

## MODEL TRANSLATION OF *DE HOND VAN ONZE BUURMAN*

- Boldface = main translation
- Forward slashes are used to separate (more or less equally good) alternatives. The first mentioned alternative is usually to be preferred, however
- Round brackets: if a word, part of a word, words or punctuation are put in round brackets, this means such word(s), part of a word or punctuation are optional (i.e. may be omitted.)

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### DE HOND VAN ONZE BUURMAN

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#### OUR NEIGHBOUR'S/[AmE] NEIGHBOR'S DOG

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*Al jaren komt de hond van onze buurman tweemaal per week bij ons om een bot op te halen.*

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**For years (now)(,) our/the neighbour's/[AmE] neighbor's dog has paid a call on us/has called (in) on us/has dropped in on us/has dropped by/round/has paid us a visit/has paid a visit to us/has visited us/(AmE) has visited with us/has come to us (at our home) twice a week to fetch/get/pick up/collect a bone.**

(*al jaren* – ~~already for years~~ [see Mistakes Sheet 1b] // *komt* – ~~has been coming~~ [because this is a habitual use, which is uncommon with the Perfect Progressive; see Leech, p. 47; see Mistakes Sheet]/~~comes/is coming/visits/is visiting~~, etc. [the Present Perfect is compulsory because of the phrase 'for years', (see Mistakes Sheet 1c)]/~~has come over~~ → used mainly where someone travels over quite a distance: *He came over from the US.* // *de hond van onze buurman* – ~~the dog of our neighbour~~ [the 's construction should be preferred to an *of* phrase if reference is made to people, except if the person involved is followed by a phrase or subclause, or for aesthetic reasons (sentence rhythm etc.; see Mistakes Sheet 3a) // [Word order: it is doubtful to place 'twice a week' at the end of the sentence: wrong emphasis!])

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*Toen hij vorige week ineens niet verscheen, vroegen we ons af wat er aan de hand was: nog nooit was er zoiets gebeurd!*

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(a)

**When(,) all of a sudden/suddenly(,) he failed to show up/turn up/appear last week, we wondered what was going on/what was the matter/what was afoot/what could have happened/whether anything/something was wrong: never (before) had a thing like that/this sort of thing/anything like it/such a thing happened!**

(b)

**When, all of a sudden, he did not appear last week, we wondered/asked ourselves what was going on: never (before) had a thing like that happened!**

(c)

**When he suddenly failed to appear last week, we wondered what was the matter: this (sort of thing) had never happened before!**

(d)

**When last week he failed to appear all of a sudden, we wondered what was/could be up [informal]: never before had anything like it happened!**

(*niet verscheen* – ~~didn't~~ [Use contractions only in very informal texts and in dialogue/quotations etc.] // *verscheen* – show [US slang, = Wrong Register] // *wat er aan de hand was* – ~~what the matter was~~ (Incorrect Word Order // *nog nooit was er zoiets gebeurd* – ~~never (before) such a thing had happened~~ [The inversion rule must be applied! See Mistakes Sheet 7c]/~~this had not happened ever before~~ // *zoiets* – something like that // [Word order: ~~when all of a sudden last week ....~~])

*We besloten te gaan kijken.*

**We decided to (go and) have/take a look.**

*Nu moet u weten dat het huis van onze buurman, dat hij jaren geleden heeft laten bouwen, zoals zo veel Engelse huizen, geen bel maar een klopper heeft, een te zware klopper!*

(a)

**(Now) you should know that our neighbour's home/house, which was built on his instructions/orders years ago, does not have a bell but a knocker – too heavy a knocker! – (just) like many English houses/as have many English houses.**

(b)

**(Now) you should know that our neighbour's home, which was commissioned by him years ago, (just) like many English homes, has a knocker – too heavy a knocker! – rather than/instead of a doorbell.**

(*dat hij jaren geleden heeft laten bouwen* – that was built for him years ago/that he (had) built years ago/~~that he had had/has had built years ago~~ // *klopper* – ~~window tapper~~ // *een te zware klopper* – a (~~much~~) too heavy ~~knocker~~ [see Mistakes Sheet 7d!])

