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Translation Notes (unfoldingWord)

Song of Solomon - Introduction

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Song of Songs

1. The title of the book (1:1)
2. The woman longs for the man she loves (1:2–1:7)
3. The man responds to the woman he loves (1:8–1:11)
4. The woman speaks to herself (1:12–1:14)
5. The man praises the woman he loves (1:15)
6. The woman responds to the man she loves (1:16–2:1)
7. The man responds to what the woman said in 2:1 (2:2)
8. The woman speaks to the man she loves, herself, and the women of Jerusalem (2:3–3:11)
9. The man praises the woman he loves (4:1–4:11)
10. The garden metaphor (4:12–5:1)
11. The woman and the women of Jerusalem speak to each other (5:2–6:1)
12. The woman speaks to herself (6:2–6:3)
13. The man praises the woman he loves (6:4–10)
14. The man goes to the walnut tree orchard and imagines he is among chariots (6:11–6:12)
15. The women of Jerusalem speak to the woman and the man replies to them (6:13)
16. The man praises the woman he loves and expresses his desire to be intimate with her (7:1–9a)
17. The woman responds to the man she loves (7:9b–8:3)
18. The woman speaks to the women of Jerusalem (8:4)
19. The women of Jerusalem see the woman and man coming from the wilderness (8:5a)
20. The woman expresses her thoughts on their love to the man she loves (8:5b–7)
21. The woman's brothers speak about their sister (8:8–9)
22. The woman responds to her brothers (8:10–12)
23. The man and the woman speak their concluding thoughts to each other (8:13–14)

There are different views among biblical scholars regarding how this book is structured and who is speaking in different places, and therefore how it should be outlined. The outline above attempts to offer a reasonable and general way of outlining this book but there are other possible ways this book could be outlined.

What is the Song of Songs about?

The Song of Songs is a poem or a series of poems that celebrate love and intimacy between a man and a woman. Jews traditionally have interpreted the book as a picture of God's love for his people Israel. Until the 1800's the main view among Christians was that this book is primarily a picture of love between Christ and his bride, Christians. Since the 1800's the more common view of the meaning of this book among Christians is that it is a poem or a series of poems that give a beautiful picture of love between a man and a woman. Many Christians also think that even though the main meaning of this poem is to give a beautiful portrayal of romantic love between a man and a woman, that there are lessons in this book to be learned about God's love for his bride, Christians.

Who wrote the Song of Songs?

The first verse of the book ("The song of songs, which is of Solomon") gives the idea that King Solomon of Israel wrote it. However, there are different possible ways to interpret the meaning of this title. A translation note for this verse discusses the different possible meanings.

How should the title of this book be translated?

This book is traditionally titled "Song of Songs," which means the very best song, or "Song of Solomon." It may also be called "Songs of Love," "Great Poems of Love," or "The Love Songs of Solomon." (See: How to Translate Names)

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What place do the descriptions of sexual behavior have in the Song of Songs?

The Song of Songs approves of sexual behavior expressing love between a husband and his wife.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

How many characters are in the Song of Songs?

The two main characters in this book are the man and the woman, who love each other. In [8:8-9](#) the woman's brothers speak among themselves and in different places throughout the book a group of women called the "daughters of Jerusalem," speak or are spoken to. However, it is possible that the group of women is not real and that the woman only imagined them and that they are put into the poem for poetic effect.

Some interpreters believe there may be more characters than these, but this is not certain. The ULT and UST versions recognize only the man, the woman, the group of women (and possibly a group of friends in some parts), and the woman's brothers.

What are the lines in the UST about people speaking?

The Song of Songs is a poem that shows the thoughts and words of a man, a woman, the woman's friends, and the woman's brothers. Throughout the poem, the author does not identify the speakers and their audience. So to help readers

understand the poem, some translations attempt to identify the speaker and the audience. It is not always certain who the speaker is, so sometimes translations disagree about who is speaking.

Before each speech, the UST has a header which identifies the speaker and often the audience in ways like this: "The woman speaking to the women of Jerusalem," "The woman speaking to the man," "The man speaking to the woman," or "The woman speaking to herself." Translators are encouraged to include these ways of identifying the speaker and the audience, and to format them differently from the scripture text. The translators should also include an initial note explaining that these explanations are not actually part of the text of scripture.

There are different views among Bible scholars about who the man is who is in love with the woman, whether it is a shepherd boy or King Solomon or whether both speak in this book at various times and are competing for the woman's love. The headers in the UST will indicate when the man is speaking or being spoken to with headers such as "The man speaking to the woman he loves" and "The woman speaking to the man she loves," but will not indicate the identity of the man.

How should one translate the Song of Songs if the readers will view certain terms as coarse, vulgar, or improper?

Readers might consider many images or forms appearing in the Song of Songs as improper when translated. The translator should try to avoid offensive language if possible, by using expressions that will not cause offense. (See: Euphemism)

How do I translate metaphors and similes in this book?

There are many metaphors and similes in this book. These figures of speech are used to add poetic beauty and emotional effect, however their meaning is sometimes unclear and sometimes it is unclear whether or not there is a sexual meaning intended or a double meaning (both a literal and a sexual meaning). However, though meanings are often unclear, it is not always necessary to clarify the meaning and often ambiguity in translation is best. You can translate the words as they are written in order to avoid committing to a specific meaning. (See: Metaphor)

Translating terms of endearment

The word the ULT translates as “my beloved” occurs 26 times in this book and each time it occurs the woman uses it to refer to the man she loves. You should translate this term consistently throughout this book. The word the ULT translates as “my darling” appears nine times in this book. Each time it occurs the man uses it to refer to the woman he loves. You should translate this term consistently throughout the book.

Song of Solomon - Chapter 1 Introduction*Important figures of speech in this chapter***Metaphors**

In the ancient Near East, it was common to describe a woman using metaphors involving animals. In many cultures today, this can be considered offensive. Different metaphors of beauty are used in different cultures. (See: Metaphor)

*Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter***The lines indicating who is speaking and who is being spoken to.**

Throughout the poem, the author does not identify the speakers and their audience. So to help readers understand the poem, some translations attempt to identify the speaker and the audience. It is not always certain who the speaker is, so sometimes translations disagree about who is speaking. Before each speech, the UST has a header which identifies the speaker and the audience. You may wish to do the same in your translation.

“I am black”

In the ancient Near East, rich people usually had lighter skin because they did not need to work outside in the sun. This young woman had to work outside in the sun, and her skin became dark as a result and this is why she says “I am black” in [1:5-6](#).

Song of Solomon 1:1 (#1)

“The Song of Songs which {is} of Solomon”

This verse is the title of this book. Use whatever formatting convention is most natural in your language for indicating that something is the title of a poem or song. The ULT places this line further to the left than the other lines in this book to indicate that this verse is the title of the book.

See: Poetry

Song of Solomon 1:1 (#2)**“The Song of Songs”**

The possessive form is being used here to indicate a comparison with other **songs** and to show that this **song** is the best or greatest of all **songs**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use another form to indicate this. Alternate translation: “The best song” or “The most excellent song” or “The greatest song”

See: Possession

Song of Solomon 1:1 (#3)**“is} of Solomon”**

The phrase **of Solomon** could mean: (1) Solomon wrote this song. Alternate translation: “Solomon wrote” (2) this song was dedicated to Solomon. Alternate translation: “is dedicated to Solomon” (3) this song was about Solomon. Alternate translation: “is about Solomon”

Song of Solomon 1:2 (#1)**“Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth”**

The author is using an emphatic form to indicate the fervor and intensity of the desired kisses. Consider using a natural way in your language to indicate this. Alternate translation: “Let him kiss me again and again with the kisses of his mouth” or “Let him cover my face with the kisses of his mouth”

See: Poetry

Song of Solomon 1:2 (#2)

“your love”

In this book every occurrence of the words **you** and **your** are singular. Your language may require you to mark these forms.

See: Forms of 'You' — Singular

Song of Solomon 1:2 (#3)

"better {is} your love than wine"

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **love**, you could express the same idea with a verbal form or in another way. Alternate translation: "the way you love me is better than wine" or "your loving is better than wine"

See: Abstract Nouns

Song of Solomon 1:2 (#4)

"better {is} your love than wine"

Alternate translation: "I enjoy having you near me more than I enjoy drinking wine" or "your love is more pleasant than wine"

Song of Solomon 1:2-4 (#1)

""Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth,"

These lines of poetry most likely indicate thoughts or words that the woman is speaking or thinking to herself while she is alone. Your language may have a way of indicating speech that is expressed toward a person who is not present to hear what is being said.

See: Poetry

Song of Solomon 1:3 (#1)

"As for the smell of"

The Hebrew word which the ULT translates as **As for** could: (1) indicate reference, in which case it should be translated as the ULT translates it or with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "In reference to the smell of" or (2) indicate emphasis or be making an assertion. Alternate translation: "Truly, the smell of" or "Indeed, the smell of"

Song of Solomon 1:3 (#2)

"your oils—{they are} good"

Here, **oils** refers to colognes or perfumes. In the authors culture pleasant smelling spices were mixed into olive oil in order to make a pleasant smelling perfume which was then put on the skin. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. If men do not put pleasant smelling things on their skin in your culture you could say that the man being spoken of here smells pleasant. Alternate translation: "your colognes—they are good" or "your scented oils—they are good" or "your skin—it is good" or "your body—it is good"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 1:3 (#3)

"oil poured out {is} your name"

The woman is describing the man she loves and his reputation by association with his **name**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: "oil poured out is your reputation" or "oil poured out is the honor that people give to you"

See: Metonymy

Song of Solomon 1:3 (#4)

"oil poured out {is} your name"

The woman makes a comparison between the man's reputation (which she refers to as his **name**) and scented oil that is poured out after which the good smell of the oil spreads as the air moves. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the comparison. Alternate translation: "your reputation spreads more and more like the scent of scented oil which spreads after it has been poured out" or "your reputation spreads more and more like the scent of perfumed oil which spreads after it has been poured out"

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 1:3 (#5)

"Therefore"

The words translated as **Therefore** indicate that what follows is a result of what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a result of what came before. Alternate translation: "As a result"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Song of Solomon 1:3 (#6)

"marriageable women"

The word translated as **marriageable women** refers to a young woman who is old enough to be married or to a young woman who has recently been married but not yet given birth to a child. Your language and culture may have a term for a woman during this stage of life that you could use in your translation. You could also explain the meaning of the term in the context as the ULT does or use a general phrase as modeled by the UST.

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 1:4 (#1)

"Draw me"

Alternate translation: "Lead me"

Song of Solomon 1:4 (#2)

"after you"

The word **you** refers to the man and so is singular. Your language may require you to mark this form. In this book every occurrence of the words **you** and **your** are singular.

See: Forms of You

Song of Solomon 1:4 (#3)

"let us run"

The word **us** refers to the young woman and the man that she is addressing so **us** is inclusive. Your language may require you to mark these forms. Alternate translation: "let you and I run"

See: Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

Song of Solomon 1:4 (#4)

"let us run"

Here, the woman uses **run** as a poetic way of expressing her desire that she and the man she loves hurry and go away together. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "let us hurry"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 1:4 (#5)

"The king"

Here, the woman speaks of the man she loves as if he were **The king**. Here, the term **king** is a term of endearment and is an affectionate way for the woman to refer to the man she loves. The woman is not speaking of an actual king but rather this is a poetic way of speaking. The woman is still speaking of the same man that she was speaking of in [1:2-3](#). If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning by using a simile. Alternate translation: "He whom I love is like a king to me and" or "He who is like a king to me"

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 1:4 (#6)

"The king has brought me"

The original language word which the ULT translates as **he has brought me** could be describing: (1) a request or wish that the woman has. Alternate translation: "May the king bring me" (2) an action that has already happened. Alternate translation: "The king brought me"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 1:4 (#7)

"has brought me"

Your language may say "taken" rather than **brought** in contexts such as this. Use whichever is more natural. Alternate translation: "has taken me"

See: Go and Come

Song of Solomon 1:4 (#8)**""Let us be glad and rejoice in you."**

The **us** in these two lines could: (1) be a group of young women speaking about the man. Alternate translation: "We will be glad and rejoice in you. We will profess your love more than wine" (2) be the woman continuing to speak to the man she loves and using **us** to refer to herself. Alternate translation: "May I be glad and rejoice in you. May I profess your love more than wine" (3) be the woman continuing to speak and using **us** to refer to herself and the man. Alternate translation: "Let you and I be glad and rejoice in you. Let you and I profess your love more than wine"\n

Song of Solomon 1:4 (#9)**""let us run."**

The word **us** is inclusive all three times that it occurs in this verse. Your language may require you to mark these forms.

See: Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

Song of Solomon 1:4 (#10)**"Let us be glad and rejoice"**

The terms **glad** and **rejoice** mean similar things. The author is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: "Let us greatly rejoice" or "Let us rejoice greatly"

See: Doublet

Song of Solomon 1:4 (#11)**"Let us profess"**

Alternate translation: "Let us praise"

Song of Solomon 1:4 (#12)**"more than wine"**

The phrase **more than wine** could mean: (1) that the women would **profess** the man's **love** as **more** delightful **than wine**. Alternate translation: "as being more delightful than wine" (2) that the

women would **profess** the delightfulness of the man's **love more than** they would **profess** the delightfulness of **wine**. Alternate translation: "more than we profess wine"

Song of Solomon 1:4 (#13)**"your love more than wine"**

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **love**, you could express the same idea with a verbal form or in another way. Alternate translation: "the way you love is better than wine" or "the way you love me is better than wine"

See: Abstract Nouns

Song of Solomon 1:4 (#14)**"rightly do they love you"**

Here the speaker could be: (1) the woman speaking to the man about the young women who admire him. Alternate translation: "rightly do the young women love you" (2) the young women speaking of other women who admire the man. Alternate translation: "rightly do the other young women love you" or "rightly do the young women love you". You may wish to indicate who the presumed speaker is here by placing a heading above this section as modeled by the UST.

Song of Solomon 1:4 (#15)**"do they love you"**

Alternate translation: "do they admire you"

Song of Solomon 1:4 (#16)**"rightly do they love you"**

Alternate translation: "it is right that other young women adore you" or "no wonder other young women adore you"

Song of Solomon 1:5 (#1)**"I {am} black"**

Here, **I am black** means “My skin is black” or “My skin is very dark.” If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: “My skin is black” or “My skin is very dark”

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 1:5 (#2)

"but lovely"

Here, the word **but** is introducing a contrast. What follows the word **but** is in contrast to what was expected, because in the author's culture it was not considered attractive for a woman to have skin that was dark as a result of much exposure to the sun. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a contrast. Alternate translation: “yet lovely” or “but still lovely”

See: Connect — Contrast Relationship

Song of Solomon 1:5 (#3)

"daughters of Jerusalem"

The woman is using the possessive form to poetically describe where the young women (whom she calls **daughters**) live. The phrase **daughters of Jerusalem** refers to the young women who were from the city of Jerusalem (These are probably the same women as the “marriageable women” in [1:3](#) and the women referred to as “they” in [1:4](#)). If your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could indicate the association between these young women and **Jerusalem** in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “daughters from Jerusalem” or “young women from Jerusalem”

See: Possession

Song of Solomon 1:5 (#4)

""like the tents of Kedar,"

The Kedar were a tribe of people who used black goat skins to make their tents, thus their tents were dark in color. The woman is comparing her skin to these tents which were dark in color. The phrase **the curtains of Solomon** refers to the curtains in Solomon's palace which were very beautiful. The point of the first comparison is that the woman's

skin was dark (referring back to and further describing the word **black**) and the point of the second comparison is that the woman was beautiful (referring back to and further describing the word **lovely**). If it would be helpful in your language, you could use equivalent comparisons from your culture or you could retain these similes and express these meanings as plainly as possible. Alternate translation: “like the dark color of the tents of the people of the tribe Kedar, like the curtains of Solomon's palace” or “as dark as the color of the tents of Kedar, as beautiful as the curtains in Solomon's palace”

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 1:6 (#1)

"Do not look at me"

The phrase **Do not look at me** could mean: (1) that the woman does not want people to look at her with contempt. Alternate translation: “Do not look at me with contempt” or “Do not look down on me” or “Do not look at me disapprovingly” (2) that the woman does not want people to stare at her in admiration of her beauty. Alternate translation: “Do not stare at me because I am so beautiful”

Song of Solomon 1:6 (#2)

"that I"

The word **that** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: “because I”

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Song of Solomon 1:6 (#3)

"that I {am} black"

Here, **I am black** means “my skin is black” or “my skin is very dark” as it did in [1:5](#). If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: “that my skin is black” or “that my skin is very dark”

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 1:6 (#4)**"that the sun scorched me"**

The word **that** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: "because the sun scorched me"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Song of Solomon 1:6 (#5)**"that the sun scorched me"**

The phrase **the sun scorched me** refers to sunlight shining on the skin and means "the sun burned me" or "the sun tanned my skin dark." If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "that the sun burned me" or "that the sun turned my skin brown" or "that the sun tanned my skin"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 1:6 (#6)**""as} keeper of the vineyards—"**

Alternate translation: "as caretaker of the vineyards—my vineyard that is mine, I have not taken care of"

Song of Solomon 1:6 (#7)**"my vineyard that {is} mine, I have not kept"**

The woman is probably using the phrase **my vineyard** to refer to her complexion. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "my skin, I have not protected from the sun" or "my complexion, I have not protected from the sun"

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 1:7 (#1)**"you} whom my soul loves"**

The woman is using one part of herself, her **soul**, to represent all of her. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression

from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "you whom I love"

See: Synecdoche

Song of Solomon 1:7 (#2)**"where do you graze"**

The woman is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers might misunderstand this, you could supply these words from the context. Alternate translation: "where do you graze your flock" or "where do you graze your sheep"

See: Ellipsis

Song of Solomon 1:7 (#3)**""where do you graze?"**

The phrase **where do you graze** and the phrase **Where do you make your flocks lie down at noontime** mean basically the same thing. The second phrase emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and it would be good to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation rather than combining them. However, if saying very similar things twice might confuse your readers, you could combine the phrases into one. Alternate translation: "Where do you pasture your flocks in the middle of the day"

See: Parallelism

Song of Solomon 1:7 (#4)**""For why should I be like a woman who covers herself"**

The woman is not asking for information, but is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate her words as a statement, a request, or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "I do not want to be like a woman who covers herself beside the flocks of your companions" or "Please do not let me be like a woman who covers herself beside the flocks of your companions" or "Tell me so that I will not be

like a woman who covers herself beside the flocks of your companions"

See: Rhetorical Question

Song of Solomon 1:7 (#5)

""like a woman who covers herself"

The phrase **covers herself** means **covers herself with a veil** and the phrase **your companions** refers to the other shepherds who pastured their animals near the flocks of the man and were probably his friends. If it would help your readers, you could express these phrases explicitly. Alternate translation: "like a woman who covers herself with a veil beside the flocks of the other shepherds"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 1:7 (#6)

""For why should I be like a woman who covers herself"

In the authors culture women who were prostitutes often covered their faces with a veil so that people would not recognize them. It would not be normal for a young unmarried woman to be wandering among shepherds and the woman did not want to be mistaken for a prostitute. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the basis of this comparison. Alternate translation: "Tell me where you pasture your flocks so that I will not need to wander around among the flocks of your companions like a prostitute when I am looking for you" or "For why should I be like a prostitute who covers herself with a veil and wanders about beside the flocks of your companions"

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 1:8 (#1)

""If you do not know, most beautiful among women,"

If it would help your readers to see that this is a conditional statement then you could supply a word like "then" in your translation. Alternate translation: "If you do not know, most beautiful among women, then go out"

See: Connect — Hypothetical Conditions

Song of Solomon 1:8 (#2)

"If you do not know, most beautiful among women"

If it would be more natural in your language you could begin this verse with the phrase **most beautiful among women**. Alternate translation: "Most beautiful among women, if you do not know"

See: Information Structure

Song of Solomon 1:8 (#3)

"most beautiful among women"

Alternate translation: "you who are the most beautiful of all women"

Song of Solomon 1:8 (#4)

"go out"

Your language may say "come" rather than **go** in contexts such as this. Use whichever is more natural. Alternate translation: "come out"

See: Go and Come

Song of Solomon 1:8 (#5)

"and pasture your young goats"

Alternate translation: "and let your young goats graze" or "and graze your young goats"

Song of Solomon 1:8 (#6)

"and pasture your young goats"

Alternate translation: "and graze your young goats" or "and let your young goats eat"

Song of Solomon 1:9 (#1)

""To a mare among the chariots of Pharaoh"

If it would be more natural in your language you could begin this verse with the phrase **my darling**.

Alternate translation: "My darling, I liken you to a mare among the chariots of Pharaoh"

See: Information Structure

Song of Solomon 1:9 (#2)

""To a mare among the chariots of Pharaoh"

Here, it is implied that the man is comparing the woman to the beauty of a mare and not to other qualities of a horse. The king of Egypt's horses were known to be the best in the world and so they would have been very beautiful. If it would help your readers you could explain the point of this comparison. Alternate translation: "Your beauty is like the beauty of Pharaoh's chariot horses" or "I compare your beauty to the beauty of Pharaoh's chariot horses"

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 1:9 (#3)

"among the chariots of Pharaoh"

The man is using the phrase **the chariots** to mean "the horses that pull the chariots." If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "among the horses that pull Pharaoh's chariots" or "among the horses that pull the chariots of Pharaoh"

See: Metonymy

Song of Solomon 1:9 (#4)

"Pharaoh"

Here, the term **Pharaoh** does not refer to a specific Egyptian king but is a title used to designate the acting king of Egypt. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "the king of Egypt"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 1:10 (#1)

"with earrings"

The term the man uses, which the ULT translates as **earrings**, is a term which refers to strings of small ornaments or jewels which apparently hung down

the side of one's face. If your readers would not be familiar with this type of jewelry you could use a more general term and, if you are using footnotes, you could make a footnote explaining this type of jewelry. Alternate translation: "with neck ornaments" or "with strings of jewels"

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 1:10 (#2)

"with necklaces"

necklaces are a type of jewelry worn around the neck in order to make a person look more attractive. If your readers would not be familiar with **necklaces**, you could use the name of something similar in your area worn around the neck for the purpose of looking nice or you could use a more general term and, if it would help your readers, you could make a footnote explaining what a necklace is if you are using footnotes. Alternate translation: "with neck ornaments" or "with strings of jewels"

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 1:11 (#1)

"Earrings of"

See how you translated the term "earrings" in the previous verse.

