widely popular in America because of the word "Philosopher." In that case, the translation of that word into "Sorcerer" helped make it as successful as it has been. In that sense, the translation of one word did make all the difference, and while the life of every creature on the planet was not affected, as Paul Engle threatened, Scholastic's decision to change the title did affect the success of the *Harry Potter* characters and their adventures in the American market.

The Spanish Text

Harry Potter y la piedra filosofal can be directly translated into the original British English text's title, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. However, when comparing the covers of the books, the Spanish cover is much more similar to the American cover than it is to the British cover. Since this text was purchased in an American bookstore, the design of the cover may also have targeted the American audience it was being sold to, whether that audience was English speaking or Spanish speaking.

One of the most interesting aspects of this translated text is that it was translated in Barcelona, Spain. Knowing that Harry Potter had been translated for both Spain and Latin America, I tried to locate the Castilian Spanish edition, the Catalan Spanish edition, and the Latin American Spanish edition. I was unable to verify the existence of a Castilian or Catalan Spanish translation because there is no official comprehensive list of all authorized translations. However, the Spanish used in this text indicates that it follows the language patterns of Latin

American Spanish rather than Iberian Spanish, or the Spanish spoken or used in Spain. For instance, Iberian Spanish has six general ways to conjugate a verb within a tense. When conjugating a verb, the verb's ending is changed in order to reflect who the speaker is referring to. There is the informal "I" form ("yo") in which the speaker is talking about something he or she did, the informal "you" form ("tu") in which the speaker is talking about something you did, the formal "he," "she," and "it" form ("usted"), the informal "we" plural form ("nosotros"), the informal "you" plural form ("vosotros"), and the formal "their" and "it" plural form ("ustedes"). The entire Spanish speaking world uses five of these six forms of conjugation, but only Iberian Spanish uses the "vosotros" form in daily speech. Having been translated by translators in Spain, I assumed that the "vosotros" conjugation form would be used. Because the "vosotros" form was not utilized in the text that I back-translated, it became apparent that I was using a Latin American edition, whether or not a Castilian or Catalan Spanish translation does exist.

Within the text, most of the characters' names were not altered in any way from the British text, except "Mr." and "Mrs." were changed to "Señor" and "Señora" which is equivalent to the original. This is most likely due to Spanish and English sharing the same alphabet and writing style; thus, in general, there was no need to change the English names to Spanish equivalents.

The one name that was most altered was Voldemort's other name, "He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named" or "You-Know-Who." In the Spanish text, the name is translated into "Quien-usted-sabe" (12 [Spanish text]). This could be translated into "Who-You-Know" or "You-Know-Who," which is another way that Voldemort is referred to in the chapter. To a Western Translation theorist, "You-Know-Who" would be the preferred way to translate Voldemort's name from

Spanish. By moving “who” to the end of the name, the translation conveys the same emphasis as the original text.

In this respect, Gideon Toury’s Descriptive Translation studies were best suited for the Spanish translation of the text. Instead of analyzing the text so that I was looking for exact word translations, as in Western Translation Theory, Toury’s Descriptive Translation studies allowed me to look at the translation shifts that occurred throughout the text. One example of this is at the end of the first line. In the British text, the opening line of the chapter is, “Mr and Mrs Dursley, of number four, Privet Drive, were proud to say that they were perfectly normal, thank you very much” (7). In the Spanish text, however, the same sentence is back-translated into, “Mr. and Mrs. Dursley, who lived at number four Privet Drive, were proud to say they were very normal, fortunately” (9). The last word in the sentence, “afortunadamente,” gives a different connotation to the sentence than the original text does. In the original text, the “thank you very much” begins to tell the reader that the Dursleys are haughty whereas the word, “fortunately,” gives the connotation of them being grateful.

Another translation shift has to do with a name that was translated into Spanish as opposed to keeping it in English. This is not only a shift from the original text, but it is also a shift from the way the translators approached names throughout the rest of the text. Dumbledore’s “Put-Outer,” the device he uses to extinguish all the street lamps along Privet Drive when he arrives there, was changed to “Apagador” (15 [Spanish text]) which can be translated into “Extinguisher.” Perhaps the translators decided that since the word was not a character’s name, it would be better to change “Put-Outer” to “Extinguisher” in order to make it more obvious to a Spanish reader that the device is used to extinguish lights. Thus, translating “Put Outer” as “Apagador” is more in line with Western Translation Theory in that the same

information conveyed to an English reader in “Put-Outer” is conveyed in a similar fashion to a Spanish reader in “Apagador.”

One other translation shift in this first chapter of the text was how Hagrid referred to returning the motorbike he had borrowed from Sirius Black. In the original text, the line is, “‘Yeah,’ said Hagrid in a very muffled voice. ‘I’d best get this bike away’” (17), meaning that he would return it to Sirius. In the Spanish text, however, the line reads, “‘Ajá—respondió Hagrid con voz ronca—. Más vale que me deshaga de esta moto’ ” (21). In English, the line translates as, “‘Ah—Hagrid responded with a rough voice—. I had better get rid of this bike,’ ” which gives no indication of his intent to return it.

Overall, however, the Spanish back-translation is very close to the original British text. In most cases, the names have remained the same and Voldemort’s other name is very closely equated. Using the translation shifts to analyze this back-translation proved extremely helpful because it illuminated possible motives the translators may have had in making some of the changes that they did, such as with the translation of the Put-Outer.

The Mandarin Chinese Text

As with the cover of the Latin American text, the Mandarin Chinese cover is almost exactly the same as the American cover. In fact, if one were to replace the Chinese characters across the cover with English, the covers would look exactly the same. Yet upon turning the book over, the British English title is printed across the back. While these books are only available in Chinese as a paperback edition, they are sized and designed as if they were hardback editions. However, unlike the British English, American English, and Spanish *Harry Potter* texts, before the first chapter, there is a list of characters with names and roles. The character list was

necessary in order to help the Chinese reader to know what names to look for because written Chinese cannot differentiate a name from another phrase as easily as Spanish or English can. In both English and Spanish, the first letter of a proper name is capitalized but Chinese characters are not able to be capitalized in the same way. How the character list is organized is of particular interest. For instance, after Harry's slot at the top of the list, the Dursleys are listed. But Harry's parents, Lily and James, are not included on the list. In the middle of the list, Albus Dumbledore, Professor McGonagall, and Professor Snape are all grouped together, but Professor Quirrell, the only other professor mentioned on the list, is at the very bottom, separated from the others.

The positioning of Professor Quirrell at the bottom of the list illustrates that the character list is organized in a way to loosely associate certain characters with other characters. For example, the villains, Voldemort and Professor Quirrell, are kept together at the bottom of the list, but Professor Snape, who is first expected to be the evil professor, is kept with all the people supporting Harry, both his professors and his friends. Draco Malfoy, Harry's rival classmate, is listed right above Voldemort's name, thus potentially linking him with Voldemort.

Not only is the character list helpful to the reader, it is also helpful to me as the back-translator in figuring out what Chinese characters are associated with which character's name. Before undertaking the back-translation of the text, I analyzed how the character's names are translated. Harry Potter's name is translated as "ha li" (哈利) "pwa ta" (波特). According to scholar Suman Gupta, Harry's name was originally translated into "ha li," where the 'ha' character did not have a tone associated with it so that it was a pure-sounding word used commonly to mimic the English "ha ha" laughing sound. Gupta also states that the original 'li' (里) has the valley tone and is a different character altogether, meaning "inside" (202).

According to Gupta, the Chinese translators felt that the "li" with the valley tone, for which the

sound goes down first and then up, sounds closer to how the English name “Harry” is spoken. However, when the Taiwanese translators, who were working on their own translation of the text, translated the name, they used a different “li” character, one associated with a down tone instead of the valley tone of the one above. Besides the down tone having a stronger sound because it is sharply cutting off the end of the sound, this “li” also means strength, power, or victory. By choosing the “li” that means strength, the translators foreshadowed Harry’s role in the story. For these reasons, the Mandarin Chinese translators adopted the Taiwanese translation of Harry’s name (202).

The Chinese translators tried to create names for the characters that sound similar to their English counterparts. For instance, the Dursleys’ last name is translated into “de se li” (德思礼), which sounds quite similar to the English name. However, unlike Harry’s name in which the characters were also chosen to show character traits, ‘de se li’ does not accurately represent the Dursleys’ personalities, as the Chinese characters meanings are virtue, thought, and ritual. In the Dursley’s case, ‘de se li’ was probably chosen only for its phonetic value.

