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Article:

Gregoriou, C orcid.org/0000-0003-2875-0180 (2023) Plotting and Characterisation in Sophie Hannah's The Other Half Lives: a Cognitive Stylistic approach. *Journal of Literary Semantics*, 52 (1). pp. 41-60. ISSN 0341-7638

<https://doi.org/10.1515/jls-2023-2004>

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Plotting and Characterisation in Sophie Hannah's *The Other Half Lives*: a Cognitive Stylistic approach

Abstract: Sophie Hannah's (2009) *The Other Half Lives* both complies with, and departs from, the crime fiction formula or text schema. It features a mystery the specifics of which are unravelled non-chronologically, while its numerous crimes and non-ideal criminals and victims disrupt readers' world schemas and help enable its surprising effects. Not unlike such fiction, the story's early happenings feature late in the telling, while many happenings are given from different character perspectives. Both of these help unsettle narrative perspective, and generate suspense, mystery, and readers' later repairing and replacing of frames. Focalisation and the working and reworking of killing characters' early depiction are techniques also enabling foreshadowing and misdirection, for readers' sympathies and prejudices to be manipulated accordingly, and for surprise revelations to prove effective, even when a surprise ending is – given the nature of this genre – only to be expected.

Keywords: schemas, focalisation, plot, discourse, archive

1 Introduction

Sophie Hannah's UK-published (2009) *The Other Half Lives* – also found under the name *The Dead Lie Down* in the US – is the fourth of her detective Simon Waterhouse and Charlie (Charlotte) Zailer crime fiction series, also known as 'Culver Valley Crime'. The book series is

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long-standing; it originated in 2005, and is – according to the author’s official website and as of 2022 – 12-book strong in the UK, and still on-going. Unlike the three earlier novels in the series, *The Other Half Lives* is worth studying partly in light of the University of Leeds Sophie Hannah crime fiction special collection hosting various kinds of, and indeed substantial, work-in-progress material in relation to it. This material takes such forms as plans, notebooks, annotated early novel drafts and relevant editor comments in response to such drafts. Whilst the focus of this paper lies on narratological and cognitive stylistic analysis of the published book, I draw from the special collection material whilst engaging with the novel’s structure and characterisation. Having access to such work in progress material also offers important opportunities, with an eye to shedding light on the ‘making’ and ‘remaking’ of the novel’s effects. The sort of effects I focus on, and which my methodological approach can help explain, are (rather typical) crime fiction ones, and include that of mystery, suspense, misdirection and surprise. Emmott and Alexander (2010, 2014, 2019, 2020) identify and list a range of crime fiction burying strategies, one of which proves relevant in the analysis that follows: that of certain characters needing discrediting for misdirection purposes. Also in the analysis that follows, I specifically define and then utilise, the concepts of frame repairs/replacements, schemas, focalisation, plot, and discourse, given their particular effect-explanatory power. Before doing so, I start with a necessary summary of the 550-paged book (which, given its complexity, is rather lengthy).

2 Novel Summary

In the Q and A printed at the end of the book itself (Hannah, 2009: 555), the author discloses to sometimes “start with the mystery”. When she does so, she says “it’s always a question I can’t immediately answer, a puzzle with apparently no solution [...] Then the challenge for me is to come up with a satisfying solution to the puzzle”. Indeed, *The Other Half Lives* revolves around

the matter of Ruth Bussey telling police officer Charlie that Ruth's boyfriend, framer/painter Aidan Seed, admitted to having killed someone called 'Mary Trelease'. Further to being horrified, Ruth is perplexed by Aidan's confession as it triggers a mysterious puzzle; the character he says he killed several years prior is one Ruth understands to actually be alive in the present day. Even more so, Ruth herself suffered a physical attack by Mary's own hands during an altercation among the women only recently, i.e. *after* she is supposed to have been killed by Aidan. Following Aidan's murder confession, readers are told of the murder of a woman called Gemma Crowther, yet another character Ruth had once also suffered at the hands of. Toward the end of the book, readers discover that Aidan did kill a Mary Trelease when much younger, but this actually is a different 'Mary' to the one we have so far been acquainted with. Aidan's actual murder victim turns out to have been his stepfather's partner, a woman who was sexually abusing Aidan at the time. His stepfather Len Smith consciously took the blame for this murder; even though he was sexually abusing Aidan too, he confessed to the murder Aidan committed in an attempt to redeem himself of guilt, and also protect his own sexual abuse of Aidan being known to others. When the character of Martha Wyers obsesses over a then-older Aidan, she buys and destroys all his paintings, and then tries to commit suicide in front of him when feeling rejected. She fails in her suicide attempt but, knowing that Aidan had once killed a woman called Mary Trelease, formally changes her name to that of his former murder victim to continue taunting him. It is this (henceforth) 'Martha/Mary' who attacked Ruth in a rage after their altercation, and who proves to be the one who killed Gemma. Martha/Mary's motive for killing Gemma links back to Ruth and Aidan. Gemma once discovered Ruth's near-affair with Gemma's then partner, Stephen, for which reason she tortured Ruth. Using this knowledge as ammunition, Martha/Mary kills Gemma, wanting to frame Aidan for this murder in revenge; his girlfriend's torturer being found dead would lead the police to treat him as a serious murder suspect. Put differently, Martha/Mary avenges Aidan's rejection of her by murder, only as this