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 1:11 (#2)

"Earrings of gold we will make for you"

The reason the word **we** is used here could be: (1) because the man is saying that he will have someone make the **Earrings of gold** for him. The man is not including the woman so **we** would be exclusive. Your may language require you to mark these forms. Alternate translation: "Earring of gold I will have someone make for you" or "I will pay someone to make earring of gold for you" (2) because he is using a commonly accepted use of the plural in his language and expects the woman to understand that he means "I." Alternate translation: "Earrings of gold I will make for you" (3) because a group of people are speaking here and not the man. If you are using section headers

you can place a header above this section indicating who you think is speaking.

See: Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

Song of Solomon 1:11 (#3)

"with studs of silver"

Alternate translation: "with beads of silver" or "that are decorated with silver"

Song of Solomon 1:12 (#1)

"the king"

See how you translated the phrase "The king" in [1:4](#) where it is used with the same meaning.

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 1:12 (#2)

"was} on his couch"

The word which the ULT translates as **couch** could: (1) refer to a couch and be translated as **couch** as modeled by the ULT. (2) refer to a table. Alternate translation: "was at his table"

Song of Solomon 1:12 (#3)

"my nard"

The term **nard** refers to pleasant smelling perfumed oil that was made from the roots of the **nard** plant. If your readers would not be familiar with **nard** plants, you could use a general expression or describe what **nard** is. Alternate translation: "my perfumed oil" or "my pleasant smelling perfume made from the nard plant"

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 1:12 (#4)

"gave off its smell"

Alternate translation: "gave off its good smell" or "spread its pleasant smell"

Song of Solomon 1:13 (#1)

""A bundle of myrrh {is} my beloved to me;"

In the author's culture women would sometimes place a small bag or pouch of myrrh on a necklace so it would hang on their neck and they could enjoy its pleasant smell. The woman makes a comparison between the enjoyable experience of having a bag of myrrh near her and the enjoyable experience of having the man she loves near her. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use a simile to show the comparison. Alternate translation: "I enjoy having my beloved near me throughout the night like I enjoy the smell of a bag of myrrh"

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 1:13 (#2)

"myrrh"

myrrh was a pleasant smelling incense that was made from resin taken from the bark of a certain kind of tree. One of the things it was used for was to make a person smell good. If your readers would not be familiar with **myrrh**, you could use the name of something pleasant smelling in your area that might be used for this purpose or you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: "pleasant smelling perfume"

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 1:13 (#3)

"is} my beloved"

Alternate translation: "is my lover"

Song of Solomon 1:13 (#4)

""A bundle of myrrh {is} my beloved to me;"

If using the word **breasts** would offend your readers, you could use an appropriate euphemism for **breasts** or state the meaning of the phrase **between my breasts it stays** using a more general expression. Alternate translation: "My beloved stays very close to me during the night, like a bundle of myrrh hanging near my chest"

See: Euphemism

Song of Solomon 1:13 (#5)

"it stays"

Here, the original language word that the ULT translates with the phrase **it stays** is ambiguous regarding what it is that **stays**. This word could: (1) indicate that the **bundle of myrrh** is what **stays**, in which case it should be translated as something similar to **it stays** as modeled by the ULT. (2) mean that the man **stays**. Alternate translation: "he stays"

Song of Solomon 1:13 (#6)

"it stays"

Here, the word **stays** could: (1) refer to staying in one place for a prolonged period of time in which case you could translate this word with something similar to **stays** as modeled by the ULT. (2) refer to lying down. Alternate translation: "it lies"

Song of Solomon 1:14 (#1)

"henna blossoms"

The phrase **henna blossoms** refers to **blossoms** from the **henna** plant which produces clusters of flower blossoms which have a pleasant smell. If your readers would not be familiar with this plant, you could use the name of a plant in your area that has a pleasant smell, you could explain in your translation that henna is a plant that produces fragrant blossoms, or you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: "fragrant flowers" or "fragrant blossoms from the henna plant"

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 1:14 (#2)

""A cluster of henna blossoms {is} my beloved to me,"

Here, **vineyards of En Gedi** is probably a reference to the woman's body because at that time **vineyards** were often used to convey a sexual meaning and because the phrase **in the vineyards of Engedi** is in parallel to the phrase in the previous verse in which the woman refers to her body by saying that her "beloved" is like a "bundle of myrrh" which "stays" (the night) "between" her

"breasts." In this verse the woman makes a comparison between the pleasurable experience of the smell of henna blossoms and her enjoyment of having the man she loves near her body. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use a simile to show the comparison. Because the woman describes her body in a poetic way with images, it is recommended that you either maintain these images or select images from your context and language that communicate the same concepts. Alternate translation: "I enjoy being near my beloved's body like I enjoy the smell of the henna flowers in the vineyards of Engedi" or "I delight in my beloved being near my body like I enjoy the smell of the henna flowers in the vineyards of Engedi"

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 1:15 (#1)

"Behold you! {" - "Behold you"

The man is using the term **Behold** to focus attention on what he is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: "Look at you! ... Look at you!"

See:

Song of Solomon 1:15 (#2)

""Behold you! {You are} beautiful, my darling."

The man uses the phrase **Behold you! You are beautiful** two times for emphasis. If saying the same thing twice might be confusing for your readers, you can combine the phrases into one and provide emphasis in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "Behold you—you are beautiful, my darling. Your eyes are doves"

See: Parallelism

Song of Solomon 1:15 (#3)

"my darling"

See how you translated the phrase **my darling** in [1:9](#)

Song of Solomon 1:15 (#4)**"your eyes {are} doves"**

The man makes a comparison between the beauty and gentleness of doves and the woman's eyes. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use a simile to show the comparison or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "your eyes are like doves" or "your eyes are gentle and beautiful"

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 1:16 (#1)**"Behold you"**

The woman is using the term **Behold** to focus attention on what she is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: "Look at you"

See:

Song of Solomon 1:16 (#2)**""Behold you! (You are} handsome, my beloved, truly pleasant."**

If it would be more natural in your language you could either begin or end this verse with the phrase **my beloved**.

See: Information Structure

Song of Solomon 1:16 (#3)**"my beloved"**

See how you translated the phrase **my beloved** in [1:13](#). Alternate translation: "my lover"

Song of Solomon 1:16 (#4)**"truly pleasant"**

The woman is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers might misunderstand this, you could supply these words from the context. Alternate translation: "you are truly pleasant"

See: Ellipsis

Song of Solomon 1:16 (#5)**"our couch is"**

Here, **couch** does not refer to a literal couch but rather to the place where the couple would lie down in the forest. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "the place where we lie down is" or "the place we lie down on like a bed is"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 1:16 (#6)**"leafy"**

Here, the word that the ULT translates as **leafy** refers to plants that are a green color. You could translate **leafy** in a general way such as "green" or if it would help your readers you could indicate specifically what vegetation the word **leafy** refers to. Here, **leafy** could refer to: (1) the grass that the couple laied down on. Alternate translation: "grass" (2) the branches above their meeting place in the forest. Alternate translation: "under the cover of branches" or "shaded by branches"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 1:17 (#1)**""The beams of our house {are} cedars;"**

Here the woman is speaking of the forest as though it were a **house**, the cedar trees as if they were the **beams** of the **house** and **pine** trees as if they were the **rafters** of the **house**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly or use a simile as modeled by the UST. Alternate translation: "Our meeting place is shaded by cedar and pine trees" or "Branches of cedar and pine trees will be a canopy over our meeting place"

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 1:17 (#2)**"are} pine"**

pine is a type of tree that grows tall and close to other trees so that they provide shade from the sun. If your readers would not be familiar with **pine** trees, you could use general phrase describing them or use the name of a tree that grows tall and densely in your area. Alternate translation: "tall leafy trees"

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon - Chapter 2 Introduction

Important figures of speech in this chapter

The woman and man complement each other by using metaphors and similes

In 2:1 the woman uses a metaphor to tell the man she loves that she thinks she is common like a flower that grows on the plains or a lily that grows in the valleys. The man responds in 2:2 by using a simile to tell her how special he thinks she is when compared to other women. She then uses a simile in 2:3 to tell him how special she thinks he is compared to other men. When translating these verses one will need to pay close attention to the translation notes and the UST in order to understand the meaning.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Chiasm

Hebrew poetry sometimes uses a literary device called a "chiasm" (sometimes called "chiasmus"). A chiasm is when words or phrases are ordered in an AB-BA sequence. In [Song of Songs 2:14](#) the author uses a chiasm. The ULT follows the Hebrew order and translates this verse as "show me **your appearance**, make me hear **your voice**, for **your voice** {is} sweet, and **your appearance** {is} lovely" (the repeated phrases are highlighted for the purpose of illustration). Notice that the phrases "your appearance" and "your voice" are repeated in this verse and they are repeated in an AB-BA sequence: "your appearance...your voice...your voice...your appearance."

Song of Solomon 2:1 (#1)

"I {am} a flower of Sharon,"

The woman is speaking of herself as if she is two different types of flowers in order to make a comparison between herself and these flowers. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly, explain the comparison, or use a simile as modeled by the UST. The reason the woman compares herself to these wildflowers is to express that she thinks she has only common beauty and is no more attractive than other young women her age. Alternate translation: "I am as common as a wildflower of Sharon or a lily of the valleys" or "My beauty is as common as a wildflower in Sharon or a lily of the valleys"

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 2:1 (#2)

"am} a flower of"

The original word which the ULT translates as **flower** refers to a specific type of flower which grows on the ground. The exact type of flower that the original word refers to cannot be known with certainty so you could use the name of a pretty wildflower in your area or you could use a general term as modeled by the ULT.

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 2:1 (#3)

"Sharon"

Sharon was the name of a specific plain (a flat area) and the word itself refers to a flat, wide area and so by using the word **Sharon** the woman is probably referring to "plains" in general and expressing that she is like a wildflower that grows on the plains. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly as modeled by the UST.

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 2:1 (#4)

"I {am} a flower of Sharon,"

The phrase **a flower of Sharon** and the phrase **a lily of the valleys** mean very similar things. The second phrase emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and it would be good to show this to

your readers by including both phrases in your translation rather than combining them. However, if saying very similar things twice might confuse your readers, you could combine the phrases into one. Alternate translation: "I am a wildflower that grows in the plains and the valleys"

See: Parallelism

Song of Solomon 2:1 (#5)

"a lily of"

The woman is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers might misunderstand this, you could supply these words from the context. Alternate translation: "I am a lily of"

See: Ellipsis

Song of Solomon 2:1 (#6)

"a lily of"

A **lily** is a type of flower. If your readers would not be familiar with this type of flower, you could use the name of something similar in your area or you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: "a flower of"

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 2:2 (#1)

""Like a lily among thorns,"

The man compares the woman he loves to a **lily among thorns**. The point of this comparison is that in the same way that a **lily** is much more beautiful than **thorns** so the woman is much more beautiful than the other young women. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent comparison or express this meaning in plain language. Alternate translation: "You my darling, are much more beautiful than all other women"

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 2:2 (#2)

"Like a lily"

See how you translated the word **lily** in [2:1](#)

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 2:2 (#3)

"is} my darling"

See how you translated the phrase **my darling** in [1:9](#).

Song of Solomon 2:2 (#4)

"the daughters"

Here, the phrase **the daughters** refers to the **daughters of Jerusalem** mentioned in [1:5](#) and probably refers not just to the young women of Jerusalem but also to all women. If it would help your readers you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "the young women of Jerusalem" or "the other young women"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 2:3 (#1)

""Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest,"

The woman is saying that the man is like an **apple tree** because in the same way that an **apple tree** is more pleasant than the other **trees of the forest**, so the man she loves is more pleasant than other men. If it would be helpful in your language, you could explain the basis of this comparison. Alternate translation: "As apple trees are more pleasant than other trees, so you my beloved are more pleasant than other men"

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 2:3 (#2)

""Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest,"

If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases. Alternate translation: "Among the other young men my beloved is like an apple tree among the trees of the forest" or "Compared to other men my beloved is like an apple tree among the trees of the forest"

See: Information Structure

Song of Solomon 2:3 (#3)

"Like an apple tree"

An **apple tree** is a tree that produces **apples**, a round, pleasant tasting fruit that is about the size of an adult human's fist and has a pleasant smell. If your readers would not be familiar with this type of fruit, you could use the name of a similar fruit in your area that grows on trees or you could use a more general term. (Bible scholars are not totally certain that the word the ULT translates as **apple** refers to an apple. It could refer to an apricot or another type of fruit so if your readers are not familiar with apples but they are familiar with apricots you could "apricot" instead of a general term. Alternate translation: "Like a tree that produces pleasant tasting fruit" or "Like a fruit tree" "Like an apricot tree"

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 2:3 (#4)

"among the trees of the forest"

The phrase **the trees of the forest** refers to the other trees of the forest which were considered common when compared to an apple tree. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "among the other trees of the forest" or "compared to the common trees of the forest"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 2:3 (#5)

"is} my beloved"

See how you translated the phrase **my beloved** in [1:13](#).

Song of Solomon 2:3 (#6)

"among the sons"

Here, the phrase **the sons** refers to the other young men. In the previous verse the man compared the woman to the other "daughters" (young women). Here the woman compares the man she loves to the other young men, whom she calls **the sons**. If it

would help your readers you could indicate explicitly what **the sons** means here. Alternate translation: "among the other young men" or "when compared to all the other men"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 2:3 (#7)

""In his shadow I took delight, and I sat,"

Here the woman continues speaking of the man as if he were an **apple tree**. The word **shadow** refers to the shade of an apple tree which would give protection from the sun and refreshment. To **sit** represents being near or in the presence of the man. The phrase **his fruit is sweet** means that he causes the woman to experience pleasurable feelings in a way that is comparable to eating sweet fruit. If it is possible in your language you should try to retain the images used here, or substitute a comparable image if needed. If you are not able to retain the metaphors without causing misunderstanding, you could use similes or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "He provides me with refreshment and protection when I am in his presence, he gives me great pleasure" or "I sit in his presence and he refreshes and protects me. He is delightful to me like sweet fruit"

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 2:3 (#8)

"In his shadow I took delight, and I sat"

Alternate translation: "In his shade I took delight, and I sat"

Song of Solomon 2:3 (#9)

"I took delight"

Alternate translation: "I passionately desired"

Song of Solomon 2:4 (#1)

"He brought me"

See how you translated the phrase "has brought me" in [1:4](#). The original language word which the ULT translates here as **He brought me** could be

describing: (1) a request or wish that the woman has and not something that has already happened. Alternate translation: "May he bring me" or "I desire him to bring me" (2) an action that has already happened. Alternate translation: "He has brought me"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 2:4 (#2)

"He brought me"

Your language may say "took" rather than **brought** in contexts such as this. Use whichever is more natural. Alternate translation: "He took me"

See: Go and Come

Song of Solomon 2:4 (#3)

"the house of wine"

In the author's culture the phrase **house of wine** was used to refer to a location that people went for the purpose of drinking wine. The phrase does not necessarily indicate a **house** or building so here it could be referring a private location that the couple used as their meeting place, possibly the "house" (location) where they spent time together in the forest (described in [1:17](#)). If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly or use a general expression that allows for either meaning. Alternate translation: "the place where wine is drunk" or "the place where wine is served" or "our meeting place"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 2:4 (#4)

"the house of wine"

Here, **house of wine** most likely does not refer to a literal **house of wine** but instead the woman is probably using this phrase to poetically describe a private meeting place where they could enjoy expressing their love for each other. She is describing their meeting place by using an image that was meaningful in that culture. If it would be helpful in your language, you could retain the literal translation **house of wine** and explain the meaning in a footnote (if you are using them), or you could express the meaning using a different

expression that is meaningful in your culture, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "our meeting place so that we could enjoy our love" or "the place where we could celebrate our love for each other" or "the place where we could consummate our love"

See: Euphemism

Song of Solomon 2:4 (#5)

"and his banner over me {is} love"

The woman is speaking of the man's **love** for her as if it were a **banner**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and he publicly displays his love for me and his intention is to protect me" or "and he covers me with his love"

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 2:4 (#6)

"and his banner"

A **banner** is a flag made out of a large piece of cloth that is attached to the top of a long wooden pole. People groups and kings had their own unique banners by which they identified themselves. If your readers would not be familiar with this term, you could use the name of something used for a similar purpose in your area or you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: "and his flag"

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 2:4 (#7)

"and his banner over me {is} love"

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **love**, you could express the same idea with a verbal form as modeled by the UST.

See: Abstract Nouns

Song of Solomon 2:5 (#1)

""Sustain me with raisin cakes;"

These two phrases mean very similar things. In the author's culture both raisins and **apples** were

believed to give people strength for love. The second phrase emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and it would be good to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation rather than combining them. However, if your readers are unfamiliar with raisins and/or **apples** and you do not have an equivalent food or foods that you could substitute for them here you could combine these two phrases into one and use a general expression. Alternate translation: "Sustain and refresh me with fruit" or "strengthen me with fruit" or "strengthen me for love with fruit"

See: Parallelism

Song of Solomon 2:5 (#2)

"Sustain me" - "refresh me"

The phrases **Sustain me** and **refresh me** are plural imperative forms in the original language. The woman is addressing the man using plural forms to show the intensity of her feelings. Your language may allow you to do the same thing. The ULT indicates the intensity that these two plural forms indicate by placing an exclamation point at the end of this verse. Use a natural form in your language for showing intensity of emotion.

See: Unusual Uses of the Plural

Song of Solomon 2:5 (#3)

""Sustain me with raisin cakes;"

If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of the phrases in this verse, since the second part gives the reason for the result that the first part describes. Alternate translation: "Because I am sick with love, sustain me with raisin cakes and refresh me with apples"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Song of Solomon 2:5 (#4)

"with raisin cakes"

A **raisin** is a dried grape. Raisin cakes were cakes made of dried grapes pressed together. If your readers would not be familiar with this type of fruit, you could use the name of something similar

in your area or you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: "with cakes made of dried fruit"

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 2:5 (#5)

"with apples"

See how you translated the word **apple** in [2:3](#). Alternate translation: "with fruit"

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 2:5 (#6)

"for sick with love {am} I"

The woman speaks of feeling **sick with love** because her feelings of love are so strong for the man that they overwhelm her body as if they were a kind of sickness. She is exaggerating in order to emphasize the strength of her feelings for the man. Alternate translation: "for my love for you is so strong that I feel as if I were sick with love" or "because my love for you overwhelms me like a sickness"

See: Hyperbole

Song of Solomon 2:5 (#7)

"love"

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **love**, you could express the same idea with a verbal form as modeled by the UST.

See: Abstract Nouns

Song of Solomon 2:6 (#1)

""His left hand {is} under my head,"

This verse could be describing: (1) an action that the man was doing in which case it should be translated in a similar way to the way that the ULT translates it. (2) a request or wish that the woman has and not something that has already happened. Alternate translation: "I hope he puts his left arm under my head and holds me close with his right arm" or "I want him to put his left arm under my head and hold me close with his right arm"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 2:7 (#1)

"I adjure you, daughters of Jerusalem"

Here, the author portrays the woman speaking to the **daughters of Jerusalem** as if they were present and could hear her but most likely they are not present but rather the author is depicting the woman as addressing the **daughters of Jerusalem** as a poetic way of giving voice to the woman's feelings. Because the author does this intentionally for poetic effect it is suggested that you do the same. If it would be helpful in your language, you could indicate this in a footnote if you are using them.

See: Apostrophe

Song of Solomon 2:7 (#2)

"I adjure you," - "by the female gazelles or the does of the field"

I adjure you and the word **by** are both parts of Hebrew oath or promise formulas. You can use a natural way of making a promise in your culture that would be appropriate in this context. Alternate translation: "I urge you to promise me ... with the female gazelles or the does of the field as our witnesses" or "Please, promise me ... with the female gazelles or the does of the field as our witnesses" or "I want you to make an oath ... with the female gazelles or the does of the field listening"

See: Oath Formulas

Song of Solomon 2:7 (#3)

"daughters of Jerusalem"

See how you translated the phrase **daughters of Jerusalem** in [1:5](#).

See: Possession

Song of Solomon 2:7 (#4)

"by the female gazelles or the does of the field"

Here, the woman is using the possessive form to indicate that **female gazelles** and **does** live in **the field** and therefore are wild rather than domesticated animals. If your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could explain the meaning of the phrase **of the field** in your translation. Alternate translation: "by the wild female gazelles and does" or "by the wild female gazelles or the wild does" or "by the female gazelles or the does that live in the wild"

See: Possession

Song of Solomon 2:7 (#5)

"by the female gazelles or the does of"

A gazelle is an animal that is a small antelope and looks like a deer, moves quickly like a deer, and is very similar in size to a deer. If your readers would not be familiar with this type of animal, you could use the name of something similar in your area or if you do not have two deer-like animals in your area or if your language does not have two different words for deer-like animals you could combine the terms **female gazelles** and **does** into one term. Alternate translation: "by the female deer of" or "by the female gazelles of"

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 2:7 (#6)

"the does of"

The term **does** refers to female deer. If it would be helpful to your readers you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "the female deer of"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 2:7 (#7)

""do not awaken nor stir love"

Here **love** is spoken of as if it were a person who could sleep and be awakened and as if it were a person who could have **desires**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "do not encourage people to love romantically until the appropriate time" or "do not encourage people to have romantic feelings until the appropriate time"

See: Personification

Song of Solomon 2:7 (#8)

"do not awaken nor stir"

Here, the words **awaken** and **stir** mean basically the same thing. The repetition is used for emphasis. If your language does not use repetition to do this, you could use one phrase and provide emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "do not awaken" or "do not stir up feeling of"

See: Doublet

Song of Solomon 2:7 (#9)

"love"

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **love**, you could express the same idea with a verbal form as modeled by the UST.

See: Abstract Nouns

Song of Solomon 2:8 (#1)

"The voice of my beloved"

Here the original language word which the ULT translates as **voice** is being used to get the readers attention. If it would help your readers you can indicate that explicitly in your translation. Alternate translation: "Listen, I hear my beloved speaking" or "Listen, I hear my beloved approaching"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 2:8 (#2)

"Behold"

Behold is an exclamation word that is used to bring attention to something. Here it is used to bring attention to the man's approach. Use an exclamation that is natural in your language for communicating this. See how you translated "Behold" in [1:15](#). Alternate translation: "Look"

See:

Song of Solomon 2:8 (#3)

"is coming"

Your language may say "going" rather than **coming** in contexts such as this. Use whichever is more natural. Alternate translation: "is going"

See: Go and Come

Song of Solomon 2:8 (#4)

""leaping over the mountains,"

These two phrases mean the same thing. The woman says the same thing twice, in slightly different ways, to give emphasis to what she is saying. If saying the same thing twice might be confusing in your language, or if you do not have two words for steeply elevated inclines you could combine these two phrases and provide emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "jumping over the mountains!" or "leaping over the hills!"

