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**SVEUČILIŠTE U RIJECI
FILOZOFSKI FAKULTET
ODSJEK ZA ANGLISTIKU**

KATEDRA ZA TRANSLATOLOGIJU
ANGLISTIKA I OPĆI MODUL

Nina Medanić

**PRIJEVOD TEKSTA S AFROAMERIČKOG
DIJALEKTA NA HRVATSKI JEZIK**

Diplomski rad

Mentorica: dr. sc. Tatjana Vukelić

2023

UNIVERSITY OF RIJEKA
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES DEPARTMENT OF
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

DIVISION OF TRANSLATOLOGY
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND GENERAL MODULE

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**TRANSLATION FROM AFRICAN AMERICAN
VERNACULAR LANGUAGE TO CROATIAN
LANGUAGE**

Master thesis

Mentor: Tatjana Vukelić, PhD

2023

__Nina Medanić_____

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Abstract

This master thesis deals with translating a chapter from the book *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zola Neale Hurston. Following the introduction, there is the source text in the English language from Chapter 5 and its accompanied translated target text in the Croatian language. The main point this thesis revolves around is African American Vernacular English and how it differs from standard English and Croatian. The process of translation and problems that arose when translating are discussed in the commentary and analysis part of the thesis. Finally, this master thesis ends with a brief conclusion and overview of the focal points. The emphasis is put on introducing AAE and AAVE and comparing their grammar and rules to standard English ones. In addition, there is a third direction that we need to account for, translating AAVE into Croatian.

Key words: African American English, African American Vernacular English, standard English, Ebonics, translation, Croatian

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1. INTRODUCTION

This master thesis will focus on translating a chapter from the book *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zola Neale Hurston, which is considered a classic of the Harlem Renaissance. The novel is chosen because of its extensive use of African American English. African American English or AAE is also often called Ebonics, Jive, or Black English. While some of its features are unique and seen only in this variety, the language's structure shows commonalities with other varieties mostly spoken in the US and the Caribbean.

However, in the 20th century, the main question surrounding it was whether it was actually an English dialect or a descendant of 17th-century West African Pidgin English. In addition, it was also studied whether AAE went through a decreolization process, a term for when a language starts to lose its creole features.

So, even though it is the most studied variety of the English language, it still doesn't have a grammar system that can represent its basic features. Because of that, most studies of AAE give us examples of the language's shallow grammar.

„Shallow grammar refers to any one or the set of written grammatical descriptions as well as the set of approaches to grammatical study shackled by received theoretical questions, methodologies, and inventory of language grammatical features, all of which contribute to the overlooking of important grammatical features in the languages under study.“ (Spears, K. Arthur, 2009.)

Before diving into the text and its analysis, we need to differentiate between two varieties of AAE, African American Vernacular English (AAVE) and African American Standard English (AASE).

There are six important differences between these two varieties that we need to discuss:

1. Double negatives
2. Remote present perfect tense
3. Absence of copula
4. Habitual aspect marker
5. It for the dummy expletive there
6. Preterite had

Double negatives are pretty self-explanatory, but it means that all negation needs to match. Usually, it is frowned upon to use double negatives in standard English, but in AAVE it is a well-used practice, e.g. Ain't nobody there.

The remote present perfect tense is a grammatical distinction that standard English lacks completely. The tense can be seen in phrases such as She been married.; She been living there. It's important to note that here, been is emphasized and denotes an action that has been happening for some time.

Furthermore, in AAVE there is the absence of a copula, which means that in some contexts, the is/are is left out, e.g. He writing a book. Then, there is the habitual aspect marker, also known as habitual be or invariant be: e.g. He be working late.; You always be stealing my lunch money. Moreover, in some cases, AAVE speakers may replace there with it, e.g. It's a fire. Finally, AAVE uses preterite had in narrative, meaning that had will be added in sentences that do not need it, e.g. He had went to work and he had called a client.

Thus, African American Vernacular English is not as ungrammatical as it may seem. There are clear grammar rules that need to be followed in order to construct sentences. *Their Eyes Were Watching God* has an abundance of AAVE examples, making it a perfect choice for translating it into Croatian and conducting an analysis. Translating AAVE is still a tricky challenge for many translators, not just because it can be hard to transfer it to standard English, but also because experts can't decide on a definite tactic when translating.

In addition, linguists still can't come to a consensus on what to call AAVE. If you call it a dialect, you may be in favor of the Anglicist Hypothesis which states that enslaved African people on plantations acquired it through their British owners. This view was mostly held until the 1960s.

On the other hand, if you view AAVE as a language, you are in favor of the Creolist Hypothesis view, which says that AAVE originated from Creole which was spoken before the Civil War. Creole itself evolved from pidgin, a language that is used between two groups of people who don't have a language they both understand. It is extremely simple but acts as a bridge between two communities.

Moreover, words and phrases that we can hear in African American Vernacular English can be derived by many different means. So, sometimes a phrase will simply be shortened, or an

object will be referred to based on one of its characteristics, or a synonym will be used instead of another slang word.

In any case, the dialect or language is still widely misunderstood and viewed as less than standard English. While its name came from good intentions, we can't deny that now it acts as a slur and a way to denote someone's bad English and grammar.

This thesis aims to explain the rules and workings of AAE and AAVE, which will be presented using examples from *Their Eyes Were Watching God* and explained in the commentary and analysis part.

2. SOURCE TEXT

On the train the next day, Joe didn't make many speeches with rhymes to her, but he bought her the best things the butcher had, like apples and a glass lantern full of candies. Mostly he talked about plans for the town when he got there. They were bound to need somebody like him. Janie took a lot of looks at him and she was proud of what she saw. Kind of portly like rich white folks. Strange trains, and people and places didn't scare him neither. Where they got off the train at Maitland he found a buggy to carry them over to the colored town right away.

It was early in the afternoon when they got there, so Joe said they must walk over the place and look around. They locked arms and strolled from end to end of the town. Joe noted the scant dozen of shame-faced houses scattered in the sand and palmetto roots and said,

"God, they call this a town? Why, 'tain't nothing but a raw place in de woods."

"It is a whole heap littler than Ah thought." Janie admitted her disappointment.

"Just like Ah thought," Joe said. "A whole heap uh talk and nobody doin' nothin'. I god, where's de Mayor?" he asked somebody. "Ah want tuh speak wid de Mayor."

Two men who were sitting on their shoulderblades under a huge live oak tree almost sat upright at the tone of his voice. They stared at Joe's face, his clothes and his wife.

"Where y'all come from in sich uh big haste?" Lee Coker asked.

"Middle Georgy," Starks answered briskly. "Joe Starks is mah name, from in and through Georgy."

"You and yo' daughter goin' tuh join wid us in fellowship?" the other reclining figure asked.

"Mighty glad tuh have yuh. Hicks is the name. Guv'nor Amos Hicks from Buford, South Carolina. Free, single, disengaged." "I god, Ah ain't nowhere near old enough to have no grown daughter. This here is mah wife."

Hicks sank back and lost interest at once.

"Where is de Mayor?" Starks persisted. "Ah wants tuh talk wid him."

"Youse uh mite too previous for dat," Coker told him. "Us ain't got none yit."

"Ain't got no Mayor! Well, who tells y'all what to do?"

“Nobody. Everybody’s grown. And then agin, Ah reckon us just ain’t thought about it. Ah know Ah ain’t.”

“Ah did think about it one day,” Hicks said dreamily, “but then Ah forgot it and ain’t thought about it since then.”

“No wonder things ain’t no better,” Joe commented. “Ah’m buyin’ in here, and buyin’ in big.

Soon’s we find some place to sleep tonight us menfolks got to call people together and form a committee. Then we can get things movin’ round here.” “Ah kin point yuh where yuh kin sleep,” Hicks offered. “Man got his house done built and his wife ain’t come yet.”

Starks and Janie moved on off in the direction indicated with Hicks and Coker boring into their backs with looks.

“Dat man talks like a section foreman,” Coker commented. “He’s mighty compellent.”

“Shucks!” said Hicks. “Mah britches is just as long as his. But dat wife uh hisn! Ah’m uh son of uh Combunction if Ah don’t go tuh Georgy and git me one just like her.”

“Whut wid?”

“Wid mah talk, man.”

“It takes money tuh feed pretty women. Dey gits uh lavish uh talk.”

“Not lak mine. Dey loves to hear me talk because dey can’t understand it. Mah co-talkin’ is too deep. Too much co to it.”

“Umph!”

“You don’t believe me, do yuh? You don’t know de women Ah kin git to mah command.”

“Umph!”

“You ain’t never seen me when Ah’m out pleasurin’ and givin’ pleasure.”

“Umph!”

“It’s uh good thing he married her befo’ she seen me. Ah kin be some trouble when Ah take uh notion.”

“Umph!”

“Ah’m uh bitch’s baby round lady people.”