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*Toen wij het tuinhekje opendeden, hoorden we niets en we werden een beetje ongerust.*

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**When we opened the garden gate, we did not hear anything/a thing/a sound(,) and (we) became/got a bit/little (bit)/somewhat worried/uneasy.**

(*tuinhekje* – small garden gate // *hoorden we niets* – we heard nothing)

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*De buurman, die in zijn werkende leven officier was, is 85 en zijn bij hem wonende vijftienjarige kleindochter was, samen met een vriendin van haar moeder, met vakantie.*

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**Our/The neighbour, who was/used to be an (army) officer in his working life, is 85 (years old) and his 15-year-old granddaughter, who lives with him, was (away) on holiday/had left for a holiday/had gone (away) for a holiday/for her holiday(s), together/along with a friend of her mother's.**

(*die ... officier* – who is a former (army) officer/who was an officer in the past/in the old days/formerly/in former days/previously he was an officer // *is 85* – ~~is 85 years~~ // *zijn bij hem wonende kleindochter* – his live-in granddaughter ('live-in' is used: (a) for *inwonend personeel*; (b) unmarried partners) // *vijftienjarige* – ~~fifteen(-)years(-)old~~ [hyphens are essential, but the singular must be used!]) (see Mistakes Sheet, Point to Remember (e)); // *een vriendin van haar moeder* – ~~her mother's friend/a friend of her mother/a friend of her mothers~~ [the post-genitive is compulsory here! See Mistakes Sheet 3b]; // *met vakantie* – [American English] on vacation.)

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*Wat te doen?*

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**What were we to do?/What could we do?**

(What to do? / ~~What should/must we do?~~)

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*We vermeden elkaar aan te zien.*

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**We avoided looking at each other.**

(*vermeden elkaar aan te zien* – ~~We avoided to look at each other~~ [See Mistakes Sheet 1n!])

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*Als je niets zou doen, zou je je dit later verwijten.*

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**If we/you did nothing/did not do anything, we/you would blame ourselves/yourself (for it) later/later on.**

(*als je niets zou doen* – ~~if you would not do anything~~ (see Mistakes Sheet 1k); // *verwijten* – ~~reproach yourself (with it)~~ ('reproach someone/something' does not need to be followed by a PP, but when it is followed by a PP, there are two possibilities: a. 'for something' = criticise someone. for failing to do something, e.g. 'She reproached him for forgetting her anniversary'; 'I have nothing to reproach myself for'; b. 'with something' = name a fault as a reason for criticising 'reproach the Government with neglect/injustice'.)

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*De mens is een gek wezen en hij aarzelt vaak te lang.*

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(a)

**Humans are strange/funny/peculiar/odd creatures and (they) often hesitate too long.**

(b)

**Man is a strange/funny/peculiar/odd creature and often hesitates (for) too long.**

(*aarzelt vaak te lang* – ~~is often hesitating too long~~ [See Mistakes Sheet 1c.]

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*We konden geen adviezen vragen en wij moesten zèlf een besluit nemen.*

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(a)

**We could not ask for (any) advice(,) and we had to take/make/arrive at/come to/reach a decision ourselves/decide on it ourselves.**

(b)

**There was no one to ask for advice and so we had to make up our own minds.**

(*adviezen* – ~~advices~~ [non-count nouns cannot be pluralized! See Mistakes Sheet2a]/*advise* [=only verb] // *zelf* – ~~by ourselves~~ [= on their own/alone!])