See: Parallelism

Song of Solomon 2:8-9 (#1)

""leaping over the mountains,"

The woman speaks of the man as if he were a **gazelle or a young stag**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the basis of this comparison. Alternate translation: "leaping over the mountains, jumping over the hills. My beloved is agile and fast and he exudes freedom and strength like a gazelle or young stag"

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 2:8-9 (#2)

""leaping over the mountains,"

If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases. Alternate translation: "My beloved resembles a gazelle or a young stag, leaping over the mountains, jumping over the hills" or "My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag, leaping over the mountains, jumping over the hills"

See: Information Structure

Song of Solomon 2:9 (#1)

"a gazelle"

See how you translated the plural form "gazelles" in [2:7](#) and translate this word as the singular of "gazelles."

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 2:9 (#2)

"stag"

A **stag** is a male deer. If it would help your readers you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "male deer"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 2:9 (#3)

"Behold, this one is standing"

Behold is an exclamation word that is used to bring attention to something. Here it is used to draw attention to the man's arrival. Use an exclamation that is natural in your language in this context. Alternate translation: "Look! Here he is! Standing"

See:

Song of Solomon 2:9 (#4)

"this one"

Here, the phrase **this one** refers to the man who the woman calls **My beloved** in the first part of this verse. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "this man" or "my beloved"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 2:9 (#5)

"behind our wall"

Here, the word **our** refers to the woman and her family and does not include the man, so use the exclusive form of that word in your translation if your language marks that distinction. Alternate translation: "behind the wall of my house" or "on the other side of the wall of my family's house"

See: Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

Song of Solomon 2:9 (#6)

""gazing through the windows,"

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and it would be good to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation rather than combining them. However, if it would be helpful to your readers, you could connect the phrases with a word other than **and** in order to show that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: "gazing through the windows, yes, looking through the lattice"

See: Parallelism

Song of Solomon 2:9 (#7)

""the windows,"

Here, the words **windows** and **lattices** are plural forms and could: (1) have a plural meaning here indicating that the man was walking around the house and looking into the house through different windows and lattices. If you decide that these two terms have a plural meaning here you can translate them in a similar way to the ULT. (2) be used with singular meanings here. Alternate translation: "the window ... the lattice"

See: Unusual Uses of the Plural

Song of Solomon 2:9 (#8)

"the lattices"

A "lattice" is a cover inside a window frame that is made by weaving strips of wood together. **lattices** have holes that people can look through. If your readers would not be familiar with **lattices**, you could use the name of something similar in your area or you could describe **lattices** as modeled by the UST. Alternate translation: "the screen"

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 2:10 (#1)**"and come"**

Your language may say "go" rather than **come** in contexts such as this. Use whichever is more natural. Alternate translation: "and go"

See: Go and Come

Song of Solomon 2:11 (#1)**"behold, the winter"**

The man is using the term **Behold** to focus attention on what he is about to say. Use an exclamation that is natural in your language for communicating this. Alternate translation: "see that the winter"

See:

Song of Solomon 2:11 (#2)**"for"**

Here, the word **for** indicates that what follows is the motivation or reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: "because"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Song of Solomon 2:11 (#3)**"the winter"**

In Israel **winter** is the time of year when it is cold and rains more heavily than during other seasons. If the seasons do not vary much in your location, you could explain this with a general expression such as "the cold season" as modeled by the UST. Alternate translation: "the cold rainy season" or "the cold wet season"

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 2:11 (#4)**""the winter has gone;"**

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by

repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and it would be good to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation rather than combining them. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could connect the clauses with a word that shows that the second clause is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: "the winter has gone; yes, the rain has passed"

See: Parallelism

Song of Solomon 2:11 (#5)**"has gone"**

Your language may not say **gone** in contexts such as this. Alternate translation: "is finished" or "is over"

See: Go and Come

Song of Solomon 2:11 (#6)**"it went away"**

Your language may not say **went** in contexts such as this. Alternate translation: "it ended" or "it left"

See: Go and Come

Song of Solomon 2:11 (#7)**""has passed;"**

The terms **passed** and **went away** mean similar things. The author is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: "is over and gone" or "has gone away"

See: Doublet

Song of Solomon 2:12 (#1)**"in the land"**

Alternate translation: "throughout the land"

Song of Solomon 2:12 (#2)**"and the voice of the turtledove is heard"**

If your language does not use the passive form, you could express the idea of the phrase **the turtledove is heard** in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you need to say who did the action, it is clear from the context that it is people. Alternate translation: "and people hear the voice of the turtledove" or "and people hear the turtledove cooing"

See: Active or Passive

Song of Solomon 2:13 (#1)**"The fig tree ripens its green figs"**

The word **tree** is a singular noun that refers to all the fig trees in that region. If your language does not use singular nouns in that way, you could use a different expression. Alternate translation: "The fig trees are ripening their green figs" or "The figs on the trees are becoming ripe"

See: Collective Nouns

Song of Solomon 2:13 (#2)**"and the vines {are in} blossom"**

Alternate translation: "and the grapevines are flowering" or "and the grapevines are blossoming"

Song of Solomon 2:13 (#3)**"they give off a smell"**

Here, the word **they** refers to blossoms on the grapevines. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "their flowers give off a pleasant smell" or "their blossoms have a sweet smell"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 2:13 (#4)**"Get up, come, my darling, my beauty, and come"**

See how you translated the similar phrase in [2:10](#). Alternate translation: "Get up, go, my darling, my beauty, and go"

See: Go and Come

Song of Solomon 2:14 (#1)**"My dove"**

Here, the phrase **My dove** could be: (1) a form of address in which the man is speaking directly to the woman. Alternate translation: "O my dove" (2) the man speaking about the woman rather than addressing her directly. Alternate translation: "The woman I love is a dove"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 2:14 (#2)**""My dove, in the clefts of the rock,"**

Here, the man uses a term of affection for the woman, speaking of her as if she were a **dove**. He then explains the way in which she is like a dove. If it would be helpful in your language, you could turn this metaphor into a simile and explain the basis of the comparison. Alternate translation: "O my one who is like a dove. You are like a gentle and timid dove which hides in the clefts of the rock and in the hiding places of the cliff" or "You are like a dove. You are like a gentle and shy dove which hides in the clefts of the rock and in the hiding places of the cliff" or "You are like a dove. Far away in the clefts of the rock, in the hiding places of the cliff"

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 2:14 (#3)**""in the clefts of the rock,"**

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea (that the woman seems difficult to reach and far away) with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and it would be good to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation rather than combining them. However, if it would be helpful to your readers, you could connect the phrases with a word such as "yes" in order to show that the second phrase is repeating

a similar idea to the first one, not saying something additional. However, if saying similar things twice would confuse your readers you could combine the two lines as modeled by the UST. Alternate translation: "in the clefts of the rock, yes, in the hiding places of the cliff"

See: Parallelism

Song of Solomon 2:14 (#4)

"in the clefts of the rock"

Alternate translation: "in the cracks of the rock" or "in the cracks of the rock cliff"

Song of Solomon 2:14 (#5)

""show me your appearance,"

Here two ideas are presented and then they are further explained in reverse order. This is called a chiasm. Biblical Hebrew sometimes uses this literary device. If possible, try to follow this AB-BA sequence of presenting the information here. See the book introduction for more information regarding chiasms.

See: Poetry

Song of Solomon 2:14 (#6)

""show me your appearance,"

The phrases **show me** and **make me hear** are imperatives, but they communicate a polite request rather than a command. Use forms in your language that communicate a polite request. It may be helpful to add an expression such as "please" or "let" to make this clear. Alternate translation: "please let me see your appearance, please make me hear" or "let me see you, let me hear"

See: Imperatives — Other Uses

Song of Solomon 2:14 (#7)

"your voice {is} sweet"

Alternate translation: "your voice is sweet-sounding" or "your voice sounds beautiful"

Song of Solomon 2:15 (#1)

""Catch the foxes for us, the little foxes"

Here, **the foxes** represent things that could harm the man and woman's developing love relationship with each other. One interpretation is that the harmful things which **the foxes** symbolize are other men. Catching **the foxes** represents removing these harmful things or protecting against them. The term **vineyards** represents the love the man and woman have for each other. The phrase **in blossom** means that the love they have for each other is developing positively and growing, similar to how a plant blossoms and grows. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning of this verse plainly. Alternate translation: "Get rid of the harmful things that hinder and ruin our relationship, for our relationship is blossoming" or "Remove the little things that destroy our growing relationship" or "There are other men who are like little foxes that ruin vineyards; do not allow those men to attack me"

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 2:15 (#2)

"the foxes for us, the little foxes"

The original language word that the ULT translates as **foxes** could refer to: (1) **foxes** in which case you could translate the term as the ULT does. (2) "jackals" which are a wild dogs that resemble wolves and coyotes. Alternate translation: "the jackals for us, the little jackals"

Song of Solomon 2:15 (#3)

"the foxes for us, the little foxes"

Both **foxes** and jackals are land animals that are similar to small dogs and would ruin vineyards by digging up and eating the budding blossoms that could eventually produce grapes. If your readers would not be familiar with these animals and their habits, you could describe the animal you chose to use in your translation (a fox or a jackal) in general terms or use the name of something similar in your area. Alternate translation: "the dog-like animals for us, the little dog-like animals"

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 2:15 (#4)**"for us," - "and our vineyards"**

Here, the words **us** and **our** refer to the woman and the man, so use the exclusive forms of these words if your language marks that distinction.

See: Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

Song of Solomon 2:15 (#5)**"and our vineyards {are in} blossom"**

Alternate translation: "because the grapevines in our vineyards are blooming" or "because our grapevines are in bloom"

Song of Solomon 2:16 (#1)**"My beloved {belongs} to me and I {belong} to him"**

The woman is speaking as if she is talking about the man to another person even though she is most likely speaking directly to the man. This is common in Hebrew poetry. If this would not be natural in your language you can translate this in a way that indicates that the woman is speaking directly to the man. Alternate translation: "My beloved, you belong to me, and I belong to you"

See: First, Second or Third Person

Song of Solomon 2:16 (#2)**"the man grazing among the lilies"**

The phrase **the man grazing among the lilies** could mean: (1) that the man himself is grazing among the lilies in which case you can translate this phrase as the ULT does. (2) that the man grazes his flock of animals among the lilies. Alternate translation: "the man grazing his flock among the lilies"

Song of Solomon 2:16 (#3)**"the man grazing among the lilies"**

The woman is speaking of the man as if he were "a gazelle or a young stag" (2:9) that eats **among the lilies**. She is using **lilies** to represent herself as she did in 2:1. Here, **the lilies** probably specifically

represent the woman's lips. The meaning here is that the man finds sustenance and enjoyment through being with the woman and kissing her lips. If it would help your readers, you could state the meaning plainly as modeled by the UST or you could explain the meaning in a footnote if you are using footnotes in your translation. Alternate translation: "my beloved gets pleasure grazing among the lilies" or "my beloved gets pleasure as he grazes among the lilies"

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 2:16 (#4)**"among the lilies"**

See how you translated "lily" (the singular form of **lilies**) in 2:1.

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 2:17 (#1)**"the day breathes and the shadows flee"**

The phrases **the day breathes** and **the shadows flee** are parallel ideas which have similar meanings. Together they both either refer to: (1) the evening time when the evening breeze blows (**breathes**) and the shadows cast by the sun disappear (**flee**). Alternate translation: "the evening time when the breeze blows and the shadows cast by the sun disappear" (2) the morning when the light from the sun dawns and the morning breeze blows (**breathes**). Alternate translation: "dawn tomorrow morning, when the darkness disappears"

See: Personification

Song of Solomon 2:17 (#2)**"and the shadows flee"**

Here, the author is leaving out the word **until** which in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You could supply this word from earlier in the sentence if it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "and until the shadows flee"

See: Ellipsis

Song of Solomon 2:17 (#3)**"turn; resemble, my beloved"**

Alternate translation: "turn; my beloved, and be like"

Song of Solomon 2:17 (#4)**"a gazelle"**

See how you translated the plural form "gazelles" in [2:7](#) and translate this word as the singular form of "gazelles."

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 2:17 (#5)**"the mountains of Bether"**

The word **Bether** is a transliteration of a Hebrew word that means "cleft" or "divided." Here it could: (1) be a proper name that refers to a specific place in Israel. If you choose this option then in your translation you can spell it the way that it sounds in your language as modeled by the ULT. In this case, you may want to put the meaning in a footnote. (2) be a description of **the mountains**. Alternate translation: "the cleft mountains" or "the rugged mountains" or "the mountain gorges"

See: Copy or Borrow Words

Song of Solomon - Chapter 3 Introduction*Special concepts in this chapter***Longing**

[3:1-3](#) describes the feeling of longing that the woman had for the man she loved and it describes her diligently seeking the man loved. [3:4](#) describes the woman finding the man that she loved and her response to finding him, holding onto him and bringing him to her mother's house.

*Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter***Whether [3:1-4](#) describe a dream, a real event or something imagined**

Bible scholars do not know for certain whether the events described in [3:1-4](#) are real events or something that the woman dreamed in a dream or something that the woman imagined. Many Bible scholars think that [3:1-4](#) describe a dream. If you are using footnotes you may wish to explain this in a footnote or you could indicate in a section header whether you think this is a dream, a real event or something that the woman imagined. You could also use a general section header such as "The woman searches for the man she loves at night and finds him" which does not comment on whether this was a dream, a real event or something imagined.

Song of Solomon 3:1 (#1)**"On my bed in the night"**

Because Bible scholars do not know if the events described in [3:1-4](#) describe real events or things that happened in a dream or things the woman imagined, you should not expand on or explain the phrase **On my bed in the night** in the actual text of your translation (by adding a phrase like "I dreamed I was" or "I imagined I was") though you may wish to use a header or a footnote. See the section "Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter" in the Introduction to this chapter for more information.

See: When to Keep Information Implicit

Song of Solomon 3:1 (#2)**"in the night"**

In the original language the phrase **in the night** uses a plural form of **night** and could mean: (1) that the woman sought the man during the night. Alternate translation: "during the night" (2) that the woman sought the man throughout the night. Alternate translation: "throughout the night" or "all night long" (3) that the woman sought the man on many nights. Alternate translation: "night after night" or "night upon night"

See: Unusual Uses of the Plural

Song of Solomon 3:1 (#3)**"I sought him whom my soul loves;"**

The phrase **I sought him** is repeated for emphasis. Hebrew poetry often uses repetition for emphasis. You may be able to use the same construction in your language to show the emphasis here. Alternatively, your language may have another way of showing the emphasis. Alternate translation: "I desperately sought him whom my soul loves" or "I earnestly sought him whom my soul loves"

See: Poetry

Song of Solomon 3:1 (#4)**"him whom my soul loves"**

See how you translated the similar phrase "you whom my soul loves" in [1:7](#). Alternate translation: "him whom I love"

See: Synecdoche

Song of Solomon 3:2 (#1)**"I will get up now"**

The woman is thinking or saying this to herself. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly by beginning this section with an introductory phrase as modeled by the UST. Alternate translation: "I thought to myself, "I will get up now"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 3:2 (#2)**"and go about in the city"**

Alternate translation: "and walk through the city"

Song of Solomon 3:2 (#3)**"and in the squares"**

The word **squares** refers to spacious open places where people gathered to sell things and conduct other business matters and handle legal matters. If your readers would not be familiar with this type

of place, you could use the name of something similar in your area or you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: "and in the open plazas" or "and in the wide open places"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 3:2 (#4)**"I will seek" - "I sought him"**

Alternate translation: "I will look for ... I looked for him"

Song of Solomon 3:2 (#5)**"him whom my soul loves"**

See how you translated the similar phrase "you whom my soul loves" in [1:7](#). Alternate translation: "him whom I love"

See: Synecdoche

Song of Solomon 3:3 (#1)**"The guards"**

Here, the word **guards** refers to men who had the job of walking about the city during the night for the purpose of keeping the people safe. If your readers would not be familiar with this term you could use the name of a similar role in your area or you could use a more general term as modeled by the UST.

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 3:3 (#2)**"Have} you seen him whom my soul loves"**

The woman is asking the **guards** a question. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly by introducing this question with words that indicate that this is a question. Alternate translation: "I said to them, "Have you seen him whom my soul loves""

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 3:3 (#3)**"him whom my soul loves"**

See how you translated the similar phrase "you whom my soul loves" in [1:7](#). Alternate translation: "him whom I love"

See: Synecdoche

Song of Solomon 3:3 (#4)**"Have} you seen him whom my soul loves"**

Alternate translation: "Do you know where the man who I love is?"

Song of Solomon 3:4 (#1)**"Hardly"**

Alternate translation: "Scarcely"

Song of Solomon 3:4 (#2)**"him whom my soul loves"**

See how you translated the similar phrase "you whom my soul loves" in [1:7](#). Alternate translation: "him whom I love"

See: Synecdoche

Song of Solomon 3:4 (#3)**"I had brought him"**

Your language may say "taken" rather than **brought** in contexts such as this. Use whichever is more natural. Alternate translation: "I had taken him"

See: Go and Come

Song of Solomon 3:4 (#4)**"I had brought him to the house of my mother"**

These two phrases are parallel. The second phrase adds additional information to the first one. This is common in Hebrew poetry and it would be good to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation rather than combining

them. However, if it would be helpful to your readers, you could connect the phrases with a word such as "then" in order to show that the second phrase is adding additional information. Alternate translation: "I had brought him to the house of my mother and then to the room of the woman who had conceived me"

See: Parallelism

Song of Solomon 3:5 (#1)**"I adjure you, daughters of Jerusalem,"**

This verse is identical to [2:7](#). Translate this verse exactly as you translated that verse. This verse is a refrain (a repeated phrase). Refrains are a common feature of poetry. This refrain closes section 2:8–3:5.

See: Poetry

Song of Solomon 3:6 (#1)**"Who {is} that coming up from the wilderness"**

Here, the phrase **Who is that** could: (1) be rhetorical question that is used to create a sense of expectation and interest. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate these words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way as modeled by the UST. (2) be a request for information. Alternate translation: "Who is it that I see arising from the wilderness like columns of smoke, fragrant smoke of myrrh and frankincense from all the powders of the merchant?"

See: Rhetorical Question

Song of Solomon 3:6 (#2)**"is} that coming up from the wilderness"**

The word translated as **that** here could refer to: (1) Solomon's "litter," which is named in the following verse. Alternate translation: "is that group of people that is arising from the wilderness" (2) the woman. Alternate translation: "is this woman that is arising from the wilderness"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 3:6 (#3)

"coming up"

The phrase **coming up** is used by the author because the group of people described is traveling **from the wilderness** to Jerusalem. They must travel upward in elevation in order to reach Jerusalem because **the wilderness** is low in the Jordan valley and Jerusalem is built on hills and is therefore high. Use a word or phrase that expresses moving upward in elevation. Alternate translation: "moving upward" or "arising"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 3:6 (#4)

"coming up"

Your language may say "going" rather than **coming** in contexts such as this. Use whichever is more natural. Alternate translation: "going up"

See: Go and Come

Song of Solomon 3:6 (#5)

""like columns of smoke,"

The word **like** is introducing a comparison. Here, the phrase **a column of smoke** is most likely describing a dust cloud created by a group of people traveling in a dry and dusty area. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate the basis of comparison. Alternate translation: "creating a dust cloud that resembles a column of smoke, which resembles the fragrant smoke of myrrh and frankincense"

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 3:6 (#6)

""like columns of smoke,"

Here, the phrase **fragrant smoke of myrrh and frankincense** could: (1) be further describing the word **arising**. Alternate translation: "creating dust clouds that resemble rising columns of smoke. Yes, creating dust clouds that resemble the fragrant smoke of myrrh and frankincense" (2) describing the phrase **column of smoke**. Alternate translation: "like a column of smoke, incensed with myrrh and frankincense"

See: Poetry

Song of Solomon 3:6 (#7)

"fragrant smoke of"

The author is leaving out a word that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers might misunderstand this, you could supply this word from the context. Alternate translation: "like fragrant smoke of"

See: Ellipsis

Song of Solomon 3:6 (#8)

"myrrh"

Alternate translation: "the sweet smelling incense made from the resin of a myrrh tree"

Song of Solomon 3:6 (#9)

"from all the powders of the merchant"

The word translated as **from all** could: (1) be introducing **the powders of the merchant** as additional information about **myrrh and frankincense**. Alternate translation: "which are among the powders of the merchant" (2) indicate that **the powders of the merchant** are being introduced as additional things **the merchant** sells. Alternate translation: "and other powders of the merchants"

See: Connecting Words and Phrases

Song of Solomon 3:7 (#1)

"Behold"

Behold is an exclamation that is being used to draw people's attention to what was "arising from the wilderness". Use an exclamation that would express that meaning in your language as modeled by the UST.

See:

Song of Solomon 3:7 (#2)

"his litter"

A **litter** was a portable bed or couch that important people were carried on from place to place. It was carried by wooden poles that were attached to it. This **litter** probably had a canopy on top of it that functioned as a roof and curtains around it that could be opened and closed. If your readers would be unfamiliar with this term you could use the name of something similar in your area or you could use a descriptive phrase as modeled by the UST. Alternate translation: "portable couch"

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 3:7 (#3)

"his litter, which {belongs} to Solomon"

The phrase **his litter, which belongs to Solomon** could mean: (1) that the woman was riding on the **litter** which belonged to **Solomon** and which he had sent for her. The UST models this interpretation. (2) that **Solomon** himself was riding in the **litter**. Alternate translation: "Solomon riding in his royal portable chair"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 3:8 (#1)

"studied {in} war"

Alternate translation: "all of them have been trained in warfare" or "all of them have been trained to use their swords"

Song of Solomon 3:8 (#2)

""Each one {has} his sword at his thigh,"

The phrase **Each one has his sword at his thigh** means that each warrior has his **sword** strapped to his thigh so that it is ready to use to defend **against the terrors in the nights**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "Each warrior has his sword strapped to his thigh so that it is ready to use against the terrors in the nights" or "Each warrior has his sword ready to use to defend against the terrors in the nights"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 3:8 (#3)

"against the terrors in the nights"

The phrase **against the terrors in the nights** means "ready to defend against the terrifying things that could happen on any given night." If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly as modeled by the UST. Alternate translation: "ready to guard against dangers that happen during the night" or "ready to defend against the dangers of the night."

