

*Pompon w Rodzinie Fisiow* (Pompon in the Fisió Family) is a children's book written and illustrated by Joanna Olech. Youngsters between the age of six and ten are its target audience.

The book is adorned with a large amount of expressive illustrations and the creative book design adds to its expressiveness. The pages are, for the most part, colored little-dragon green and every two or three pages, when the action shifts, phrases from the general text are inserted into the background in block white. This makes the fun and exciting bits of the book to stand out.

The narrator has a very authentically developed voice. It is a 12 year-old girl, Malwina. She is cheerful, full of wonder, energy, and a healthy dose of mischief. Malwina is a bright kid who observes the strange behavior of adults, sometimes copies it, and also resorts to diminutive phrasing and slightly outdated slang—all of which she adorably apes from her elders.

The other key narrative component is the dragon's style, which is anything but childish. Right from the getgo, as a very young dragon, Pompon comes across as a savant who absorbs just about any information thrown at him. This is especially the case when it comes to culinary, technological, Internet and scientific knowledge! Foreign languages also come easily, and Pompon's outbursts in foreign languages, in the most unexpected situations, are yet another of this book's charms. He is an autodidact, one is tempted to say world-class, expert when it comes to research regarding his biological cousins: the reptiles. This is a very modern dragon who is often an obstinate smart ass, especially after screws up. The character is so well-developed that it will be hard for an adult reader, as she or he reads the book to kids, not to fall in love with Pompon.

A bit like Shrek *Pompon* contains some allusions to grown-up problems and concerns. For example, the book contains critiques of the growing influence of the Internet also a subtle critique of the cult of fame generated by modern media.

This is an area where the translator might need to do some creative editing in order to adjust the book to its new context. The reference to a mohair beret is obviously an allusion to the Polish conservative Catholic women's movement centered around Radio Maria, because its female members are infamous for wearing those kinds of berets. This would be opaque to a British or American reader, however, if it were to be replaced by an allusion to a French beret—it would be equally as funny, even though it would refer to a totally different context.

Same goes for the references to vegetable stores, political parties and soccer team names in the book. The kid's names would also need to be changed, because there are no analogues in Western European languages—they are simply too hard to pronounce. These minor tweaks wouldn't pose much of a problem and could be easily handled by a good translator.

The book starts innocently enough with the dragon climbing out of a bathroom sink drain. The first part of the book describes the shenanigans Malwina and her brother go through to hide their rather unusual pet from the parents. The dragon is a bit too hot to handle as it destroys the family's flowers, attacks a relative's cat, and spends his evenings making a mess of the house (once dousing itself with Mom's most expensive perfumes) and surfing the net (the reptile breeder's online forum is his favorite by far).

Pompon blows his cover after flooding the bathroom and is discovered by Mrs. Fisió who comes home unexpectedly after breaking a shoe while waiting for public transportation. The parents are at first apprehensive, but soon take to the dragon as they discover his charms, among them his considerable cooking talents and his love for watching televised sporting events.

Next comes an episode where the children take Pompon to camp. He runs away and finds his way home only after the family gives up all hope of finding him. After his return he gets to meet several people outside the family circle and even gets to go on walks, hidden inside a basket.

After several close encounters with strangers, Pompon is finally unveiled upon an unsuspecting world when the kids take him to a live television awards program. The awards are given out to writers of blogs. It just so happens that Pompon submitted his blog and won first prize. He

jumps out of his basket, out of wounded pride, when he hears the host ridiculing the children for saying that the blog written by ghostwriter, “DRAGON,” was indeed written by a real dragon.

From then on Pompon basks in the public spotlight thanks to the fame brought by the award show. Eventually his socialization becomes complete when he is given a job on Wawel Hill in Krakow—famous for its own dragon legend—and starts a family with a female dragon named Pepsi-Cola; of course, he goes back to visited his foster family in Warsaw as often as possible.