“Ah’s much ruther see all dat than to hear ’bout it. Come on less go see whut he gointuh do ’bout dis town.”

They got up and sauntered over to where Starks was living for the present. Already the town had found the strangers. Joe was on the porch talking to a small group of men. Janie could be seen through the bedroom window getting settled. Joe had rented the house for a month. The men were all around him, and he was talking to them by asking questions.

“Whut is de real name of de place?”

“Some say West Maitland and some say Eatonville. Dat’s ’cause Cap’n Eaton give us some land along wid Mr. Laurence. But Cap’n Eaton give de first piece.” “How much did they give?”

“Oh ’bout fifty acres.”

“How much is y’all got now?”

“Oh ’bout de same.”

“Dat ain’t near enough. Who owns de land joining on to whut yuh got?”

“Cap’n Eaton.”

“Where is dis Cap’n Eaton?”

“Over dere in Maitland, ’ceptin’ when he go visitin’ or somethin’.”

“Lemme speak to mah wife a minute and Ah’m goin’ see de man. You cannot have no town without some land to build it on. Y’all ain’t got enough here to cuss a cat on without gittin’ yo’ mouf full of hair.”

“He ain’t got no mo’ land tuh give away. Yuh needs plenty money if yuh wants any mo’.”

“Ah specks to pay him.”

The idea was funny to them and they wanted to laugh. They tried hard to hold it in, but enough incredulous laughter burst out of their eyes and leaked from the corners of their mouths to

inform anyone of their thoughts. So Joe walked off abruptly. Most of them went along to show him the way and to be there when his bluff was called.

Hicks didn't go far. He turned back to the house as soon as he felt he wouldn't be missed from the crowd and mounted the porch. "Evenin', Miz Starks."

"Good evenin'."

"You reckon you goin tuh like round here?"

"Ah reckon so."

"Anything Ah kin do tuh help out, why you kin call on me."

"Much obliged."

There was a long dead pause. Janie was not jumping at her chance like she ought to.

Look like she didn't hardly know he was there. She needed waking up.

"Folks must be mighty close-mouthed where you come from."

"Dat's right. But it must be different at yo' home."

He was a long time thinking but finally he saw and stumbled down the steps with a surly "Bye."

"Good bye."

That night Coker asked him about it.

"Ah saw yuh when yuh ducked back tuh Starks' house. Well, how didju make out?"

"Who, me? Ah ain't been near de place, man. Ah been down tuh de lake tryin' tuh ketch me uh fish."

"Umph!"

"Dat 'oman ain't so awfully pretty no how when yuh take de second look at her. Ah had to sorta pass by de house on de way back and seen her good. 'Tain't nothin' to her 'ceptin' dat long hair."

"Umph!"

“And anyhow, Ah done took uhlikin’ tuh de man. Ah wouldn’t harm him at all. She ain’t half ez pretty ez uh gal Ah run off and left up in South Cal’lina.” “Hicks, Ah’d git mad and say you wuz lyin’ if Ah didn’t know yuh so good. You just talkin’ to consolate yo’self by word of mouth.

You got uh willin’ mind, but youse too light behind. A whole heap uh men seen de same thing you seen but they got better sense than you. You oughta know you can’t take no ’oman lak dat from no man lak him. A man dat ups and buys two hundred acres uh land at one whack and pays cash for it.”

“Naw! He didn’t buy it sho nuff?”

“He sho did. Come off wid de papers in his pocket. He done called a meetin’ on his porch tomorrow. Ain’t never seen no sich uh colored man befo’ in all mah bawndays. He’s gointuh put up uh store and git uh post office from de Goven’ment.”

That irritated Hicks and he didn’t know why. He was the average mortal. It troubled him to get used to the world one way and then suddenly have it turn different. He wasn’t ready to think of colored people in post offices yet. He laughed boisterously.

“Y’all let dat stray darky tell y’all any ole lie! Uh colored man sittin’ up in uh post office!” He made an obscene sound.

“He’s liable tuh do it too, Hicks. Ah hope so anyhow. Us colored folks is too envious of one ’nother. Dat’s how come us don’t git no further than us do. Us talks about de white man keepin’ us down! Shucks! He don’t have tuh. Us keeps our own selves down.”

“Now who said Ah didn’t want de man tuh git us uh post office? He kin be de king uh Jerusalem fuh all Ah keer. Still and all, ’tain’t no use in telling lies just ’cause uh heap uh folks don’t know no better. Yo’ common sense oughta tell yuh de white folks ain’t goin’ tuh ’low him tuh run no post office.”

“Dat we don’t know, Hicks. He say he kin and Ah b’lieve he know whut he’s talkin’ ’bout.

Ah reckon if colored folks got they own town they kin have post offices and whatsoever they please, regardless. And then agin, Ah don’t speck de white folks way off yonder give uh damn. Less us wait and see.”

“Oh, Ah’m waitin’ all right. Specks tuh keep on waitin’ till hell freeze over.”

“Aw, git reconciled! Dat woman don’t want you. You got tuh learn dat all de women in de world ain’t been brought up on no teppentine still, and no saw-mill camp. There’s some women dat jus’ ain’t for you tuh broach. You can’t git her wid no fish sandwich.”

They argued a bit more then went on to the house where Joe was and found him in his shirt-sleeves, standing with his legs wide apart, asking questions and smoking a cigar.

“Where’s de closest saw-mill?” He was asking Tony Taylor.

“’Bout seven miles goin’ t’wards Apopka,” Tony told him. “Thinkin’ ’bout buildin’ right away?”

“I god, yeah. But not de house Ah specks tuh live in. Dat kin wait till Ah make up mah mind where Ah wants it located. Ah figgers we all needs uh store in uh big hurry.”

“Uh store?” Tony shouted in surprise.

“Yeah, uh store right heah in town wid everything in it you needs. ’Tain’t uh bit uh use in everybody proagin’ way over tuh Maitland tuh buy uh little meal and flour when they could git it right heah.”

“Dat would be kinda nice, Brother Starks, since you mention it.”

“I god, course it would! And then agin uh store is good in other ways. Ah got tuh have a place tuh be at when folks comes tuh buy land. And furthermo’ everything is got tuh have uh center and uh heart tuh it, and uh town ain’t no different from nowhere else. It would be natural fuh de store tuh be meetin’ place fuh de town.”

“Dat sho is de truth, now.”

“Oh, we’ll have dis town all fixed up tereckly. Don’t miss bein’ at de meetin’ tuhorrow.”

Just about time for the committee meeting called to meet on his porch next day, the first wagon load of lumber drove up and Jody went to show them where to put it. Told Janie to hold the committee there until he got back, he didn’t want to miss them, but he meant to count every foot of that lumber before it touched the ground. He could have saved his breath and Janie could have kept right on with what she was doing. In the first place everybody was late in coming; then the next thing as soon as they heard where Jody was, they kept right on up there where the

new lumber was rattling off the wagon and being piled under the big live oak tree. So that's where the meeting was held with Tony Taylor acting as chairman and Jody doing all the talking. A day was named for roads and they all agreed to bring axes and things like that and chop out two roads running each way. That applied to everybody except Tony and Coker. They could carpenter, so Jody hired them to go to work on his store bright and soon the next morning. Jody himself would be busy driving around from town to town telling people about Eatonville and drumming up citizens to move there.

Janie was astonished to see the money Jody had spent for the land come back to him so fast. Ten new families bought lots and moved to town in six weeks. It all looked too big and rushing for her to keep track of. Before the store had a complete roof, Jody had canned goods piled on the floor and was selling so much he didn't have time to go off on his talking tours.

She had her first taste of presiding over it the day it was complete and finished. Jody told her to dress up and stand in the store all that evening. Everybody was coming sort of fixed up, and he didn't mean for nobody else's wife to rank with her. She must look on herself as the bell-cow, the other women were the gang. So she put on one of her bought dresses and went up the new-cut road all dressed in wine-colored red. Her silken ruffles rustled and muttered about her. The other women had on percale and calico with here and there a headrag among the older ones.

Nobody was buying anything that night. They didn't come there for that. They had come to make a welcome. So Joe knocked in the head of a barrel of soda crackers and cut some cheese.

"Everybody come right forward and make merry. I god, it's mah treat." Jody gave one of his big heh heh laughs and stood back. Janie dipped up the lemonade like he told her. A big tin cup full for everybody. Tony Taylor felt so good when it was all gone that he felt to make a speech.

"Ladies and gent'men, we'se come tuhgether and gethered heah tuh welcome tuh our midst one who has seen fit tuh cast in his lot amongst us. He didn't just come hisself neither.

He have seen fit tuh bring his, er, er, de light uh his home, dat is his wife amongst us also.

She couldn't look no mo' better and no nobler if she wuz de queen uh England. It's uh pledger fuh her tuh be heah amongst us. Brother Starks, we welcomes you and all dat you have seen fit tuh bring amongst us—yo' belov-ed wife, yo' store, yo' land—"

A big-mouthed burst of laughter cut him short.