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 3:9 (#1)

"a palanquin"

Here, the term **palanquin** refers to the same object that the term "litter" referred to in [3:7](#). The term **litter** is a general term meaning "couch" or "bed" and the term **palanquin** is a more descriptive word meaning "sedan chair." You could translate the term **palanquin** the same way you translated "litter" in [3:7](#) or you could use a different word or phrase here. Alternate translation: "portable couch" or "sedan chair"

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 3:9 (#2)

""King Solomon,"

Alternate translation: "King Solomon had it made from the trees in Lebanon"

Song of Solomon 3:9-10 (#1)

""He made for himself a palanquin, King Solomon,"

These two verses give background information. Use the natural form in your language for expressing background information.

See: Background Information

Song of Solomon 3:9-10 (#2)

"He made for himself a palanquin" - "He made its posts {out of} silver"

These phrases mean that Solomon had people make a **palanquin** for him. It does not mean that he made the **palanquin** himself. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "He had craftsmen make him a palanquin...He had craftsmen make its post with silver" or "He had a palanquin made for him...He had its posts made with silver"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 3:10 (#1)

"He made its posts {out of} silver"

The **posts** were made of wood and overlaid with **silver**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "He made its posts of wood that was overlaid with silver" or "He made its posts of wood covered in silver"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 3:10 (#2)

"its back, gold"

The phrase **its back gold** could mean: (1) that the base or foundation of the "palanquin" was covered in **gold**. Alternate translation: "its foundation of gold" or "its base of gold" (2) the back of the chair was covered in **gold**. Alternate translation: "its back made from gold"

Song of Solomon 3:10 (#3)

"its seat, purple cloth"

Alternate translation: "and covered the cushion with purple cloth"

Song of Solomon 3:10 (#4)

""Its interior was fitted {with} love"

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "The daughters of Jerusalem fitted its interior with love"

See: Active or Passive

Song of Solomon 3:10 (#5)

""Its interior was fitted {with} love"

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **love**, you could express the same idea with an adverb as modeled by the UST or in some other way that is natural in your language.

See: Abstract Nouns

Song of Solomon 3:10 (#6)

""Its interior was fitted {with} love"

Alternate translation: "The inside of it was lovingly inlaid with decorations by the women of Jerusalem."

Song of Solomon 3:10 (#7)

"from the daughters of Jerusalem"

See how you translated the phrase **daughters of Jerusalem** in [1:5](#).

See: Possession

Song of Solomon 3:11 (#1)

"Go out"

Your language may say "Come out" rather than **Go out** in contexts such as this. Use whichever is more natural. Alternate translation: "Come out"

See: Go and Come

Song of Solomon 3:11 (#2)

"daughters of Zion"

The possessive form is used here to describe where the young women live. The phrase **daughters of Zion** is a poetic way of referring to the young women who were from the city of Jerusalem (These are probably the same women as the "marriageable women" in [1:3](#) and the women referred to as "daughters of Jerusalem" in [2:7](#) and [3:5](#)). If your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could indicate the association between these young women and **Zion** in a way that is

natural in your language. Alternate translation: “young women from Zion” or “young women from the city of Zion” or “you young women who live in Zion”

Song of Solomon 3:11 (#3)

“on the day of his wedding,”

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and it would be good to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation rather than combining them. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could connect the clauses with a word that shows that the second clause is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: “on the day of his wedding, yes, on the day of the joy of his heart”

See: Parallelism

Song of Solomon 3:11 (#4)

“on the day of the joy of his heart”

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **joy**, you could express the same idea with an adjective such as “joyful” or in some other way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “on the day his heart was exceedingly joyful” or “on the day when his heart was very joyful”

See: Abstract Nouns

Song of Solomon 3:11 (#5)

“on the day of the joy of his heart”

Solomon’s inner being is being described by association with his **heart**, which the Jews viewed as being the center of a person’s being and therefore the center of their mind and inner feelings. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language as modeled by the UST.

See: Metonymy

Song of Solomon - Chapter 4

Introduction

Special concepts in this chapter

Beauty

The man describes the woman he loves as the epitome of beauty and attractiveness in [4:1–4:5](#) and in [4:7](#).

Feelings of longing to be with one’s lover who seems distant and temporarily inaccessible

In [4:8](#) the man speaks of the woman he loves as if she were far away from him and he invites her to “come with” him and “descend from” the height of three high places and be with him. The woman is not actually dwelling in these places but rather the man is using imaginative and poetic language to describe how he feels about being separated from her and to describe his desire to be with her. In [4:12](#) the man uses poetic language to describe the fact that the woman he loves is temporarily inaccessible.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

The Garden Metaphor

[4:12–5:1](#) is an extended metaphor. This metaphor is a conversation between the man and the woman he loves in which the man first compares the woman he loves to “a locked garden” (in [4:12–4:15](#)) where many delightful things grow and then the woman responds by inviting the man to come to her garden in [4:16](#). The man then responds to her invitation in [5:1](#). The term **garden** is used as a metaphor for the woman in [4:12](#), in [4:16](#) (two times), and in [5:1](#). You should be consistent in how you translate the term “garden.” In [4:13](#) the man speaks of the woman’s body as “an orchard of pomegranate trees with delicious fruits” and then in [4:16](#) the woman invites the man to **come to his garden and eat its delicious fruit**. (See: Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors)

The “sister” metaphor

The phrase **my sister** is used in [4:9](#); [4:10](#), [4:12](#), [5:1](#), and [5:2](#). The man uses this phrase as a term of endearment for the woman he loves. The woman is not actually his sister. You should translate this phrase the same way each of the five times it occurs in this book because the author uses it with the

same meaning every time. See the note at the first occurrence of this phrase in 4:9 for more information regarding this phrase.

Song of Solomon 4:1 (#1)

""Behold you! {You are} beautiful, my darling."

See how you translated these two parallel phrases in [1:15](#).

See: Parallelism

Song of Solomon 4:1 (#2)

"Your eyes {are} doves from behind your veil"

See how you translated the phrase **Your eyes are doves** in [1:15](#).

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 4:1 (#3)

"Your hair {is} like a flock of goats that hop down from {the} slopes of Gilead"

Both the color and the motion of the woman's **hair** is being compared to **a flock of goats that hop down from the slopes of Gilead**. Goats in Israel were black so the original readers would have understood this comparison to mean that the woman's hair was black. Seen from a distance, a flock of black goats descending down from the high elevation of **Mount Gilead** would have created a majestic visual effect because the goats would have looked like one long flowing mass of black. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state explicitly these two points of comparison. Alternate translation: "Your black hair moves in graceful waves like a flock of black goats moving down the slopes of Mount Gilead" or "Your long black hair flows in graceful waves like a flock of black goats coming down the slopes of Mount Gilead"

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 4:2 (#1)

"Your teeth {are} like a flock of shorn {sheep} that have come up from the washing"

The color (white) of the woman's teeth is being compared to the color (white) of sheep after they have had their wool cut off and then washed in the water of a stream. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state explicitly these two points of comparison as modeled by the UST.

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 4:2 (#2)

"shorn {sheep}"

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you must state who did the action, it is implied that "shepherds" did it. Alternate translation: "sheep whose wool shepherds have cut off" or "sheep whose wool people have cut off"

See: Active or Passive

Song of Solomon 4:2 (#3)

"bear twins"

Alternate translation: "give birth to twins"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 4:2 (#4)

""all of which bear twins,"

Here the woman's teeth are being compared to a flock of female sheep which all have birthed twin lambs. The author is saying that in a similar way to how twin lambs have a matching sibling that resembles it so each of the woman's teeth has a matching tooth on the other side of her mouth. She has not lost any of her teeth. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the basis of this comparison. If it would help your readers you could also start a new sentence as modeled by the UST. Alternate translation: "As a flock of female sheep that has born twin lambs without losing any, so your mouth has its teeth, each with a match, and none of them are missing"

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 4:2 (#5)

"and there is not among them one which is bereaved"

Alternate translation: "and there is not one among them which has died"

Song of Solomon 4:3 (#1)

"Like a thread of scarlet {are} your lips"

Scarlet is a term that describes a bright red color. The woman's lips were a beautiful red color. The woman's lips are being compared to the color of scarlet thread and not to the thinness of the thread. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the basis of this comparison. Also, if it would help your readers you could use a term for a material that is thicker than **thread** such as ribbon. Alternate translation: "Your lips are a beautiful red like scarlet thread" or "Your lips are a beautiful red like scarlet ribbon"

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 4:3 (#2)

"Like a slice of pomegranate {are} your cheeks"

The term translated as **cheeks** could: (1) refer to the **woman's two cheeks** on the side of her mouth as rendered by the ULT. (2) be translated as "temples" and refer to the woman's two temples on the side of her forehead. Alternate translation: "Like a slice of pomegranate are your temples" (3) be translated as "forehead." Alternate translation: "Like a slice of pomegranate is your forehead"

Song of Solomon 4:3 (#3)

"Like a slice of pomegranate {are} your cheeks"

This comparison could be comparing: (1) the shape of the woman's **cheeks** to the shape of a **pomegranate** which has been sliced in half and to the outside color of a **pomegranate** (which is the color red). Alternate translation: "Your cheeks are red and rounded like a slice of pomegranate" or "Your cheeks resemble the color and shape of a slice of pomegranate" (or if you decided that the term **cheek** refers to the woman's temples "Your temples are red like a slice of pomegranate") (2) the way the woman's cheeks looked through the

inside of the veil to the color and pattern of the inside of a pomegranate which has been sliced in half. Alternate translation: "Your cheeks resemble the color and pattern of the inside of a slice of pomegranate" (or if you decided that the term **cheeks** refers to the woman's temples "Your temples are the color of the inside of a slice of pomegranate")

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 4:3 (#4)

"from behind your veil"

See how you translated the phrase **from behind your veil** in [4:1](#).

Song of Solomon 4:4 (#1)

"Like the tower of David {is} your neck, built of layers"

The woman's **neck** is being compared to **the tower of David** which was a tall fortress **built of layers** or rows. A long neck was considered beautiful in the author's culture. King David built some of his towers of beautiful white marble rock. It is probable that this tower was made from white marble rock since this tower is compared to the beauty of the woman's neck. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the basis of this comparison. Alternate translation: "Your neck is long and beautiful like the tower of David" or "Your neck is beautiful like the tower of David"

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 4:4 (#2)

"Like the tower of David {is}"

The **tower of David** was a tall building that was built for defense. Towers were significantly taller than other buildings and often built more narrow so that they were not wide. If your readers would not be familiar with this type of structure, you could use the name of something similar in your area or you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: "Like the tall, narrow defense structure of David is" or "Like David's tall thin rock defense building is"

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 4:4 (#3)

"built of layers"

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you must state who did the action, the context implies that David instructed men to build it. Alternate translation: "that men built in layers" or "which David instructed men to build of layers" or "that David had men build of layers"

See: Active or Passive

Song of Solomon 4:4 (#4)

"built of layers"

Alternate translation: "built using rows of stones"

Song of Solomon 4:4 (#5)

"a thousand shields hanging on it,"

In the authors culture it was a common practice to hang **shields** on walls as decorations. Here, the man compares the beauty of the woman's neck with **shields** hanging on **the tower of David**. This comparison probably included the decorations of the woman's necklaces which probably went around her neck many times. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the basis of this comparison. Alternate translation: "The beauty of your neck jeweled in necklaces is like a thousand warriors shields hanging from a tower"

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 4:4 (#6)

"a thousand"

In the authors culture the number **a thousand** was often used to represent a very large, but not precise, amount. This is how the number is being used here. Alternate translation: "with many"

See: Numbers

Song of Solomon 4:4 (#7)

"a thousand shields hanging on it,"

The phrase **all the shields of the warriors** is parallel to the statement **a thousand shields hanging on it** and adds the additional information that the **shields** belonged to **warriors**. Hebrew poetry often used this kind of parallel statement, in which the second line gives additional information, so it would be good to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation rather than combining them. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could connect these two parallel phrases with "each of which" or "each one" in order to show that the second phrase is not repeating the first one, but rather is saying something additional. Alternate translation: "a thousand shields hanging on it, each of which belongs to the warriors" or "a thousand shields hanging on it, each one belonging to the warriors"

See: Parallelism

Song of Solomon 4:5 (#1)

"Your two breasts {are} like two fawns,"

Here, the man compares the woman's **two breasts** to two young twin gazelles that are grazing. The context does not explicitly indicate how exactly the woman's **two breasts** are like two young gazelles so you could simply say that they resemble young gazelles or if it would be helpful to your readers, you could use a general point of comparison between the woman's **breasts** and the young gazelles such as their beauty as modeled by the UST.

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 4:5 (#2)

"a female gazelle"

See how you translated the plural form "gazelles" in [2:7](#).

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 4:5 (#3)

"among the lilies"

See how you translated the singular form "lily" in [2:1](#).

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 4:6 (#1)

"Until the day breathes and the shadows flee"

See how you translated the phrase **Until the day breathes and the shadows flee** in [2:17](#).

See: Personification

Song of Solomon 4:6 (#2)

"I myself will go"

Your language may say "come" rather than **go** in contexts such as this. Use whichever is more natural. Alternate translation: "I myself will come"

See: Go and Come

Song of Solomon 4:6 (#3)

"myrrh"

See how you translated **myrrh** in [1:13](#).

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 4:6 (#4)

"I myself will go to the mountain of myrrh"

The phrases **the mountain of myrrh** and **the hill of frankincense** are both metaphors that refer to the woman's "breasts" (mentioned in the previous verse). The man is discreetly indicating that the woman's breasts are pleasant smelling and that he wants to enjoy them (The man and the woman are now married). It would be good to retain this discreet and beautiful poetic imagery if possible. If you are using footnotes you could indicate what these two metaphors mean there. If you decide that it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning using a simile. Alternate translation: "I myself will go to your breasts which are like two sweet-smelling mountains" or "I myself will be close to your breasts, which are like two pleasant smelling hills"

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 4:7 (#1)

"All of you {is} beautiful"

Alternate translation: "Every part of you is beautiful"

Song of Solomon 4:8 (#1)

"Come} with me from Lebanon, {my} bride;"

This entire verse is a metaphor. This is poetry and the author is not literally indicating that the woman is physically in the mountains and near wild and dangerous animals. Rather, the author is using this metaphor to express the man's feelings regarding being physically distant from the woman and his strong desire to have the woman near him and away from anything that could harm her. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly using a simile as modeled by the UST.

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 4:8 (#2)

"Come} with me" - "come"

Your language may say "go" rather than **come** in contexts such as this. Use whichever is more natural. Alternate translation: "Go with me ... go"

See: Go and Come

Song of Solomon 4:8 (#3)

"Descend"

The word translated as **Descend** here could mean: (1) to come down from a height. If you choose this meaning you can follow the model of the ULT and UST. Alternate translation: "Climb down" (2) to bend down and look. Alternate translation: "Bend down and look"

Song of Solomon 4:8 (#4)

"from the top of Amana,"

Hermon is a mountain range in northern Israel and **Amana** and **Senir** are both mountain peaks.

See: How to Translate Names

Song of Solomon 4:8 (#5)

""from the hiding places of lions,"

These two phrases mean very similar things. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same general idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and it would be good to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation rather than combining them. However, if saying the same thing twice might be confusing for your readers, you could combine these two phrases into one as modeled by the UST.

See: Parallelism

Song of Solomon 4:9 (#1)

""You have enchanted my heart, my sister, {my} bride;"

If it would be more natural in your language, you could change the order of these phrases. If it would help your readers you could also add the word "yes" to show that the phrase **you have enchanted my heart** is repeated in order to add emphasis. Alternate translation: "My sister, my bride; you have enchanted my heart. Yes, you have enchanted my heart"

See: Information Structure

Song of Solomon 4:9 (#2)

"You have enchanted my heart," - "you have enchanted my heart"

The phrase translated as **you have enchanted my heart** is an idiom which could mean: (1) to steal or capture a person's heart. In Jewish thinking the **heart** was the center of a person's thinking. To capture a person's **heart** probably also had the added meaning of causing them to be so in love that they could not think clearly because they were so overcome with feelings of love. Alternate translation: "You have captured my heart ... you have captured my heart" or "It is as though you have captured my heart ... it is as though you have

captured my heart" or "You have made me feel so in love with you that it is as if I have lost my mind ... you have made me feel so in love with you that it is as if I have lost my mind" (2) the woman had made the man's **heart** beat faster. Alternate translation: "You have caused my heart to beat fast ... you have caused my heart to beat fast" (3) that the woman had encouraged the man's **heart**. Alternate translation: "You have encouraged my heart ... you have encouraged my heart" or "You have given me heart ... you have given me heart"

See: Idiom

Song of Solomon 4:9 (#3)

"my sister"

The man and woman are not actually brother and sister. The phrase **my sister** is a term of endearment which expresses affection between lovers. This phrase indicates that the man and woman have a close companionship and deep emotional bond. If calling a lover **my sister** would be offensive or socially inappropriate in your culture you could use a different term of endearment or indicate the meaning of **my sister** with a footnote. Alternately, you could indicate the meaning explicitly as modeled by the UST.

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 4:10 (#1)

"How" - "How"

Here, the word **How** is used as an exclamation to emphasize two statements about how wonderful the woman's **love** is. Use an exclamation that is natural in your language for communicating this.

See:

Song of Solomon 4:10 (#2)

"my sister"

See how you translated the phrase **my sister** in [4:9](#).

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 4:10 (#3)

""How your love is beautiful, my sister, {my} bride!"

If it would be more natural in your language, you could change the order of these phrases. Alternate translation: "My sister, my bride; how your love is beautiful! How your love is better than wine"

See: Information Structure

Song of Solomon 4:10 (#4)

"How your love is beautiful," - "How your love {is} better than wine"

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **love**, you could express the same idea with a verb form as modeled by the UST or in some other way that is natural in your language.

See: Abstract Nouns

Song of Solomon 4:10 (#5)

"your oils {is} better"

Here, **oils** refers to perfumes. In the author's culture pleasant smelling spices were mixed into olive oil in order to make a pleasant smelling perfume which was then put on the skin. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "your scented oils" or "the perfumed oils on your skin"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 4:10 (#6)

"your oils {is} better"

The author is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers might misunderstand this, you could supply the words "is better" from the context as modeled by the ULT.

See: Ellipsis

Song of Solomon 4:11 (#1)

"Your lips drip {with} nectar"

Here the the woman's **lips** refer to the kisses from her **lips**. The man says that her **lips drip with nectar** to indicate the pleasantness of her kisses. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a simile or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Your kisses are so pleasant that it is as if your lips drip with nectar" or "Your kisses are delightfully sweet" or "Being kissed by you is as enjoyable as eating honey"

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 4:11 (#2)

"nectar"

The word translated as **nectar** refers specifically to honey which drips or flows from honeycomb. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly by translating it as "honey" as modeled by the UST.

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 4:11 (#3)

"honey and milk {are} under your tongue"

The phrase **honey and milk are under your tongue** could mean: (1) that the taste of the woman's kisses were as pleasant as milk and honey. Alternate translation: "your kisses are like milk and honey to me" or "your kisses are as pleasant and delightful as milk and honey" (2) that the woman's words were as pleasant as milk and honey. Alternate translation: "your words are as pleasant as milk and honey" (3) that both the woman's kisses and her words were as pleasant as milk and honey. Alternate translation: "the kisses from your mouth and your words are as pleasant as milk and honey to me"

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 4:11 (#4)

"and the smell of your garments {is} like the smell of Lebanon"

Lebanon is known for its forests of cedar trees. Cedar trees have a very pleasant smell. The phrase **the smell of your garments is like the smell of Lebanon** probably means that the woman's clothes smelled like the smell of cedar wood. If it

would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: “and the smell of your garments is like the smell of Lebanon’s pleasant smelling cedar”

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 4:12 (#1)

“A locked garden {is} my sister, {my} bride,”

If it would be more natural in your language, you could change the order of these phrases. Alternate translation: “My sister, my bride; you are a locked garden, a locked spring, a sealed fountain”

See: Information Structure

Song of Solomon 4:12 (#2)

“A locked garden {is} my sister, {my} bride”

The man is speaking of the woman as if she were a **locked garden**. He uses **garden** as a poetic way of referring to the woman herself and by saying she is a **locked garden** he means that the woman is both beautiful and seemingly inaccessible like a **locked garden**. If it would help your readers you could express the meaning as a simile. Alternate translation: “You are like a locked garden my sister, my bride”

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 4:12 (#3)

“A locked garden {is} my sister, {my} bride”

The word translated as **garden** refers to a large enclosed area where bushes, flowers, plants, and trees grow. If your readers would not be familiar with this type of garden, you could use the name of something similar in your area that would fit this context or you could use a descriptive phrase to explain it or explain it in a footnote. Alternate translation: “A locked park where many trees and plants grow is my sister, my bride”

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 4:12 (#4)

“my sister”

See how you translated the phrase **my sister** in [4:9](#).

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 4:12 (#5)

“a locked spring, a sealed fountain”

The man continues to draw an extended comparison between the woman he loves and a **garden** by speaking of the woman as if she were a **locked spring** and a **sealed fountain** within a **locked garden**. The man means that the woman’s body is beautiful and seemingly inaccessible like a **a locked spring** or a **sealed fountain**. If you translated **A locked garden is my sister, my bride** as a simile then you should also translate these two phrases as similes. Alternate translation: “you are like a locked spring, you are like a sealed fountain”

See: Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors

Song of Solomon 4:12 (#6)

“a locked spring, a sealed fountain”

The phrase **a locked spring** and the phrase **a sealed fountain** mean basically the same thing. The author is saying the same thing twice, in slightly different ways, for emphasis. If saying the same thing twice might be confusing for your readers, you can combine the phrases into one, as modeled by the UST, and show the emphasis in some other way.

See: Parallelism

Song of Solomon 4:13 (#1)

“Your shoots {are}”

The word translated as **shoots** refers to the parts of something that come out from it. Here, the word refers to the stems and roots that come out (shoot out) from trees and plants. The word **shoots** is used here to refer to the woman so if it would help your readers you could translate the phrase **Your shoots** as “You” as modeled by the UST. Alternately, you could translate **shoots** with a general word that your language uses to speak of what grows out of plants and trees. Alternate translation: “Your sprouts are”

See: Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors

Song of Solomon 4:13-14 (#1)

""Your shoots {are} an orchard of pomegranate trees with delicious fruits,"

The man is making a comparison between these things and the woman by speaking of her as if she is **an orchard of pomegranate trees** and as if she is various other spices and pleasant smelling plants and trees that are in the "locked garden" (4:12). If you translated 4:12 as a simile you should also translate these two verses as a simile. Alternate translation: "You are like an orchard of pomegranate trees with delicious fruits; henna with nard, nard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes with all the best spices"

See: Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors

Song of Solomon 4:13-14 (#2)

""Your shoots {are} an orchard of pomegranate trees with delicious fruits,"

Here the man is poetically describing how wonderful the woman is by describing her as if she is a garden where all types of pleasant plants and trees grow. These plants and trees would not normally grow in the same location (garden) because they normally grew in different climates (areas) but because this is poetry the author imaginatively places these plants in one garden to create a poetic comparison for how wonderful the woman he loves is. If it would help your readers, you could indicate in a footnote that the author is using plants and trees from different areas to create an imaginative image of how wonderful the woman is.