Simply mimicking the sound of the English name was not possible for all the different names. For instance, there is no ‘v’ sound in Chinese so names like Vernon, who is Mr. Dursley, and Voldemort, needed a different translation technique. In the case of Vernon, translators chose “fu nong” (弗农), which only sounds faintly like “Vernon.” The two characters’ meanings (“not” and “agriculture”) do nothing to illuminate Vernon’s character. Therefore, it is unclear why those two characters were chosen for Vernon’s name, especially since they only tenuously mimic the English name with the “n” sound.

Voldemort, on the other hand, is translated differently. The Chinese translators decided to create a name that foreshadowed Voldemort’s character, which may be because they could not

mimic the “v” sound. Voldemort was translated into “fu di mo” (伏地魔), which literally means “devil crouching ground.” These characters foreshadowed that he was an evil character since “mo” means devil and “fu” means to “conceal,” “lie low,” “crouching or hiding.” This particular translation also foreshadowed the fact that Voldemort would be in hiding, if not for the entirety of the series then for most of it.

Voldemort is also known by the epithet, “He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named.” This name was translated as “shen mi ren” (神秘人), which means “mysterious person.” This particular translation does not convey to the reader the level of fear associated with Voldemort. In the first chapter, Professor McGonagall cannot say “Voldemort” and so opts to say, “He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named.” Even that name conveys fear. Wizards are afraid of referring to Voldemort by his real name; therefore they use the epithet. “Mysterious person” also indicates that Voldemort is a mystery to most of the wizarding world, many of whom do not know his many secrets. Even in the first chapter, there is a mystery surrounding how Voldemort was destroyed.

The Chinese text alters the original British chapter title as well. In the British text, the first chapter is titled, “The Boy Who Lived.” In the Chinese text, though, the title can be translated two different ways, “The Boy Who Did Not Die” or “The Boy Who Survived a Great Disaster.” “The Boy Who Did Not Die” would be the more literal translation. If we were to refer to Western Translation Theory, “The Boy Who Did Not Die” would be the preferred translation because it is closer to the original text. The connotation of the two titles, though, is quite different. Perhaps the Chinese title uses “die” instead of a closer translation to “lived,” because Chinese culture accepts death more readily than Western culture, as evidenced through ancestral worship (Lamb 228), thus supporting the theory that the translator is conditioned by the social context provided by the culture.

Besides Western Translation Theory, Chinese Post-Colonial Translation Theory is also applicable to the Chinese text. Just as Leo Tak-hung Chan stated in his analysis of Post-Colonial Translation, words that were not needed were omitted from the text. In the British English text, Mr. Dursley is described as leaving his house and heading to work. The British text reads, “ ‘Little tyke’ chortled Mr Dursley as he left the house. He got into his car and backed out of number four’s drive” (2 [British text]). In the Chinese text, the word “drive” is completely omitted. That same sentence in the Chinese text is combined with the previous sentence as well as altered slightly. It reads, “‘Little tyke.’ Mr. Dursley muttered, chuckling as he walked out the door, sat in his car, and backed out of number four” (2 [Chinese]). In this instance, the translators chose to combine the two sentences, ignoring the grammar and style of the British editions.

In the same way that unnecessary words are omitted, the Chinese convention of punctuating a sentence also overrides the original British punctuation. For instance, in several places, what are originally a few short sentences are now compressed into a long, run on sentence in the Chinese text. The original text describing Hagrid reads:

He was almost twice as tall as a normal man and at least five times as wide. He looked simply too big to be allowed, and so *wild*—long tangles of bushy black hair and beard hid most of his face, he had hands the size of dustbin lids and his feet in their leather boots were like baby dolphins. (16 [British text])

This description is broken up into two sentences, the first being much shorter than the second. However, in the Chinese text below, these sentences are combined into one.

That man compared to a normal man was twice as tall, five times as wide, not only was he exceptionally tall and big, but he was also rough—a knotted mess of overgrown long black hair and beard that nearly covered the greater part of his

face, his hands were as big as trashcan lids, his feet were like a pair of small dolphins. (8 [Chinese text])

In this instance, it is unclear why the Chinese translators decided to merge the two sentences. This may be one way that the Chinese translators tried to make the text less like its original Western text.

There were also several instances in which English grammar was completely unable to help me back-translate the Chinese text. For instance, the name for Privet Drive is “nu zhen lu” (女贞路) and is denoted as a name by italics and bold text. On page two of the Chinese text, “nu zhen lu” is not separated from the other text by the format changes but is still supposed to represent the name of the road. The back-translated text reads as follows:

This time the patched cat stood at Privet Drive’s intersection but didn’t have a map. In the end, had he imagined it? It was very possible the light caused the illusion. Mr. Dursley blinked, stared at the cat, the cat also stared at him. Then, when Mr. Dursley turned the corner, he watched the cat in the rearview mirror. The cat, this time was looking at ***Privet Drive’s*** street sign, no, *reading*, the sign; cats can’t read maps or signs. (2 [Chinese])

In the above passage, the first time “Privet Drive” is mentioned, the font is the same font used throughout the chapter, and therefore, no distinction is created. The second time the street is mentioned by name, it is denoted by a smaller, bold font.

English grammar was of no help to my back-translation because the Chinese text so often deviated from the original text. Since I had decided to read the Chinese translation before rereading the English, in an effort to keep my knowledge of the English text from coloring my back-translation of the Chinese text, I did not want to assume that “nu zhen lu” meant “Privet

Drive.” In order to translate this phrase, I attempted to use the context of the sentence to help translate, a method that English grammar uses. This method proved unhelpful, however, because the text is referring to an intersection, so I thought that two road names may have been used. In addition, I was not even sure that the unfamiliar characters were the name of a road. Then, I proceeded to try to find a word that I knew was in the British text that sounded similar to “nu zhen.” That, also, was unsuccessful. Subsequently, I tried to figure out what those three characters stood for through their respective meanings. From the word “lu,” which means, “street,” I was able to surmise that the text is referring to a road. The other two characters, “nu,” which means “woman” or “girl,” and “zhen” means “chaste,” are not particularly helpful in figuring out “Privet Drive.” Yet, once the characters were separated by the different font, the context helped me figure out that the passage was referring to “Privet Drive.” Again, it is unclear why the characters were italicized on the second mention in this passage. Therefore, besides the context, my knowledge of English grammar did not help me back-translate this word.

Unlike the Spanish translation, which more closely followed the original text, the Mandarin Chinese text deviated more from the original. Throughout the text, the Chinese translators even completely ignore the punctuation used in the British text. Chinese Post-Colonial Translation Theory also manifests itself in how names were sometimes completely changed and have no resemblance to the original names, such as Privet Drive’s translation as “nu zhen lu.” These deviations are indicative of Post-Colonial Translation Theory.

Conclusion

Each translation theory emphasizes a different area of translation as most important. However, the matter is complicated even more when one looks at different editions of the same

text. For instance, subsequent editions of the British text altered some of the original phrases in order to adapt the first book to the rest of the series as it progressed. In the first edition, when Hagrid is leaving Privet Drive, he says, “I better get Sirius his bike back” (HPL: Differences). This phrase did not fit with Rowling’s plot in the rest of the series and it was later changed to “I best get this bike away” (HPL: Differences). Do we then consider the later editions of the same book as a translation? Or do we simply disregard the changes?

If we decide to consider later editions of the British text as a translation, then which edition should be considered the original text? Furthermore, if so much emphasis is placed on each word, what would critics such as Peter Gleick say about the later editions? Gleick did not appreciate the alterations Scholastic’s editor made on the American text in an attempt to clarify some of the meanings for the American audience. So when the British text makes changes for clarification, does that ruin the authenticity of the text?

Furthermore, when comparing back-translations to the source text, the question arises, how are translators to manage multiple editions? The Spanish translation almost certainly used a later edition of the British text because it translated Hagrid as getting rid of the bike he was riding. However, is this translated phrase a deviation from the first British edition in which Hagrid is *returning* the bike to Sirius? Or should an analysis of a back-translation ignore later editions and opt for the first edition only?

One response to such a situation is to compare a translated text with the edition of the source text that the translators used. Yet, if there is no obvious sign of which edition was used, such an option is unavailable to the back-translator. Thus, the back-translator may instead compare the back-translation to multiple editions of the source text in order to see how similar or

dissimilar each is in order to make an informed judgment as to which may have been used by the translators.

Multiple editions of a source text are not the only obstacle a back-translator must face. Grammar differences and other limitations of language are also major factors in back-translations. However, one of the most fundamental obstacles is simply the punctuation of a text. One of the issues that these back-translations encountered was whether or not to maintain the translated text's punctuation or to punctuate the back-translation in a way that would make sense in English. Maintaining the translation's punctuation helps to highlight differences between the source text and the back-translation. However, if a back-translation is to be truly a back-translation, one might argue that the back-translation should punctuate the sentence using English grammar and sentence structure.