“Dat’ll do, Tony,” Lige Moss yelled out. “Mist’ Starks is uh smart man, we’s all willin’ tuh acknowledge tuh dat, but de day he comes waggin’ down de road wid two hund’ed acres uf land over his shoulder, Ah wants tuh be dere tuh see it.”

Another big blow-out of a laugh. Tony was a little peeved at having the one speech of his lifetime ruined like that.

“All y’all know whut wuz meant. Ah don’t see how come—”

“ ’Cause you jump up tuh make speeches and don’t know how,” Lige said.

“Ah wuz speakin’ jus’ all right befo’ you stuck yo’ bill in.”

“Naw, you wuzn’t, Tony. Youse way outa jurisdiction. You can’t welcome uh man and his wife ’thout you make comparison about Isaac and Rebecca at de well, else it don’t show de love between ’em if you don’t.”

Everybody agreed that that was right. It was sort of pitiful for Tony not to know he couldn’t make a speech without saying that. Some tittered at his ignorance. So Tony said testily, “If all them dat’s goin-tuh cut de monkey is done cut it and through wid, we’ll thank Brother Starks fuh a respond.”

So Joe Starks and his cigar took the center of the floor.

“Ah thanks you all for yo’ kind welcome and for extendin’ tuh me de right hand uh fellowship. Ah kin see dat dis town is full uh union and love. Ah means tuh put mah hands tuh de plow heah, and strain every nerve tuh make dis our town de metropolis uh de state. So maybe Ah better tell yuh in case you don’t know dat if we expect tuh move on, us got tuh incorporate lak every other town. Us got tuh incorporate, and us got tuh have uh mayor, if things is tuh be done and done right. Ah welcome you all on behalf uh me and mah wife tuh dis store and tuh de other things tuh come. Amen.”

Tony led the loud hand-clapping and was out in the center of the floor when it stopped.

“Brothers and sisters, since us can’t never expect tuh better our choice, Ah move dat we make Brother Starks our Mayor until we kin see further.” “Second dat motion!!!” It was everybody talking at once, so it was no need of putting it to a vote.

“And now we’ll listen tuh uh few words uh encouragement from Mrs. Mayor Starks.”

The burst of applause was cut short by Joe taking the floor himself.

“Thank yuh fuh yo’ compliments, but mah wife don’t know nothin’ ’bout no speech-makin’.

Ah never married her for nothin’ lak dat. She’s uh woman and her place is in de home.”

Janie made her face laugh after a short pause, but it wasn’t too easy. She had never thought of making a speech, and didn’t know if she cared to make one at all. It must have been the way Joe spoke out without giving her a chance to say anything one way or another that took the bloom off of things. But anyway, she went down the road behind him that night feeling cold. He strode along invested with his new dignity, thought and planned out loud, un-conscious of her thoughts.

“De mayor of uh town lak dis can’t lay round home too much. De place needs buildin’ up.

Janie, Ah’ll git hold uh somebody tuh help out in de store and you kin look after things whilst Ah drum up things otherwise.”

“Oh Jody, Ah can’t do nothin’ wid no store lessen youse there. Ah could maybe come in and help you when things git rushed, but—”

“I god, Ah don’t see how come yuh can’t. ’Tain’t nothin’ atall tuh hinder yuh if yuh got uh thimble full uh sense. You got tuh. Ah got too much else on mah hands as Mayor. Dis town needs some light right now.”

“Unh hunh, it is uh little dark right long heah.”

“ ’Course it is. ’Tain’t no use in scufflin’ over all dese stumps and roots in de dark. Ah’ll call uh meetin’ bout de dark and de roots right away. Ah’ll sit on dis case first thing.”

The very next day with money out of his own pocket he sent off to Sears, Roebuck and Company for the street lamp and told the town to meet the following Thursday night to vote on it. Nobody had ever thought of street lamps and some of them said it was a useless notion.

They went so far as to vote against it, but the majority ruled.

But the whole town got vain over it after it came. That was because the Mayor didn’t just take it out of the crate and stick it up on a post. He unwrapped it and had it wiped off carefully and put it up on a showcase for a week for everybody to see. Then he set a time for the lighting and sent word all around Orange County for one and all to come to the lamplighting. He sent men

out to the swamp to cut the finest and the straightest cypress post they could find, and kept on sending them back to hunt another one until they found one that pleased him. He had talked to the people already about the hospitality of the occasion.

“Y’all know we can’t invite people to our town just dry long so. I god, naw. We got tuh feed ’em something, and ’tain’t nothin’ people laks better’n barbecue. Ah’ll give one whole hawg mah ownself. Seem lak all de rest uh y’all put tuhgether oughta be able tuh scrape up two mo’. Tell yo’ womenfolks tuh do ’round ’bout some pies and cakes and sweet p’tater pone.”

That’s the way it went, too. The women got together the sweets and the men looked after the meats. The day before the lighting, they dug a big hole in back of the store and filled it full of oak wood and burned it down to a glowing bed of coals. It took them the whole night to barbecue the three hogs. Hambo and Pearson had full charge while the others helped out with turning the meat now and then while Hambo swabbed it all over with the sauce. In between times they told stories, laughed and told more stories and sung songs. They cut all sorts of capers and whiffed the meat as it slowly came to perfection with the seasoning penetrating to the bone. The younger boys had to rig up the saw-horses with boards for the women to use as tables. Then it was after sun-up and everybody not needed went home to rest up for the feast.

By five o’clock the town was full of every kind of a vehicle and swarming with people. They wanted to see that lamp lit at dusk. Near the time, Joe assembled everybody in the street before the store and made a speech.

“Folkses, de sun is goin’ down. De Sun-maker brings it up in de mornin’, and de Sun-maker sends it tuh bed at night. Us poor weak humans can’t do nothin’ tuh hurry it up nor to slow it down. All we can do, if we want any light after de settin’ or befo’ de risin’, is tuh make some light ourselves. So dat’s how come lamps was made. Dis evenin’ we’se all assembled heah tuh light uh lamp. Dis occasion is something for us all tuh remember tuh our dyin’ day.

De first street lamp in uh colored town. Lift yo’ eyes and gaze on it. And when Ah touch de match tuh dat lamp-wick let de light penetrate inside of yuh, and let it shine, let it shine, let it shine. Brother Davis, lead us in a word uh prayer. Ask uh blessin’ on dis town in uh most particular manner.”

While Davis chanted a traditional prayer-poem with his own variations, Joe mounted the box that had been placed for the purpose and opened the brazen door of the lamp. As the word Amen was said, he touched the lighted match to the wick, and Mrs. Bogle's alto burst out in:

We'll walk in de light, de beautiful light

Come where the dew drops of mercy shine bright

Shine all around us by day and by night

Jesus, the light of the world.

They, all of them, all of the people took it up and sung it over and over until it was wrung dry, and no further innovations of tone and tempo were conceivable. Then they hushed and ate barbecue.

When it was all over that night in bed Jody asked Janie, "Well, honey, how yuh lak bein'

Mrs. Mayor?"

"It's all right Ah reckon, but don't yuh think it keeps us in uh kinda strain?"

"Strain? You mean de cookin' and waitin' on folks?"

"Naw, Jody, it jus' looks lak it keeps us in some way we ain't natural wid one 'nother.

You'se always off talkin' and fixin' things, and Ah feels lak Ah'm jus' markin' time. Hope it soon gits over."

"Over, Janie? I god, Ah ain't even started good. Ah told you in de very first beginnin' dat Ah aimed tuh be uh big voice. You oughta be glad, 'cause dat makes uh big woman outa you."

A feeling of coldness and fear took hold of her. She felt far away from things and lonely.

Janie soon began to feel the impact of awe and envy against her sensibilities. The wife of the Mayor was not just another woman as she had supposed. She slept with authority and so she was part of it in the town mind. She couldn't get but so close to most of them in spirit. It was especially noticeable after Joe had forced through a town ditch to drain the street in front of the store. They had murmured hotly about slavery being over, but every man filled his as-signment.

There was something about Joe Starks that cowed the town. It was not because of physical fear. He was no fist fighter. His bulk was not even imposing as men go. Neither was it because he was more literate than the rest. Something else made men give way before him. He had a bow-down command in his face, and every step he took made the thing more tangible.

Take for instance that new house of his. It had two stories with porches, with bannisters and such things. The rest of the town looked like servants' quarters surrounding the "big house." And different from everybody else in the town he put off moving in until it had been painted, in and out. And look at the way he painted it—a gloaty, sparkly white. The kind of promenading white that the houses of Bishop Whipple, W. B. Jackson and the Vanderpool's wore. It made the village feel funny talking to him—just like he was anybody else. Then there was the matter of the spittoons.