See: Poetry

Song of Solomon 4:13-14 (#1)

"henna with nard" - "nard"

See how you translated the word **nard** in 1:12 and the word **henna** in 1:14.

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 4:14 (#1)

""and saffron,"

The word **saffron** refers to a beautiful flowering plant that produces purple flowers and the word **calamus** refers to a cane. Both **saffron** and **calamus** were used to make a pleasant smelling oil. The term **cinnamon** refers to a spice made from the bark of the **cinnamon** tree. The term **aloes** refers to the pleasant smelling resin that comes from specific trees in Asia. If one or more of these plants are unknown in your area you could use the name of something similar in your area or you could retain the name and use a footnote explaining what the plant is. Alternate translation: "and saffron flowers, calamus canes and cinnamon trees ... pleasant smelling resin called aloes"

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 4:15 (#1)

""a fountain of gardens,"

Here, the man continues the metaphor that he began in 4:12 and speaks of the woman he loves as if she were **a fountain** in a garden, **a well of living waters** and **flowing streams from Lebanon**. If you translated 4:12-14 as a simile you should also translate this verse as a simile. See how you translated the word "garden" in 4:12. Alternate translation: "you are like a fountain of gardens, like a well of living waters and like flowing streams from Lebanon"

See: Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors

Song of Solomon 4:15 (#2)

"a fountain of gardens"

The term translated as **fountain** refers to a spring or underground well that is dug in order to be used as a water source. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "a garden spring" or "a garden well"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 4:15 (#3)

"a fountain of gardens"

Here, the author could be using the plural form **gardens** to: (1) designate the kind of **fountain** that would be in **gardens**. Alternate translation: “a garden fountain” (2) designate a large garden. Alternate translation: “a fountain in a large garden”

See: Unusual Uses of the Plural

Song of Solomon 4:15 (#4)

"living waters"

Here, the term **living** means that the water is fresh and flowing. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: “fresh water” or “flowing water”

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 4:16 (#1)

""Awake, north wind, and come, south wind;"

The woman is speaking to the **wind** which she knows cannot hear her. She is doing this to communicate her strong desire that the pleasant smell of her body will flow through the air and attract the man she loves so that he will come to her. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate these words as a wish or desire. Alternate translation: “I wish that the north wind and south wind would come and blow on my garden and let its spices flow”

See: Apostrophe

Song of Solomon 4:16 (#2)

"and come," - "Let my beloved come"

Your language may say “go” rather than **come** in contexts such as this. Use whichever is more natural. Alternate translation: “and go ... Let my beloved go”

See: Go and Come

Song of Solomon 4:16 (#3)

""Awake, north wind, and come, south wind;"

Here, the woman continues the “garden” metaphor (that the man began in [4:12](#)) by referring to her body as **my garden** and then **his garden**. In this

verse the woman calls to the wind to blow on her **garden** so that **its spices flow** into the air and attract the man she loves. The woman then offers her body to the man she loves by inviting him to **come to his garden** (a poetic way of inviting him to come to her and enjoy her body). You should translate the term **garden** here the same way you did in [4:12](#) because both uses refer to the woman’s body. In [4:13](#) the man spoke of the woman’s body as “an orchard of pomegranate trees with delicious fruits” and here the woman invites the man to **come to his garden and eat its delicious fruit**. If you translated [4:12-15](#) as a simile, you should also translate the sentence **Let my beloved come to his garden and eat its delicious fruit** as a simile.

See: Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors

Song of Solomon 4:16 (#4)

"and let its spices flow"

Alternate translation: “and carry the pleasant smell of its spices through the air” or “and make the pleasant smell of its spices flow through the air”

Song of Solomon - Chapter 5 Introduction

Structure and formatting

5:1 The conclusion of the garden metaphor

5:2-8 The theme of longing and searching.

5:9 The women of Jerusalem ask the young women why she thinks the man she loves is special

5:10-16 The woman responds to the question the young women of Jerusalem asked her

Special concepts in this chapter

The attractiveness of the man

The woman describes the man as the epitome of male attractiveness in 5:10-16.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors

As the author has done throughout this book so far, he continues to use metaphors to describe feelings

and events that are common to romantic relationships. (See: Metaphor)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Order of events

5:2–8 seems to describe events that would have chronologically and logically occurred before the events described in 3:6–5:1. The solution to this seeming problem is to understand that this book is poetry and that the author is poetically describing emotions and feelings that occur between a man and woman who romantically love each other. Because the author is using poetry to describe the couple's romantic relationship and its associated feelings, he does not need to follow the conventions of chronological story telling.

Whether 5:2–8 describes events that really happened or that happened in a dream.

There are two main views among Bible scholars regarding the events described in 5:2–8. One view is that the events which 5:2–8 describe happened in a dream. The other view is that the events that 5:2–8 describe happened after the man awakened the women from sleeping or from being nearly asleep. The vast majority of Bible scholars think that the first view is correct, that the events described in 5:2–8 happened in a dream.

The “sister” metaphor

The phrase **my sister** is used in 4:9; 4:10, 4:12, 5:1, and 5:2. The man uses this phrase as a term of endearment for the woman he loves. The woman is not actually his sister. You should translate this phrase in 5:1, and 5:2 the same way as you translated it in 4:9; 4:10, and 4:12 because the author uses it with the same meaning in this chapter. See the note at the first occurrence of this phrase in 4:9 for more information regarding this phrase.

An alternate translation possibility for the word the ULT translates as “towers of” in 5:13

In verse 13, the ULT follows the standard Hebrew text by saying “towers of.” However, as a footnote in the ULT indicates, many biblical scholars believe that the original reading was more likely “yielding.” Consider using that reading in your translation. If “yielding” is used in place of “towers of” then, the first portion of 5:13 in the ULT would read “His

cheeks {are} like a bed of spices, yielding herbal spices” (and The UST would read “His cheeks are like a garden where spices grow that produce sweet-smelling perfume”). The phrase “yielding herbal spices” would then be further describing the phrase “a bed of spices.” The point of the comparison would be that the man's cheeks smell like a garden bed of spices which yields herbal spices. If you choose to use the word “yielding” in your translation you could explain the basis of the comparison for your readers in your translation if you think it would help them. Alternate translation: “His cheeks smell like a bed of spices that produce herbal spices” or “His cheeks smell like a bed of spices that yield herbal spices”

Song of Solomon 5:1 (#1)

“I have come to my garden, my sister, {my} bride;”

Here, the man continues using the “garden” metaphor that he began in 4:12 and again refers to the woman's body as a **garden**. Here the man accepts the woman's invitation (that she gave in the previous verse) to enjoy her body. The lines **I have plucked my myrrh with my spice** and **I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey** and **I have drunk my wine with my milk** are all metaphors for the man enjoying the woman's body. If you used similes to translate 4:12–16 you should continue to do so here. Alternate translation: “You who are as dear to me as a sister, my bride, I am ready to go with you and enjoy the delights of your body, it will be as though I will be gathering myrrh with my other spices, and eating my honey and honeycomb, and drinking my wine and my milk”

See: Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors

Song of Solomon 5:1 (#2)

“I have come to my garden, my sister, {my} bride;”

Though the man is speaking as if he has already done these things. He is actually getting ready to do them. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: “I am going to come to my garden, my sister, my bride; I will pluck my myrrh with my spice. I will eat my honeycomb with my honey; I will drink my wine with my milk”

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 5:1 (#3)

"I have come"

Your language may say "gone" rather than **come** in contexts such as this. Use whichever is more natural. Alternate translation: "I have gone"

See: Go and Come

Song of Solomon 5:1 (#4)

"I have come to my garden, my sister, {my} bride"

If it would be more natural in your language, you could change the order of these phrases. Alternate translation: "My sister, my bride, I have come to my garden"

See: Information Structure

Song of Solomon 5:1 (#5)

"my sister"

See how you translated the phrase **my sister** in [4:9](#).

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 5:1 (#6)

""Eat, friends;"

The author does not say who is speaking to the couple here so you should not indicate the speakers explicitly in the text of your translation. However, if you are using section headers to indicate who is speaking, as the UST does, the speakers could be: (1) the "daughters of Jerusalem" who spoke earlier in the book. The daughters of Jerusalem are speaking to the couple at the couple's wedding. If you are using section headers you can use a phrase such as "The young women of Jerusalem speaking to the couple" or "The young women of Jerusalem speak to the couple at their wedding" (2) a group of people who are the couple's friends and wedding guests. If you are using section headers you can use a phrase such as "The couple's friends speak" or "The couple's wedding guests speak"

See: When to Keep Information Implicit

Song of Solomon 5:1 (#7)

""Eat, friends;"

Eating and drinking are metaphors which are used to represent the newly married couple enjoying their sexual union. The phrase **be drunk** is an encouragement to fully enjoy the delights of their sexual union. If it would help your readers you could express the meaning with a simile. Alternately, you could express the meaning in plain language by adding a describing phrase such as "with love." If this metaphor of becoming drunk might be offensive to your hearers you could use a phrase such as "drink deeply" or "drink abundantly" instead of "be drunk." Alternate translation: "Enjoy your marital intimacy and make love until you are fully satisfied as if you are eating food until full and drinking wine freely" or "Eat, friends; Drink, and be drunk with love" or "Eat, friends; Drink, and drink abundantly of love"

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 5:2 (#1)

"I {am} asleep, but my heart {is} awake"

Here, the term **heart** could represent: (1) the woman's thoughts and mental awareness which would make the phrase **my heart is awake** mean that her mind is alert and dreaming after she had started to sleep. Alternate translation: "I am asleep, but my mind is dreaming" or "I am asleep, but my mind is alert and dreaming" (2) the woman's entire person which would make the phrase **my heart is awake** mean that she had been awakened after falling **asleep** or awakened after she was almost **asleep**. Alternate translation: "I was almost asleep, now I am awakened" or "I was asleep, but now I have been awakened"

See: Metonymy

Song of Solomon 5:2 (#2)

"A sound—my beloved is knocking"

Alternate translation: "I hear a sound, it is my beloved knocking" or "I hear a sound, it is the sound of my beloved knocking on my door"

Song of Solomon 5:2 (#3)**"my beloved"**

See how you translated the phrase **my beloved** in [1:13](#). Alternate translation: "my lover"

Song of Solomon 5:2 (#4)**"my sister, my darling"**

See how you translated the phrase **my sister** in [4:9](#) and the phrase **my darling** in [1:9](#).

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 5:2 (#5)**"my dove"**

See how you translated the phrase **my dove** in [2:14](#).

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 5:2 (#6)**"because my head {is} full of dew"**

Here, the phrase **full of** is a Hebrew idiom which means "wet with." If your readers would not understand this, you could use an equivalent idiom or use plain language. Alternate translation: "because my head is wet with dew"

See: Idiom

Song of Solomon 5:2 (#7)**"my hair {is full of}"**

The words "is full of" are understood from the previous phrase. If it would help your readers, they can be repeated here as modeled by the ULT.

See: Ellipsis

Song of Solomon 5:3 (#1)**""I have taken off my robe; how will I put it on?"**

In this verse, the author quotes: (1) what the woman thought to herself. Alternate translation: "I thought to myself; I have taken off my robe; how

will I put it on? I have washed my feet; how could I get them dirty?" (2) the woman speaking directly to the man. Alternate translation: "I said to the man I love; I have taken off my robe; how will I put it on? I have washed my feet; how could I get them dirty?"

See: Quote Markings

Song of Solomon 5:3 (#2)**""how will I put it on?"**

The woman is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or an exclamation and express the emphasis in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "I do not want to put it back on! I have already washed my feet so I do not want to get them dirty again!"

See: Rhetorical Question

Song of Solomon 5:4 (#1)**"My beloved"**

See how you translated the phrase **my beloved** in [1:13](#).

Song of Solomon 5:4 (#2)**"and my belly roared concerning him"**

Here, **belly** represents the center of a person's emotions. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and my feelings for him roared"

See: Metonymy

Song of Solomon 5:4 (#3)**"and my belly roared concerning him"**

Here, the phrase **my belly roared** means that the woman's feelings were aroused. The term **belly** represents the woman's feelings and the woman saying that her feelings **roared** is a poetic way of saying that her feelings were aroused. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or express the meaning in

plain language. Alternate translation: “and my feelings for him were aroused”

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 5:5 (#1)

“and my hands dripped {with} myrrh”

The phrase **my hands dripped with myrrh** and the phrase **my fingers dripped with flowing myrrh** mean basically the same thing. The second phrase emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and it would be good to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation rather than combining them. However, if it would be helpful to your readers, you could connect the phrases with a word other than **and** in order to show that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: “and my hands dripped with myrrh, yes, my fingers dripped with flowing myrrh”

See: Parallelism

Song of Solomon 5:5 (#2)

“flowing myrrh”

The phrase translated as **flowing myrrh** refers to liquid myrrh. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: “liquid myrrh”

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 5:5 (#3)

“and my fingers {dripped with}”

The woman is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers might misunderstand this, you could supply these words from the context as modeled by the ULT which adds the words “dripped with.”

See: Ellipsis

Song of Solomon 5:6 (#1)

“to my beloved,”

See how you translated the phrase **my beloved** in [1:13](#).

Song of Solomon 5:6 (#2)

“and gone”

Your language may say “went” rather than **gone** in contexts such as this. Use whichever is more natural. Alternate translation: “and went”

See: Go and Come

Song of Solomon 5:6 (#3)

“My soul went out”

Your language may say “gone” rather than **went** in contexts such as this. Use whichever is more natural. Alternate translation: “My soul had gone out”

See: Go and Come

Song of Solomon 5:6 (#4)

“My soul went out”

Here, **soul** represents the entire person, and the phrase **My soul went out** is a Hebrew idiom that means to feel extreme despair. If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use an idiom from your language that does have this meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “My heart sank” or “I felt great despair”

See: Idiom

Song of Solomon 5:6 (#5)

“because he departed”

Here, the word translated as **when he departed** could mean: (1) **when he departed**. If you choose this option use the translation of the ULT as a model. (2) “when he spoke.” Alternate translation: “when he spoke”

Song of Solomon 5:6 (#6)**"but he did not answer me"**

The reason the man did not answer is because he was not there. If your readers might mistakenly think that the phrase **he did not answer** implies that the man was present, you could state explicitly that the man was not there or you could use a different phrase to express the meaning such as "but there was no answer." Alternate translation: "but he did not answer me because he was not there" or "but there was no answer"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 5:7 (#1)**"The guards going about in the city found me"**

See how you translated the sentence **The guards going about in the city found me** in [3:3](#).

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 5:7 (#2)**""They beat me and wounded me;"**

If it would be more natural in your language, you could change the order of these phrases. Alternate translation: "The guards of the walls beat me and wounded me; they lifted my shawl from me"

See: Information Structure

Song of Solomon 5:7 (#3)**"They beat me and wounded me"**

The reason that the city watchmen **beat** and **wounded** the woman is because they thought she was a prostitute. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly as modeled by the UST.

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 5:7 (#4)**"my shawl"**

The word translated as **shawl** could refer to: (1) a light article of clothing like a **shawl** or cloak that

was worn as an outer garment and wrapped around the body. Alternate translation: "my cloak" (2) a large veil. Alternate translation: "my veil"

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 5:7 (#5)**"the guards of the walls"**

The men called **the guards of the walls** are the same men as **The guards going about in the city** mentioned earlier in the verse. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "those guards who were going about in the city guarding the walls"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 5:8 (#1)**"I adjure you, daughters of Jerusalem"**

See how you translated the phrase **I adjure you, daughters of Jerusalem** in [2:7](#).

See: Oath Formulas

Song of Solomon 5:8 (#2)**"Declare to him} that sick {with} love {am} I"**

See how you translated the phrase **sick with love am I** in [2:5](#)

See: Hyperbole

Song of Solomon 5:8 (#3)**"Declare to him} that sick {with} love {am} I"**

The woman is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers might misunderstand this, you could supply these words from the context as modeled by the ULT.

See: Ellipsis

Song of Solomon 5:9 (#1)**""What {is} your beloved more than {another} beloved,"**

The phrase **What is your beloved more than another beloved** is repeated for emphasis. This is a common feature of Hebrew poetry, and it would be good to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation rather than combining them. However, if asking the same question twice would be confusing to your readers you could combine them into one. Alternate translation: "What is your beloved more than another beloved, most beautiful among women, that thus you adjure us" or "Most beautiful among women, what is your beloved more than another beloved, that thus you adjure us"

See: Poetry

Song of Solomon 5:9 (#2)

"What {is} your beloved more than {another} beloved"

Alternate translation: "What makes the man you love better than other men" or "What is so special about the man you love"

Song of Solomon 5:9 (#3)

""What {is} your beloved more than {another} beloved,"

If it would be more natural in your language, you could change the order of these phrases. Alternate translation: "Most beautiful among women, what is your beloved more than another beloved"

See: Information Structure

Song of Solomon 5:9 (#4)

"most beautiful among women"

See how you translated the phrase **most beautiful among women** in [1:8](#).

Song of Solomon 5:9 (#5)

"that thus you adjure us"

Alternate translation: "with the result that thus you adjure us" or "with the result that you request us to promise that we tell him that" or "that would make you want to thus adjure us"

Song of Solomon 5:9 (#6)

"you adjure us"

See how you translated the word **adjure** in the previous verse.

See: Oath Formulas

Song of Solomon 5:10 (#1)

"My beloved {is} shimmering and red"

The word translated here as **shimmering** refers to something that is "radiant" or "glowing." Here it means that the man's skin had a healthy glow. The word **red** refers to the man's healthy color of skin that was a brownish red or reddish brown color. These two words are used together to indicate that the man's skin and complexion looked healthy and handsome. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate explicitly that these two words refer to his skin or you could summarize what they indicate when used together as modeled by the UST. Alternate translation: "My beloved has radiant and healthy skin" or "My beloved's skin glows and is a handsome reddish brown" or "My beloved's skin is radiant and reddish-brown"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 5:10 (#2)

"distinguished among ten thousand"

In the Hebrew language **ten thousand** is the highest number that was used when making comparisons so the woman uses this number here to stand for an uncountable number of **other people**. If you have a similar expression in your culture you could use that. Alternately, if it would help your readers, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "better than anyone else" or "there is no one else like him" or "one in a million"

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 5:11 (#1)

"His head {is} gold, refined gold"

The woman is speaking of the man's **head** as if it were **gold**. Because she speaks of the appearance of the man's **hairs** in the following line she probably intends to speak of the man's face in this line and express that his face resembles the dazzling, beautiful appearance of gold. The phrase **refined gold** indicates that the **gold** is very special and valuable. By saying that the man's **head** is **refined gold** the woman is probably indicating that the man she loves is special and has great worth. If it would help your readers you could use a simile to express the meaning or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "His head is like gold that is refined" or "His face is beautiful and gleams like gold. He is precious and valuable like refined gold" or "His face gleams. He is precious and valuable"

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 5:11 (#2)

"black like the raven"

A **raven** is a large bird with dark black feathers. Ravens are as big as some hawks and are similar in color and appearance to crows but larger. If your readers would not be familiar with this type of bird, you could use the name of a similar bird in your area or you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: "black like a bird with dark black feathers" or "black like a dark black bird"

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 5:11 (#3)

"his hairs {are} wavy, black like the raven"

The point of the comparison **black like the raven** is that the man's hair is dark **black** like the color of a **raven**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could express this meaning in plain language. Alternate translation: "his hair is wavy and dark black"\n\n

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 5:12 (#1)

""His eyes {are} like doves beside stream beds of water,"

In [1:15](#) the man said to the woman, "your eyes are doves." Here, the woman uses the word **like** instead of "are" and compares the man's **eyes** to **doves** that are **bathing in milk** and are by water. The phrase **bathing in milk** explains what color the **doves** (eyes) are. The two phrases, **beside stream beds of water** and **sitting by the pools**, both describe the **doves** as being by water. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could add the words "that are" and "and" to show that the comparison continues throughout the verse. Alternately, you could express the meaning in plain language as modeled by the UST. Alternate translation: "His eyes are like doves beside stream beds of water, that are bathing in milk and sitting beside the pools"

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 5:12 (#2)

""His eyes {are} like doves beside stream beds of water,"

The phrases **beside stream beds of water** and **sitting by the pools** mean basically the same thing. They both describe the **doves** as being by water. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and it would be good to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation rather than combining them. However, if it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them. Alternate translation: "His eyes are like doves beside stream beds of water, bathing in milk" or "His eyes are like doves bathing in milk, sitting by the pools"

See: Parallelism

Song of Solomon 5:13 (#1)

""His cheeks {are} like a bed of spices,"

Here, the man's **cheeks** are compared to two things; a garden, or an area in a garden, used for planting **spices** and **towers of herbal spices**. The point of this comparison is that the man's **cheeks** smell ****like** planters of spices and are like **towers** that contain **herbal spices**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the basis of this comparison. Alternate translation: "His cheeks smell like a bed of spices and like towers that contain herbal spices"

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 5:13 (#2)**"like a bed of spices"**

Here, the term translated as **bed** refers to an area in a garden used for planting. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "like an area for planting spices" or "like a garden bed of spices" or "like planters of spices"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 5:13 (#3)**"towers of"**

See the chapter five introduction for information regarding an alternate translation of the word that the ULT translates as **towers of**.

Song of Solomon 5:13 (#4)**"towers of herbal spices"**

The woman is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers might misunderstand this, you could supply these words from the context. Alternate translation: "like towers of herbal spices" or "and his cheeks are like towers of herbal spices"

See: Ellipsis

Song of Solomon 5:13 (#5)**"His lips {are} lilies, dripping {with} flowing myrrh"**

Here, the woman compares the man's **lips** to **lilies** that are **dripping with flowing myrrh**. The woman probably compares his lips with **lilies, dripping with flowing myrrh** because of the sweet smell of both **lilies** and **myrrh**, because of the beauty and softness of **lilies**, and because the man's kisses are wet like **flowing myrrh**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could express the meaning with a simile or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "His lips are beautiful, fragrant, and soft. His kisses are sweet-smelling and moist"

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 5:13 (#6)**"lilies"**

See how you translated **lilies** in [2:16](#).