Yet in the process of back-translation, grammar plays an important role in helping guide the back-translator through the translated text. Taking one language and translating it into another exposes limits of both languages and highlights other changes in the meaning conveyed to the reader. For instance, the Chinese text may actually be better than the Spanish text at foreshadowing the characters' personalities in their names. The name, "You-Know-Who," evokes the mystery and fear that surrounds Voldemort. In the Chinese translation, "mysterious person," also reflects a similar idea. The Spanish translation, "Who-You-Know," may not echo that idea. However, Spanish translators could not translate Voldemort's other name as "You-Know-Who" because "usted-sabe-quien" does not make sense in Spanish. Thus, one of the most important aspects of translation and back-translation discovered in this paper is that even a simple name change can alter how a character is perceived. It was also particularly interesting that the Chinese language, the language most removed from English, may have, through

translation, more evocatively portrayed the characters via their names. The Spanish readers may not understand how the names of the characters reflect their personalities because the names were not translated. In a way, not translating the names may have further removed the reader from the original text.

Setting aside the punctuation issues encountered in the back-translations in the appendix below, the story itself must be considered as a whole. Instead of analyzing the individual parts of a translation, a back-translation should ultimately be compared to the source text based upon the message that the content of that text conveys. It is not enough to say how similar or dissimilar these texts are to the original text because, in the end, Spanish readers only know the Harry Potter of the Spanish translation. Similarly, to Chinese readers, who have also only read the Chinese translation of the text, the original Harry Potter is the Harry Potter in their text. Therefore, to the readers, the original Harry Potter is the Harry Potter in whichever language they encounter him in.

Appendix

A Note about the Back-Translations

Before looking at the back-translations of the Spanish and the Chinese texts below, please note the following. Footnotes are used in order to identify significant differences from the original text for quick referencing. The page numbers of the original translated texts are used to facilitate finding a passage in the translated language quickly. These page numbers are only accurate with regards to the particular texts cited. Also, a pair of brackets indicates that the words within had to be added in on my part in order for the sentence to make sense in English. The words may have been implied by the other language, as was often the case in the Spanish text, or they could have been completely omitted, as with the Chinese text. Peculiar or interesting omissions are further noted by footnotes.

Spanish Back-Translation

Page 9

The boy that lived¹

Mr. and Mrs. Dursley, who lived at number 4 Privet Drive, were proud to say they were very normal, fortunately.² They were the last people that could be expected to have relations with other strange or mysterious [people]³, because they weren't associated with foolishness.

¹ Spanish only capitalizes the first word of the title, as reflected above.

² In the British edition, that last word was originally, "thank you very much."

³ The word "people" was implied but not written.

Mr. Dursley was the director of a house called Grunnings, which made drills. He was a portly and plump man, almost no neck, with an enormous mustache. Mrs. Dursley was thin, blond and had a neck nearly twice as long as normal, which resulted in being very useful, having already passed the major part of time stretching over the property fence to spy on their neighbors. The Dursleys had a small son named Dudley, and to them there was no child better than him.

The Dursleys had everything they wanted, but they also had a secret, and a terrible fear that it would be discovered; they couldn't bear it if they knew about the Potters.

Mrs. Potter was the sister of Mrs. Dursley, but they hadn't seen each other in years; mainly because Mrs. Dursley pretended she didn't have a sister, because her and her husband, completely useless, they were opposite the Dursleys' thinking. The Dursleys shivered to think what would be said if the Potters appeared on the sidewalk. They knew the Potters also had a small son, but had never visited [him]. The boy was another good reason to keep their distance⁴ from the Potters: they did not want Dudley to be connected with a boy like that.

Page 10

Our story starts when Mr. and Mrs. Dursley wake up on Tuesday, with a sky covered by gray clouds that threatened to storm. But there was nothing in the clouds to suggest the strange and mysterious events that would take place a little later in places all over the region. Mr. Dursley hummed while he put on his very ugly tie to go to work, and Mrs. Dursley chattered happily while putting a blond Dudley in a high chair.

Neither saw the great brown owl that passed quickly by the window.

At 8:30, Mr. Dursley grabbed his briefcase, kissed Mrs. Dursley on the cheek and tried to say goodbye to Dudley with a kiss, but couldn't, by now the boy had a tantrum and was throwing

⁴ Another translation could be "banish."

cereal against the walls. —Mischievous child—Mr. Dursley said through his teeth as he left the house. He entered his car and left number 4.

At the corner, he saw the first indication of strange happenings: a cat was looking at the street sign. For a second, Mr. Dursley didn't believe what he had seen, but then turned his head to look again. There was a tabby cat on the corner of Privet Drive, but it wasn't looking at the sign. Was it in his head? He decided it was an optical illusion. Mr. Dursley blinked and thought about the cat. He gave it a glance. While Mr. Dursley turned the corner and moved down the road, he watched the cat through the rearview mirror: in that moment, the cat was reading the sign that said <<Privet Drive>> (no, that couldn't be right, cats can't read street signs or maps). Mr. Dursley shook his head and banished the cat from his thoughts. While going to the city in his car, he thought more about an order of drills that he hoped to make that day.

But outside other occurrences parted drills from his thoughts. While in the habitual morning traffic jam, he couldn't ignore the great number of people dressed in strange clothes. Individuals with capes. Mr. Dursley could not put up with people wearing ridiculous clothes. Ah, everyone that's wearing them is young! So he decided it was a new fashion. Drumming with his fingers on the [steering wheel] and he watched those strange people settle around him.

Page 11

They whispered, very excitedly. Mr. Dursley was angered to find that two of the strangers weren't young. Come on one was actually an old guy and was wearing an emerald green cape! How crazy! But then it occurred to him that they were advertising; it was evident that that man was collecting for something. Yes, that had to be so. Traffic moved and, a few minutes later, Mr. Dursley arrived at Grunning's office building, thinking anew about drills.

Mr. Dursley always sat with his back to the window in his office on the 9th floor. If he did not always do this, that morning he would have side-tracked his concentration on the drills. He didn't see the owls that flew in plain daylight, as on the streets [the people] saw and watched with open mouths, meanwhile the birds crossed paths. The oldest of the people hadn't seen an owl even in the night. Without distress, Mr. Dursley had a perfectly normal morning, without owls. He yelled at five people. Made important phone calls and continued yelling. He was in a very good mood by lunchtime, when he decided to stretch his legs and leave to go to a bakery that was on the opposite sidewalk.

He had forgotten the man with the cape until he passed near a group to the side of the bakery. He passed looking angry. He couldn't think of why, but he felt nervous. This group also whispered with excitement and there wasn't any money. When he returned with a giant bagel in a paper bag, he overheard a few words of the conversation.

--The Potters, that's right, that's right, I heard...

--Yes, their son, Harry...

Mr. Dursley went still. Fear invaded him. They continued murmuring, talking about something else, but he restrained himself.

He rushed to cross the street and broke into a run to his office. Shouting at his secretary not to bother him, he seized the telephone and, when he punched in the last number for his house, he had an idea. He put down the device and smoothed his mustache while thinking...No, he shouldn't be so stupid.

Page 12

Potter wasn't a very special last name. He was certain that there were many people whose last name was Potter and who had a son named Harry. And thinking some more, he wasn't sure in

the least that his nephew's name was Harry. He had never seen the boy. He could be named Harvey. Or Harold. There was no sense in worrying Mrs. Dursley, she always shook a lot after any mention of her sister. And he can't reproach her. If he had had a sister like that...! But of everything, that guy in the cape...

That afternoon he couldn't concentrate on the drills, and when he left the office, at 5 on the dot, he was so preoccupied that, without even looking, collided with a man who was in the doorway.

--Sorry—he grunted, the tiny old [man] staggered and fell to the ground. Seconds later, Mr. Dursley saw that the man was wearing a violet cape. He didn't look angry about being shoved. On the contrary, his face lit up with a huge smile, while saying with a loud voice that called attention of the passersby:

--Don't apologize, my dear sir, because today nothing could bother me! There should be rejoicing, because "Who-You-Know" is finally gone! Even the muggles like you should celebrate this happy day!

And the old [man] hugged Mr. Dursley and left.

Mr. Dursley was completely frozen. He had been hugged by a stranger. And last but not least he had been called muggle, no matter what that was. He rushed to his car and headed for his home, hoping that he had imagined it all (something that never had he hoped for before, because it wasn't proper to imagine).

