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## Le Petit Prince is printed for first time in Scots

Angus Cochrane



Author Susan Rennie has brought the classic to life in Scots for the first time



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ANOTHER classic literary tale has been given the Scots treatment as Le Petit Prince becomes The Wee Prince.

Language specialist Dr Susan Rennie of [Glasgow University](#), author of ABC: a Scots Alphabet, has brought the classic to life in Scots for the first time.

Originally published in 1943, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's timeless tale is believed to have sold 150 million copies worldwide, read by around 400 million readers and officially translated more than 320 times.

The book, released last week, reveals the life of the enigmatic Wee Prince, including the secrets of his dowff an dowie life, his fondness for sundouns and his love for a wondrous bonnie. The poignancy of the original remains, with its message that the things that really matter in life – the muckle maitters – are takkin guid tent of your hame planet, and cultivating the deep ties of friendship and love.

Rennie first read Le Petit Prince in Katherine Woods' classic translation as a teenager, and has been "fond of the story and its enigmatic characters ever since".

"It is one of the most translated books in the world, so I was delighted to be able to add Scots to the list, as it is a recognition of the status of the language and of the many cultural links between [Scotland](#) and Europe," she added.

"Saint-Exupéry's writing is deceptively simple, but the choice of each word is important. Certain concepts and phrases echo across the text, and you have to try to keep that fabric together.

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“Some quotes from the original, and the English translation, are well-known and well-loved, so any translator has a responsibility to retain the spirit and weight of those lines.”

The writer is confident that her translation will appeal to both young and old readers alike.

“Le Petit Prince is one of those books which appeal to both children and adults, and I hope the Scots version will do the same. Grown-ups come in for quite a bit of criticism in the book – for example “Grown-ups canna mak sense o onie thing on their lane, an it is a sair wark for bairns tae be aye explainin things tae them” – but that only enhances its appeal to ‘bairns’ of all ages!”



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Beyond a source of entertainment, Rennie hopes the new translation can also be of use educationally.

“In this translation, there are some French words which transfer directly into Scots, such as *douce* “gentle or sweet”, which is one of many words which Scots borrowed from French. I hope that schools may now be able to use the Scots version alongside the French original to support the teaching of both languages”.

The expert translator has previously worked on prestigious titles such as *TinTin* and the *BFG*, bringing the classic tales to life in Scots.

Her newest release, however, relies on a more formal and literal style of Scots as opposed to the more informal and conversational style of the aforementioned titles. But Rennie has assured readers that *The Wee Prince* is just as accessible.

“There are some very familiar Scots words in the text, such as *bairn* and *bonnie*”, she explained, “but also less common ones like *malafoster* meaning ‘to destroy’ and *dowff an dowie* ‘sad and melancholy’, so I have also compiled a glossary of the Scots words in the text to help readers.”



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