No sooner was he all set as the Mayor—post master—landlord—storekeeper, than he bought a desk like Mr. Hill or Mr. Galloway over in Maitland with one of those swing-around chairs to it. What with him biting down on cigars and saving his breath on talk and swinging round in that chair, it weakened people. And then he spit in that gold-looking vase that anybody else would have been glad to put on their front-room table. Said it was a spittoon just like his used-to-be bossman used to have in his bank up there in Atlanta. Didn't have to get up and go to the door every time he had to spit. Didn't spit on his floor neither. Had that golded-up spitting pot right handy. But he went further than that.

He bought a little lady-size spitting pot for Janie to spit in. Had it right in the parlor with little sprigs of flowers painted all around the sides. It took people by surprise because most of the women dipped snuff and of course had a spit-cup in the house. But how could they know up-to-date folks was spitting in flowery little things like that? It sort of made the rest of them feel that they had been taken advantage of. Like things had been kept from them. Maybe more things in the world besides spittoons had been hid from them, when they wasn't told no better than to sit in tomato cans. It was bad enough for white people, but when one of our own color could be so different it put you on a wonder. It was like seeing your sister turn into a 'gator. A familiar strangeness. You keep seeing your sister in the 'gator and the 'gator in your sister, and you'd rather not. There was no doubt that the town respected him and even admired him in a way. But any man who walks in the way of power and property is bound to meet hate. So when speakers stood up when the occasion demanded and said "Our beloved Mayor," it was one of those statements that everybody says but nobody actually believes like "God is everywhere."

It was just a handle to wind up the tongue with. As time went on and the benefits he had conferred upon the town receded in time they sat on his store porch while he was busy inside and discussed him. Like one day after he caught Henry Pitts with a wagon load of his ribbon cane and took the cane away from Pitts and made him leave town. Some of them thought Starks ought not to have done that. He had so much cane and everything else.

But they didn't say that while Joe Starks was on the porch. When the mail came from Maitland and he went inside to sort it out everybody had their say. Sim Jones started off as soon as he was sure that Starks couldn't hear him.

"It's uh sin and uh shame runnin' dat po' man way from here lak dat. Colored folks oughtn't tuh be so hard on one 'nother."

"Ah don't see it dat way atall," Sam Watson said shortly. "Let colored folks learn to work for what dey git lak everybody else. Nobody ain't stopped Pitts from plantin' de cane he wanted tuh. Starks give him uh job, what mo' do he want?"

"Ah know dat too," Jones said, "but, Sam, Joe Starks is too exact wid folks. All he got he done made it offa de rest of us. He didn't have all dat when he come here."

"Yeah, but none uh all dis you see and you'se settin' on wasn't here neither, when he come. Give de devil his due."

"But now, Sam, you know dat all he do is big-belly round and tell other folks what tuh do.

He loves obedience out of everybody under de sound of his voice."

"You kin feel a switch in his hand when he's talkin' to yuh," Oscar Scott complained. "Dat chastisin' feelin' he totes sorter gives yuh de protolapsis uh de cutinary linin'."

"He's uh whirlwind among breezes," Jeff Bruce threw in.

"Speakin' of winds, he's de wind and we'se de grass. We bend which ever way he blows,"

Sam Watson agreed, "but at dat us needs him. De town wouldn't be nothin' if it wasn't for him. He can't help bein' sorta bossy. Some folks needs thrones, and ruling-chairs and crowns tuh make they influence felt. He don't. He's got uh throne in de seat of his pants."

"Whut Ah don't lak 'bout de man is, he talks tuh unlettered folks wid books in his jaws,"

Hicks complained. "Showin' off his learnin'. To look at me you wouldn't think it, but Ah got uh brother pastorin' up round Ocala dat got good learnin'. If he wuz here, Joe Starks wouldn't make no fool outa him lak he do de rest uh y'all."

"Ah often wonder how dat lil wife uh hisn makes out wid him, 'cause he's uh man dat changes everything, but nothin' don't change him." "You know many's de time Ah done thought about dat mahself. He gits on her ever now and then when she make little mistakes round de store." "Whut make her keep her head tied up lak some ole 'oman round de store? Nobody couldn't git me tuh tie no rag on mah head if Ah had hair lak dat." "Maybe he make her do it. Maybe he skeered some de rest of us mens might touch it round dat store. It sho is uh hidden mystery tuh me."

"She sho don't talk much. De way he rears and pitches in de store sometimes when she make uh mistake is sort of ungodly, but she don't seem to mind at all. Reckon dey understand one 'nother."

The town had a basketful of feelings good and bad about Joe's positions and possessions, but none had the temerity to challenge him. They bowed down to him rather, because he was all of these things, and then again he was all of these things because the town bowed down.

3. TARGET TEXT

Sljedeći dan u vlaku, Joe joj nije držao puno govora s rimama, ali zato joj je kupio najbolje stvari koje je mesar imao, poput jabuka i staklenke pune bombona. Uglavnom je pričao o planovima za grad kada tamo bude stigao. Zasiurno im treba netko poput njega. Janie mu je stalno bacala poglede i bila je ponosna na ono što je vidjela. Pomalo krupan poput bogatih bijelaca. Nisu ga plašili ni čudni vlakovi, ni ljudi ni mjesta. Tamo gdje su sišli s vlaka u Maitlandu, pronašao je kolica koja će ih odmah prevesti u obojeni grad.

Bilo je rano poslijepodne kada su tamo došli pa je Joe rekao da moraju prošetati do mjesta i razgledati. Uхватili su se za ruke i šetali od početka do kraja grada. Joe je primijetio oskudan tucet kuća sramotnog izgleda razbacanih u pijesku i korijenju palmi pa je rekao,

„Bože, oni ovo zovu gradom? Zašto, nije ništa doli sirovog mjesta u šumi.“

„Puno je malecnije nego što sam mislila.“ Janie je priznala da je razočarana.

„Baš k'o što sam mislio,“ rekao je Joe. „Puno priče a nitko ništa ne radi. Gdje je gradonačelnik?“, upitao je nekoga. „Oću pričat' s gradonačelnikom.“

Dvojica su muškaraca naslonjena na ogromno zimzeleno drvo hrasta zamalo sjela uspravno kad su čuli ton njegova glasa. Zagledali su se u Joeovo lice, njegovu odjeću i njegovu ženu.

„Od kud dolazite u toj velikoj žurbi?“, pitao je Lee Coker.

„Srednja Georgija“, brzo je odgovorio Starks. „Ime mi je Joe Starks, iz i oko Georgije.“

„Ti i tvoja kćerka ćete nam se pridružiti?“, upitala je druga nagnuta figura.

„Nemamo ništa protiv da nam se pridružite. Hicks mi je ime. Guverner Amos Hicks iz Buforda, Južna Karolina. Slobodan, sam, otkaćen.“

„Bože, nisam dovoljno star da imam odraslu kćer. Ovo ovdje je moja žena.“

Hicks se nagnuo natrag i odmah izgubio zanimanje.

„Gdje je gradonačelnik?“ ustrajao je Starks. „Oću pričat' s njim.“

„Malo ste uranili za to“, rekao mu je Coker. „Nemamo mi nikoga još.“

„Nemate gradonačelnika! Pa 'ko vam kaže što da radite?“

„Ni'ko. Svi su odrasli. A i pretpostavljam da mi jednostavno nismo razmišljali o tome. Znam da ja nisam.“

„Ja jesam razmišljao o tome jednom“, rekao je Hicks sanjivo, „ali onda sam zaboravio i nisam razmišljao o tome od onda.“

„Nije ni čudo da nije ništa bolje“, komentirao je Joe. „Ja ovdje kupujem i kupujem na veliko. Čim nađemo neko mjesto za spavati večeras, mi muški moramo pozvati ljude i formirat' komisiju. Onda možemo nešto pokrenut' ovdje.“ „Ja vam mogu pokazat' gdje ćete spavat'.“ ponudio je Hicks. „Čovjek je završio svoju kuću, a žena mu još nije došla.“

Starks i Janie krenuli su u smjeru koji im je pokazao dok su Hicks i Coker piljili u njihova leđa.

„Taj tip priča kao vođa rudara“, komentirao je Coker. „Baš je silan.“

„Kvrugu!“, rekao je Hicks. „Moje su gaće jednako duge kao njegove. Al' ta njegova žena! Kurvin sin sam ako ne odem u Georgiju i nađem si jednu takvu.“

„S čim?“

„Sa šprehom, čovječe.“

„Moraš imati šuške da nahraniš lijepe žene. Ne vjeruju one riječima.“

„Mojima da. Obožavaju me slušati jer me ne kuže. Moja špreha je preduboka. Previše značenja.“

„Hmpf!“

„Ne vjeruješ mi, a? Ne znaš ti žene koje ja mogu imati pod svojom kontrolom.“

„Hmpf!“

„Nisi me nikad vidio kako primam i dajem zadovoljstvo.“

„Hmpf!“

„Dobro je da ju je oženio prije nego me vidjela. Mogu ja biti opasan kad me zanima.“

„Hmpf!“

„Ja sam kurvin sin kada su dame tu.“

„Radije bih ja to vidio nego slušao o tome. Ajmo vidjet' što će napraviti s ovim gradom.“

Ustali su se i odšetali do mjesta gdje je Starks za sada živio. Grad je već našao strance. Joe je bio na trijemu i razgovarao s malom grupom muškaraca. Janie se moglo vidjeti kroz prozor spavaće sobe kako se smješta. Joe je unajmio kuću na mjesec dana. Muškarci su bili svugdje oko njega i on je s njima pričao i ispitivao ih.