When he entered the drive of number 4, he first saw (and not in good humor) the tabby cat he had seen that morning. In that moment it was sitting on the wall of the garden. He was sure it was the same, because it had identical lines around the eyes.

--Go!—said Mr. Dursley in a loud voice.

The cat didn't move. It only gave him a severe look. Mr. Dursley wondered if that was normal behavior in a cat.

Page 13

He calmed himself and entered the house. He decided not to tell his wife anything.

Mrs. Dursley had had a good and normal day. While they ate, she informed him about the neighbor's problem with her daughter, and told him that Dudley had learned a new phrase, (--No, I won't!). Mr. Dursley tried to act normally. Once Dudley was tucked in, he went to the living room to watch the nightly news.

--And, lastly, bird watchers everywhere have informed us that today the owls of the nation have not been following habits. Although owls normally hunt at night and it is very difficult to see them in the light of day, there have been hundreds of notices about these birds flying in all directions after sunrise. Experts are unable to explain the cause for why the owls have changed their hours of sleep--. The broadcaster allowed an ironic smile. --Very mysterious. And now, back with Jim McGuffin and the forecast of the time. Are there showers of owls for tonight, Jim?

--Ok, Ted—said the meteorologist, --that I do not know, but it's not only the owls that have been acting strangely. Viewers as far away as Kent, Yorkshire, and Dundee have called in to say that instead of the promised rain yesterday they had a downpour of shooting stars. Maybe they have started celebrating Bonfire Night early. It is this coming week, people! But there will probably be a rainy night.

Mr. Dursley stayed frozen in his seat. Falling stars all over Great Britain? Owls flying in the light of day? And that rumor, that whispering about the Potters...

Mrs. Dursley entered the room with two cups of tea. That wasn't good. He had to talk to his wife. It was clear that his voice shook with nervousness.

--Eh, Petunia, dear, have you heard anything lately about your sister?

Like he had expected, Mrs. Dursley looked bothered and angry. After all, normally they pretended that she did not have a sister.

Page 14

--No—she responded in a short tone--. Why?

--There are very strange things in the news—mumbled Mr. Dursley--. Owls... falling stars... and today in the city there were a number of people with rare appearances...

--So?—Mrs. Dursley briskly interrupted.

--Well, I thought...wondered...that it could have something to do with...you know...*their group*.

Mrs. Dursley drank her tea with pursed lips. Mr. Dursley questioned if he should tell her that he heard the name <<Potter>>. No, no he shouldn't. In place of that, he said, trying to appear nonchalant:

--Their son...he must be the age of Dudley, right?

--I think—responded Mrs. Dursley with rigidity.

--And what is his name? Howard, right?

--Harry. A vulgar and horrible name, if you ask my opinion.

--Oh, yes—said Mr. Dursley, with an awful feeling of dejection--. Yes, I agree.

He didn't say anything else on the topic, and went to bed. While Mrs. Dursley was in the bathroom, Mr. Dursley slowly approached the window and scanned the garden below. The cat was still there. It was looking with attention at Privet Drive, as if it was hoping for something.

Was he imagining things? Or could all this have something to do with the Potters? If it did...if it was discovered that they are related to them... well, he believed that couldn't happen.

The Dursleys got into bed. Mrs. Dursley fell asleep quickly, but Mr. Dursley stayed awake, with all that running through his mind. His last and comforting thought before falling asleep was that although the Potters were involved in the events, there was no reason for them to come to him and Mrs. Dursley. The Potters knew very well what he and Petunia thought of them and those of their class... He couldn't see how he and Petunia could get mixed in something that had to do with them (he yawned and turned over)...No, no they couldn't affect them...

How wrong that was!

Page 15

Mr. Dursley fell into an uneasy sleep, but the cat that was sitting on the wall of the garden didn't show signs of being sleepy. It was so still like a statue, with fixed eyes, without blinking, in the square of Privet Drive. She hardly⁵ moved when a car door closed in the street to the side, or when two owls flew right over its head. The truth is that the cat did not move until midnight.

A man appeared in the square that the cat had observed, and materialized so suddenly and silently that one could think that came from the earth. The tail of the cat was agitated and half closed its eyes.⁶

On Privet Drive no one had ever seen a man like this. He was tall, slim and very old,⁷ like a judge for his silver hair and beard, so very long that it could be held together with a belt.

⁵ This word, "apenas" is only used in Latin American Spanish.

⁶ "Entornaron" sounds more angry than the translation suggests, perhaps more like a glare.

⁷ Elderly or aged is also another translation.

He wore a large tunic, a cape the color purple that brushed the ground and boots with tall heels⁸ and buckles. His blue eyes were clear, brilliant and sparkling behind half-moon glasses. He had a very large and crooked nose, as if it had been fractured at another time. His name was Albus Dumbledore.

Albus Dumbledore did not seem to know that he had arrived at a road in where everything, from his name to the boots, he would be badly received.⁹ He was very occupied rummaging in his cape, found something, but appeared to take account that he was watched because, quickly, saw the cat, that still looked with fixedness from the other end of the road. For another reason, seeing the cat amused him. He laughed between teeth and he murmured:

--I should have known.

He found in his interior pocket what he had been looking for. It appeared a silver lighter. He opened it, held it high in the air and ignited it. The light closest to the road went out with a light crack. He ignited it another time and the next lamp went dark. Twelve times he used the Apagador,¹⁰ until the only lights that remained in the whole street were two distant pinpoints: the eyes of the cat that were watching him. If someone else were to look from the window in this moment, without Mrs. Dursley with her eyes as discerning, small and brilliant, they would not be able to see what occurred in the street. Dumbledore returned the

Page 16

extinguisher's top to inside his cape and went toward the number 4 on the street, sat himself on the wall, near the cat. He did not look at it, but then in a moment, he said a word.

⁸ The wording also refers to the back of the shoe in a more general form, indicating the entire back of the shoe, not just the back part of the sole.

⁹ Another translation would be "not welcome."

¹⁰ "Apagador" translates into "extinguisher."

--I am happy to see you here, Professor McGonagall.

He turned to smile at the cat, but she was not there. In her place, he gave a smile to a severe-looking woman who wore square-rimmed glasses, that resembled the lines that were around the eyes of the cat. The woman also wore a cape, an emerald color. Her black hair was pulled in a bun. She was obviously disgusted.

--How did you know that it was me?—she asked.

--My dear professor, never have I seen a cat so tense.

--You also would be tense if you spent the whole day sitting on a wall of brick—
responded Professor McGonagall.

--All day? When you could have been at a party? I must have passed a dozen celebrations and parties in my journey here.

Professor McGonagall exhaled angrily.

--Oh, yes, everyone was partying, I'm sure¹¹—she said with impatience—. I believe they would know a little more caution, but no... Even the muggles have taken account that something has happened! Appeared in the news. —She twisted her head in the direction of the window of the dark sitting room of the Dursleys—. I heard it. Flocks of owls, falling stars... Good, they aren't all stupid. They have assumed something. Falling stars in Kent... I'm sure that was Dedalus Diggle. Never had too much common sense.

--Do not reproach them—said Dumbledore with a smooth tone—. We have had very little to celebrate for 11 years...

¹¹ Literal translation is "agreement" or "pact," and gives an idea of group consensus.

--I know—responded Professor McGonagall, irritated--. But that is not a reason to lose your head. The people have been completely careless, appearing in the streets in plain light of day, without at least putting on the clothing of the muggles, exchanging rumors...

She cast a short glance to the side at Dumbledore, as if hoping that he would answer something. But when he didn't, she continued talking.

Page 17

--I think it extraordinary that the same day that Who-You-Know has disappeared finally, the muggles discover all of us. Because really he is gone, right, Dumbledore?

--It would seem so—said Dumbledore--. We have much to be thankful for. Would you like to eat a lemon candy?

--A what?

--A lemon candy. It is a muggle kind of candy that I like a lot.

--No, thank you—responded with coldness Professor McGonagall, as if she considered that this was not the appropriate time for candies--. If you say, that Who-You-Know is gone...

--My dear professor, I am confident that a sensible person like yourself can call him by his name, right? All this foolishness about Who-You-Know...during 11 years I have tried to persuade everyone to call him by his true name, Voldemort. --Professor McGonagall [was] taken aback with apprehensiveness, but Dumbledore, occupied in unwrapping two lemon candies, apparently did not notice--. Everything is becoming very confused if we continue to say "Who-You-Know". Never have I encountered at all the emotion of fear in saying the name Voldemort.