would give himself a supposed revenge motive the police would suspect him over her instead. As for Aidan, he is revealed to have only confessed to having killed ‘Mary’ to Ruth as he initially wanted to be honest about his past. When witnessing Ruth’s troubled reaction to his confession though, he realises that he should not have confessed at all. Grasping that ‘Martha/Mary’ took on Mary Trelease’s name/identity after he rejected her, he uses Martha/Mary being alive to disprove his own confession (see one of Hannah’s own Notebook handwritten scribbles in the same archive, which reads “A[idan] would maybe have confessed properly with R[uth]’s support. But she reacted badly + then realised M[artha] W[yers] could ruin him + went on defensive”). The end of the novel finds Aidan and Ruth injured and held at gunpoint by Martha/Mary. Charlie and Simon come to the couple’s rescue just in time to prevent Martha/Mary killing them both, though she does kill herself before arrest.

3 Plotting: Narrative Design and Generic Deviance

Cognitive stylistics proposes a close link between language and cognition when reading literature (see Stockwell, 2020). In the context of this field, reader expectations can be referred to, and conceptualised along the lines of organised bundles of knowledge of what are known as “schemas”: whereas “world schemas” are those “to do with content”, “text schemas [...] represent our expectations of the way that world schemas appear to us in terms of their sequencing and structural organisation” (Stockwell, 2020: 107). To relate this distinction to the reading of crime fiction specifically, readers of this genre arguably react to what they read, firstly, depending on their knowledge of what the world is like i.e. drawing on their world schemas. A relevant world schema expectation is that of killers usually being driven by some sort of motive, having opportunity to commit a crime and the physical ability to do so. Simultaneously, readers also react to what they read depending on their familiarity with what such texts are like, i.e. their crime fiction text schemas. Such schemas being reader-specific, they

are therefore informed by that particular reader's experience of the genre at any one point, for which reason that experience, though non-stable, needs specifying. Experienced crime fiction readers come to crime novels with developed schemas of this kind, and are likely to expect to, for instance, be misdirected or manipulated when text processing, only to then be pleasurably surprised toward a novel's end. Having said that, though crime fiction novels tend to be rather formulaic, a novel exhibiting crime fiction conformity does not disallow departure from the supposed formula or 'norm'. For one such novel to prove noteworthy, some departure from the crime fiction formula in the form of generic deviance (Gregoriou 2007) is only to be expected. As argued elsewhere (Gregoriou 2007: 155), "within the frame of contemporary crime fiction, deviance *is* often the norm", and it is indeed perhaps such a departure from the formula that can prove key to one such text's very success as a crime novel. Before exploring *The Other Half Lives*' structure in some detail, I turn to unpacking its own crime fiction formula compliance, and departure.

A typical/common whodunit text schema, popularised by such Golden Age authors as Agatha Christie, is that of having a novel feature a, most typically, single murder of a victim at its start. Such victims are 'ideal' (see Christie 1986), and relatively world schema abiding, if they share such properties as being young, female and innocent, the reader and detective(s) being driven to find out 'whodunit', and certainly doing so toward the novel's end. It is at this point that a, most often, single killer of such a victim gets revealed, the 'ideal' and world schema abiding construct of whom is male, unrepentant, and irredeemable, i.e. carries unambiguous blame for the crime they committed (see discussion of the crime fiction formula in Gregoriou 2007, and constructions of victim and killer identity in such fiction in Gregoriou 2011). Though fitting for the crime fiction text schema or formula in featuring crime, puzzlement, detection, surprise revelations as to 'whodunit' and so on, *The Other Half Lives* is a contemporary crime

novel that is simultaneously text schema disrupting; it is unusual, or generically deviant (Gregoriou 2007, 2011) in a number of ways.

Firstly, though revolving around a mystery, the novel features a different *kind* of mystery to that which readers and detectives might expect; instead of them investigating who an actual victim's unknown killer is, here someone actually confesses to killing a victim who is actually alive, the unknowability seemingly lying with the crime, or victim identity perhaps, rather than the killer's. Put differently, instead of being initially driven by the 'whodunit' question, *The Other Half Lives* is driven by the need to explain, or makes sense of, an initially absurd killing confession.

Secondly, rather than ultimately featuring a single murder victim, the novel comes to feature two: Aidan's stepmother Mary Trelease and also Gemma Crowther. Even more so, though 'idealised' in their femaleness, the murder victims are non-ideal too. They are neither particularly 'young', nor entirely innocent, devoid of blame or 'undeserving' of what ultimately happened to them. Instead, these female victims prove to have been torturers of others themselves – Aidan and Ruth respectively – which arguably suggests 'deservability' for their own demise (see victim deservability scale and related discussion in Gregoriou 2011: 172). And even Ruth herself is not depicted as idealised or 'innocent' a victim in terms of her own abuse suffering. Besides, Gemma's attack on Ruth is linked to, and instigated by, Ruth trying to steal Gemma's partner at the time, Stephen. Put differently, no character is conventionally 'innocent' here.