„Koje je pravo ime ovog mjesta?“

„Neki kažu zapadni Maitland, a neki kažu Eatonville. Zato što nam je kapetan Eaton uz g. Laurencea dao nešto zemlje. Al' kapetan Eaton je dao prvi komad.“

„Kol'ko su dali?“

„Oh, oko 50 hektara.“

„Kol'ko imate sada?“

„Oh, skoro isto.“

„To nije ni blizu dovoljno. 'Ko je vlasnik zemlje koja se spaja na vašu?“

„Kapetan Eaton.“

„Gdje je taj kapetan Eaton?“

„Tamo u Maitlandu, osim kad ide u posjet ili nešto.“

„Daj da pričam s ženom minutu pa ću ići posjetiti čovjeka. Ne možeš imati grad bez neke zemlje za gradnju. Vi ovdje ne možete ni opsovati mačku bez da su vam usta puna dlake.“

„Nema on više zemlje za dati. Moraš imati puno šuške ako 'oćeš još.“

„Očekujem da mu platim.“

Ideja im je bila toliko smiješna da su se htjeli smijati. Trudili su se zadržati ga, ali dovoljno je nepovjerljivog smijeha probilo iz njihovih očiju i kutova usana koji je svakoga obavijestio o njihovom mišljenju. Joe je zato naglo otišao. Većina ih je otišla za njim da mu pokažu put i da budu ondje kada mu prokuže blef.

Hicks nije došao daleko. Okrenuo se natrag prema kući čim je osjetio da neće nedostajati gomili te se popeo na trijem. „Večer, gospodična Starks.“

„Dobra večer.“

„Misliš da će ti se svidjet' ovdje?“

„Mislim da da.“

„Ako ti mogu pomoć' s nečim, samo me zovi.“

„Puno hvala.“

Nastala je duga pauza. Janie nije iskoristila svoju priliku kao što je trebala. Čini se da je jedva znala da je on tamo. Morala se probuditi.

„Ljudi mora da su jako šutljivi tamo od kud dolaziš.“

„Tako je. Mora da je drugačije kod tebe.“

Dugo je razmišljao i konačno uvidio stvari te se strmoglavio niz stube uz mrzovoljan „Bok.“

„Doviđenja.“

Tu ga je noć Coker pitao o tome.

„Vidio sam kad si se odšuljao nazad do kuće Starksova. I, jesi uspio?“

„Ko, ja? Nisam bio ni blizu, čovječe. Išao sam do jezera i pokušavao si upecat' ribu.“

„Hmpf!“

„Ta ženska nije tol'ko lijepa kad ju pogledaš drugi put. Morao sam proći do kuće na putu nazad da ju bolje vidim. Nije nešto osim te duge kose.“

„Hmpf!“

„Kako god, svidio mi se tip. Ne bih mu radio zlo. Ona nije ni blizu one ženske koju sam ostavio u Južnoj Karolini.“

„Hicks, naljutio bih se i rekao ti da lažeš da te ne znam tako dobro. Samo pričaš kako bi se utješio. Imaš dobru pamet, ali si malo spor. Gomila je muškaraca vidjela iste stvari kao i ti, ali imaju više razuma. Moraš znat' da ne možeš preotet' takvu žensku od takvog tipa. Tipa koji samo tako kupi 200 hektara zemlja od jednom i to u gotovini.“

„Ma ne! Nije stvarno kupio?“

„Stvarno je. Došao je s papirima u džepu. Odmah je sazvaio sastanak na svom trijemu za sutra. Nikad prije nisam vidio takvog obojenog tipa. Od vlade će dobit' poštanski ured i otvorit' će trgovinu.“

To je iziritiralo Hicksa, a da nije znao zašto. Bio je prosječan smrtnik. Mučilo ga je što se naviknuo na svijet na jedan način, a onda je on odjednom postao drugačiji. Još nije bio spreman razmišljati o obojenim ljudima u poštanskim uredima. Grleno se nasmijao.

„Pustili ste tom tamnom lualici da vam govori laži! Obojeni čovjek da sjedi u poštanskom uredu!“ Ispustio je nepristojan zvuk.

„Mogao bi to učinit', Hicks. Ja se barem tome nadam. Mi obojeni ljudi smo previše zavidni jedno drugome. Zato ni'ko od nas ne dospije dalje od ovoga. Pričamo o tome da nas bijeli čovjek sputava! Kvrugu! Ne mora. Mi se sami sputavamo.“

„Ko je rekao da ne želim da nam nabavi poštanski ured? Može on biti i kralj Jeruzalema što se mene tiče. Svejedno, ne mora nam govorit' laži samo zato što gomila ljudi ne zna za bolje. Zdrav ti razum mora reć' da mu bijeli ljudi neće dat' da upravlja poštanskim uredom.“

„Ne znamo to, Hicks. On kaže da može i ja vjerujem da zna o čem' priča. Mislim da ako obojeni ljudi imaju svoj grad, onda mogu imat' i poštanske urede i što god žele, bez obzira. Ali opet, ne očekujem da će nam bijeli ljudi dat' išta. Pričekajmo pa ćemo vidjet'.“

„Ja bome čekam. Čekat' ću dok se pakao ne zaledi.“

„Daj se pomiri s tim da te ta žena ne želi. Moraš naučit' da neke žene na svijetu nisu odrasle na terpentinu i u pilani. Postoje neke žene koje jednostavno nisu za tebe. Ne možeš je pridobit' s ribljim sendvičem.“

Još su malo raspravljali, a zatim otišli do kuće u kojoj je bio Joe i zatekli ga samo u majici, kako stoji širom razmaknutih nogu, postavlja pitanja i puši cigaru.

„Gdje je najbliža pilana?“, pitao je Tonyja Taylora.

„Nekih 11 kilometara u smjeru Apopke“, rekao mu je Tony. „Razmišljaš o gradnji odmah?“

„Bože, da. Al' ne kuću u kojoj vi očekujete živjeti. To može čekat' dok odlučim gdje je želim. Mislim da svima brzo treba trgovina.“

„Trgovina?“ Tony je iznenađeno uzviknuo.

„Da, trgovina baš ovdje u gradu sa svime što ti treba. Nema smisla da svi klipsaju sve do Maitlanda kako bi kupili malo krupice i brašna kada to mogu dobit' baš ovdje.“

„To bi bilo nekako lijepo, Brate Starks, sad kad to kažeš.“

„Bože, naravno da bi! Al' opet, trgovina je korisna i na druge načine. Moram imat' svoje mjesto kada ljudi dođu kupit' zemlju. Osim toga, sve mora imat' svoje središte i srce, a ovaj grad nije ništa drugačiji od drugih. Prirodno je imat' trgovinu koja će biti gradsko sastajalište.“

„E to je istina.“

„Oh, brzo ćemo mi sredit' ovaj grad. Nemoj propustit' sutrašnji sastanak.“

Taman na vrijeme za sastanak komisije sazvan na njegovom trijemu sljedeći dan, dovezli su prva kola s trupcima i Jody im je otišao pokazati gdje da ih stave. Rekao je Janie da tamo zadrži komisiju dok se on ne vrati, nije ih želio propustiti, ali je namjeravao izbrojiti svaku stopu trupaca prije nego što dotaknu tlo. Nije trebao tratiti svoje vrijeme i Janie je mogla nastaviti s onim što je radila. Kao prvo, svi su kasnili; zatim, čim su čuli gdje je Jody, nastavili su gore gdje je nova građa zveckala s kola i gomilala se ispod velikog zimzelenog hrasta. Dakle, tamo je održan sastanak s Tonyjem Taylorom kao predsjedavajućim i Jodyjem koji je vodio sve razgovore. Dan je namijenjen za ceste i svi su se složili da donesu sjekire i slične stvari i isjeku dvije ceste prema svakoj strani. To se odnosilo na sve osim na Tonyja i Cokera. Znali su obrađivati namještaj, pa ih je Jody unajmio da rano ujutro odu raditi na njegovoj trgovini. Sam će Jody biti zaposlen vozeći se od grada do grada govoreći ljudima o Eatonvilleu i nagovarajući građane da se presele onamo.