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 5:13 (#7)**"flowing myrrh"**

See how you translated the phrase **flowing myrrh** in [5:5](#).

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 5:14 (#1)**"His arms {are} rods of gold mounted with topaz"**

Here, the woman compares the man's **arms** to **rods of gold mounted with topaz**. The woman uses this comparison because **rods of gold** were powerful, had an attractive color, and had a finely rounded shape and **topaz** would have made the **rods of gold** even more nice to look at. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could express the meaning with a simile or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "His arms are powerful, nicely rounded, and beautiful like rods of gold mounted with topaz"

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 5:14 (#2)**"His arms {are}"**

The word that the ULT translates as **arms** could: (1) refer to **arms** in which case you can use the ULT's translation as a model. (2) refer to "hands." Alternate translation: "His hands are"

Song of Solomon 5:14 (#3)**"with topaz"**

topaz is a beautiful looking gem stone used in jewelry and also to add decoration to other things. Bible scholars are not certain exactly what stone the word the ULT translates as **topaz** refers to. Many different stones have been proposed such as **topaz**, chrysolite, beryl and others. If you have one of these types of stones in your area you could use it in your translation or you could use a general term. Alternate translation: “with beautiful stones” or “with jewels”

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 5:14 (#4)

"his belly {is} a plate of ivory covered {with} sapphires"

Here, the woman compares the man's **belly** to a **plate of ivory covered with sapphires**. Both **ivory** and **sapphires** are very beautiful. By comparing the man's **belly a plate of ivory covered with sapphires** she is saying that the man's belly looks beautiful and is probably also trying to indicate the specialness or uniqueness of his appearance since **ivory** and **sapphires** were rare and costly. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could express the meaning with a simile or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “his belly is beautiful and precious” or “his belly is handsome”

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 5:14 (#5)

"his belly {is}"

Alternate translation: “his stomach is”

Song of Solomon 5:14 (#6)

"ivory"

The word **ivory** refers to the tusks of a large animal called an elephant. **ivory** is a white color and is very beautiful and costly. If your readers would not be familiar with **ivory** you could explain this term in a footnote.

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 5:14 (#7)

"with} sapphires"

sapphires are a beautiful blue gem stone. If your readers would not be familiar with this type of stone, you could use the name of something similar in your area or you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: “with blue gem stones” or “with beautiful blue gem stones”

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 5:15 (#1)

"His thighs {are} pillars of alabaster set on bases of refined gold"

Here, the woman compares the man's **thighs** to **pillars of alabaster set on bases of gold**. The woman means that the man's legs are strong and majestic looking like **pillars of alabaster set on bases of gold**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could express the meaning with a simile or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “His thighs are strong and majestic like pillars of alabaster set on bases of gold”

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 5:15 (#2)

"His thighs {are}"

The word the ULT translates as **thighs** most likely refers to the entirety of a person's legs so you could translate this term as **legs** as the UST does, if you desire.

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 5:15 (#3)

"alabaster"

The word translated as **alabaster** can refer to either **alabaster** or marble. Both **alabaster** and marble are types of strong stone that are nice looking and are used to make large columns, statues and other things. If your readers would not be familiar with one of these types of stone use the name of the other one. If they are not familiar with either you could use the name of something similar

in your area or you could use a more general term.
Alternate translation: “marble” or “stone”

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 5:15 (#4)

"his appearance {is} like Lebanon, {as} choice as the cedars"

Lebanon was a beautiful mountainous region and the cedar trees that grew there were tall and strong and considered to be the best wood. The word **choice** here means “excellent quality” so the phrase **as choice as the cedars** means that the man is of excellent quality like the **cedars** in **Lebanon**. The point of this comparison is that the man is majestic like the mountainous, wooded area of **Lebanon** and is tall and strong and stately like the **cedars**. Also, similar to how the **cedars** are better than other trees so he is outstanding in comparison to other men. If it would be helpful in your language, you could explain the point of this comparison or express this meaning in plain language. Alternate translation: “His appearance is tall and strong and stately. He is outstanding among other men” or “His appearance is majestic. He is strong and tall and better than other men”

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 5:16 (#1)

"His mouth {is} most sweet"

Here, **mouth** could refer to: (1) the man’s kisses. Alternate translation: “His kisses are most sweet” (2) the man’s words. Alternate translation: “His speech is most sweet” or “The words from his mouth are most sweet”

See: Metonymy

Song of Solomon 5:16 (#2)

"and all of him {is} most desirable"

Alternate translation: “and every part of him is very desirable”

Song of Solomon 5:16 (#3)

"daughters of Jerusalem"

See how you translated the phrase **daughters of Jerusalem** in [1:5](#).

See: Possession

Song of Solomon - Chapter 6 **Introduction**

Special concepts in this chapter

Beauty

In 6:4–10 the man describes the woman he loves as the epitome of female beauty and attractiveness by using various similes.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Metaphors

In the ancient Near East, it was acceptable to describe a woman using similes involving animals. In many cultures today, this can be considered offensive. Different similes of beauty are used in different cultures. (See: Simile)

The meaning of 6:12

6:12 is very difficult to understand and its meaning is uncertain. Bible scholars have a variety of different opinions on the exact meaning of this verse because it is a very difficult verse to interpret and therefore there are a variety of different opinions on how the words and phrases relate to each other and what the exact meaning of some of the words are in context. Published versions of the Bible differ significantly from one another in their rendering of this verse. The ULT seeks to offer a reasonable translation of this verse. But if a translation of the Bible exists in your region, you may find that it differs from the ULT in the way that it translates this verse. If there is a Bible translation in your region, you may wish to use the reading that it uses. If not, you may wish to follow the reading of ULT.

The meaning of the phrase “like the dance of two armies” in 6:13

The meaning of the phrase “like the dance of two armies” is uncertain and Bible scholars have different opinions on the exact meaning of this verse. The ULT offers one possible translation of this verse. But if a translation of the Bible exists in

your region, you may find that it differs from the ULT in the way that it translates this verse. If there is a Bible translation in your region, you may wish to use the reading that it uses. If not, you may wish to follow the reading of ULT.

Song of Solomon 6:1 (#1)

""Where did he go, your beloved,"

The question **Where did he go, your beloved** and the question **Where did he turn, your beloved** have basically the same meaning. This type of repetition is a common feature of Hebrew poetry. This question is asked twice, in slightly different ways, for emphasis and poetic effect. It would be good to retain this repetition if possible but if saying the same thing twice might be confusing for your readers, you can combine the phrases into one. Alternate translation: "Where did he go, your beloved, most beautiful woman among women? Let us seek him with you" or "Most beautiful woman among women, where did he turn your beloved? Let us seek him with you"

See: Parallelism

Song of Solomon 6:1 (#2)

""Where did he go, your beloved,"

Alternate translation: "Where did your beloved go ... Where did your beloved turn"

Song of Solomon 6:1 (#3)

"most beautiful woman among women"

See how you translated the phrase **most beautiful woman among women** in [1:8](#).

Song of Solomon 6:1 (#4)

"Where did he turn, your beloved"

Alternate translation: "Which way did your beloved go"

Song of Solomon 6:1 (#5)

"and let us seek him with you"

The women of Jerusalem are leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers might misunderstand this, you could supply these words from the context. Alternate translation: "tell us, so that we can seek him with you" or "tell us, and let us seek him with you"

See: Ellipsis

Song of Solomon 6:2 (#1)

""My beloved went down to his garden,"

Here, the word **garden** and **gardens** both refer to the woman's body. The woman resumes the "garden" metaphor that was used in [4:12-5:1](#) by again referring to her body as a **garden**. The phrase **graze in the gardens** and **glean lilies** are both metaphors for the man enjoying the woman's body. If you used similes to translate [4:12-5:1](#) you should continue to use similes here. Alternate translation: "My beloved went to me. I am like a garden where beds of spices grow. He came to me in order to enjoy my body like a gazelle enjoys grazing in gardens and like a person enjoys gleaning lilies"

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 6:2 (#2)

""My beloved went down to his garden,"

The phrase **to the beds of spices** explains where in the **garden** the man **went down to**. This phrase is not describing a separate location from the **garden** (woman). If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "My beloved went down to the beds of spices in his garden" or "My beloved went to me who is like his spice garden"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 6:2 (#3)

"went down"

Your language may say "gone" rather than **went** in contexts such as this. Use whichever is more natural. Alternate translation: "has gone down"

See: Go and Come

Song of Solomon 6:2 (#4)**"to the beds of spices"**

See how you translated the similar phrase **bed of spices** in [5:13](#).

Song of Solomon 6:2 (#5)**"in the gardens"**

Here, the phrase **the gardens** refers to the woman just like the phrase **his garden** earlier in the verse does. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly by translating the phrase **the gardens** as "his gardens" or "his garden." Alternate translation: "in his gardens" or "in his garden"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 6:3 (#1)**"I {belong} to my beloved, and my beloved {belongs} to me"**

See how you translated the similar phrase "My beloved belongs to me and I belong to him" in [2:16](#).

Song of Solomon 6:3 (#2)**"he grazes among the lilies"**

See how you translated the similar phrase "the man grazing among the lilies" in [2:16](#).

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 6:4 (#1)**""You {are} beautiful, my darling, like Tirzah,"**

The man is saying that the woman is **like** the city of **Tirzah** and **like** the city of **Jerusalem** because both of these cities were beautiful. These lines are parallel and both mean basically the same thing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the point of comparison explicitly. Alternately, you could combine the lines if it would help your readers. Alternate translation: "You are beautiful, my darling, like the beautiful city of Tirzah, lovely like the lovely city of Jerusalem" or "You are beautiful and lovely, my darling, like the cities of Tirzah and Jerusalem"

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 6:4 (#2)**"You {are} beautiful, my darling"**

See how you translated the phrase "you are beautiful, my darling" in [1:15](#).

Song of Solomon 6:4 (#3)**"You {are} beautiful, my darling, like Tirzah"**

If it would be more natural in your language, you could change the order of these phrases. Alternate translation: "My darling, you are beautiful like Tirzah"

See: Information Structure

Song of Solomon 6:4 (#4)**""lovely like Jerusalem,"**

The man is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers might misunderstand this, you could supply these words from the context. Alternate translation: "you are lovely like Jerusalem, you are awe-inspiring like bannered armies"

See: Ellipsis

Song of Solomon 6:4 (#5)**"awe-inspiring like bannered armies"**

The man is saying that the woman is **awe-inspiring like bannered armies** because looking at her causes the man to feel a sense of awe that is comparable to seeing an army with its banners above it. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: "and the awe I feel when looking at you is like the awe I would feel if I were to see armies with their banners" or "and the awe I feel when looking at you is like the awe I feel when I see armies with their banners above them"

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 6:4 (#6)**"like bannered armies"**See how you translated the term **banner** in [2:4](#).

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 6:5 (#1)**"Your hair {is} like a flock of goats"**See how you translated the similar sentence "Your hair is like a flock of goats that hop down from the slopes of Gilead" in [4:1](#).

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 6:6 (#1)**"Your teeth {are} like a flock of ewes"**See how you translated the almost identical verse in [4:2](#). The only difference between this verse and 4:2 is that 4:2 has the phrase "shorn sheep" instead of **ewes**.

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 6:6 (#2)**"ewes"**The term **ewes** refers to female sheep. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate explicitly what the term **ewes** refers to. Alternate translation: "female sheep"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 6:7 (#1)**"Like a slice of a pomegranate {are} your cheeks"**See how you translated [4:3](#) which is identical to this verse.

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 6:8 (#1)**"Sixty {are} they, queens"**If it would be more natural in your language, you could change the order of words in the phrase **Sixty are they, queens**. Alternate translation: "They are sixty queens"

See: Information Structure

Song of Solomon 6:8 (#2)**"Sixty {are} they, queens, and eighty concubines"**The man is using the numbers, **Sixty** and **eighty** as a poetic way to make a comprehensive statement. The man is using the typical 3, 4 pattern that was commonly used at that time, and for emphasis he multiplies the numbers 3 and 4 by the number 20 resulting in the numbers **Sixty** and **eighty** which he thinks is sufficient to illustrate his point. If a speaker of your language would not do this, in your translation you could express the emphasis in a way that would be natural in your language. Alternate translation: "A large number of queens and a large number of concubines" or "Many queens, and many concubines"

See: Poetry

Song of Solomon 6:8 (#3)**"and marriageable women"**See how you translated the phrase **marriageable women** in [1:3](#).

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 6:8 (#4)**"and marriageable women without number"**Here, **without number** is an idiom that means "more than can be counted." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use an idiom from your language that does have that meaning or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and too many marriageable women to count" or "and more marriageable women than can be counted"

See: Idiom

Song of Solomon 6:8-9 (#1)

""Sixty {are} they, queens, and eighty concubines,"

This is a comparison that expresses that the woman is superior to women in a king's royal court. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could add words that explicitly indicate that this is a comparison. Alternate translation: "When compared to sixty queens, and eighty concubines and marriageable women without number, none of them are as special as my dove; my perfect one who is special to her mother and pure to the woman who bore her" or "Even if compared to sixty queens, and eighty concubines and marriageable women without number, still none of them would be as special as my dove; my perfect one who is special to her mother and pure to the woman who bore her"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 6:9 (#1)

"One {is} she"

Here, the phrase **One is she** means "She is special" (the number **One** is used in contrast to the large numbers of other women described in the previous verse). If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "She is special" or "She is unique" or "She is special in comparison to other women"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 6:9 (#2)

""my dove;"

See how you translated the phrases **my dove** and **my perfect one** in [5:2](#).

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 6:9 (#3)

"one {is} she to her mother"

The phrase **one is she to her mother** could mean: (1) that the woman the man loves is special **to her mother** (with **one** being used in contrast to the large numbers of other women described in the previous verse). Alternate translation: "she is

special to her mother" or "her mother thinks she is special" or "her mother thinks she is unique" (2) that the woman was the only child or the only daughter that her mother had. Alternate translation: "she is the only child of her mother" or "her mother's only daughter" or "she is the only child of her mother"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 6:9 (#4)

"pure {is} she to the woman who bore her"

The phrase **pure is she to the woman who bore her** could mean: (1) that the woman was her mother's favorite child or favorite daughter. Alternate translation: "the favorite child of the woman who bore her" or "the favorite daughter of the woman who bore her" (2) that the woman was pure or flawless in some way. Alternate translation: "flawless is she to the woman who bore her"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 6:9 (#5)

""one {is} she to her mother;"

If you decided that **one** means "special" here and that **pure** means "favorite" then these two lines are parallel and mean basically the same thing because both these words then have similar meanings and the phrases **her mother** and **the woman who bore her** both mean the same thing. The second line is emphasizing the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words which is common in Hebrew poetry. It would be good to show this repetition to your readers by including both phrases in your translation rather than combining them. However, if it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine these two lines into one. Alternate translation: "her mother thinks that she is very special" or "she is very special to her mother"

See: Parallelism

Song of Solomon 6:9 (#6)

"The daughters"

"Here, the word **daughters** could refer to: (1) the "marriageable women" in the previous verse. Alternate translation: "The marriageable women" or "the young women of the king's court" (2) young women in general, possibly "the daughters of Jerusalem"" (young women of Jerusalem) mentioned several times earlier in the book. Alternate translation: "The young women" "

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 6:10 (#1)

""Who {is} that, the woman who looks down like {the} dawn,"

The author does not say who is speaking here so you should not indicate explicitly who is speaking in the text of your translation. However, if you are using section headers to indicate who is speaking the speaker or speakers could be: (1) the man speaking to the woman he loves. If you are using section headers you can follow the example of the UST and include this verse under the section heading for 6:4–10 that indicates the man is speaking. (2) the **daughters** and the **queens** and **concubines** mentioned in the previous verse. If you are using section headers you can use a phrase for the section header such as "The daughters, the queens, and the concubines praise the woman" or "The other women praise the woman" or something comparable.

See: When to Keep Information Implicit

Song of Solomon 6:10 (#2)

""Who {is} that, the woman who looks down like {the} dawn,"

The man is not asking for information, but is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate these words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "Look at this woman who looks down like the dawn, beautiful like the moon, pure like the sun, terrifying like the bannered army!"

See: Rhetorical Question

Song of Solomon 6:10 (#3)

"the woman who looks down like {the} dawn"

Here, the man speaks of the sun as it dawns in the morning and shines down on the earth as though it were a person who could look down on the earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "the woman who shines like the sun as it rises early in the morning and brightens the sky" or "the woman who shines like the sun as it rises early in the morning and shines down from the sky"

See: Personification

Song of Solomon 6:10 (#4)

""the woman who looks down like {the} dawn,"

Here, the man first compares the woman to the sun in the morning as it dawns. He then compares the woman's beauty to the beauty of **the moon**. He then compares the woman's radiance to the radiance of **the sun**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the basis of these comparisons as modeled by the UST.

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 6:10 (#5)

"awe-inspiring like bannered armies"

See how you translated the identical phrase "awe-inspiring like bannered armies" in [6:4](#).

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 6:11 (#1)

"To the garden of {the} nut tree I went down"

The speaker is using the possessive form to describe an area where walnut trees grow. If this is not clear in your language, you could clarify the relationship for your readers. Alternate translation: "To the the nut tree garden I went down" or "To the place where walnut trees grow I went down"

See: Possession

Song of Solomon 6:11 (#1)**"To the garden of {the} nut tree I went down"**

If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases. Alternate translation: "I went down to the garden of the nut tree"

See: Information Structure

Song of Solomon 6:11 (#2)**"I went down"**

Your language may say "gone" rather than **went** in contexts such as this. Use whichever is more natural. Alternate translation: "I had gone down"

See: Go and Come

Song of Solomon 6:11–12 (#1)**""To the garden of {the} nut tree I went down,"**

It is difficult to know with certainty who is speaking in these two verses and because of this Bible scholars have different opinions about who is speaking here. Because the author does not say who is speaking you should not indicate who is speaking in the text of your translation. However, if you are using section headers to indicate who is speaking the speaker could be: (1) the man in both verses. If you decide the man is speaking in both these verses you can follow the example of the UST and include these two verses under the section heading for 6:4–11 that indicates the man is speaking. (2) the woman in both verses. If you decide the woman is speaking in both of these verses you can put a section header at the top of 6:11 indicating that the woman is speaking.

See: When to Keep Information Implicit

Song of Solomon 6:12 (#1)**"I did not know"**

Here, the phrase **** I did not know**** means "Before I realized it" or "Before I was aware." If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "Before I realized it" or "Before I was aware"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 6:12 (#2)**"my soul put me"**

The phrase **my soul put me** probably means that the man imagined what comes next in this verse. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly as modeled by the UST.

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 6:12 (#3)**"among} the chariots of my people, a noble"**

There are many different views among Bible scholars regarding what this phrase means and many different views among Bible scholars regarding what this entire verse means. The UST offers one possible interpretation for what this phrase means. See the section on 6:12 in the chapter 6 introduction for more information about how to translate this difficult verse.

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 6:13 (#1)**""Return, return, Shulammite,"**

It is difficult to know with certainty who is saying this. Because the author does not say who is speaking here you should not indicate who is speaking in the text of your translation. However, if you are using section headers to indicate who is speaking the speaker could be: (1) the young women of Jerusalem. If you decide this is who is speaking you can follow the example of the UST and indicate this with a section header above this verse. (2) friends of the man and woman. If you decide that this is who is speaking here you can place a section header above this verse indicating that friends of the man and woman are speaking. (3) the man. If you decide that this is who is speaking here you can place a section header above this verse indicating that the man is speaking.

See: When to Keep Information Implicit

Song of Solomon 6:13 (#2)**""Shulammite,"**

The word translated as **Shulammite** refers to someone who is from the town of Shulam. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "woman from Shulam ... at the woman from Shulam"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 6:13 (#3)

""Return, return, Shulammite,"

Here, the word **return** is repeated for emphasis. Repetition is a common feature of Hebrew poetry and it would be good to show it to your readers. However, if repeating a word would be confusing to your readers you can combine the repeated words. Alternate translation: "Return Shulammite, return and let us look at you" or "Please return Shulammite, and let us look at you"

See: Poetry

Song of Solomon 6:13 (#4)

""Why do you look at the Shulammite"

It is difficult to know with certainty who is saying this. Because the author does not say who is speaking here you should not indicate who is speaking in the text of your translation. However, if you are using section headers to indicate who is speaking the speaker could be: (1) the man. If you decide that the man is speaking here you can follow the example of the UST and indicate this with a section header above this part of the verse. (2) The woman speaking of herself in the third person. If you decide that this is who is speaking here you can place a section header above this verse indicating that the woman is speaking.

See: First, Second or Third Person

Song of Solomon 6:13 (#5)

"like the dance of two armies"

The speaker is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers might misunderstand this, you could supply these words from the context. Alternate translation: "like you look at the

dance of two armies" or "like you would look at the dance of two armies"

See: Ellipsis

Song of Solomon 6:13 (#6)

"like the dance of two armies"

The phrase translated as **like the dance of two armies** could be translated as: (1) **like the dance of two armies** as the ULT does and refer to a dance that is performed as entertainment for armies. Alternate translation: "like a dance performed before armies" (2) "like the dance of Mahanaim" (3) "like two rows of dancers" or "like two companies of dancers" and mean "like you like to watch two rows of people dancing" See the section in the chapter 6 introduction on this phrase for more information about how to translate this phrase.

See: Simile

Song of Solomon - Chapter 7 **Introduction**

Special concepts in this chapter

Beauty

In 7:1-7 the man describes the woman as the epitome of female beauty and attractiveness using various similes and metaphors.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Similes and metaphors

There are many similes and metaphors in this chapter. Their purpose is to describe the beauty of the woman and to describe romantic love between a man and a woman. (See: Simile) and (See:Metaphor)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

An alternate translation possibility for the word the ULT translates as "love" in [7:6](#)

In verse 6, the ULT follows the standard Hebrew text by saying "love." However, as a footnote in the ULT indicates, many biblical scholars believe that the original reading was more likely "one who is

loved." Consider using that reading in your translation. If "one who is loved" is used instead of "love" then, the portion of 7:6 that the ULT translates as "love with delights!" would instead be translated "one who is loved, with all your delights!"

An alternate translation possibility for the words that the ULT translates as "the lips of those who sleep" in [7:9](#)

In verse 9, the ULT follows the standard Hebrew text by saying "the lips of those who sleep." However, as a footnote in the ULT indicates, many biblical scholars believe that the original reading was more likely "lips and teeth." The translators of the Septuagint (the ancient Greek translation of the Old Testament) thought this and translated this phrase as "my lips and my teeth." If a Bible translation exists in your region that translates this phrase with the word "teeth" instead of "those who sleep" consider using "lips and teeth" instead of "the lips of those who sleep" in your translation.