Thirdly, one encounters differing killers for each murder victim as opposed to the expected one; whereas Gemma is revealed to have been killed by Martha/Mary, Aidan is revealed to be the killer of his own abuser: his stepmother Mary Trelease. And much like the story's victims are 'non-ideal', so are the killers. Whereas Martha/Mary being a killer challenges one's idealised offender world schema as to such characters being male, Aidan being a killer is

non-idealised given his being repentant (see his willingness to confess), and his killing act redeemable. He killed Mary Trelease when younger only to put a stop to her own abuse of him, this motive excusing some of the blame killers normally get allocated. The same can be said of Aidan's stepfather Len, who tries to redeem himself of his own mistreatment of his son by confessing to a crime the son committed. In other words, not all of this novel's criminals are irredeemable.

Fourthly and lastly, the crime novel is not limited to murders alone; it additionally features such crimes as physical and psychological abuse, attempted murder, and the perverting of the course of justice in the form of characters confessing to killing people they have not (given Aidan's confession pointing to Martha/Mary at first).

In sum, the novel's generic deviance and text schema disruption is to do with it featuring an unexpected kind of puzzle, multiple (types of) crimes, and numerous non-idealised victims and criminals. Even more so, it is due to such characters non-conforming to world schemas to do with the idealised victim and criminal/offender role constructs that the novel arguably features social deviance (Gregoriou 2007) too. When discussing character social schemas, Culpeper (2001: 76) uses the 'social role' categorisation to include knowledge about people's social functions. Further to being centred round characters engaged in various kinds of crime, the novel's characters resist the idealised positioning their social role schemas (see Culpeper 2001) have us expect, and hence problematize the world schemas wanting victims purely innocent and criminals senselessly guilty. Put differently and collectively, the story's victims are less victim-like and the criminals less criminal-like than readers' schemas anticipate. Having given a story overview, I next turn to certain narratological concepts which allow me to explore the novel's specific structure and effects in more detail: I inspect plot, discourse and focalisation.

Simpson and Montgomery (1995) use 'plot' to refer to the chronological ordering possible of events – see also 'the happening' (Pike 1981) – and 'discourse' for the design of the

ordering – see also ‘the structure of the telling of the happening’ (Pike 1981). Hoey (2001: 99) objects to the idea of there being a ‘happening’ in fiction at all, and says that it is the “telling [that] always precedes and produces our sense of something being a happening”. He is of the opinion that “[g]enre is in part a reflection of choices of ordering, though without the implication that something existed prior to the telling that was waiting to be ordered” (Hoey, 2001: 105). He goes on to propose the ‘matrix perspective analysis’ as an alternative way of talking about, and visualising, story plotting. Notwithstanding Hoey’s objections and proposal, I argue that Pike’s is a useful distinction partly as it signifies the multiple ways in which the (presumably only) one novel ‘happening’ (regardless of whether it is assumed, and whether it precedes or follows the telling) might be represented in multiple ‘tellings’, but also as the author’s chosen ‘telling’ is instrumental in generating crime novel-important effects, including those of mystery, suspense, misdirection and surprise. What I do borrow from Hoey’s (2001: 99) analytical proposal is the idea of visualising a story’s plot, and doing so in such a way that one is allowed to analyse the narrative whilst “compar[ing] the telling we have with alternative tellings we might have had”. To return to *The Other Half Lives*, it is a novel noteworthy in having its plot deviating from its discourse substantially; again, acknowledging that the plot is arguably not an accurate reflection of what happened (and that this happening is merely what is implied by the telling), the two nevertheless mismatch, and perhaps to an unusual extent.

Table 1 shows this mismatch in some detail. To compile the table, I started by listing what I deem to be the rough/bare bones of the novel’s order-structure i.e. discourse/telling in Table 1’s first column. The chapter names being dates helped, even though many such names are identical, with events happening concurrently and/or on the same date. This table’s second column signals each section’s focaliser (Genette [1972] 1980), as in the character whose viewpoint the narration allows access to; to achieve a “measure of coherence”, “a combination of evaluation and character introspection” is needed (Hoey. 2001: 97). I use ‘main’ alongside

