

Harry Potter (I)

Chapter 2 : The Vanishing Glass

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The Vanishing Glass

Nearly ten years had passed since the Dursleys had woken up to find their nephew on the front step, but Privet Drive had hardly changed at all. The sun rose on the same tidy front gardens and lit up the brass number four on the Dursleys' front door; it crept into their living room, which was almost exactly the same as it had been on the night when Mr. Dursley had seen that fateful news report about the owls. Only the photographs on the mantelpiece really showed how much time had passed. Ten years ago, there had been lots of pictures of what looked like a large pink beach ball wearing different-colored bonnets — but Dudley Dursley was no longer a baby, and now the photographs showed a large blond boy riding his first bicycle, on a carousel at the fair, playing a computer game with his father, being hugged and kissed by his mother. The room held no sign at all that another boy lived in the house, too. [...]

Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone. 1997. J.K. Rowling. Chapter 2 : The Vanishing Glass

Texte original

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Corrigé

Il s'était passé près de dix ans depuis que les Dursley avaient trouvé au saut du lit leur neveu devant la porte, mais Privet Drive n'avait quasiment pas changé. Ce jour-là, le soleil se leva sur les mêmes petits jardins propres en faisant étinceler la plaque de cuivre qui portait le numéro 4, à l'entrée de la maison des Dursley. La lumière du matin s'infiltra dans un living-room exactement semblable, à quelques détails près, à celui où Mr Dursley avait appris par la télévision le fameux vol des hiboux, de sinistre mémoire. Seules les photos exhibées sur le manteau de la cheminée donnaient une idée du temps qui s'était écoulé depuis cette date.

Dix ans plus tôt, on distinguait sur les nombreux clichés exposés quelque chose qui ressemblait à un gros ballon rose coiffé de bonnets à pompons de différentes couleurs. Mais Dudley Dursley n'était plus un bébé et à présent, les photos montraient un gros garçon blond sur son premier vélo, sur un manège de fête foraine, devant un ordinateur en compagnie de son père ou serré dans les bras de sa mère qui le couvrait de baisers. Rien dans la pièce ne laissait deviner qu'un autre petit garçon habitait la même maison. [...]

Note about this translation :

The suggested rendering above comes from the French version of the book, translated by Jean-François Ménard in 1998. Translation is not an automatic or purely mechanical process : it requires interpretation, stylistic judgement, and sensitivity to rhythm, tone, and cultural context. This is why translation is a profession in its own right. Here, the difference in length between the original passage and the corrected French version also illustrates this point : preserving meaning and literary effect often requires restructuring, expanding, or condensing the source text rather than translating it word for word.