Janie je bila zapanjena kada je vidjela da se novac koji je Jody potrošio za zemlju vratio tako brzo. Deset novih obitelji kupilo je parcele i preselilo se u grad u roku od šest tjedana. Sve je to izgledalo preveliko i užurbano da bi mogla pratiti. Prije nego što je trgovina imala potpuni krov, Jody je nagomilao po podu konzervirane proizvode i toliko ih prodavao da nije imao vremena odlaziti na svoje govore.

Prvi put je okusila predsjedanje onog dana kada je krov bio cijeli i završen. Jody joj je rekao da se dotjera i stoji u trgovini cijelu tu večer. Svi su dolazili nekako sređeni, i nije želio da ničija druga žena bude u rangu s njom. Mora na sebe gledati kao na vođu stada, dok su druge žene bile družina. Stoga je odjenula jednu od svojih kupljenih haljina i otišla novouređenom cestom

sva odjevena u crvenu boju vina. Njezini su svileni volani šuštali i mrmljali o njoj. Ostale su žene odjenule perkal i kreton, a tu i tamo bilo je pokrivala za glavu među starijima.

Te večeri nitko nije ništa kupovao. Nisu zbog toga došli tamo. Došli su poželjeti dobrodošlicu. Stoga je Joe udario u gornju stranu bačve soda krekeri i narezao malo sira.

„Dođite svi i družite se. Bože, ja častim.“ Jody se nasmijao onim svojim prepredenim smijehom i stao iza. Janie je podijelila limunadu kako joj je rekao. Velika limena šalica puna za sve. Tony Taylor se osjećao toliko dobro kada je svega nestalo da je morao održati govor.

„Dame i gosp' do, skupili smo se ovdje kako bismo u našu sredinu poželjeli dobrodošlicu onome koji je smatrao prikladnim pridružiti nam se. Nije on došao sam. Smatrao je prikladnim dovesti svoju, ovaj, ovaj, svjetlo svog doma, svoju ženu također. Ne bi izgledala bolje i plemenitije ni da je kraljica Engleske. Zadovoljstvo joj je bit' tu među nama. Brate Starks, želimo dobrodošlicu tebi i sve što smatraš prikladno donijeti nam – svoju voljenu ženu, svoju trgovinu, svoju zemlju—,“

Grleni smijeh ga je prekinuo.

„To je sve, Tony“, uzviknuo je Lige Moss. „Gospon Starks je pametan čovjek, svi smo voljni to priznati, ali želim biti ovdje da vidim dan kada dođe šepureći se niz cestu s dvjesto hektara zemlje na ramenu.“

Još jedan glasni smijeh. Tony je bio pomalo ljut što mu je upropašten najveći govor života.

„Svi znate šta se mislilo. Ne vidim kako—,“

„Zato što se žuriš držati govor a ne znaš kako“, rekao je Lige.

„Govorio sam baš dobro prije nego si se ti ubacio.“

„Ne, nisi, Tony. Daleko si izvan svoje nadležnosti. Ne možeš poželjeti dobrodošlicu muškarcu i njegovoj ženi bez da ih usporediš s Isaacom i Rebeccom nad bunarom, inače se ne vidi ljubav između njih.“

Svi su se složili da je to ispravno. Bilo je nekako jadno da Tony nije znao da ne može održati govor, a da to ne kaže. Neki su se kikotaali nad njegovim neznanjem. Stoga je rekao razdražljivo: "Ako svi oni koji će izigravati budalu pred bijelim čovjekom to i naprave, zahvalit ćemo Bratu Starksu na odgovoru."

Nato su Joe Starks i njegova cigara zauzeli glavno mjesto.

„Zahvaljujem svima na toploj dobrodošlici i pružanju ruke zajedništva. Vidim da je ovaj grad pun jedinstva i ljubavi. Namjeravam uzet' u ruke u plug i napet' svaki živac da pretvorim ovaj grad u metropolu savezne države. Možda onda bolje da vam kažem ako ne znate da ako želimo krenut' naprijed, moramo se uklopit' kao i svaki drugi grad. Moramo se uklopit' i imat' gradonačelnika, ako želimo da sve bude kako treba. U ime sebe i svoje žene želim vam dobrodošlicu u ovu trgovinu i u druge objekte koji dolaze, Amen.“

Tony je predvodio glasno pljeskanje i zauzeo središte prostorije kada je pljeskanje prestalo.

„Braćo i sestre, kad već ne možemo očekivati bolje, predlažem da izaberemo Brata Starksa za gradonačelnika dok ne vidimo šta dalje.“ „Slažem se!!!“ Svi su govorilo u jedan glas, pa nije bilo potrebno glasati.

„A sad ćemo poslušat' par riječi ohrabrenja Gđe. Gradonačelnik Starks.“

Pljesak je prekinuo sam Joe koji je zauzeo mjesto na govornici.

„Hvala na komplimentima, al' moja žena ne zna ništa o govorima. Nisam je oženio zbog toga. Ona je žena i mjesto joj je u kući.“

Janie je natjerala lice da se nasmije nakon kratke stanke, ali nije bilo lako. Nikada nije pomislila održati govor i nije znala želi li ga uopće održati. Mora da je način na koji je Joe progovorio, a da joj nije dao priliku da išta kaže na ovaj ili onaj način, umanjio zadovoljstvo toga. No svejedno, otišla je niz cestu iza njega te noći osjećajući hladnoću. Koračao je zajedno sa svojim novim dostojanstvom, razmišljao i planirao naglas, nesvjestan njezinih misli.

„Gradonačelnik grada ne može predugo ležat' doma. Ovo mjesto treba uredit'. Janie, naći ću nekoga da pomogne u trgovini, a ti možeš pazit' dok ja radim na drugim stvarima.“

„Oh Jody, ne mogu ništa napraviti' u trgovini ako tebe nema tamo. Mogu možda doć' i pomoć' kada je gužva, ali—,“

„Bože, ne vidim kako ne bi mogla. Ne nam ničega šta će te ometat' ako imaš i naprstak razuma. Moraš. Ja imam previše toga u svojim rukama kao gradonačelnik. Ovaj grad odmah treba nešto svjetla.“

„Uh-uh, je malo mračno ovdje.“

„Naravno da je. Nema smisla brzat' preko svih ovih panjeva i korijenja u mraku. Odmah ću sazvat' sastanak o mraku i korijenju. Prvo ću riješit' ovaj slučaj.“

Već je sljedećeg dana s novcem iz vlastitog džepa krenuo u *Sears, Roebuck and Company* po uličnu svjetiljku i rekao gradu da se sastane sljedećeg četvrtka navečer kako bi glasali o tome. Nitko nikada nije razmišljao o uličnim svjetiljkama, a neki od njih su rekli da je to beskoristan pojam.

Išli su toliko daleko da su glasali protiv, ali većina je presudila.

No, cijeli se grad ponosio njom nakon što je dostavljena. Bilo je to zato što ju Gradonačelnik nije samo izvadio iz sanduka i zalijepio na stup. Odmotao ju je i dao pažljivo obrisati te je izložio na tjedan dana da svi vide. Zatim je odredio vrijeme za paljenje i poslao vijest po okrugu Orange da svi dođu na paljenje svjetiljke. Poslao je ljude u močvaru da posijeku najfiniji i najravniji stup od čempresa koji su mogli pronaći, te ih nastavio slati natrag u potragu na još jedan dok nisu pronašli onaj koji mu se sviđa. Već je razgovarao s ljudima o gostoprimstvu za tu prigodu.

„Vi znate da ne možemo pozvat' ljude u naš grad samo reda radi. Bože, ne. Moramo ih nahranit', a ništa ljudi ne vole više od roštilja. Ja ću sam nabavit' jednog krmka. Bolje bi bilo da vi svi ostali uspijete nabaviti još dva. Recite svojim ženskama da naprave nešto pita, torti i puding od batata.“

Tako je i bilo. Žene su skupile slatkiše, a muškarci su se pobrinuli za meso. Dan prije paljenja, iskopali su veliku rupu u stražnjem dijelu trgovine, napunili je hrastovim drvetom i spalili do užarenog sloja ugljena. Trebala im je cijela noć da ispeku tri krmka na roštilju. Hambo i Pearson bili su glavni, dok su ostali tu i tamo pomagali oko okretanja mesa i dok ga je Hambo premazivao umakom. U međuvremenu su pričali priče, smijali se, pričali još priča i pjevali pjesme. Rezali su sve vrste kapara i pirjali meso koje je polako dolazilo do savršenstva uz pomoć začina koji su prodirali do kosti. Mlađi su dječaci morali su poduprti nogare za sječenje drva daskama koje su žene koristile kao stolove. Nakon izlaska sunca svi koji nisu potrebni otišli su kući odmoriti se za gozbu.

Do pet je sati grad bio pun svih vrsta vozila i vrvio je ljudima. Htjeli su vidjeti tu svjetiljku upaljenu u sumrak. Otprilike je u to vrijeme Joe okupio sve na ulici ispred trgovine i održao govor.

