

Adapting Text for Young Readers

Dracula

I've mentioned that Dracula has been translated a couple of times. First was the full-blown translation from the original. Much later came an abridged version aimed at teenagers. I thought it might be interesting to compare excerpts from these two versions.

Early in the book, our hero, Jonathan Harker, who has reached a hotel in Transylvania, gets a note from Dracula giving instructions for proceeding to the castle. The first excerpt below is the teenager version (about two pages in), the second is the unabridged version (about four pages in).

“A Chàra, – Fáilte romhat go dtí Sléibhte Cairp. Táim ag tnúth le bualadh leat. Ar Bhucovín a bheidh d’aghaidh amárach ar a trí agus beidh mo chóiste romhat ag Mám Borgó chun tú a thabhairt anseo. Tá súil agam go raibh aistear taitneamhach agat agus go mbainfidh tú sult as an gcuid eile de do sheal inár measc. Do chara,

Dracula.”

“A chara, Dia do bheatha go dtí na Sléibhte Cairp. Is fada liom go bhfeicfidh mé thú. Gura sámh codladh na hoíche anocht duit. Beidh cóiste ag dul go dtí an Bucovín ar a trí a chlog amárach; tá suíochán in áirithe duit air. Beidh mo charráiste ag fuireachas leat ag Mám Borgó chun tú a thabhairt anseo. Coinne agam gur éirigh do thuras go maith leat ó Londain i leith agus go dtaitneoidh do chuairt go dtí an dúiche álainn seo agamsa leat. – Do chara,

Dracula.”