*Terwijl we daar stonden te praten, en vlak nadat mijn partner voor de derde keer had geopperd dat we maar beter geen risico's konden nemen, hoorden we ineens een licht geluid achter ons.*

**While we stood there talking/While we were talking there, and just/shortly/right after my partner had suggested for the third time (that) we had better not take any risks, we suddenly heard a faint/soft/gentle/light sound behind us.**

(*stonden te praten* – ~~talked~~ [The Progressive is of course compulsory here!] // *maar beter .... nemen* – ~~we could/should better not make~~ // *geluid* – noise)

*Het eerste wat we deden, was omkijken.*

**The first thing we did was (to) look round/around/turn and look.**

(*het eerste* – ~~the first~~ // *wat* – ~~what~~ // *omkijken* – ~~looking round~~)

*Daar stond een heel grote politieman – en wat een grote oren had hij!*

**There stood a bulky/huge/gigantic/towering/very big/large policeman/police officer/constable – and what enormous/huge ears he had!**

(For the inversion, see *Koning*, pp. 330-31; // *en ... hij!* – ~~and what (a) big ears had he!~~ [Note the the *Roodkapje* rule! See Mistakes Sheet7e)

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*Hij vroeg ons vriendelijk wat we aan het doen waren; waren we aan het proberen om in te breken?*

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(a)

**He asked us in a friendly/kind(ly) tone/manner/way what we were doing/what we were up to; were we trying to break in/break into the house?**

(b)

**In a friendly tone he asked us what we were doing: were we attempting a burglary?**

*(Hij vroeg ons vriendelijk – He asked us kindly .... /he kindly asked us [because that means: Hij was zo vriendelijk om ons te vragen]/he asked us friendly // waren ... breken – the Progressive is compulsory! See Mistakes Sheet1c)*

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*We ontkenden dit en vertelden hem ons verhaal.*

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(a)

**We denied this/doing such a thing and told him our story.**

(b)

**We denied that/this and told our story to him.**

*(en ... verhaal – ~~and told to him our story~~)*

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*Er volgde een korte pauze en toen stopte er een auto voor het huis – je kunt bij ons gelukkig makkelijker parkeren dan in de meeste buurten – en we hoorden geblaf.*

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(a)

**There was a short pause/break (in the conversation) and then a car pulled up/stopped in front of the house – fortunately/luckily, you can park in our neighbourhood more easily than in most! – and we heard (the sound of) barking.**

(b)

**A short pause followed and at that moment a car stopped in front of the house – fortunately, it is easier to park in our neighbourhood/(AmE) neighborhood than in most (others)! – and we heard (a dog) barking.**

*(er volgde – there followed ... etc. (see Brederode, pp. 117-18) // break/pause usage, see break, p. 108 ALD-Enc. // je kunt ... buurten – luckily, it is easier to park in/within our neighbourhood/district/area than in most others; not: you can park in our district easier/more easy*

than ... // *dan* – ~~then~~)

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*Toen herinnerden we ons dat onze buurman ons weken geleden gezegd had dat hij tijdens de vakantie van zijn kleindochter een tochtje naar Schotland zou maken en zijn hond zou meenemen.*

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(a)

**Then(,)/At that point(,) we remembered/recalled that our neighbour had told us weeks ago that he was (going) to make/be making a trip to Scotland during his granddaughter's holiday(s) and take/bring his dog (along) with him/and that he was to take his dog with him/taking his dog with him.**

(b)

**Then we remembered/recalled our neighbour telling us some weeks ago/earlier/before that he was (going) to tour (in) Scotland/make/go on/do a tour in Scotland during his granddaughter's holiday(s) and that he would take his dog with him.**

(*toen* – ‘then’ can also be placed after ‘we’ // *gezegd had* – ~~told~~ // *zou maken* – would make/would be making)

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*De hond hield van Schotland, zo had hij gezegd, en de Schotten van hem.*

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**The dog was fond of/(just) loved Scotland, he had said, and the Scots/the Scottish were fond of/loved him.**

(*zo* should be left untranslated! // *de Schotten* – ~~the Scottish people/the Scotch~~)

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*Pas toen drong tot ons door dat als we daar eerder aan gedacht zouden hebben, we daar niet hadden gestaan!*

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**Only then did it dawn on us/did we realise/did it occur to us that if we had thought/had we thought of that before/sooner, we would not have been there/we would not have been standing there.**

(*Pas toen ... door* – Not until then had we realised that .../~~only then we realised~~ [See Mistakes Sheet7c!])

