

How to Get Rid of a Vampire by J M Erre

(translated from the French by Sander Berg)

4 stars

Great book for 9 – 11 year-olds

Zazie has a brilliant imagination and is always getting into trouble at home and at school because adults do not understand her! Zazie's made-up words will amuse adults and children alike, e.g. catastramatized, exhaustified and abominaciousness.

She has a large fluffy cat called Roudoudou, an annoying cousin called Lucas and two and a half best enemies – identical twins named Charlotte and Camille who Zazie insists on collectively calling Charmille, and Anais, with whom she falls out every other day!

When she starts reading Bram Stoker's 'Dracula', her active imagination runs away with her. Back at school, Zazie discovers that their normal teacher Mrs Cuche is off ill and they have a substitute called Mr Fleder! Having dreamt the previous evening she saw a vampire in the cemetery which in turn changed into a bat, added to the fact that 'fledermaus' is German for bat, she knows that therefore Mr Fleder is the vampire of whom she dreamt.

The rest of the book describes how Zazie tried to engage her friends in trying to get rid of Mr Fleder, only getting herself into more trouble by the day.

This is an amusing book and 9 – 11 year-olds, at whom the book is directed, should enjoy it. There are however, one or two errors which may be 'in the translation'; 'never' instead of 'ever' and 'discretely' instead of 'discreetly'.

Sméagol

Breakaway Reviewers received a copy of the book to review