--Because you don't have that problem—observed Professor McGonagall, in between exasperation and admiration--. But you are different. Everyone knows that you are the only one that "Who-You... Oh, ok, Voldemort, feared.

--I am flattered—said Dumbledore calmly--. Voldemort had powers that I never had.

--Only because you are too...good...noble to use them.

--Thankfully it is dark. I haven't blushed this much since Mrs. Pomfrey told me that she liked my new earmuffs.

Professor McGonagall shot him a look, before speaking.

--The owls are nothing compared to the rumors that are running around. Do you know what all they are saying about how he disappeared? About what finally stopped him?

Page 18

It seemed that Professor McGonagall had reached a point that she was very anxious to discuss, the true reason that she had spent all day on a cold wall who, neither as a cat or as a woman, had ever looked at Dumbledore with as much intensity as she did in this moment. It was evident that, whatever it was “what everyone was saying,” she would not believe it until Dumbledore said that it was true. Dumbledore, however, chose another candy and did not respond.

--They have said—she insisted—is that last night Voldemort appeared in Godric Valley. He went to kill the Potters. The rumor is that Lily and James are...are...ok, that they are dead.

Dumbledore inclined his head. Professor McGonagall stayed openmouthed.

--Lily and James...I can't believe it...I can't believe it... Oh, Albus...

Dumbledore approached her and patted her on the back.

--I know... I know...--he said with sympathy.

Professor McGonagall's voice trembled when she continued.

--That's not all. They say he wanted to kill the Potter's son, Harry. But he couldn't. He couldn't kill this boy. No one knows why or how, but they say that since he couldn't kill him, Voldemort's power is broken... and that this is the reason he has gone.

Dumbledore nodded with his head, sorrowfully.

--It's...it's true? --stammered Professor McGonagall--. After all that he's done...all the people he has killed...he couldn't kill a boy? It's astonishing...of all the things that could have stopped him... But how did he survive, in the name of heaven?

--We can only guess—said Dumbledore--.This time we will never know.

Professor McGonagall took out a handkerchief with lace and dabbed her eyes,¹² behind her glasses. Dumbledore snorted as he pulled out a gold watch from his bag and examined it. It was a very rare watch. It had twelve hands and no numbers; small planets moved around the perimeter of the circle. But for Dumbledore it must have made sense, because he put it away and said:

Page 19

--Hagrid is delayed. I imagine it was him who told you I would be here, right?

--Yes—said Professor McGonagall--. And I imagine that you are not going to tell me why, of all places, you have come precisely here.

--I have come to deliver Harry to his aunt and uncle. They are the only family that he has now.

--You mean...? You couldn't refer to the people who live here!—cried the professor, jumping up and pointing at number 4--. Dumbledore...you can't. I have observed them all day. You couldn't encounter a person more distant from us. And this son that they have...I saw him

¹² A more literal translation would be "passed by her eyes."

kicking at his mother while they were on the stairs, asking for candies while screaming. Harry Potter can't live there!

--It is the best place for him—said Dumbledore with firmness--. His uncle can explain it all to him when he is older. I wrote them a letter.

--A letter?—Professor McGonagall repeated, returning to her seat--. Dumbledore, do you really think that you can explain all this in a letter? These people will never understand Harry! He is famous... a legend... I wouldn't be surprised if today became known in the future as the day of Harry Potter! They will write books about Harry... All the children of the world will know his name.

--Exactly—said Dumbledore, with a serious look over his glasses--. It is enough to navigate for any child. Famous before he knows to talk and walk! Famous for something that he can't remember! Isn't it not much better that he grows up away from all of that, until he is ready for assimilating it?

Professor McGonagall opened her mouth, changed ideas, swallowed and then said:

--Yes... yes, it has reason, of course. But how will the child get here, Dumbledore? -- She quickly looked over the professor's cape, as if she thought that he could have been hiding Harry.

--Hagrid will bring him.

--Is that... sensible... trusting Hagrid with something as important as this?

--Hagrid, I would trust him with my life—said Dumbledore.

Page 20

--I didn't say that he isn't a good person—said Professor McGonagall hesitantly. But I don't want to say that he is neglectful. Have the customs that... What was that?

A deafening sound broke the silence surrounding them. It was getting stronger while they looked on both sides of the street, found another light. It increased to a roar as the two looked to the sky, and then a heavy bike fell from the air and landed on the road, in front of them.

The motorbike was huge, but if it was compared with the man that was driving it, it seemed like a toy. He was two times taller than a normal man and at least five times as wide. You could say that he was too big to be accepted and also so unkempt... Black hair, large and scrambled, and a beard that covered nearly his entire face. His hands were the same size as trashcan lids and his feet, in leather boots, seemed like dolphin calves.¹³ In his enormous muscular arms he held a bundle wrapped in blankets.

--Hagrid—said Dumbledore, relieved--. Finally. And where did you get this motorbike?

--I borrowed it, Professor Dumbledore—answered the giant, dismounting with care from the vehicle while talking--. Young Sirius Black gave it to me. I have brought him, sir.

--There weren't any problems were there?

--No, sir. The house is almost destroyed, but I got him before the muggles began to appear. He fell asleep while we flew over Bristol.

Dumbledore and Professor McGonagall leaned over the blankets. In between them they saw a small boy, deeply asleep. Under a mat of jet black hair, on his forehead, they could see a scar in a curious shape, like a lighting bolt.

--It was there...? --whispered Professor McGonagall.

--Yes --responded Dumbledore--. He will have this scar forever.

--You can't do anything, Dumbledore?

--If I could, I wouldn't. Scars can have uses. I have one on my left knee that is a

¹³ This can also be translated as "small dolphins."

Page 21

perfect diagram of the London metro. Yes, leave him here, Hagrid, it is better that we finish this.

Dumbledore turned toward the Dursley's house.

--Can I... can I say goodbye to him, sir?—asked Hagrid.

He inclined his huge disheveled head over Harry and gave him a kiss, scraping him with his beard. Then, suddenly, Hagrid let out a howl, like a wounded dog.

--Shhh!—said Professor McGonagall--. You will disturb the muggles!

--I'm...sorry—cried Hagrid, and he cleaned his face with a huge handkerchief--. But I can't believe it... Lily and James are dead... and poor Harry has to live with muggles...

--Yes, yes, it is all very sad, but really, Hagrid, we'll be discovered—whispered Professor McGonagall, patting Hagrid's arm, while Dumbledore passed through the gate of the garden and went to the door in the front. He gently left Harry on the threshold, pulled out the letter from his cape, and hid it between the covers of the child and then returned to the other two. During a long minute the three thought about the small bundle. Hagrid's shoulders shook. Professor McGonagall blinked furiously. The twinkling light that Dumbledore's eyes shone with seemed to have abandoned him.

--Good—said Dumbledore finally--, that's it. We have nothing to do here. It is better that we leave and join in the celebrations.

--Ah—Hagrid responded with a rough voice--. I had better get rid of¹⁴ this bike. Good night, Professor McGonagall, Professor Dumbledore.

¹⁴ This is different from the British text. The British text says that he intends to take it away.

Hagrid wiped his tears with the sleeve of his jacket, mounted the motorbike and gave a kick to the lever to start up the motor. With a roar he rose in the air and disappeared into the night.

--We'll see each other soon, I hope, Professor McGonagall—said Dumbledore, saluting her with a nod of his head. Professor McGonagall blew her nose in response.

Page 22

Dumbledore turned and walked down the street. He stopped in the square and raised the silver Extinguisher. He used it one time and all the lights on the street ignited, so that Privet Drive shone with an orange glow, and he could see a tabby cat sneaking through the square at the other end of the road. He could also see the bundle of blankets on the threshold of the number 4 house.

--Good luck, Harry—he murmured. He gave a half turn and, with a movement of his cape, disappeared.