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*De buurman en zijn hond, die beide niets mankeerden, stapten uit en keken ons verbaasd aan.*

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(a)

**Our/the neighbour and his dog, who were both in fine condition/fine/all right/okay/both of whom seemed/appeared in fine condition/looked all right, got out (of the car) and looked at us in amazement/in surprise/in astonishment.**

(b)

**Our neighbour and his dog, who were both in fine condition, got out (of the car) and looked at us, amazed/surprised.** [but not without the comma!]

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*Beschaamd herhaalden we ons verhaal.*

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**Ashamed/embarrassed, we repeated our story/told our story again/once again/once more.**

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*Toen we ons wilden verontschuldigen, bedankte hij ons en vroeg ons om binnen te komen.*

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**When we were about/wanted to apologise/to offer our apologies/to excuse ourselves, he thanked us and invited/asked us (to come) in.**

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*'Typisch Engels!', zei de buurman toen we de hal betraden, 'om meteen onraad te ruiken!'*

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**'Typically English/British,' our/the neighbour/(AmE) neighbor said/said our neighbour/[AmE] neighbor, when we entered/on/upon entering the hall(way), 'to smell a rat straight away/immediately/at once!'**

*(Typisch Engels – ~~typical English/British~~ [because *typisch* is an adverb!; see Mistakes Sheet7f] // onraad ruiken – scent danger)*

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*We hadden het kunnen weten: hij houdt van zijn whisky.*

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**We might/could have known: he likes/loves/is fond of his whisky.**

*(Whisky - whisky/whiskey usage → whisky = Scottish; whiskey = Irish/American)*



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*We waren pas om vier uur 's nachts thuis en we waren niet helemaal nuchter meer.*

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(a)

**We did not get/come/arrive home/were not (back) home until [not: before!] four o' clock in the morning, and we were not quite sober anymore/any longer.**

(b)

**Not until 4 o'clock in the morning did we get home, and we were not quite sober anymore.**

(c)

**It was not until [not: before] 4 o' clock in the morning that we got home, and we were not quite sober anymore.**

(d)

**It was only at four in the morning that we got home, and we were not quite sober anymore.**

(e)

**Only at four o' clock in the morning did we get home, and we were not quite sober anymore.**

*(vier uur 's nachts – 4 a.m./4 am (US AM)/four o'clock at night/in the night (also: that night.)*

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*Toen Bertie, de hond, nadat hij eerst de rest van de buurt had verkend, ons de volgende morgen kwam wakker maken – gelukkig hadden we ons bed nog kunnen vinden! – hadden we een flinke kater.*

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**When, after (first) exploring/having explored the rest of the neighbourhood (first), Bertie, the dog, woke us (up)/came to wake us (up) a few hours later [possibly: the next morning] – fortunately/luckily, we had been able to find our beds! – we had quite a hangover/a considerable/fine/decent /doggish hangover.**

*(nadat ... verkend – Note that the phrase must be placed before 'Bertie, the dog', because in such cases English keeps subject and predicator together); see Mistakes Sheet 7a // de volgende morgen – ~~next morning~~ // wakker maken – ~~awaken~~ [wrong register] // hadden kunnen vinden – ~~could/might have found~~ [Note the difference between this *had kunnen*-constructie ('realis') and the one two sentences earlier ('irrealis'); see Mistakes Sheet 1h // flinke kater – one hell of a hangover [Wrong Register]/~~considerable to me~~)*

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*Maar we wisten wel alles van de Schotse schilderkunst en het vrolijke nachtleven van Edinburgh.*

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**But we did know everything/all about Scottish painting and Edinburgh's cheerful nightlife/  
the cheerful nightlife of Edinburgh.**

(*van* – ~~on~~ // *vrolijke* – ~~cheerful~~ [See Mistakes Sheet, Point to Remember (f).])

Chris P. Odijk, March 2007