‘focaliser’ as speech reporting can also allow access to viewpoint, but my main focus here lies with the viewpoint indicated through the internally mediated narration, which is limited to just the one character’s perspective in each section/at a time (as opposed to omniscient narration where the perspective would have shifted within each section over and beyond speech reports). This second column is needed as I consider the importance of focaliser choice. The third column indicates each section content or collective happening, with as little detail as can be managed, given the book’s 550-paged length, and the need to capture this content’s complexity precisely but also succinctly. I acknowledge that just as with Hoey’s (2001: 102) matrix analysis, “there are various levels of detail that [such a visualisation] might be constructed to reflect”. Though the first column is chronologically ordered in part (see the dates mostly progress in the expected order as we go down the list), note the discourse departure from the chronological order possible of events as signalled by the plot/happening’s-disordering. This is shown in Table 1’s three right hand columns, each of which indicates the happenings in Ruth, Aidan and Martha/Mary’s lives separately and respectively. These happenings are mostly inclusive of actions, but also important realisations that characters come to, realisations that often relate to other characters’ actions. I again follow Hoey (2001: 93) in this respect; he uses tabulation and argues that participants form one parameter, and time bands (“the cumulative happening”, he calls it) form the other. Though other columns could be added for all other story characters, and Gemma, Simon and Charlie in particular for instance, it is Ruth, Aidan and Martha/Mary that are the most key characters *The Other Half Lives* story is centred around, and the three whose backstories Hannah needed to reveal only slowly, and as the story unfolded. It is for this reason that numbers can only be found in cells that are relevant to each of these three characters’ ‘lives’ alone, the rest of the cells being left blank in each column. As for the Martha/Mary column, it reflects knowledge of this character’s Mary and Martha-related activities needing to be merged in one, with the Martha-events spreading from 1 until 7, and Mary’s from 8 until 24. It is only when all story character

columns are added to this table that numbers can feature on each and every row relating events having to do with characters' 'lives'. I also acknowledge that the 'what happened next?' question "reflects a relationship between reader and text" hence its answer "can be variably precise and this explains the flexibility of time frames" (Hoey, 2001: 100); other readings of the text are possible. To read each character's 'life story' as depicted in this novel, read the content corresponding to each of their columns in that column's numbers' normal numerical order. Doing so signals that the numbers in these columns are disordered significantly (signalling analepsis, for instance). Where these numbers are found in each column more than once, they signal that the same events get visited in the book more than once, and sometimes from different characters' perspectives.

Table 1: The novel's 'telling' (discourse) and 'happening' (plot)

Date/Time: 'telling' order	(main) Focaliser	Content	'happening' order		
			Ruth	Aidan	Martha/ Mary
13/12/07	Ruth	In London, Aidan confesses to Ruth: He killed 'Mary Trelease'.	7	11	
am 29/02/08	Ruth	Ruth reports Aidan's confession to Charlie. She is unable to name the stone hurting her feet when doing so.	10	11	
		Ruth relays the confession that took place on 13/12/07, also elaborating on her reaction to it.	8	11	
1/3/08	Charlie	Charlie and Simon's engagement party.			
later on 1/3/08	Charlie	Charlie and Simon converse after their party.			
		Simon details Aidan's confession to him in the afternoon of 29/02/08.		12	
		Simon details visiting Aidan's supposed victim in the morning of 1/3/08.			
2/3/08	Ruth	After Aidan calls Ruth at home, she reminisces over renting her current house.	3	13	

		We get glimpses of how Ruth met (and came to work for) Aidan on 22.8.07.	6	10	
		We also glimpse as to why she left her Spilling Gallery job/the altercation she had with a 'Mary Trelease' in Spilling (on 18/6/07).	5		12
3/3/08	Simon	Simon discusses the case with his boss.			
	Charlie	After trying but failing to meet Ruth, Charlie visits 'Mary', who refers to her altercation with Ruth in Spilling (18/6/07).	5		12
	Ruth	Charlie and Simon visit Ruth and Aidan.	11	14	
Early 2007	Ruth	Ruth reminisces of how she came to work for Spilling in 2007, 4 years after leaving Lincoln.	4		
		Ruth details her altercation with 'Mary' on 18/6/07.	5		12
3/3/08	Simon	Simon follows Aidan into a Quaker meeting in London, a meeting inclusive of a woman he nicknames <i>Olive Oyl</i> .		15	
	Charlie	Charlie visits Ruth, who details her altercation with 'Mary' in Spilling (June 2007).	5		12
		Ruth recalls her teenage years.	1		
Autumn of 2007	Ruth	Ruth explains how she and Aidan came to visit the London art fair, and what happened in their time there, including his murder confession, and its aftermath. Ruth explains finding a painting by Mary at the London fair.	7	11	
4/3/08	Simon	Simon's boss interrogates him over his whereabouts the previous day, before disclosing that Gemma Crowther (who he nicknamed <i>Olive Oyl</i>) died the night before.			
	Charlie	Charlie has lunch with an attorney, concerned with Ruth's obsessive interest in her.			
		Charlie next visits a Gallery that used to frame Mary's work. Mary's co-worker Jan recalls how Mary came to frame her work there (in October 2007).			10
		Jan details that Mary had gone to an expensive boarding school, Villiers.			1