Song of Solomon 7:1 (#1)

"How your feet are beautiful in sandals, daughter of a noble!"

If you are using section headings to indicate who is speaking and you decided in the previous verse that the woman said the words "Why do you look at the Shulammitte like the dance of two armies" you will need to place a section header above this verse indicating that the man is now speaking. The man begins speaking directly to the woman in this verse and continues speaking to her until part way through [7:9](#).

See: When to Keep Information Implicit

Song of Solomon 7:1 (#2)

"How"

Here, the word **How** is used as an exclamation to emphasize a statement about how **beautiful** the woman's **feet** are in **sandals**. Use a natural way in your language to communicate this emphasis.

See:

Song of Solomon 7:1 (#3)

"How your feet are beautiful in sandals, daughter of a noble"

If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases. Alternate translation: "Daughter of a noble, how your feet are beautiful in sandals"

See: Information Structure

Song of Solomon 7:1 (#4)

"daughter of a noble"

The phrase **daughter of a noble** could: (1) be translated as **daughter of a noble** and mean that the woman was the daughter of a nobleman (a person of high social status). Alternate translation: "daughter of a nobleman" (2) be translated as "noble daughter" and mean that she had noble character. Alternate translation: "noble daughter" or "woman of noble character"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 7:1 (#5)

"The curves of your thighs {are} like ornaments,"

The point of this comparison is that the **curves** of the woman's thighs have an attractive shape like **ornaments** that are made by a skilled **craftsman**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the basis of this comparison. Alternate translation: "The curves of your thighs have an attractive shape, like ornaments that are made by the hands of a craftsman" or "The curves of your thighs are beautiful like the beautiful curves of jewel that a skilled craftsman has made"

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 7:1 (#6)

"the work of the hands of a craftsman"

The phrase **the work of the hands of a craftsman** further describes the **ornaments**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly by adding an explanatory phrase such as "which are" to show that this phrase is describing the **ornaments** and not introducing something

new. Alternate translation: “which are the work of the hands of a craftsman”

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 7:1 (#7)

"the work of the hands of a craftsman"

The man is using one part of a **craftsman**, the **hands**, to represent all of the **craftsman** in the act of making ornaments. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “the work of a craftsman” or “which a craftsman has made”

See: Synecdoche

Song of Solomon 7:2 (#1)

""Your navel {is} the rounded bowl—"

The man is speaking of the woman's **navel** as if it were a **rounded bowl** used for serving wine. The point of this comparison is that the woman's **navel** is nicely rounded like a **rounded wine bowl**. The phrase **that never lacks spiced wine** describes what is inside the bowl and probably means that in a similar way to how **spiced wine** excites the man and gives him joy so her **navel** excites him and gives him joy. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly or use a simile to express the meaning. Alternate translation: “Your navel is beautifully rounded and causes me to feel excited” or “Your navel is beautifully rounded like a round wine bowl and it causes me to feel excited like drinking spiced wine” or “Your navel is beautifully rounded like a bowl and gives me joy and excitement like when I drink spiced wine”

See: Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors

Song of Solomon 7:2 (#2)

"never lacks spiced wine"

The phrase that the ULT translates as **that never lacks** could be: (1) an assertion and therefore be translated as an assertion as modeled by the ULT. (2) a strong wish. Alternate translation: “let it never lack spiced wine” or “may it never lack spiced wine”

Song of Solomon 7:2 (#3)

"spiced wine"

The phrase **spiced wine** refers to wine that is mixed with spices. If your readers would not be familiar with this type of wine, you could use the name of something similar in your area or you could use a descriptive phrase. Alternate translation: “wine that people have added spices to”

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 7:2 (#4)

""Your belly {is} a heap of wheat"

The man is speaking of the woman's **belly** as if it were a **heap of wheat**. The point of comparing the woman's **belly** to a **heap of wheat** is that **wheat** was a very common food in Israel and so was considered nourishing and satisfying to the appetite. The man is expressing that the woman satisfies him. The man is also comparing the color of her **belly** to **wheat** since harvested **wheat** is a pleasant golden beige or tan color. He is also comparing the pleasant shape of her **belly** to the pleasant shape of a **heap of wheat**. The phrase **encircled with the lilies** describes what is around the **heap of wheat** and probably means that in a similar way to how a **heap of wheat encircled with the lilies** looks beautiful so her **belly** is beautiful. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly or use a simile to express the meaning. Alternate translation: “Your belly is as beautiful as a heap of wheat that is encircled with lilies and it satisfies me” or “The shape and color of your belly is beautiful” or “Your belly is beautiful and satisfying”

See: Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors

Song of Solomon 7:2 (#5)

"encircled with the lilies"

Alternate translation: “which has lilies all around it”

Song of Solomon 7:3 (#1)

""Your two breasts {are} like two fawns,"

See how you translated the almost identical statement in [4:5](#).

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 7:4 (#1)

"Your neck {is} like a tower of ivory"

Here, the man compares the woman's **neck** to a **tower** that is adorned with **ivory** (the tower was decorated with ivory, not made of ivory). The appearance of a **tower** decorated with **ivory** would be beautiful in appearance and tall and slender. By comparing the woman's **neck** to a **tower of ivory** the man is saying that the woman's **neck** is both beautiful and tall and slender. Your language may have a comparable expression for complementing a woman's neck in this way that you could use in your translation or you could state the basis of the comparison. Alternately, if it would help your readers, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Your neck is beautiful and slender" or "Your neck is beautiful and tall like a tower that people have adorned with ivory" or "Your neck is lovely and tall like a tower decorated with ivory"

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 7:4 (#2)

"ivory"

See how you translated the term **ivory** in [5:14](#).

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 7:4 (#3)

""Your eyes {are} pools in Heshbon"

The man is speaking of the woman's **eyes** as if they were clear **pools** of water in the city of **Heshbon**. The man does not say how the woman's eyes are like **pools in Heshbon**. The point of comparison may be that the woman's eyes sparkle or shine in the light like when light shines on water or it may be that her eyes look mysterious and deep (and possibly dark) like a deep pool of water or it may be that her eyes reflect light like a pool of water

does. Your language may have a comparable expression for complementing a woman's eyes that you could use in your translation or you could state one or more of these points of comparison or if you have been translating metaphors with similes you could use a simile here. Alternate translation: "Your eyes shine like the sun reflecting off the pools in Heshbon by the gate of Bath Rabbim" or "Your eyes are deep and mysterious like the pools in Heshbon by the gate of Bath Rabbim"

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 7:4 (#4)

"in Heshbon"

Heshbon is the name of a city.

See: How to Translate Names

Song of Solomon 7:4 (#5)

"by the gate of Bath Rabbim"

Bath Rabbim is the name of this gate. Alternate translation: "by the gate called Bath Rabbim" or "by the gate that people call Bath Rabbim"

See: How to Translate Names

Song of Solomon 7:4 (#6)

""Your nose {is} like the tower of Lebanon,"

The man is speaking of the woman's **nose** as if it were **the tower of Lebanon** that faces toward the city of **Damascus**. This tower was high and was used as a military watch tower to look out for enemy attacks. The point of comparison is that the woman's nose was high and/or long (which was considered attractive in that culture) and beautiful and made her look dignified and impressive like **the tower of Lebanon**. Your language may have a comparable expression for complementing a woman's nose that you could use in your translation or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternately, if it would help your readers, you could state the point of comparison. Alternate translation: "Your nose is beautiful and makes you look dignified" or "Your nose is long and beautiful like the tower in Lebanon that faces Damascus" or "Your nose is high and beautiful like the tower in Lebanon that faces Damascus"

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 7:5 (#1)

"Your head on you {is} like Carmel"

Mount **Carmel** is a beautiful and majestic looking mountain and adds beauty to what is below it. The point of this comparison is that the woman's head is beautiful and majestic like Mount **Carmel** and it increases the beauty of the rest of her body. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the basis of this comparison. Alternate translation: "Your head is beautiful and majestic like Mount Carmel"

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 7:5 (#2)

"like Carmel"

Carmel refers to the mountain called Mount Carmel. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly as modeled by the UST.

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 7:5 (#3)

"and the loose hair of your head {is} like purple"

Here, the word **purple** refers to wool cloth that was dyed a purple-red color. The phrase **the loose hair of your head is like purple** could mean: (1) that the woman's hair was a deep shiny black that looked like a black-purplish color when the sun radiated on it. Alternate translation: "and the loose hair of your head is shiny and black" or "and the loose hair of your head looks shiny purplish-black as the sun shines on it" (2) that the woman's hair made her look like a queen (purple was a color associated with royalty). Alternate translation: "and the loose hair of your head is like royal cloth"

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 7:5 (#4)

"a king is held captive in the tresses"

The man is speaking of the beauty of the **tresses** of the woman's hair as if they could capture **a king**. The man means that the woman's **tresses** are so beautiful that they captivate his attention. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Your tresses are so beautiful that a king is not able to stop admiring them" or "Your hair is so beautiful that a king is not able to stop admiring it" or "the king is captivated by your tresses"

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 7:5 (#5)

"a king is held captive"

It is implied that the man speaking is the **king** spoken of here. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "your king is held captive" or "I, your king, am held captive"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 7:5 (#6)

"a king is held captive in the tresses"

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you must state who did the action, the context implies that the woman's **tresses** did it. Alternate translation: "the tresses hold the king captive" or "your tresses hold the king captive"

See: Active or Passive

Song of Solomon 7:5 (#7)

"in the tresses"

Here, the term **tresses** refers to the woman's hair which hangs down from her head. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "in the long locks of your hair" or "in the flowing locks of your hair"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 7:6 (#1)

"How you are beautiful"

See how you translated the similar phrase "You are beautiful" in [6:4](#).

See:

Song of Solomon 7:6 (#2)

"How you are beautiful and how you are lovely"

In this phrase the word **How** is used as an exclamation to emphasize the beauty of the woman and then **how** is used as an exclamation to emphasize how **lovely** the woman is. Use an exclamation that is natural in your language for communicating the woman's beauty and loveliness.

See:

Song of Solomon 7:6 (#3)

"love"

See the chapter seven introduction for information regarding an alternate translation of the word that the ULT translates as **love**.

Song of Solomon 7:6 (#4)

"love with delights"

The man is praising the delightfulness of romantic love. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "romantic love has many delights" or "how delightful romantic love is" or "romantic love is very delightful"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 7:6 (#5)

"love with delights"

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **love**, you could express the same idea with a verb as modeled by the UST, or in some other way that is natural in your language.

See: Abstract Nouns

Song of Solomon 7:7 (#1)

"This is your height—it is like a palm tree"

The point of this comparison is that the woman is tall like a **palm tree**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the point of comparison explicitly as modeled by the UST or express this meaning in plain language. Alternate translation: "You are tall"

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 7:7 (#2)

"a palm tree,"

Here, the term **palm tree** refers to specifically to a date palm, which is the type of palm tree that produces dates. Date palm trees are tall and thin and produce a small sweet brown fruit called a date. The term **clusters** refers to the **clusters** of dates that hang down from a date palm tree. If your readers would not be familiar with this type of tree or its fruit, you could use the name of something similar in your area or you could use a more general term or you could explain what a date palm is and the type of fruit it produces in a footnote. Alternate translation: "a tall and slender fruit tree ... its clusters of fruit" or "a tall fruit tree ... like its clusters of delicious fruit"

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 7:7 (#3)

"and your breasts {like its} clusters"

The point of this comparison is that the woman's **breasts** are plump and nicely rounded like the **clusters** of dates that grow on and hang down from date palm trees. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the point of comparison explicitly or you could express this meaning in plain language. Alternate translation: "and your breasts are plump and round" or "and your breasts are plump and round like its clusters"

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 7:8 (#1)

""I said, "I will go up {the} palm tree;"

Here, **go up** means "go to" and the phrase **the palm tree** refers to the woman the man loves. The phrase **fruit stalks** refers to the woman's breasts as the previous verse indicates. **I will grab hold of its fruit stalks** means that the man wanted to caress the woman's breasts and enjoy being intimate with her. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly Alternate translation: "I will go to the woman I love and caress her breasts and enjoy being intimate with her" or "I will go to the woman I love and enjoy touching her breasts and being close to her"

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 7:8 (#2)

"I said"

Here, the phrase **I said** means that the man said or thought to himself the words **I will go up the palm tree; I will grab hold of its fruit stalks**. If it would help your readers, you could use a more natural word or phrase in your language to introduce something a person says or thinks to himself. Alternate translation: "I thought to myself"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 7:8 (#3)

"the} palm tree"

See how you translated the phrase **palm tree** in the previous verse.

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 7:8 (#4)

""I will go up {the} palm tree;"

The man is using a future statement to indicate his intent or desire to do something. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a more natural form for indicating something someone intends to do or desires to do. Alternate translation: "I want to go up the palm tree; I want to grab hold of its fruit stalks" or "I have determined to go up the palm tree and grab hold of its fruit stalks"

See: Statements — Other Uses

Song of Solomon 7:8 (#5)

"I will go up"

Your language may say "come" rather than **go** in contexts such as this. Use whichever is more natural. Alternate translation: "I will come up"

See: Go and Come

Song of Solomon 7:8 (#6)

""And, please, let your breasts be like the clusters of the vine,"

The phrase **let your breasts be like the clusters of the vine** and the phrase **let the smell of your nose be like apples** are both similes. The man means "let your breasts be sweet and enjoyable like the clusters of the vine" and "let your breath be pleasant like the pleasant smell of apples." If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the basis of these comparisons or you could use equivalent expressions from your culture. Alternate translation: "And, please, let your breasts be sweet and enjoyable like the clusters of the vine, and let the smell of your breath be pleasant like the pleasant smell of apples"

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 7:8 (#7)

"And, please, let your breasts be" - "and {let the} smell of"

The man is expressing a wish or desire. If it would help your readers, you could use a more natural form in your language for expressing a wish or desire. Alternate translation: "And, please, may your breasts be ... and may the smell of"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 7:8 (#8)

"like the clusters of the vine"

The phrase **like the clusters of the vine** refers to **clusters** of grapes that grow on grapevines. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could

indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "like the clusters of the grapevine"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 7:8 (#9)

"and {let the} smell of your nose {be} like apples"

The man is using the term **nose** to refer to what the nose produces (breathes out), breath. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and let the smell of your breath be like apples" or "and let the smell of the breath coming from your nose be like apples"

See: Metonymy

Song of Solomon 7:8 (#10)

"and {let the} smell of"

The man is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers might misunderstand this, you could supply these words from the context as modeled by the ULT which supplies the words "let the" here.

See: Ellipsis

Song of Solomon 7:8 (#11)

"be} like apples"

An apple is a round hard fruit that can grow to be as big as an adult's fist. It has a sweet taste and a pleasant smell. If your readers would not be familiar with this type of fruit, you could use the name of something similar in your area or you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: "be like sweet fruit" or "be like fragrant fruit" or "be like fruit"

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 7:9 (#1)

""and {let} your mouth {be} like the best wine."

The man compares the woman's kisses (**mouth**) to **wine** in the first line of this verse and then the

woman responds to him and continues this simile in the following two lines. The man is saying that the woman's kisses are like **wine** because **wine** is pleasant tasting and has a powerful effect on the body when drunk freely. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the basis of this comparison. Alternate translation: "and let your mouth be pleasant tasting and intoxicating like the best wine. May my mouth be like pleasant and intoxicating wine which goes down to my beloved smoothly, gliding over the lips of those who sleep"

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 7:9 (#2)

"and {let} your mouth {be}"

The man is expressing a wish or desire. If it would help your readers, you could use a more natural form in your language for expressing a wish or desire. Alternate translation: "and may your mouth be"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 7:9 (#3)

"and {let} your mouth {be}"

Here, **mouth** represents the kisses which come from the woman's **mouth**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: "and let your kisses be"

See: Metonymy

Song of Solomon 7:9 (#4)

""Going down for my beloved smoothly,"

Some Bible scholars think the speaker in this part of the verse: (1) is the woman. Because the author does not say who is speaking here you should not indicate the speaker explicitly in the text of your translation. However, if you are using section headers to indicate who is speaking, as the UST does, you can indicate that the woman is now speaking. (2) continues to be the man. If you decide that the man is still speaking you do not need a header above this portion, but if you are using headers, you will need a header above the next verse indicating that the woman is speaking (since

Bible scholars agree that the speaker is the woman beginning in 7:10 and continuing through at least 8:3).

See: When to Keep Information Implicit

Song of Solomon 7:9 (#5)

"Going down for my beloved smoothly"

Your language may say "Coming" rather than **Going** in contexts such as this. Use whichever is more natural. Alternate translation: "Coming down for my beloved smoothly"

See: Go and Come

Song of Solomon 7:9 (#6)

"Going down for my beloved smoothly,"

The phrases **Going down** and **gliding** both refer to the **wine** mentioned earlier in the verse. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "Wine which is going down to my beloved smoothly, gliding over the lips of those who sleep" or "Wine which is going down to my beloved smoothly, wine which is gliding over the lips of those who sleep"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 7:9 (#7)

"smoothly,"

Here, the word **smoothly** means "freely" and refers to freely flowing **wine**. The word **gliding** here means "flowing." If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "freely, flowing over"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 7:9 (#8)

"the lips of those who sleep"

See the chapter 7 introduction for information regarding an alternate translation of the words that the ULT translates as **the lips of those who sleep**.

Song of Solomon 7:10 (#1)

"I {belong} to my beloved"

See how you translated the identical phrase in [6:3](#).

Song of Solomon 7:11 (#1)

"Come"

Your language may say "Go" rather than **Come** in contexts such as this. Use whichever is more natural. Alternate translation: "Go"

See: Go and Come

Song of Solomon 7:11 (#2)

"Come, my beloved"

If it would be more natural in your language, you could change the order of these phrases. Alternate translation: "My beloved, come"

See: Information Structure

Song of Solomon 7:11 (#3)

"let us spend the night in the villages"

Alternate translation: "and let us stay overnight in a village somewhere"

Song of Solomon 7:11 (#4)

"in the villages"

The word which the ULT translates as **in the villages** has two possible meanings in the original language. Here, it could mean: (1) **in the villages** as modeled by the ULT's translation. (2) "among the henna bushes" (henna bushes produce flowers). If you choose this option see how you translated the phrase "henna blossoms" in [1:14](#). Alternate translation: "among the henna bushes" or "among the wildflowers" or "among the henna blossoms"

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 7:12 (#1)

"Let us go early"

Alternate translation: "Let us wake up early and go" or "Let us get up early and go"

Song of Solomon 7:12 (#2)

"Let us go early"

Your language may say "come" rather than **go** in contexts such as this. Use whichever is more natural. Alternate translation: "Let us come early"

See: Go and Come

Song of Solomon 7:12 (#3)

"the vine has budded"

See how you translated the similar phrase "had the vine budded" in [6:11](#).

Song of Solomon 7:12 (#4)

"if} the pomegranates have bloomed"

See how you translated the similar phrase "Had the pomegranates bloomed" in [6:11](#).

Song of Solomon 7:12 (#5)

"I will give my love to you"

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **love**, you could express the same idea with a verbal phrase as modeled by the UST or in some other way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "I will make love with you"

See: Abstract Nouns

Song of Solomon 7:13 (#1)

"The mandrakes give off a scent"

The term **mandrakes** refers to the mandrake plant which produces flowers that have a strong pleasant smell. People in that culture thought that smelling or eating fruit from the mandrake plant would arouse a person's sexual desire and would help women to conceive children. If your readers would not be familiar with this type of plant, you could use the name of a plant in your area that people think increases sexual desire and/or helps women to

conceive children or you could use a more general term. Alternately, you could explain what a mandrake plant is in a footnote. Alternate translation: "The love flowers give off their scent" or "The scent of the love flowers is in the air"

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 7:13 (#2)

"and over our doors {are} all choice fruits,"

Here, the woman is speaking of the different pleasurable experiences that she and the man will experience together when they express their love for each other as if they were **every choice fruit** that were stored **above** their **doors** (In that culture fruit was often kept on a shelf above doors). The woman speaks of her love that she kept to give to the man she loves as if it were **choice fruit** that she has **stored** (reserved) for the man. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning with a simile or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and we are surrounded by delightful pleasures, new ones and old ones, pleasures that I have been saving to give to you, my beloved"

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 7:13 (#3)

"and over our doors {are} all choice fruits"

Alternate translation: "and above the entrance of our house are every one of the best fruits"

Song of Solomon 7:13 (#4)

"new ones and also old ones"

Here, the phrase **new ones and also old ones** means "new fruits and also old fruits" and refers to fruit that is ripe (the old fruit) and fruit that has not yet ripened (the new fruit). This phrase as a whole is an idiom which means "all kinds of fruit." If it would help your readers you could translate the meaning of the idiom or make it explicit that "new ones and also old ones" refers to ripe and unripe fruit. Alternate translation: "fruit that is not yet ripe and also sweet ripe fruit" or "all kinds of fruit"

See: Idiom

Song of Solomon 7:13 (#5)

"My beloved, I have stored {these} up for you"

Alternate translation: "My beloved, I have saved these so that I can give them to you" or "My beloved, I have saved my love so that I can give it to you"

Song of Solomon - Chapter 8 Introduction

Special concepts in this chapter

Strong feelings of love and commitment between a man and woman who love each other romantically

8:6–7 describe the strong feelings of love, commitment, and emotional attachment that can exist between a man and woman who love each other romantically.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

The meaning of [8:12](#)

The three possible meanings of [8:12](#) are: (1) that the woman is speaking of herself as a vineyard and saying that her vineyard is hers alone and is comparing herself to Solomon's vineyard (which was discussed in [8:11](#)) and saying that Solomon can keep the profits from his vineyard and his vineyard keepers can keep their portion of the profits from that vineyard. This is the interpretation of the UST. (2) that the woman is speaking of herself as a vineyard and saying that her vineyard is hers alone but that the man who she loves and calls Solomon can freely have the vineyard (her) because she chooses to give herself freely to him. (3) that the man is speaking of the woman he loves as a vineyard and saying that his vineyard (the woman he loves) is his alone and is comparing his vineyard (the woman he loves) to Solomon's vineyard (which was discussed in [8:11](#)) and saying that he feels more wealthy than Solomon because he has the woman he loves as his vineyard and so Solomon can keep the profits from his vineyard and his Solomon's keepers can keep their portion of the profits from that vineyard.