„Ljudi, sunce se spušta. Stvaratelj sunca podiže ga ujutro i stvaratelj sunca šalje ga u krevet navečer. Mi jadni ljudi ne možemo učiniti ništa kako bi ga požurili ili usporili. Sve što možemo ako želimo svjetla poslije spuštanja i prije dizanja je stvoriti svjetlo sami. Zato su stvorene svjetiljke. Ove smo se večeri svi skupili ovdje kako bismo upalili svjetiljku. Ova je prigoda nešto što ćemo pamtit' do smrti.

Prva ulična svjetiljka u obojenom gradu. Podignite pogled i gledajte. Kada prislonim šibicu na fitilj svjetiljke, dopustite svjetlu da probije unutar vas i pustite ga da sjaji, da sjaji, da sjaji. Brate Davis, povedi nas u molitvu. Zamoli blagoslov ovom gradu na pravi način.“

Dok je Davis pjevao tradicionalnu molitvenu pjesmu s vlastitim varijacijama, Joe se popeo na kutiju koja je bila postavljena za tu svrhu i otvorio mjedena vrata svjetiljke. Kad je izgovorena riječ Amen, dotaknuo je fitilj upaljenom šibicom, a alt gospođe Bogle prasnuo je:

Hodat ćemo u svjetlu, prekrasnom svjetlu

Dođi gdje rosne kapljice milosrđa jarko sjaje

Sjaj svuda oko nas i danju i noću

Isuse, svjetlo svijeta.

Oni, svi oni, svi ljudi su se pridružili i pjevali iznova i iznova dok se pjesma nije ugasila, i nikakve daljnje inovacije tona i tempa nisu bile zamislive. Zatim su ušutjeli i jeli roštilj.

Kad je sve bilo gotovo, u krevetu je Jody upitao Janie, „Pa, dušo, kako ti sve sviđa biti gđa. Gradonačelnik?“

„Pretpostavljam da je u redu, al' ne misliš li da nas čini napetima?“

„Napetima? Misliš kuhanje i služenje ljudima?“

„Ne, Jody, samo se čini da na neki način nismo opušteni jedno s drugim. Ti uvijek pričaš i popravljáš stvari, a ja se osjećam k'o da samo tratim vrijeme. Nadam se da će brzo bit' gotovo.“

„Gotovo, Janie? Bože, nisam još ni počeo kako treba. Rek'o sam ti na početku da želim bit' velik čovjek. Trebalo bi ti bit' drago jer si i ti onda velika žena.“

Obuzeo ju je osjećaj hladnoće i straha. Osjećala se udaljeno i usamljeno.

Janie je ubrzo počela osjećati utjecaj strahopoštovanja i zavisti nasuprot svoje osjetljivosti. Supruga gradonačelnika nije bila samo još jedna žena kako je to tada mislila. Dijelila je postelju s autoritetom i tako je bila dio toga u mislima grada. Većini njih se nije mogla toliko približiti u duhu. To je bilo posebno vidljivo nakon što je Joe probio gradski jarak kako bi odvodnio ulicu ispred trgovine. Strastveno su mrmljali o tome kako je ropstvo ukinuto, no svaki je čovjek ispunio svoj zadatak.

Bilo je nešto u vezi s Joeom Starksom što je plašilo grad. Nije to bilo zbog fizičkog straha. Nije bio borac šakama. Njegova veličina nije bila čak ni impozantna kao obično kod muškaraca. Nije to bilo ni zato što je bio pismeniji od ostalih. Nešto je drugo natjeralo muškarce da pokleknu pred njim. Na licu mu je pisala naredba pokloni mi se, a svaki korak koji bi napravio samo je to činilo opipljivijim.

Uzmimo za primjer tu njegovu novu kuću. Imala je dva kata s trijemovima, ogradama i takvim stvarima. Ostatak grada izgledao je kao odaje za poslugu koje su okruživale "glavnu kuću". I za razliku od svih ostalih u gradu, odgađao je useljenje sve dok kuća nije bila obojana, iznutra i izvana. I pogledajte kako ju je obojao — blistavo, svjetlucavo bijelo. Vrsta promenadske bijele boje kakvu su imale kuće biskupa Whipplea, W. B. Jacksona i Vanderpoolovih. Selo se osjećalo smiješno razgovarajući s njim - baš kao da je bio bilo tko drugi. Zatim je tu bila stvar s pljuvačnicama.

Tek što je bio spreman za gradonačelnika — šefa pošte — kućevlasnika — vlasnika trgovine, kupio je stol poput gospodina Hilla ili gospodina Gallowaya u Maitlandu s jednom od onih stolica na okretanje. To što je grizao cigare i ne trošio vrijeme pričajući i vrteći se u toj stolici, slabilo je ljude. A onda bi pljunuo u onu zlatnu vazu koju bi bilo tko drugi rado stavio na stol u prednjoj sobi. Rekao je da je to pljuvačnica baš kakvu je njegov bivši šef imao u svojoj banci tamo gore u Atlanti. Nije morao ustati i otići do vrata svaki put kad je morao pljunuti. Nije pljunuo ni na svoj pod. Imao je taj pozlaćeni lonac za pljuvanje pri ruci. No išao je i dalje od toga.

Kupio je lonac za pljuvanje u ženskoj veličini u koji je Janie mogla pljuvati. Na njemu su na svim stranama bile naslikane male grančice cvijeća te ga je držao u salonu. Ljude je to iznenadilo jer je većina žena umakala burmut i dakako imala pljuvačnicu u kući. Ali kako su mogli znati da ljudi upoznati s trendovima pljuju u takve cvjetne stvarčice? Zbog toga su se ostali osjećali iskorišteno. Kao da su im se stvari tajile. Možda je od njih bilo skriveno više stvari na svijetu osim pljuvačnica, kad im nije rečeno ništa bolje nego sjediti u konzervama s

rajčicama. To je dovoljno loše za bijelce, no kad kako netko naše vlastite boje može biti toliko različit, to vas čudi. Bilo je to kao da vidite svoju sestru kako se pretvara u aligatora. Poznata neobičnost. Stalno vidite svoju sestru u aligatoru i aligatora u svojoj sestri, a radije ne bi. Nema sumnje da ga grad poštuje i čak mu se na neki način divi. No, svaki čovjek koji ide putem moći i vlasništva mora susresti mržnju. Stoga, kada bi govornici ustali kad je to prilika zahtijevala i rekli "Naš voljeni gradonačelnice", bila je to jedna od onih izjava koje svi govore, ali nitko zapravo ne vjeruje, poput "Bog je posvuda."

Bio je to samo način za navijanje jezika. Kako je vrijeme prolazilo, a dobrobiti koje je dao gradu nestajale s vremenom, sjedili su na trijemu njegove trgovine dok je on bio unutra u gužvi i razgovarali o njemu. Kao jednog dana nakon što je uhvatio Henryja Pittsa s kolima natovarenim njegovom šecernom trskom, uzeo mu trsku i natjerao ga da napusti grad. Neki od njih mislili su da Starks to nije trebao učiniti. Toliko je imao trske i svega ostalog.

No, nisu to rekli dok je Joe Starks bio na trijemu. Kad je stigla pošta iz Maitlanda i on ušao unutra da to sredi, svi su rekli svoje. Sim Jones je krenuo čim se uvjerio da ga Starks ne čuje.

„Grieh je i sramota tako tjerat' tog jadnog čovjeka od ovdje. Obojeni ljudi ne bi trebali bit' takvi jedni prema drugima.“

„Ja na to uopće ne gledam tako“, kratko je rekao Sam Watson. „Pustimo obojene ljude da zarade nešto kao svi ostali ovdje. Nitko nije branio Pittsu da posadi trsku gdje je htio. Starks mu je našao posao, šta više 'oće?“

„Znam i ja to“, rekao je Jones, „ali Sam, Joe Starks je previše isključiv prema ljudima. Sve što ima dobio je na račun nas ostalih. Nije imao sve to kada je stig'o ovdje.“

„Da, ali ni sve ovo što vidiš nije bilo ovdje kada je on doš'o. Priznaj vragu zaslugu.“

„Ali sada Sam, znaš da se samo kočoperi i govori drugima što da rade. Voli poslušnost svih pred svojim glasom.“

„Možeš osjetiti tu promjenu kada govori s tobom“, požalio se Oscar Scott. „Taj osjećaj kažnjavanja i nervoze u želucu.“

„On je uragan među povjetarcima“, ubacio se Jeff Bruce.