		Jan explains that Mary had once painted a picture of a dead woman who committed suicide.			11
		Jan details how one of Mary's paintings came to be displayed at the London fair, and what trouble it caused.			
Afternoon 4/3/08	Ruth	Ruth visits Mary and finds the painting of the 'dead' woman, now named 'Martha'.	12		
		Ruth recalls she located Mary's home in December 2007. When visiting her, Mary gifted her a painting.	9		14
	Charlie	Charlie argues with her sister, Olivia.			
		Charlie calls the boarding school about Martha but cannot get detail.			
	Ruth	In a letter to 'Mary', Ruth details her gardening past, and how she tried to steal an unnamed woman's partner (in 2000, in Cherub cottage), after which the man drugged Ruth so his partner could torture her (by forcing her to eat stones from a garden she designed for them), a crime for which the couple were later imprisoned.	2		
Martha/Mary glimpses at Aidan's childhood suffering, and then recalls April 22 2000, when Martha tried to kill herself in front of Aidan, and ultimately 'died'.			7	7	
5/3/08	Charlie	Charlie and Simon discuss the case specifics with colleagues.			
	Olivia	Charlie finds out that Martha published a book in 1987.			6
	Charlie	Charlie reports her recent investigating to her boss. Charlie and Simon discover the specifics of Gemma's death.			
		Charlie discovers who Ruth's torturer was: Gemma.	2		
	Ruth	Ruth and Mary are in Villiers. Ruth explains how they got there. Ruth finds herself able to name Gemma and Stephen.	13		18
		Mary explains having hired a private investigator to follow Ruth after their altercation.			13

Later on 5/3/08	Ruth	Mary tells Ruth that Aidan used to work for Ruth's former boss in Spilling, Saul.	14	9	16
		Mary tells Ruth that Gemma was killed, and (claims so) by Aidan.	15		17
	Charlie	Olivia tells Charlie that Martha's book was about a woman who nearly killed herself over a man, and refers to her friend Senga having written a <i>Future Famous Five</i> piece (in 1999), which was inclusive of Martha and Aidan.			6
	Ruth	Mary tells Ruth that Gemma was killed two days earlier (on 3/3/08), and explains Gemma's dealings after her and Stephen were freed from prison. She claims that Aidan killed Gemma.			17
		Mary explains that Aidan and Martha met at an interview (in 1993).		3	2
	Senga	Here is <i>Future Famous Five</i> piece, dated 23 December 1999, which gives Aidan and Martha's backstory.		4	6
	Chris	DC Chris Gibbs inspects Ruth's house with DC Colin Sellers.			
	Simon	In conversation with a colleague, Simon ponders over the possibility that Aidan killed Gemma, and did so for what she did to Ruth.			
	Charlie	Charlie visits Jan again, who tells her Aidan once had a stalker: Martha.		6	4
	Ruth	Mary explains how Martha came to be infatuated with Aidan, who rejected her.		5	3
		After his rejection, Martha wrote a novel about her infatuation.			5
	Charlie	Charlie talks with Jan at her gallery.			
	Ruth	Mary explains that the <i>Future Famous Five</i> went for a drink in 1999, after which Martha and Aidan had sex. Aidan then avoided her, only to invite her to a private viewing of his work, after which the two argued and then Martha 'killed' herself (in 2000).		7	7
	Charlie	Simon reframes Ruth's obsession with Charlie as admiration. They contemplate as to who Aidan might have killed, given his confession.			
Later on 5/3/08	Ruth	Mary explains what her relationship with Aidan was like, after Martha 'died'.		8	9

	Charlie	Charlie and Simon discuss the case.			
	Ruth	Ruth is in a taxi being driven away from Villiers, but decides to go back.	16		
	Charlie	Charlie visits Spilling, the owner of which, Saul, recounts the altercation between Mary and Ruth.	5		12
		Charlie discovers that Aidan's stepfather, Len Smith, was in prison for killing a woman in 1982: Mary Trelease.		2	
	Ruth	Ruth returns to Mary, and sends her away, only to find injured Aidan.	17	17	20
		Ruth realises that Mary has been lying to her. She shot Aidan.	18	16	19
		Mary returns.			21
	Charlie	Charlie discovers where Ruth and Mary are. She also realises that Mary is Martha.			
	Simon	Simon discovers that Martha didn't die after attempting suicide, but changed her name to Mary Trelease.			8
	Ruth	Mary shoots Ruth.	19		22
		Ruth realises that it was Mary who killed Gemma.	20		15
		Simon comes to injured Ruth's rescue.	21		
		Mary admits to having killed Gemma.			23
		Mary kills herself.			24
12/3/08	Simon	The specifics of Aidan's childhood are detailed. Simon explains that Len Smith took the blame for Aidan's killing of the original Mary Trelease.		1	
		We hear of the aftermath of Martha's failed suicide, i.e. her 'becoming' Mary.			8
1/4/08	Ruth	Saul tells Ruth that Aidan is about to propose.	22	18	

Though the novel is focused on activity 'happenings' taking place mostly in the 29/2/08-5/3/08 period (see Table 1's first column) some of which are chronologically ordered (see Ruth column's events 10-22 given in the expected numerical order, for instance), it comes to uncover happenings much prior to this day set (with Ruth's 1-9 happenings being disordered, for instance). In some respects, a plot and discourse mismatch is to be expected. A "classic detective

novel structure” is one in which “[a] murder is detected, and the story is then told through the eyes of the detective and/or through those of an assistant (such as Dr Watson). At the climax the detective proceeds to tell the story again, recounting the events that led up to the crime and the clues discovered after the crime that led him or her to the criminal” (Hoey, 2001: 107). *The Other Half Lives* does not feature an assistant-like perspective, though it is a crime novel typically featuring mystery, for which reason we perhaps expect events that explain some of the happenings, and which took place early on in the novel’s chronology to feature late in the book. In other words, though this happening/telling mismatch is not one limited to this genre, it is certainly a feature associated with crime fiction; though striking, readers might come to expect it. Such events, like the abuse that Aidan suffered in the hands of his step-parents when young (see his column’s no 1) feature relatively late in the story/in the table’s late rows, and the attack that Ruth suffered in the hands of Gemma (see her column’s no 2) far into the middle of it. Put differently, the novel features several instances of analepsis which enable a necessary happening and telling mismatch; important early events feature late in the table. What this visualisation allows one to do, though, is uncover the order and specifics of these revelations, against the chronological ordering possible of events reflected through this telling, enabling the analyst to ponder over the relationship between the nature of the telling and the effects it generates.