A breeze moved the neat hedges of Privet Drive. The road was permanently silent under an inky sky. That was the last place one could hope that amazing things would happen. Harry Potter gave a turn in his blankets, without waking. A small hand wrapped around the letter and he continued sleeping, without knowing that he was famous, without knowing that in a few hours he would be woken by Mrs. Dursley's scream, when she opened the front door to take the bottles of milk. Nor that he would spend the next weeks being pinched and pinched by his cousin Dudley. He couldn't know that, in that very moment, people that met in secret all over the country were raising their glasses and saying in quiet voices: <<For Harry Potter...the boy that lived!>>

Chinese Text Back-Translation

Character List

Harry Potter—the book’s hero, first-year student at Hogwarts magic school

Petunia—Harry’s maternal aunt

Vernon Dursley—Harry’s aunt’s husband

Dudley—Harry’s older cousin, Dursley’s son

Albus Dumbledore—Hogwarts magic school headmaster

Professor McGonagall—Hogwarts magic school vice-headmistress

Professor Snape—Hogwarts magic school potions teacher

Ron—Harry’s friend at Hogwarts magic school

Hermione—Harry’s friend at Hogwarts magic school

Neville—Harry’s classmate at Hogwarts magic school

Malfoy—Harry’s classmate at Hogwarts magic school

Voldemort—killed Harry’s parents, victims call him “mysterious person”

Professor Quirrel—Hogwarts magic school black magic defensive arts teacher

Chapter 1-The Boy Who Escaped Calamity¹⁵

Page 1

The Dursley’s chaste household of number 4 always had the idea and would say that they were the best ordinary family, respecting and respectful. They never had any business with mysterious, strange people, because they were fundamentally convinced those people were dishonest.

¹⁵ Also can be translated as “The Boy That Didn’t Die.”

Mr. Vernon Dursley was in charge of Grunnings, the company that produced drills. He was a tall and sturdy man with nearly no neck, but he grew a large mustache on his face. Mrs. Dursley is a slim, blond woman. Her neck, compared to a normal person's neck, was twice as long. Thus, whenever she came into contact with a fence, she would lengthen her neck and spy on her neighbors, her long neck was very useful. The Dursleys had a small son, named Dudley. In their eyes, the secular world did not have a better child.

The Dursley family had no deficiency, but they possessed a secret, they were afraid of someone discovering this very secret. They believed, in case someone discovered the Potters, they would have to bear it forever. Mrs. Potter was Mrs. Dursley's little sister,¹⁶ only they had not seen each other for several years. In fact, Mrs. Dursley pretended simply not to have a younger sister, because her younger sister and her devoid of any merit husband and the Dursleys' lifestyle were completely different. The thought of what the neighbors would say if the Potters came, frightened the Dursleys to death.

Page 2

They knew the Potters also had a son, only they had never seen him. That this child was also like the Potters and had no relation [to the Dursleys]¹⁷ was a very good reason, they really didn't want to let Dudley mix with that kind of child.

Our story starts on a dark and gloomy Tuesday, the Dursleys woke early, outside the window the dark clouds hung low in the sky and didn't give a bit of indication of the eccentric affair that was about to happen. Mr. Dursley hummed a little tune, picked out the most disliked

¹⁶ In Chinese, there is no word just for "sister." There is only "older sister" or "younger sister."

¹⁷ The relation to the Dursleys is implied by the context of the sentence. This is an instance where parts of the sentence are dropped because the reader should already know that the Potters have no relation with the Dursleys.

necktie for work, Mrs. Dursley was very happy, talking endlessly without a point, while stuffing a wailing child named Dudley into a highchair.

They did not notice a tawny owl flutter past the window.

At 8:30, Mr. Dursley took his briefcase, kissed Mrs. Dursley's cheek, just wanted to kiss Dudley, this little scoundrel said goodbye but didn't kiss him, the little scoundrel was in the process of getting angry and throwing oatmeal on the walls. "Little tyke." Mr. Dursley muttered, chuckling as he walked out the door, sat in his car, and backed out of number four [driveway].¹⁸

On the street corner, he saw the first abnormal sign—a cat reading a map. At first, Mr. Dursley didn't understand what he saw, so he turned his head again. This time, the patched cat stood at Privet Drive's intersection but didn't have a map. Had he imagined it? It was very possible the light caused the illusion. Mr. Dursley blinked, stared at the cat, the cat also stared at him. Then, when Mr. Dursley turned the corner, he watched the cat in the rearview mirror. The cat, this time was looking at *Privet Drive's* street sign, no, *reading*, the sign; cats can not read maps or street signs. Mr. Dursley decided to drive the cat from his mind. He drove into town, on the road he thought he could get one big order of drills today.

But when he was quite close to town, another matter pushed drills from his mind. Then, when the rate of traffic stopped, he suddenly saw on the side of the road people dressed in bizarre outfits. They were wearing cloaks. Mr. Dursley could not bear to see other people wearing outlandish [things], look at what the young people were wearing! He guessed this was probably a type of new fashion. He used his finger to pound the steering wheel, he wanted to leave the crowd he saw very close to him. They were exhilarated, whispering into each other's ears. Mr. Dursley was very angry, because he discovered that among them, one person was not

¹⁸ Again, the word "driveway" is omitted because it is implied in the rest of the sentence.

young, that man was even older than him, wearing an unexpectedly jade-green robe! Really, did he have no sense of shame! After that, Mr. Dursley suddenly thought these people probably were collecting donations for some affair, right, that was it. Traffic moved, a few minutes later Mr. Dursley arrived at Grunnings company parking lot, his train of thought back on drills.

Mr. Dursley, in his 9th floor office, always sat back-to-back with the window. If this wasn't the same, he would have discovered this morning more difficult to concentrate on the matter of drills. He didn't see the large number of owls in the full light of day flying down from the sky, but the crowds on the street did; they were stunned, pointed, staring at the owls sweeping past above them one by one. They, for the most part, only at night had seen an owl. Mr. Dursley's morning was very normal, no disturbance of thousands of owls. He first screamed loudly at five people at once, and made several important phone calls, and screamed a bit more loudly. He felt very good, when he went to eat lunch, he hoped to stretch his muscles a bit, and go to the bakery to buy a small sweet roll. If he had not come across a crowd of disheveled people nearby the bakery, he would have already forgotten them.

Page 3

When he passed beside them, he firmly stared. He thought it was unclear why, but he thought these kind of people made him feel awkward. Those people were just chattering, explaining enthusiastically, but he couldn't even see one collecting box. Then he placed one large doughnut in his bag and walked back, when he passed them [again], their speech was intermittent, lightly he heard:

“The Potters, not bad, I just heard—”

“—that's right, their son, Harry—”

He suddenly stopped walking, extremely frightened. He turned around facing the whispering crowd looking at them, apparently hoping to hear them say something, later again he changed his decision.

He hurried down the opposite side of the street, returned to his office, sternly ordered the secretary not to disturb him, then grabbed the phone,¹⁹ firmly pushed in the house phone number, and instantly changed his mind. He put down the phone, touched his mustache, pondering...no, he was being very silly. Potter wasn't an uncommon last name, he could be sure many people had the last name, Potter, who also had a son named Harry. To think about it, he, himself couldn't be sure if his wife's sister's son *was* named Harry at all. He hadn't even seen this child. Could have said Harvey, or Harold. It wasn't necessary to let Petunia worry, only the mention of her sister would always make her distraught with anxiety. He didn't blame her at all—if *he* had that kind of sister...but no matter what he said, those cloaked people in the crowd...

That afternoon, he found it very hard to concentrate on office work. At 5:30 he walked out of the large office building, thinking heavily as before, at the door he hit a person.

This little man struggled and stumbled, and fell down. "Sorry." Mr. Dursley muttered. In a second, he discovered the man was wearing a violet cloak. He had almost tripped over him, but apparently [the man] wasn't angry at all, instead a huge smile split his face. "You don't need to apologize respectable sir, because today there is nothing that will make me angry! I'm extremely happy because He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named is finally gone! Even you muggles should also celebrate today!" His voice was ear-piercing, others stared.

He finished speaking, hugged Mr. Dursley's waist and walked away.

¹⁹ The translation is more accurately, "the microphone" but the characters can also be used to refer to a telephone.

Mr. Dursley stayed right there, not moving, like a root. Just a moment ago, he was hugged by a complete stranger. He had also called him a “muggle,” but he didn’t know what it meant. His thoughts in a whirl, he hurried down the street and drove home. He hoped it was an illusion, he never had wanted to imagine something, because he fundamentally did not approve of imagination. But as he entered number 4, the first thing he saw was the tabby cat from this morning, which did not improve his mood. This time the cat sat on top of the flower garden wall. He was sure that this cat and the cat from the morning were the same: the eye markings were the same.

“Go...go!” Mr. Dursley yelled loudly.

The cat didn’t move, only stared at him fiercely. Could a normal cat behave like that? Mr. Dursley doubted it. He first calmed himself down, and soon after entered the house. He still decided not to say a single word to Petunia.

Mrs. Dursley’s day was going very well, everything normal. Dinner was on the table, Mrs. Dursley talked about their neighbor’s daughter’s conflict and Dudley had learned a new word (“absolutely not”), Mr. Dursley also tried very hard to act normal.