Song of Solomon 8:1 (#1)

""Who will give you like a brother to me,"

Here, the woman is using the idiom **Who will give you** to express her wish that the man she loves be **like a brother** to her (so that she could publicly **kiss** him). If it would help your readers, you could use an equivalent idiom from your language that expresses a desire or a wish or you could state the meaning in plain language. Alternate translation: "How I wish that you were like a brother to me, who nursed at the breasts of my mother" or "How I desire that you were like a brother to me, who nursed at the breasts of my mother"

See: Idiom

Song of Solomon 8:1 (#2)

""Who will give you like a brother to me,"

In the culture at the time the author wrote this poem it was not socially acceptable for someone to show public affection towards someone they were married to and/or loved romantically but it was acceptable for siblings to give each other non romantic kisses of affection in public (the word **outside** means "in public" here). If it would help your readers you could tell your readers in a footnote that the woman desires that the man she loves be **like a brother** to her so that she could show public affection toward him.

See: When to Keep Information Implicit

Song of Solomon 8:1 (#3)

""Who will give you like a brother to me,"

The phrase **who nursed at the breasts of my mother** describes the word **brother** and has a similar meaning as the term **brother**. Saying the same thing in slightly different ways is a common feature of Hebrew poetry. If saying the same thing twice might be confusing for your readers, you could combine the phrases into one. Alternate translation: "Who will give you like a brother to me"

See: Poetry

Song of Solomon 8:1 (#1)**"Yes"**

Here, the word **Yes** is used to strongly affirm what follows it in this sentence. Use a natural form in your language for expressing a strong assertion or strong emphasis.

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 8:1 (#2)**"they would not despise me"**

By saying **they would not despise me** the woman is expressing the result of what would happen if the man she loved were **like a brother** to her and she found him **outside** and kissed him. Use a natural form in your language for expressing reason-result expressions. Alternate translation: "then they would not despise me"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Song of Solomon 8:1-2 (#1)**""If I found you outside, I would kiss you."**

The woman is using a hypothetical situation (the situation of the man being **like a brother** to her and her finding him **outside**) to express what she would do if the the man she loved were **like a brother** to her. Alternate translation: "If you were like a brother to me and if I found you outside, then I would kiss you. Yes, if you were like a brother to me then they would not despise me. If you were like a brother to me then I would lead you; I would bring to the house of my mother who taught me and I would make you drink from the wine of spice, from the juice of my pomegranate"

See: Connect — Hypothetical Conditions

Song of Solomon 8:2 (#1)**"I would bring you to the house of my mother"**

See how you translated the similar phrase **I had brought him to the house of my mother** in [3:4](#). Alternate translation: "I would take you to the house of my mother"

See: Go and Come

Song of Solomon 8:2 (#2)**""I would bring you to the house of my mother,"**

Alternate translation: "I would bring you to the house of my mother who taught me"

Song of Solomon 8:2 (#3)**"I would make you drink from the wine of spice"**

The phrase **I would make you drink from the wine of spice** means "I would cause you to drink (by giving you) spiced wine." If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "I would cause you to drink spiced wine" or "I would give you spiced wine to drink"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 8:2 (#4)**"from the wine of spice"**

See how you translated the similar phrase "spiced wine" in [7:2](#).

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 8:2 (#5)**""I would make you drink from the wine of spice,"**

The woman is politely and poetically referring to giving herself sexually to the man by speaking of the action of giving herself to the man as if she were making him **drink from the wine of spice** and drink **from the juice of my pomegranate**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning using a simile, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I will give myself to you as if I were making you drink from the wine of spice and making you drink pomegranate juice" or "I will give myself to you as if I were giving you spiced wine to drink and giving you pomegranate juice to enjoy"

See: Euphemism

Song of Solomon 8:2 (#6)**"from the juice of my pomegranate"**

Here, the term the ULT translates as **juice** refers to fresh new wine that is sweet. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "from my fresh pomegranate wine" or "from my sweet pomegranate wine"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 8:3 (#1)**""His left hand {is} under my head"**

This verse is identical to [2:6](#). Translate this verse exactly as you translated [2:6](#).

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 8:4 (#1)**""I adjure you, daughters of Jerusalem,"**

Besides excluding the phrase "by the female gazelles or the does of the field", this verse is nearly identical to [2:7](#). You should translate this verse in a similar way to how you translated [2:7](#), but because this verse does not have the phrase "by the female gazelles or the does of the field" you should not include that phrase in this verse.

See: Oath Formulas

Song of Solomon 8:5 (#1)**""Who {is} that coming up from the wilderness,"**

The author does not say who is speaking about the couple here so you should not indicate who you think is speaking explicitly in the text of your translation. However, if you are using section headers to indicate who is speaking, as the UST does, the speakers here are most likely the "daughters of Jerusalem" who spoke several times earlier in the book and who were addressed in the previous verse.

See: When to Keep Information Implicit

Song of Solomon 8:5 (#2)**""Who {is} that coming up from the wilderness,"**

Here, the phrase **Who is that** is a rhetorical question that is used to create a sense of expectation and interest. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate these words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way as modeled by the UST.

See: Rhetorical Question

Song of Solomon 8:5 (#3)**"coming up"**

The phrase **coming up** is used by the author because the group of people described is traveling **from the wilderness** to Jerusalem. They must travel upward in elevation in order to reach Jerusalem because **the wilderness** is low in the Jordan valley and Jerusalem is built on hills and is therefore high. Use a word or phrase that expresses moving upward in elevation. Alternate translation: "moving upward" or "arising"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 8:5 (#4)**"coming up"**

Your language may say "going" rather than **coming** in contexts such as this. Use whichever is more natural. Alternate translation: "going up"

See: Go and Come

Song of Solomon 8:5 (#1)**"the apple tree"**

See how you translated the phrase **apple tree** in [2:3](#).

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 8:5 (#2)**"was in labor {with} you"**

The phrase the ULT translates as **was in labor with you** could: (1) refer to the process of a mother being in labor and be translated as the ULT models. (2) refer to the act of conception. Alternate translation: "conceived you"

Song of Solomon 8:5-7 (#1)**""Under the apple tree I awakened you;"**

The author does not say who is speaking here so you should not indicate who you think is speaking in the text of your translation. However, if you are using section headers to indicate who is speaking, as the UST does, you can place a header above this section indicating who the speaker is. Here the speaker could be: (1) the woman. (2) The man.

See: When to Keep Information Implicit

Song of Solomon 8:6 (#1)**"Place me like the seal on your heart"**

Here, **heart** could represent: (1) the chest of a person. Alternate translation: "Place me like a seal that is hung by a cord around your neck and hangs down onto your chest" (2) the emotions and thoughts of a person. Alternate translation: "Always love and think about me" or "Always love and think about me as if I were stamped onto your heart"

See: Metonymy

Song of Solomon 8:6 (#2)**""Place me like the seal on your heart,"**

The point of this comparison is that the woman wants the man she loves to be close to her like a **seal** hanging from a cord around his neck that hangs down over his **heart** (chest) and like a **seal** that is worn on his **arm**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent comparison or express this meaning in plain language. Alternately, you could express the point of comparison as modeled by the UST. Alternate translation: "Please keep me very near to you"

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 8:6 (#3)**"like the seal on your arm"**

The word which the ULT translates as **hand** can refer to any part of the arm, including the wrist and hand. The phrase **the seal on your arm** refers to a

seal that is worn on a bracelet on the wrist. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "like a seal worn on your wrist" or "like a seal worn on a bracelet on your wrist"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 8:6 (#4)**"like the seal on your arm"**

The speaker is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If it would help your readers, you could supply these words from the context. Alternate translation: "place me like the seal on your arm"

See: Ellipsis

Song of Solomon 8:6 (#5)**""strong like death {is} love;"**

The phrase **strong like death is love** and the phrase **unyielding like Sheol is zeal** are both similes for the power of romantic love. The point of comparison between romantic **love** and **death** is that they are both very strong and overcome a person in a powerful and irresistible way. The point of comparison between **Sheol** and the **zeal** of romantic love is that they are both **unyielding**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent comparison from your culture.

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 8:6 (#6)**"because strong like death {is} love"**

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **love**, you could express the meaning with a verb, as modeled by the UST, or you could express the meaning in some other way that is natural in your language.

See: Abstract Nouns

Song of Solomon 8:6 (#7)**"unyielding like Sheol {is} zeal"**

Here, the word the ULT translates as **zeal** could: (1) have the positive meaning of romantic zeal or fervor and refer to the romantic zeal of lovers. Alternate translation: “unyielding like Sheol is the zeal lovers have for each other” or “the passionate feelings lovers have for one another is unyielding like Sheol” (2) refer to the negative feeling of a lover being jealous for the affection, love, and attention of the person they love romantically. Alternate translation: “unyielding like Sheol is jealousy” or “the jealousy lovers have for the love of one another is unyielding like Sheol”

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 8:6 (#8)

"unyielding like Sheol {is} zeal"

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **zeal**, you could express the same idea with an adverb or in some other way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “lovers zealously love each other in a way that is unyielding like Sheol” or “lovers passionately love each other in a way that is unyielding like Sheol”

See: Abstract Nouns

Song of Solomon 8:6 (#9)

"like Sheol"

This line is parallel in meaning to the preceding line. The woman is again referring to **death**. Here, she is describing **death** by association with **Sheol**, which is where dead people were thought to go in that culture. If your readers would not understand this, you could use plain language, as modeled by the UST, or use an equivalent expression from your culture.

See: Metonymy

Song of Solomon 8:6 (#10)

""Its flashes {are} flashes of fire,"

Here, the woman is speaking of the **zeal** of romantic love as if it were **flashes of fire** and **the flame of Yahweh**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning with a simile or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “The zeal of lovers is like

flashes of fire and like the flame of Yahweh” or “The passion of lovers is like flashes of fire and like the flame of Yahweh”

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 8:6 (#11)

"the flame of Yah"

The phrase **the flame of Yah** is an idiom that refers to lightening. If your readers would not understand this, you could use plain language or indicate the meaning in a footnote. Alternate translation: “the lightening of Yah” or “the flashes of lightening”

See: Idiom

Song of Solomon 8:7 (#1)

""Many waters are not able to quench {this} love"

Here, **love** is spoken of as though it is a strongly burning fire which **Many waters** (a great amount of water) cannot **quench** and which **rivers** cannot **drown**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning with a simile or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “Love is so strong that it is like a strong fire that great amounts of water cannot quench and which rivers full of water cannot put out” or “The feelings of love which a man and a woman who are lovers have for each other is very strong” or “Nothing can stop romantic love”\n

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 8:7 (#2)

""Many waters are not able to quench {this} love"

Alternate translation: “Nothing can extinguish our love for each other, not even a flood”

Song of Solomon 8:7 (#3)

""{this} love"

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **love**, you could express the same idea with a verb, as modeled by the UST, or you could

express it in some other way that is natural in your language.

See: Abstract Nouns

Song of Solomon 8:7 (#4)

""If a man would give all {the} wealth of his house in exchange for love,"

The woman speaks as if this were a hypothetical situation, but she means that it must be true. If your language does not state something as a condition if it is certain or true, then you could translate the woman's words as an affirmative statement. Alternate translation: "Even though a man tries to give all the wealth of his house in exchange for love, his offer will be utterly despised"\n

See: Connect — Factual Conditions

Song of Solomon 8:7 (#5)

"in exchange for love"

Alternate translation: "in order to get love" or "in order to buy love"

Song of Solomon 8:7 (#6)

"it"

The word the ULT translates as **it** could: (1) refer to **all the wealth of his house** and be translated as "it" as modeled by the ULT. (2) could refer to the **man** who is offering **all the wealth of his house in exchange for love**. Alternate translation: "him"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 8:8 (#1)

"a little one"

Here, the phrase **a little one** means "a young one" or "a younger one." If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "a young one" or "a younger one"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 8:8 (#2)

"and breasts there are not for her"

The phrase **and breasts there are not for her** is an idiom expressing that the woman's brothers think she is not yet ready for marriage and meaning that her breasts are small and have not fully formed (and are therefore small) indicating that she has not reached full physical maturity. If your readers would not understand this, you could use an equivalent idiom or use plain language. Alternate translation: "and she is not yet fully grown" or "and her breasts are still small" or "and she is not yet ready for marriage"

See: Idiom

Song of Solomon 8:8 (#3)

"on the day"

The phrase **on the day** is an idiom meaning "at the time." If your readers would not understand this, you could use an equivalent idiom or use plain language as modeled by the UST.

See: Idiom

Song of Solomon 8:8 (#4)

"on the day when it is spoken for her"

The phrase **the day when it is spoken for her** means "on the day when she is spoken for in marriage" and betrothed to a man. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "on the day when she is pledged to be married" or "on the day when she is spoken for in marriage" or "on the day when she is betrothed to be married"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 8:8 (#5)

"when it is spoken for her"

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you must state who did the action, the context implies that the brothers are the ones who will do it. Alternate translation: "when we speak for her by promising a man that he can marry her"

See: Active or Passive

Song of Solomon 8:8-9 (#1)

""A sister {belongs} to us—a little one—"

The author does not say who is speaking here so you should not indicate who you think is speaking explicitly in the text of your translation. However, if you are using section headers to indicate who is speaking, the majority of Bible scholars think that the woman's brothers are speaking here. Because of this and because the phrases **A sister belongs to us** and **What will we do with our sister** in 8:8 seem to indicate that the woman's brothers are speaking, the most likely view is that her brothers are the ones speaking so if you choose to use headers you can place a header above 8:8-9, indicating that the woman's brothers are speaking as modeled by the UST.

See: When to Keep Information Implicit

Song of Solomon 8:9 (#1)

""If she {is} a wall,"

Here, the woman's brothers are speaking of their sister as if she were **a wall** that they would **build...a battlement of silver** upon. The meaning of this metaphor could be: (1) that they would make effort to protect her virginity as if she were **a wall** that they were seeking to protect by building a silver battlement on (a battlement was a row of stones that was built on top of a wall for the purpose of protecting it). Alternate translation: "We will protect her virginity like how we would protect a wall by building a battlement of silver on it" (2) that her chest was flat like a wall because her breasts were not yet fully formed and so they would try to make her more attractive for the man she was going to marry by adorning her with silver jewels. Alternate translation: "If her chest is flat like a wall, we will decorate it by putting silver jewels that are like towers on it"

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 8:9 (#2)

""And if she {is} a door,"

Here, the woman's brothers are speaking of their sister as if she were **a door** that they would **enclose with boards of cedar**. The meaning of this metaphor could be: (1) that they would make effort to protect her virginity as if she were **a door** that they would **enclose with boards of cedar**. Alternate translation: "We will protect her virginity like how we would enclose a door with boards of cedar" (2) that her chest was flat like a door because her breasts were not yet fully formed and so they would try to make her more attractive for the man she was going to marry by adorning her like how they would decorate a door with cedar wood (The word the ULT translates as **enclose** is identical in form to another word which means "decorate" so it is possible that "decorate" could be the intended meaning here). Alternate translation: "And if she is flat like a door, we will decorate her like how we would decorate a door with planks of cedar wood"

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 8:10 (#1)

""I {was} a wall"

The author does not say who is speaking here so you should not indicate who you think is speaking explicitly in the text of your translation. However, if you are using section headers to indicate who is speaking, as the UST does, you can place a header above 8:10 indicating that the speaker is the woman.

See: When to Keep Information Implicit

Song of Solomon 8:10 (#2)

"I {was} a wall"

Here, the woman continues the metaphor of a wall that her brothers began in the preceding verse. By referring to herself as **a wall** here, she could: (1) be indicating that she had remained a virgin. Alternate translation: "I was like a wall and remained a virgin" (2) be referring to her chest and be saying that in the past her breasts were not fully formed. Alternate translation: "My chest was previously flat like a wall"

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 8:10 (#3)**"and my breasts {are}"**

Alternate translation: "but now my breasts are"

Song of Solomon 8:10 (#4)**"and my breasts {are} like towers"**

The point of this comparison is that the woman's breasts are large **like towers**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the point of this comparison or you could express this meaning in plain language. Alternate translation: "and now my breasts are large" or "and now my breasts are fully grown"

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 8:10 (#5)**"then"**

The word translated as **then** indicates that what follows is a result of what came before it. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a result of what came before. Alternate translation: "this is why" or "as a result"

See: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Song of Solomon 8:10 (#6)**"I was in his eyes"**

Here, the man's **eyes** represent his evaluation or estimation. If your readers would not understand this, you could use plain language as modeled by the UST. Alternate translation: "I am in his judgment" or "he thinks of me" or "I was in his opinion"

See: Metonymy

Song of Solomon 8:10 (#7)**"like a person who finds"**

The word the ULT translates as **finds** could mean: (1) "finds." If you choose this option you should translate this word in a similar way to the ULT. (2) "brings." Alternate translation: "like a person who brings"

Song of Solomon 8:10 (#8)**"I was in his eyes like a person who finds peace"**

Here, the word **peace** refers to "favor." If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "I found favor in his eyes"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 8:11 (#1)**"in Baal Hamon"**

Baal Hamon is the name of a place. The name **Baal Hamon** means "master of wealth." Because the meaning of the name has significance here you could include a footnote in your translation indicating that the name **Baal Hamon** means "master of wealth, wealthy master, possessor of abundance."

See: How to Translate Names

Song of Solomon 8:11 (#2)**"to keepers"**

Here, the term **keepers** refers to farmers who rent land from a land owner and pay the land owner in order to farm his land (Here, the amount the **keepers** payed **Solomon** the land owner to farm his land was **a thousand pieces of silver**). If your readers would not be familiar with this type of farmer, you could describe what this term means in your translation. Alternate translation: "people who would pay him so that they could farm it" or "men who would pay him so that they could farm it"

See: Translate Unknowns

Song of Solomon 8:11 (#3)**"He gave the vineyard to keepers"**

Alternate translation: "He rented the vineyard to keepers" or "He leased the vineyard to keepers" or "He agreed to let keepers pay him so they could grow grapes in the vineyard"

Song of Solomon 8:11 (#4)

"Each person brought in exchange for its fruit a thousand {pieces of} silver"

Here, the phrase **its fruit** refers to the fruit of **the vineyard** and the phrase **Each person** refers to each of the **keepers**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "Each keeper brought in exchange for the fruit of the vineyard a thousand pieces of silver" or "Each keeper brought Solomon a thousand pieces of silver as payment for the fruit of the vineyard"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 8:11 (#5)

"a thousand {pieces of} silver"

Alternate translation: "a thousand silver coins"

See: Biblical Money

Song of Solomon 8:11–12 (#1)

""There} was a vineyard for Solomon in Baal Hamon."

Because the author does not say who is speaking you should not indicate who is speaking in the text of your translation. However, if you are using section headers to indicate who is speaking the speaker could be: (1) the woman in both 8:11 and 8:12. If you decide that the woman is speaking in these verses you can follow the example of the UST and include these two verses under the section heading for 8:10 that indicates the woman is speaking. (2) the man in both these verses. If you decide the man is speaking in these verses you can put a section header at the top of 8:11 indicating that the man is speaking.

See: When to Keep Information Implicit

Song of Solomon 8:12 (#1)

"My vineyard"

Here, the phrase **My vineyard** is a metaphor (see the section on [8:12](#) in the chapter intro for the meaning of this entire verse). Here, the phrase **My vineyard** could be: (1) the woman referring to herself as a **vineyard**, as she did in [1:6](#). Alternate

translation: "I am like a vineyard" or "My body is like a vineyard" (2) the man referring to the woman he loves as if she were his **vineyard**. Alternate translation: "The woman who I love is like my vineyard" or "The woman who I love is like a vineyard"

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 8:12 (#2)

"is} before me"

The phrase **is before me** means "is mine to give." If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "is at my disposal" or "is mine to do with as I desire" or "is mine to give to whom I choose"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 8:12 (#3)

""The thousand {belong} to you, Solomon,"

Here, the word **thousand** refers to the "thousand pieces of silver" mentioned in the previous verse. The phrase **the two hundred** refers to the two hundred pieces of silver that **Solomon** would have paid to **the people who are keepers** of the vineyards **fruit**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: "The thousand pieces of silver belong to you, Solomon, and the two hundred pieces of silver belong to the people who you pay to be keepers of the vineyard's fruit"

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 8:12 (#4)

"The thousand {belong} to you, Solomon"

Here, the woman could be: (1) speaking as if **Solomon** is present with her even though he is not in order to use him as an example. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could translate these words in a way that does not make it seem like the woman is speaking directly to **Solomon** but rather indicates that she is speaking about **Solomon**. Alternate translation: "The thousand belong to Solomon" (2) calling the man she loves by the name **Solomon** (even though he was not Solomon) as term of endearment similar to how she called the

man she loved “The king” in [1:4](#). Alternate translation: “The thousand belong to you, the man I love, you who are like king Solomon” or “The thousand belong to you, the man I love, you who I call Solomon”

See: Apostrophe

Song of Solomon 8:13 (#1)

“You who reside in the gardens;”

The author does not say who is speaking in this verse so you should not indicate who you think is speaking explicitly in the text of your translation. However, if you are using section headers to indicate who is speaking, as the UST does, you can place a header above this section indicating that the man is speaking.

See: When to Keep Information Implicit

Song of Solomon 8:13 (#2)

“companions are”

Here, the term **companions** is masculine in form in the original language and most likely refers to the man’s friends who were shepherds and were mentioned in [1:7](#). See how you translated the term **companions** in [1:7](#).

Song of Solomon 8:13 (#3)

“for your voice”

Here, the word **voice** could: (1) represent the woman’s speech (the words she says). Alternate translation: “to hear you speak” (2) refer to the sound of the woman’s voice. Alternate translation: “to hear your voice”

See: Metonymy

Song of Solomon 8:14 (#1)

“Flee, my beloved,”

The author does not say who is speaking in this verse so you should not indicate who you think is speaking explicitly in the text of your translation. However, if you are using section headers to indicate who is speaking, as the UST does, you can

place a header above this section indicating that the woman is speaking.

See: When to Keep Information Implicit

Song of Solomon 8:14 (#2)

“Flee”

Here, the word **Flee** means “come quickly.” If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: “Come quickly” or “Hurry”

See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Song of Solomon 8:14 (#3)

“my beloved,”

See how you translated the similar expression “My beloved is resembling a gazelle or a young stag” in [2:9](#).

See: Simile

Song of Solomon 8:14 (#4)

“on the mountains of spices”

The phrase **the mountains of spices** has a double meaning. The literal meaning refers to **mountains** where **spices** grow. The metaphorical meaning is that the woman herself is the **mountains** where **spices** grow and she wants the man she loves to come to her and enjoy her body. If it would help your readers, you could indicate the metaphorical meaning in a footnote.

See: Metaphor

Song of Solomon 8:14 (#5)

“spices”

See: Translate Unknowns