Perhaps equally expected of this genre is the novel relaying the same events more than once, and from different character perspectives at times. For instance, Martha/Mary’s attempted suicide (see her and Aidan’s columns’ no 7s) is relayed several times, as is Ruth’s altercation with Martha/Mary (see Ruth column’s numerous no 5s which correspond to Martha/Mary column’s no 12s). Such variation is of interest; further to Ruth’s version of what happened (2009: 140-6) being particularly detailed, it gives insight as to how it was perceived by Ruth, and why it proved so traumatising for her. Here is what is detailed in a typed Loose Leaf note found in the archive:

“Flashback in Ruth’s pov to confrontation between Mary and Ruth in The Picture Place. It’s much worse/more dramatic than the version we’ve heard already, the version Ruth told Aidan and, later, Charlie [...] Ruth is [...] terrified (because it brings back memories of what happened to her in Lincoln – every attack is *that* attack), and Mary, who also seems terrified and distressed as well as angry, makes it worse by picking up a can of red spray paint and spraying it in Ruth’s face before storming out of the shop. [...] Two things made this incident particularly awful for Ruth. One: Mary acted as if she was the victim of the situation, as if Ruth [...] had harmed her and two: that Mary, her attacker on this occasion, was an artist, and art was the thing that was meant to save her.”

In other words, it is the detailing of the altercation in one of its variants that allows the writer to foreshadow the revelation to come i.e. Ruth’s response to Mary on this day being very much linked to Ruth’s suffering at the hands of Gemma. And though the book opens with Aidan’s confession to the murder of Mary Trelease to Ruth (see Aidan column’s no 11s), it is then followed by the scene of Ruth relaying this confession several months later, at which point Ruth also details and explains her reaction to the name of ‘Mary’ at the time of the confession (see Ruth column’s no s 7 and 8). Even more so, some scenes seem to have been moved in the redrafting novel stage also; in one instance, and as explained in the ‘New plan and comments file’ found in the archive, the author self-instructs to “[t]ake out Ruth’s hotel reminiscence and put it in art fair chapter”, for example. In any case, revisiting a scene from a different character’s perspective is useful for the purposes of what is known as frame repair/reconstruction; where readers ‘miscue’ on textual signals, they need a mechanism for ‘repairing’ their assumptions about the nature of contextual frames (Emmott 1997: 160). With frame repair,

“an element of a frame is reinterpreted and the frame is modified retrospectively. Sometimes this will also involve the retrospective modification of linked frames that are affected by the repair. Sometimes the repair would need to be radical in order to maintain the coherence of the narrative. This typically happens with large-scale surprise endings, or twists in the tale. [...] For these, ‘repair’ hardly seems adequate, and I have called such contexts cases of frame replacement”.

(Stockwell 2020, 201).

As the table signals, it is in recollections of this murder confession scene that readers see Ruth’s reaction to Aidan’s confession, and Aidan’s recognition of who it is that she thinks he is talking about: “*His face: the absolute recognition, the fear, in his eyes.*” (Hannah, 2009: 25). This is the scene readers later need to ‘repair’, this being the moment where Aidan sees Martha/Mary having taken his former victim’s identity to taunt him, for which reason he changes his own story details accordingly. As the editor puts it (in a typed up Editor Note referring to an Early Novel Draft’s p.12 – see University of Leeds special collection), Aidan sees the Martha/Mary link as a way of “disproving [his own] confession, which he’s realised was a mistake”. The book’s most important frame replacement takes place toward the end though, where readers, detectives and the character of Ruth all realise that Mary is/was Martha, at which point the whole narrative needs rethinking from scratch, all of the specifics of Mary’s storytelling about Martha needing to be understood along the lines of her talking about herself (i.e. the two characters of Mary and Martha needing to share the same life-column). The opening of the book giving little detail of the specifics of Martha/Mary’s life is of use here – notice the opening rows of the table denying any detail/numbers in the latter’s life-column, generating mystery.