Page 4

After Dudley settled down to sleep, he went into the living room, and heard the night-time news final report:

“Finally, according to bird watchers from all over, today all over the country owls have been acting abnormally. Under normal circumstances, they hunt for food at night, and very rarely come out in daylight, but today at sunrise they were flying all over the place. Experts are also unable to explain why the owls would change their sleep patterns.” The anchor spoke here,

with a little smile. “This is really fantastic. Now, I will give the microphone over to Jim McGuffin, to ask him how the weather is. Jim, with there be showers of owls tonight?”

“Oh, Ted,” the weatherman said, “that I don’t know, it’s not only the owls acting unusual. All over the country, in every place as far as Kent, Yorkshire, and Dundee [people] have been calling one after another about eyewitness, our original forecast yesterday called for rain, but the outcome was not rain but meteor showers!²⁰ Also, people celebrate Bonfire night next week, a week early, friends! But I can guarantee you, tonight will have rain.”

Mr. Dursley sat in his armchair stupefied. Meteor showers all over England? Owls flying everywhere in the full light of day? Strange people scattered everywhere? There was also that rumor, pertaining to the Potters...

Mrs. Dursley brought two cups of tea into the living room. Things were in a bad way. He should tell her. He felt uneasy, cleared his throat. “Uh—Petunia, dear—did you get any news of your little sister recently?”

As expected, Mrs. Dursley was greatly shocked, and also very angry. No matter what was said, they usually said she didn’t have a little sister.

“No,” she said in a stern voice, “why?”

“Today’s news was a bit weird,” Mr. Dursley murmured, “large number of owls...meteor showers...today, in the city there were many of the same weirdly dressed people...”

“What was that?” Mrs. Dursley said furiously.

“Oh, I thought...didn’t speak clearly...this and...you know...her kind of people...”

Mrs. Dursley chewed on her lip and took a sip of tea. Mr. Dursley didn’t know if he should be brazen enough to tell her he heard the name “Harry.” He decided he didn’t want to be

²⁰ In the British text, the meteor showers are actually “showers of falling stars.”

too reckless. Then, as freely and carelessly and correcting himself, said: “Their son—he’s now as big as Dudley?”

“I think so.” Mrs. Dursley said dryly.

“What did they name him? Isn’t it Howard?”

“He’s called Harry, I say, an unattractive, common name.”

“Oh, right.” Mr. Dursley said, feeling his heart suddenly plummet. “Not bad, I also think so.”

When it was time to go to bed, he also did not bring up the subject again. After Mrs. Dursley went into the bathroom, Mr. Dursley crept over to the bedroom window, looked at the garden. That cat was still at the original spot, gazing steadily and attentively at the Privet Drive entrance, as if waiting for something

Page 5

Was his imagination running wild? Did this have something to do with the Potters? If there really was a connection—if finally they were connected—then he thought they would be able to live it down.

The Dursleys fell asleep. Mrs. Dursley fell asleep quickly, Mr. Dursley, however, was busy thinking thousands of things, so he couldn’t sleep. But before he could sleep, he finally had a comforting thought: even if the Potters were in all of this, there was no reason to involve him or his wife. The Potters knew very clearly the Dursley’s opinion of them and their crowd. He yawned, and rolled over. This couldn’t affect them...

But he was very wrong.

Bewildered, Mr. Dursley dozed off into sleep, but on the garden wall the cat was not the least bit sleepy. It sat on the wall just like a statue, not moving a bit, unable to look away from a

distant street down Privet Drive. On a street nearby a car door slammed, two owls flew overhead and it didn't even move. In fact, it was nearly midnight when it started to move.

The cat stared at the street where a man appeared, he arrived suddenly, without making a sound, like he simply appeared there. The cat flicked its tail, eyes narrowed to a slit.

Privet Drive had never seen this man. He was tall and thin, had silver hair and a beard long enough to tuck into his belt, and leaning a bit with age that was certainly very high.²¹ He wore a long gown, billowing purple cloak that dragged and a pair of tall boots with belt buckle fasteners. Behind a pair of half-moon spectacles a pair of deep blue eyes sparkled brightly. His nose was very long, but it was crooked, like it was broken twice. His name was Albus Dumbledore.

Albus Dumbledore apparently wasn't aware that from his name to his shoes, on the street he had arrived to, he wasn't welcome. He hurriedly searched inside his cloak like he was looking for something. He also didn't want someone spying on him, because he suddenly looked up around the street and saw a cat watching him attentively, due to some kind of reason, he thought this cat's manner was funny. He laughed and mumbled, "I already supposed [you'd be here]".²² He reached inside his pocket and pulled out the thing he wanted, and began to take out what looked like a cigarette lighter. He lightly opened it, held it up, there was a clunk noise, and the light in the closest street lamp went out with a hiss like water. He hit it again—the second street lamp also went out. He used the light extinguishing device²³ twelve times, and once all that remained on the street were two tiny lights, he looked at the cat's two eyes. If someone had

²¹ The phrase is referring to the fact that Dumbledore is very old.

²² Again, this part was omitted from the text but is implied.

²³ This is called the Put-Outer in the original text.

looked outside their window, even with Mrs. Dursley's vision, they wouldn't be able to see what was going on in the street. Dumbledore put the light extinguishing device back into his cloak pocket, afterwards he followed the street to number 4. At the wall, he approached the cat sitting on it. He didn't look at it, but instead spoke.

"I really didn't expect to see you here, Professor McGonagall."

He turned to the multicolored cat and smiled a little. The mottled cat didn't look at him, just changed into a stern looking woman, wearing a pair of square glasses, which looked just like the markings on her cat form. She also wore emerald robes, had jet-black hair in a very tight bun. She looked very agitated.

"How did you recognize me?" she asked.

Page 6

"My dear professor, I've never seen a cat wait so stiffly."

"If you had sat on a brick wall all day, you would also be stiff." Professor McGonagall said.

"All day? When you ought to be out participating in celebrations? On one street that I passed on the way here, there were at least twelve parties that were very lively."

Professor McGonagall hummed with anger.

"Oh, it's not wrong, everyone needs to celebrate, very good!" she said angrily. "You'd think they would be a little more cautious, but no, even the muggles have noticed something has happened, it was on their TV news." She suddenly moved her head toward the Dursley's living room window. "I heard it all. Large number of owls...moving star showers...good, they surely aren't that foolish. They are particularly interested in some matters. The raining stars in Kent—I dare say they could figure it out. They do not all have no brains."

“You can’t blame them,” Dumbledore calmly said, “11 years have passed with little to celebrate.”

“I know that,” Professor McGonagall hissed, “but that’s no reason to take risks. They are also too careless, on the street in broad daylight, not wearing muggle clothing, and on the news.”

Pausing, she gave Dumbledore a sideways glance, apparently hoping he would tell her something, but Dumbledore didn’t make a sound, then she kept going: “Voldemort is finally gone, he’s gone for one day, and muggles find out everything about us, this could be fantastic. I hope is he really gone, Dumbledore?”

“It seems so,” Dumbledore said, “we should be thankful. Would you like a lemon drop?”

“A what?”

“A lemon drop. It’s a muggle dessert. I like it a lot.”

“No, thank you.” Professor McGonagall said coldly, thinking that now was not the time to be eating. “Like I said, even if “mysterious person”²⁴ is really gone—”

“My dear professor, you are such a smart person, you still can’t address him by name? “Mysterious person” is not his name, I’ve been trying to tell everyone—11 years I really wanted to try to tell everyone, to say his name directly: Voldemort,” Professor McGonagall shivered a little, but Dumbledore opened a candy without noticing. “If we go on calling “mysterious person” as “mysterious person”, he is still scary. I think if you call Voldemort by his real name there will be no fear.”

“I know you’re not afraid,” Professor McGonagall said, half angry and half proud.

“Everyone knows you are unparalleled. Myster—oh, okay, Voldemort—the only person he was afraid of was you.”

²⁴ “Mysterious person” is the literal translation of the Chinese characters.

“You praise me too highly.” Dumbledore said serenely, “Voldemort had powers I would never have.”

“That’s because you are too—ah—too noble to, to even use on him.”

“Fortunately, it’s very dark, since Madam Pomfrey said she liked my new ear covers, I have not until now blushed so much.”

Page 7

Professor McGonagall stared at Dumbledore fiercely, saying. “Owls and rumors flying around with no relevance. Do you know what everyone is saying? Why he is gone? What finally stopped him?”

This time, Professor McGonagall seemed to be anxiously wanting to discuss this question thoroughly, also the reason that she sat on the ice-cold brick wall all day. But no matter if she was a cat or a woman, she never fixed Dumbledore with such an intent eye as now. Clearly, no matter what everyone said, only when Dumbledore said it was true, would she believe.