„Kada smo već kod vjetrova, on je vjetar, a mi smo trava. Savijamo se na koju god stranu puše“, složio se Sam Watson, „ali zato ga trebamo. Grad ne bi bio ništa da nema njega. Ne može, a da

ne šefuje. Neki ljudi trebaju prijestolja, vladarske stolice i krune da bi se osjetio njihov utjecaj. On ne treba. On ima prijestolje u sjedištu svojih hlača.“

„Ono što se meni ne sviđa kod čovjeka je kako priča s neobrazovanim ljudima“, požalio se Hicks, „hvali se svojim obrazovanjem. Ne bi to pomislio kad me vidiš, al' imam obrazovanog brata koji propovijeda oko Ocale. Da je on ovdje, Joe Starks ga ne bi činio budalom kao nas ostale.“

„Često se pitam kako ta njegova ženica može s njim jer je on čovjek koji sve mijenja, a njega ništa ne mijenja.“ „Znaš, i ja sam puno puta o tome razmišljao. Zanovijeta joj tu i tamo kada napravi sitne pogreške oko trgovine.“

„Šta ju tjera da oko trgovine pokriva glavu kao neka stara žena? Nitko mene ne bi mogao natjerat' da stavim pokrivalo na glavu da imam takvu kosu.“

„Možda ju on tjera. Možda se boji da će je netko od nas muškaraca dirat'. Stvarno je to misterija za mene.“

„Ona baš ne govori puno. Način na koji on diže glas i ubacuje se u trgovini kada ona napravi pogrešku je pomalo bezbožan, al' čini se da njoj uopće ne smeta. Pretpostavljam da se razumiju.“

Grad je imao mnoštvo dobrih i loših osjećaja o Joeovim položajima i imovini, ali nitko nije imao hrabrosti izazvati ga. Radije su mu se pokorili, jer on je bio sve to, a opet on je bio sve to jer se grad pokorio.

4. COMMENTARY AND WORK FLOW

Zora Neale Hurston's book *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, published in 1937. is a powerful novel depicting several important topics. One motive that we can say is prevalent is the journey of a young woman finding her identity and independence as a young black woman in the 20th century America. However, in the context of this thesis, we focused on the Black identity of the characters, their dialects and their way of speaking.

Moreover, the author uses dialect as a way of bringing characters to life. This way, they are believable and allow the reader to become immersed in the story itself. But, if the reader is not familiar with the dialect used, they can have a hard time understanding the novel and enjoying it.

As already mentioned before, the dialect used in this book is AAVE, a specific language incorporated into English that has its own grammatical rules and varieties. In the context of this thesis, we need to analyse how AAVE relates to standard English and how it can be translated into Croatian.

Thus, there are three view points from which we will analyse certain words and phrases, as seen in the table below:

AAVE	AASE	CROATIAN
Ah'm uh son of Combunction	Sun of a gun	Kurvin sin
Teppentine still and saw mill camp	Turpentine stills and saw mills	/
All them dat's goin' tuh cut de monkey	To act silly	Izigravanje budale
Georgy	Georgia	Savezna država Georgija
Isaac and Rebecca at de well	Isaac and Rebecca at the well	Izak i Rebeka
Middle Georgy	Middle Georgia	Središnja Georgia
Protolapsis uh de cutinary linin'	Discomfort in the stomach	Nervoza u želucu
Yuh	You	Ti

Ah	I	Ja
Git	Get	Depends on the sentence
Lak	Like	Kao
De	The	/
Dey	They	Oni
Naw	No	Ne
Miz	Miss	Gospođica
Kin	Can	Može
Section foreman	Leader of a mine section	Vođa rudara
Stray darky	A Black person from out of town	Tamna lotalica
Head rag	Head cover	Pokrivalo za glavu
Youse	You	Vi
Littler	Smaller	Manje
Sich uh	Such a	Kao
Mah	My	Moj
Guv'ner	Governor	Guverner
Yit	Yet	Još
Menfolks	Men	Muškarci
Whut	What	Što
Wid	With	S
Befo'	Before	Prije
Ruther	Rather	Radije
Gointuh do	Going to do	Učiniti
'ceptin'	Except	Osim

Lemme	Let me	Dopusti mi
Ah specks	I expect	Očekujem
Mouf	Mouth	Usta
Didju	Did ju	Jesi li
Wuz	Was	Bio
South Cal'lina	South Carolina	Južna Karolina
Goven'ment	Government	Vlada
Keer	Care	Brinuti
B'lieve	Believe	Vjerovati
Ah figgers	I figure	Pretpostavljam
Agin	Again	Opet
Sho	Sure	Sigurno
Tuhgether	Together	Zajedno
Hisself	Himself	On
'tain't	It ain't / It isn't	Nije
Sweet p'tater	Sweet potato	Slatki krumpir / batat
Ah reckon	I think	Mislim
Mahself	Myself	Ja

AAVE phrase examples explained:

- **Ah'm uh son of Combunction** a polite way of swearing
- **All de women in de world ain't . . . teppentine still and saw mill camp** free and easy women, women from the lowest level of laborers. Turpentine stills and saw mills were usually located in the woods, removed from town and close to the trees essential for their products.
- **All them dat's goin' tuh cut de monkey** in other words, if everyone has finished acting silly. This is especially used when referring to making a fool out of yourself in front of a white person.
- **In and through Georgy** living in and passing through the state of Georgia.
- **Isaac and Rebecca at de well** This biblical reference is not accurate. Isaac never met Rebecca at the well. Isaac's father's servant encountered Rebecca at the well. The servant had prayed for divine guidance in finding a wife for Isaac — that after his long journey to the land of Aramnaharaim, a generous and humble woman would approach him at the community well and offer him a drink of fresh water from her jug, as well as to offer to draw sufficient water for his camels. Rebecca did so and agreed to leave her village and travel to the land of Canaan to become Isaac's wife.
- **Middle Georgy** the middle of the state of Georgia
- **Protolapsis uh de cutinary linin'** The reference is to something that upsets the stomach and makes a person nervous.

In addition, we can notice that initial and final consonants are dropped in the African-American Vernacular English language. *You* is pronounced as *yuh*, or *y'all* if it's in plural. Then, *I* becomes *Ah*. Also, vowel shifts often occur. For example, *get* becomes *git*, *like* is *lak*, and *the* is *de*. Other examples include *dey* for *they*, *naw* for *no*, *miz* for *miss*, and *kin* for *can*.

When it comes to translating AAVE to Croatian, it is a fairly difficult task. It is not something we hear on a day-to-day basis, and there is not a consensus on how to translate it. Because of that, you can't go into translating without doing research yourself. First you need to become acquainted with the ins and outs of the dialect, understand where did it come from, and what influences it.

However, there are also racial undertones and experiences that are contained in the language which should be translated into the target language as well. Of course, those are not our

experiences and we most likely do not have equivalents that can accurately convey the meaning of the source language. In that case, we need to work on translating as closely as possible.

In my opinion, the most challenging phrases and words in chapter 5 of this book were *section foreman*, *stray darky*, *head rag*, and the phrases from the glossary above. *Section foreman* refers to a foreman who has complete charge of a section of a mine, in anthracite and bituminous coal mining. Personally, I have never encountered the phrase and it was pretty tricky to translate. I decided to go with *voda rudara* which is literal, but fitting.

Stray darky was used to refer to Joe Starks who came to Eatonville and became a sort of a boss of everyone. By saying this, Hicks wanted to express his discontentment and distrust that he had toward Joe. I decided to translate the phrase as *tamna lotalica*, which also expresses that level of distrust for a stranger in a town.

Head rag is one of those terms that are culturally bound, and don't work in different languages in cultures. In the Black community, a head rag is a head covering made by a piece of cloth which is wound around the head and knotted in the front. As such, it is often associated with African American women, mostly older women. We could translate this as *pokrivalo za glavu* or *marama za glavu*, but since we don't have a direct equivalent, some of the original meaning is lost.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, AAVE is still widely misunderstood. There is not a clear way how to translate it, and experts still don't know exactly how to call it. This master thesis explored the main points of AAVE, as well as how it was created, and how it is used. Moreover, laid out are problems faced while translating African American Vernacular English, as well as solutions to the issues faced.

Their Eyes Were Watching God is the most notable novel in AAVE, not only because of the language used but because of the different themes and motifs that are represented in the book. Zola Neale Hurston explores racial injustice, feminism, gender roles, and more.

Thus, the language used doesn't only serve as a distinction between races but also shows feminine and masculine roles in the book and society as a whole. There are also a plethora of phrases pertaining to the Bible, gospel, and preaching, which can also pose as a challenge to the translator.

With a task to translate African American Vernacular English, a translator needs to be familiar with the history and experiences of Black people in America, especially the South. That could be particularly tricky when translating into Croatian, as we just don't share the same experiences and mostly can't even imagine them.

As a result, translating AAVE is both demanding and time-consuming in terms of researching specific words and phrases and converting those from AAVE into standard English and then Croatian. Three directions need to be kept in mind in order to produce a high-quality translation.

Finally, translators need to adapt and be able to think quickly and on their feet. It's important to try out different solutions and proofread text numerous times in order to find which solution is the perfect one. Furthermore, the final text needs to evoke feelings that the original one evoked as closely as possible. When you've succeeded in that, you produced a successful translation.

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