The novel's preferred internal focalisers are alternating between Charlie and Ruth (see Table 1's second column) for the most part, with other characters (like Simon) featuring but as less preferred choices in terms of focalising bulk. Shifting focalisers is useful for misdirection purposes; it unsettles narrative perspective (Seago 2014). Having some of the narration focalised through the Charlie and Simon detectives is only to be expected given the crime fiction text schema previously outlined by Hoey, and the need for readers to lack all the 'story' facts at first, much like the detectives do. Avoiding any access into suspects' perspective is also of use; doing so would have given the crime fiction 'game' away as it would have shed light on characters' innocence/guilt too soon. See also work in Gregoriou (2022) showing another contemporary author, Peter Robinson, consciously deciding against using those viewpoints that would be associated with characters one need to retain much-needed suspicion and suspense around. In other words, Aidan and Martha/Mary being characters the story is *not* focalised through helps hide their guilt. Equally useful for the purposes of misdirection and narrative perspective unsettling is the choice of focaliser Ruth, though. Ruth and Aidan proving to have both been victims of others' continuous abuse serves to explain their being a match. As signalled in a typed Loose Leaf note the writer made, "Aidan [...] carries a lot of pain around with him (which Ruth instantly recognises – it's what draws her to him)". At the same time, her vulnerability as a survivor of abuse, and her love of Aidan, both contribute to her unreliability, or lack of credibility when it comes to the narration given in the extracts focalised through her. Put differently, Ruth's unsteadiness coupled with her sympathetic portrayal of her lover generate ambiguity and uncertainty over her depiction of Aidan's character; she is firstly troubled by his confession, is then misled by Martha/Mary into suspecting him of killing Gemma, but ultimately discovers that he indeed did kill someone, i.e. his stepmother, if only to stop her from abusing him when younger. The novel being partly focalised through Ruth arguably invites a dubious reading of Aidan then, only to question but ultimately somewhat confirm this original reading,

after all. According to Emmott and Alexander (2014: 332), misdirecting authors often “[d]iscredit the characters reporting certain information, thereby making them appear unreliable and giving less salience to the information they report”; Ruth’s unreliability enables the readers’ distrust over Aidan being a killer, the confirmation of his being a killer ultimately coming as a surprise of sorts to the reader. Even more so, the Ruth-focalised chapters enable the revelation of her own back story’s relevance to one of the story’s two killings – Gemma’s – to stay delayed. In the opening section, but also in the letter Ruth writes to Martha/Mary, Ruth ponders over her own suffering at the hands of Gemma and Stephen, and her having been forced to eat stones when tortured by Gemma, this causing her long-time suffering. In the early conversation she has with Charlie, her trauma appears to be so intense that she is unable to name the stone in her shoe, referring to it as “something” or “the thing” (p. 9, 10, 67) that causes her pain (again) instead. An Editor Note found in Hannah’s archive explains the ‘thing’ naming strategy, or clue: “Can’t she call the stone ‘the thing’? [H]ere [is an] opportunity to explain – somewhat – why [she] couldn’t tell Charlie about what [was] wrong with her foot?”, this recommendation materialising as follows:

“If I’d told Charlie Zailer I’d got something in my shoe, she’d have said, ‘Take it out, then.’ How could I have explained why it was so much easier to pretend it wasn’t there?” (Hannah, 2009: 67)

Ruth is similarly unable to name her abusers in recollections to all her dealings with them. In the early conversation she has with Aidan, and in her letter to Ruth, she reduces her assailants to the capitalised pronouns “Him” and “Her” alone, this signalling her reluctance to acknowledge the reality of what they did to her, and also keep them at a distance, dissociated from her, regardless

of their singularity and significance (notice the pronouns being capitalised, something we normally expect of proper nouns):

“I did something stupid. More than stupid. Wrong.’ My voice sounded too loud, so I lowered it. ‘To two people’. Saying their names would have been impossible. I didn’t try. Even in my thoughts I cannot name them. I make do with ‘Him’ and ‘Her’.” (Hannah, 2009: 2)

“I pictured Him and Her, allowed myself to think of their names for the first time in years, and something flared in my mind as it never had before, making them real.” (Hannah, 2009: 195)

Further to the writer’s naming strategising allowing her to give an impression of Ruth’s trauma, though, it additionally allows these segments to hide the identity of who Gemma, also nicknamed *Olive Oyl* by Simon, is for a significant duration of the novel. It is for this reason that – when it does get revealed that this ‘Her’/*Olive Oyl* is actually the murder victim Gemma – it does so to readers’ surprise, enabling a frame repair or replacement (Emmott, 1997), i.e. readers’ rethinking of previously thought about circumstances. This foreshadowing, misdirection and reconstruction/revelation that the naming strategy enables is important; for Gemma being Ruth’s abuser proves key to the motive ‘Martha/Mary’ was attempting to use when framing Aidan for Gemma’s murder.

Lastly, a repair is needed to recognise the importance to be given to the double meaning of Len Smith sending Aidan the message: “Tell Aidan I’d never let anyone hurt him – I never have and never will.” (Hannah, 2009: 536). As the detectives acknowledge, this message can be read in multiple ways. Though interpretable along the lines of Len claiming he killed Mary

Trelease (who was then hurting him), it is also interpretable along the lines of Len promising to keep Aidan's murder-secret, in addition to taking the blame for it (preventing him from 'hurting' by being imprisoned); 'hurt' can be read in terms of various kinds of harm.