Dumbledore, though, unwrapped another lemon drop, and didn’t reply.

“They say,” she continued determinedly, “last night Voldemort went to Godric’s Hollow. They went to the Potters, and Lily and James Potter were—were—killed together.”

Dumbledore lowered his head. Professor McGonagall gasped.

“This—this is *true*? Lily and James...I can’t believe it...I didn’t want to believe it...oh, Albus...”

Dumbledore patted her shoulder. “I know... I know...” he said heavily.

Professor McGonagall spoke in a low voice, her voice shook. “This isn’t the end of this. They say, he had meant to kill the Potter’s son Harry, but he couldn’t. He couldn’t kill this child.

No one knows why, and no one knows how he didn't die. However they say, at the same time Voldemort tried to kill Harry, his spell didn't work—so he is gone.

Dumbledore frowned and nodded.

“This—this is true?” Professor McGonagall said in a trembling voice. “All that he ruined...all the people he killed...but he can't kill a child? This is just astonishing..we hoped for something to stop him...but in heaven, Harry after all how did he narrowly escape disaster?”

“We can only guess,” Dumbledore said, “We may not ever know.”

Professor McGonagall took out a lace handkerchief to dab lightly under her eyes.

Dumbledore took in a deep breath, from inside a pocket he brought out a gold watch, seriously looking at the front. This particular watch was very strange, it had twelve hands, but didn't have numbers, it also had a few little stars following along the outside of the watch. Dumbledore appeared to understand it, he put the watch in his pocket, saying: “Hagrid²⁵ sure is late. Conveniently asked, I think, it was probably him that told you I would be here?”

“Yes,” Professor McGonagall said, “but to go to this place of all places, *why* would you want to come here? I think, probably you won't tell me?”

“I am here to receive Harry, and bring him to his aunt and uncle's house. Now they are his only family.”

“You don't mean them—you can't mean the people that live in there?” she jumped up, pointing toward number four. “Dumbledore—you can't do this. I've watched them all day. You couldn't find more different people from us. They had a boy—I saw him on the street kicking his mother, yelling to eat candy. You want Harry Potter to live there?!”

²⁵ The translation of Hagrid's name phonetically sounds like “Hai ge.”

Page 8

“This is the best place for him.” Dumbledore said firmly, “Wait for him to grow up a little, his aunt and uncle will tell him. I gave them a written letter.”

“A letter?” Professor McGonagall repeated weakly, and sat back down on the wall. “Dumbledore, do you really believe that in a letter you can explain everything clearly? These people will never understand him! He will become famous—a legend—if in the future one day will be Harry Potter Day, I wouldn’t think it the least bit strange—what’s more there will be Harry Potter books—every child in our world will know his name!”

“Exactly,”²⁶ Dumbledore said, he peered over his half moon glasses solemnly, “that is enough to make any child excited and unable to act rationally.”²⁷ Before he can walk, or talk, he will be famous! Even why he won’t remember what made him famous! Let him grow up removed from the past, when he can accept it, then let him know, isn’t this better?”

Professor McGonagall opened her mouth, then changed her mind. She swallowed saliva, then said: “Yes—yes, you’re always right. But how is the child getting here, Dumbledore?” She suddenly looked over his cloak, as if he had Harry inside his cloak.

“Hagrid will bring Harry here.”

“How important a matter to entrust Hagrid to do—do you think—it *wise*?”

“I could entrust my whole life to Hagrid.” Dumbledore said.

“I did not say his intentions are not good,” Professor McGonagall said, “but you can not see that he is very careless. He always is—what is that noise?”

²⁶ A more literal translation would be: “You say right, see.”

²⁷ This phrase, “to make any child excited and unable to act rationally,” is a Chinese figure of speech.

The shadow of a rumbling sound cut through the surrounding quiet. They turned to search the street for a light, the sound grew louder and louder, finally turning into an animal's howl. They looked up to the sky, and saw a very large bike descending, stopping in front of where they were standing in the street.

If it was said that the bike was very large, then the man riding it would be bigger. That man compared to a normal man was twice as tall, five times as wide, not only was he exceptionally tall and big, but he was also rough—a knotted mess of overgrown long black hair and beard that nearly covered the greater part of his face, his hands were as big as trashcan lids, his feet were like a pair of small dolphins.²⁸ In his thick, muscular arms he held a bundle of blankets.

“Hagrid,” Dumbledore said, sounding relieved, “You have finally come. This motorbike where did you get it from?”

“Borrowed it, Professor Dumbledore,” the giant climbed off the bike, saying, “Young Sirius²⁹ Black lent it to me. I have brought him, sir.”

“There wasn't any trouble coming?”

“No, sir—the house was almost completely destroyed. We hurried before the muggles from all over arrived. Then when we flew over Bristol, he fell asleep...”

Page 9

Dumbledore and Professor McGonagall looked down into the blankets. They saw in the blankets a baby boy, sleeping deeply. On the child's head were jet black locks and under that there was a cut, the cut's shape looked strange, like a lightning bolt.³⁰

²⁸ Broken into two sentences in the original text, the Chinese puts all of Hagrid's physical descriptions into one long sentence.

²⁹ The same three characters (天狼星) used stand for the double star constellation also named Sirius.

“This place is—” Professor McGonagall said in a low voice.

“Yes,” Dumbledore said, “He will have that scar his whole life.”

“You can’t do something? Dumbledore?”

“If I had the means, I wouldn’t do it. Scars can be useful in the future. My left knee has a scar, it’s a complete map of London. Good—give him to me, Hagrid—we had better complete this business.”

Dumbledore held Harry, and walked to the Dursley’s house.

“Could I—Could I say goodbye to him quickly? Sir?” Hagrid asked.

His matted hair of his big head was over Harry’s face, gave him a scratchy, itchy kiss. Then Hagrid suddenly howled like an animal.

“Shh!” Professor McGonagall hissed at him, “you’re going to wake the muggles!”

“Right—right—sorry,” Hagrid said sobbing, he fished out a stained huge handkerchief, burying his face in the handkerchief, “I—I can’t believe it--Lily³¹ and James dead—pitiful little Harry has to live with muggles—”

“Yes, yes, it’s very sad, but hold yourself together, now we should go.” Professor McGonagall said in a small voice, lightly patting Hagrid’s arm. This time Dumbledore walked through the garden wall to the door. He lightly placed Harry on the entrance on the steps, took out the letter, put it in Harry’s bundle of blankets, then he returned to the other two people. They all stood there looking at the little blanket for a minute. Hagrid’s shoulders trembled, Professor McGonagall furiously blinked, Dumbledore’s sparkling eyes also had faded.

³⁰ A more literal translation is “dodging direction electric.”

³¹ The character used for Lily’s name is “li” and is repeated twice so that it reads, “li li.” Lily’s name was also phonetically translated using the character that means “jasmine.”

“Ok,” Dumbledore said finally, “we’re done here. We don’t have anymore necessary business here. We should go join in the celebration.”

“Yes,” Hagrid murmured, “I should go give the bike back to Sirius. Goodnight, Professor McGonagall—goodnight, Professor Dumbledore.”

Hagrid used his sleeve to stop his leaking eyes, got on the motor bike, stepped on the motor, with a roar, soared into the sky, disappearing into the black.

“I hope to see you soon, Professor McGonagall.” Dumbledore said, nodding to Professor McGonagall. She blew her nose in reply.

Dumbledore turned around and went back up the street. At the end of the street he took out the silver, light extinguishing device, clicked it once, then twelve lights went back to their street lamps, Privet Drive at once glowed orange, he saw a patched cat quietly slip away at the other end of the street. He could just see the little bundle of blankets on number 4.

Page 10

“I wish you good luck, Harry.” He mumbled, turning on his heel, and then with only a sound from his cape, he was gone without a trace.

A light breeze swept through Privet Drive on both sides through the neat hedges, the street was directly under a pitch-black sky silently, untainted by even a speck of dust,³² it also didn’t know what had occurred there when they heard a startled scream. Harry Potter in his bundle of blankets turned a bit, but he didn’t wake up. His little hand held the letter on one side. He continued sleeping deeply, not knowing that he was special, not knowing his name was famous, not knowing that at nine o’clock, Mrs. Dursley would open the front door to put out the milk bottles, waking him with her shriek; he also didn’t know, that in the coming weeks, his

³² This phrase, “untainted by even a speck of dust,” is also another Chinese idiom.

older cousin Dudley would poke him, and pinch him... he also could not know, that at this very moment, everyone gathered in secret, lifting their glasses saying: “Blessings to the child who escaped calamity—Harry Potter!”

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