Traduire l’intertextualité en littérature pour la jeunesse :
le cas de *Stalky & Co.* de Rudyard Kipling

Édition de référence

Beetle knew what help meant, though he was by no means averse to showing his importance before his allies. The little loft behind Randall’s printing-office was his own territory, where he saw himself already controlling the *Times*. Here, under the guidance of the inky apprentice, he had learned to find his way more or less circuitously about the case, and considered himself an expert compositor.

The school paper in its locked formes lay on a stone-topped table, a proof by the side; but not for worlds would Beetle have corrected from the mere proof. With a mallet and a pair of tweezers, he knocked out mysterious wedges of wood that released the forme, picked a letter here and inserted a letter there, reading as he went along and stopping much to chuckle over his own contributions.

“You won’t show off like that,” said M’Turk, “when you’ve got to do it for your living. Upside down and backwards, isn’t it? Let’s see if I can read it.”
“Get out!” said Beetle. “Go and read those formes in the rack there, if you think you know so much.”

“Formes in a rack! What’s that? Don’t be so beastly professional.”

M’Turk drew off with Stalky to prowl about the office. They left little unturned.

“Come here a shake, Beetle. What’s this thing?” said Stalky, in a few minutes. “’Looks familiar.”

Said Beetle, after a glance: “It’s King’s Latin prose exam. paper. *In—In Verrem: actio prima*. What a lark!”

“Think o’ the pure-souled, high-minded boys who’d give their eyes for a squint at it!” said M’Turk.

“No, Willie dear,” said Stalky, “that would be wrong and painful to our kind teachers. You wouldn’t crib, Willie, would you?”

“’Can’t read the beastly stuff, anyhow,” was the reply. “Besides, we’re leavin’ at the end o’ the term, so it makes no difference to us.”

“’Member what the Considerate Bloomer did to Spraggon’s account of the Puffin’ton Hounds? We must sugar Mr. King’s milk for him,” said Stalky, all lighted from within by a devilish joy. “Let’s see what Beetle can do with those forceps he’s so proud of.”

“Don’t see how you can make Latin prose much more cock-eye than it is, but we’ll try,” said Beetle, transposing an *aliud* and *Asiae* from two sentences. “Let’s see! We’ll put that full-stop a little further on, and begin the sentence with the next capital. Hurrah! Here’s three lines that can move up all in a lump.”

“One of those scientific rests for which this eminent huntsman is so justly celebrated.” Stalky knew the Puffington run by heart.

“Hold on! Here’s a *vol—voluntate quidnam* all by itself,” said M’Turk.

“I’ll attend to her in a shake. *Quidnam* goes after *Dolabella*.”

“Good old Dolabella,” murmured Stalky. “Don’t break him. Vile prose Cicero wrote, didn’t he? He ought to be grateful for—”

“Hullo!” said M’Turk, over another forme. “What price a giddy ode! *Qui—quis*—oh, it’s *Quis multa gracilis*, o’ course.”

“Bring it along. We’ve sugared the milk here,” said Stalky, after a few minutes’ zealous toil. “Never thrash your hounds unnecessarily.”

“*Quis munditis?* I swear that’s not bad,” began Beetle, plying the tweezers. “Don’t that interrogation look pretty? *Heu quoties fidel!* That sounds
as if the chap were anxious an’ excited. *Cui flavam religas in rosa*—Whose flavour is relegated to a rose. *Mutatosque Deos flebit in antro."

“Mute gods weepin’ in a cave,” suggested Stalky. “’Pon my Sam, Horace needs as much lookin’ after as—Tulke.”

They edited him faithfully till it was too dark to see.

[…] The Latin prose paper was a success beyond their wildest dreams. Stalky and M’Turk were, of course, out of all examinations (they did extra-tuition with the Head), but Beetle attended with zeal.

“This, I presume, is a par-ergon on your part,” said King, as he dealt out the papers. “One final exhibition ere you are translated to loftier spheres? A last attack on the classics? It seems to confound you already.”

Beetle studied the print with knit brows. “I can’t make head or tail of it,” he murmured. “What does it mean?”

“No, no!” said King, with scholastic coquetry. “We depend upon you to give us the meaning. This is an examination, Beetle mine, not a guessing-competition. You will find your associates have no difficulty in—”

Tulke left his place and laid the paper on the desk. King looked, read, and turned a ghastly green.

“Stalky’s missing a heap,” thought Beetle. “’Wonder how King’ll get out of it?”

“There seems,” King began with a gulp, “a certain modicum of truth in our Beetle’s remark. I am—er—inclined to believe that the worthy Randall must have dropped this in forme—if you know what that means. Beetle, you purport to be an editor. Perhaps you can enlighten the Form as to formes.”

“What, sir? Whose form? I don’t see that there’s any verb in this sentence at all, an’—an’—the Ode is all different, somehow.”

“I was about to say, before you volunteered your criticism, that an accident must have befallen the paper in type, and that the printer reset it by the light of nature. No—he held the thing at arm’s length—our Randall is not an authority on Cicero or Horace.”

“Rather mean to shove it off on Randall,” whispered Beetle to his neighbour. “King must ha’ been as screwed as an owl when he wrote it out.” (266-268, 276)