I end by focusing on the ways in which some of the novel's early mentions of Aidan and Martha/Mary were treated in one of the redrafting novel stages, in light of them having ultimately both proved to have been killers. This is worth exploring; as Chapman argues, "the process of production" can be seen as "the site of creativity and the proper focus of scrutiny" (2020: 16), whilst also allowing the analyst to inspect author intentionality or, at least, purposefulness. I take the two characters in turn.

4 On Killers' Early Mentions

When registering Ruth's first reaction to meeting Aidan, the novel refers to her "utter surprise at the sight of him", and him being "the right person" (Early Novel Draft's p. 68) for what she was looking for, this meaning both work, and love/support, after her own suffering, at least in retrospect. In redrafting this scene though, and among other changes, Hannah's annotations signal her adding a sentence actually explaining Ruth's surprise: "It had nothing to do with attractiveness, though I registered that he was unusually attractive" (2009: 77). This is arguably an important addition to the draft, as it signals her attraction to him from the start, whilst foreshadowing and hinting at his unusualness ('unusually attractive')/social deviance as a character simultaneously. Later on, the Early Novel Draft's sentence "I found him both beautiful and disturbing to look at" (Early Novel Draft's p. 69) gets crossed out/removed from the final version, perhaps as her attractiveness to him has already been established with the last addition, but also as 'disturbing' could have possibly hinted at his deviance a little too much, maybe even foreshadowing his tendency for violence in a too-obvious way. In other words, the novel's final

draft shows a move to Ruth finding him (strangely) attractive sooner, whilst sustaining the clue to his so-called ‘unusualness’, but doing so more subtly. This shift is also explained in a detailed Loose Leaf Note summary found in the archive which reads “As soon as she saw him, she had strong feelings about him - didn’t know if it was just physical attraction, but it didn’t seem to be – it was as if she recognised something in him, without knowing what it was”.

The early depiction of Martha/Mary is given through Charlie’s perspective, when the latter first visits her at home. Both the early and finalised versions of the book feature the same opening paragraph depiction of Martha/Mary, with a detailed physical description and references to the woman having “nothing sinister” (2009: 107) about her. Having said that, an Early Novel Draft 6-lined section of her looking “tramp-like” (Early Novel Draft’s p. 101) gets removed, replaced with the sentence “She dressed like someone who didn’t give a damn what she looked like. Charlie had been through similar phases” (2009: 107). This addition is of interest, given that it is less condemnatory and hence more understanding of the Martha/Mary character than the original. In this respect, the revised version of the text arguably leads the reader toward a more sympathetic account of a character who turns out to be criminal, and hence misdirects them away from reading Martha/Mary as suspicious at first read. Lastly, when further comparing the two text versions, one encounters interesting additions to do with Martha/Mary’s accent being noted during this bit of the encounter. An annotation refers to her voice as “extraordinary” (Early Novel Draft’s p. 102), while another annotation, and the revised text, read as follows: “Her voice was at odds with her surroundings [...] What was someone who spoke like a member of the royal family doing in the Winstanley estate?” (2009: 108-9). Martha/Mary’s accent hints at her privileged upbringing, but also relies on readers being prejudiced with reference to certain accents not being fitting for certain contexts/indicating status (for links between accent, class and status, see Snell 2018). Put differently, the accent description relies on problematic world schemas readers bring to text processing. This segment could have been added so as to generate

much needed suspicion around her character, a suspicion forming a clue to the woman's ill-doings. Though the Early Novel Draft's reference to the woman's "upper crust" accent (Early Novel Draft's p. 103) gets deleted from the final version, both versions feature the woman's "refined voice" as sounding "out of place in the drab, cramped room that Charlie wondered if she was a Trustafarian – playing at slumming it" (2009: 113). In other words, though both versions refer to the accent being out of place and hence proving a clue to who she is, the finalised version brings this clue to the foreground, with the Charlie-focalised narration calling the reader's attention to it sooner. This clue is explained in a typed Loose Leaf Note found in the archive: "Mary has a refined accent [...] doesn't belong in her surroundings at all" (handwritten page 9).

5 Conclusion

In this paper, I argued that cognitive stylistics coupled with access to writers' work-in-progress material has effect-explanatory power, particularly when it comes to the study of formulaic genre fiction such as that to do with crime. *The Other Half Lives* both complies with, and departs from, the crime fiction formula or text schema. It features a mystery the specifics of which are unravelled non-chronologically, while its numerous crimes and non-ideal criminals and victims disrupt readers' world schemas and help enable its surprising effects. Not unlike such fiction, the story's early happenings feature late in the telling, while many happenings are given from different character perspectives. Both of these help unsettle narrative perspective, and generate suspense, mystery, and readers' later repairing and replacing of frames. Focalisation and the working and reworking of killing characters' early depiction are techniques also enabling foreshadowing and misdirection, for readers' sympathies and prejudices to be manipulated accordingly, and for surprise revelations to prove effective, even when a surprise ending is –

given the nature of this genre – only to be expected. Further to analysis of this kind proving of use to anyone fascinated with crime fiction’s textual effects, it can particularly appeal to creative writers, translators and adaptors wanting to understand this genre better. It is only by doing so that they, too, can create the crime fiction effects they desire, whatever their intention, language or even medium.

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