Chapter 1

The Cute Pet

“No! No! No!” Mum shouted when Dad came home with a dragon on his shoulder. Not a big dragon like in the olden days. This was a cute baby rock-dragon.

It had stubby legs, a fat belly and little wings. Its eyes were bright purple and one of its ears was floppy.

“Yes! Yes! Yes!” we cheered. We had always wanted a rock-dragon.
What does the word 'plonked' mean?

Mum plonked her hands on her hips. "I am NOT cleaning up after a messy rock-dragon!"

Dad tickled the dragon under its chin. "Look how cute he is."

"We'll clean up after him," I said.
Rock-dragons eat strange things. I think that's why they never grow as big as other dragons. There's a lot more meat on brave knights than on tin cans.

“PleeeEEEEASE!” we begged.

Mum threw her hands up and groaned. That meant yes.
Chapter 2

Smelly Burps

I named the rock-dragon Spike, because of his spiky tail. Dad named him Comet, because fireballs flew out of his nose when he sneezed. My brother, Kurt, named him Fluffy because ... well, I think he wanted a puppy.

The dragon didn’t answer to any of these names.

Dad said to me, “Holly, hold out a tin can when you call him.” It was hard to make a tin can look tasty. Spike was busy chewing on a yummy table leg.

Why did dad say to Holly to hold out a tin can?
Dragons eat a lot! Soon our dragon was too heavy to sit on our shoulders. In one day Spike ate a door handle, the cheese grater, the letterbox and a garden gnome. His stomach rumbled like crazy.

Then his claws grew too long. They clattered when he walked.

Mum said, "I can't stand that noise. Trim his toenails!"

It was hard to trim Spike's toenails when his burps smelt like rotten eggs. And he burped a lot!
Chapter 3

A Tricky Dragon

Dad said, “Try teaching him to sit, Holly.”

It was hard to teach Spike to sit when he kept setting my shoes on fire. Spike sneezed out a fireball every time he came near them. I think he was allergic to foot odour.

“Teach him to roll over instead,” Kurt said.

Spike was good at that. Too good! Once he started rolling, he was hard to stop. His spiky tail spun and crashed into chairs and ANKLES. When Spike started rolling, we ran for our ankles’ lives.
One night, Spike rolled into the dinner table. The wobbly table collapsed.

A bowl of mashed potatoes flew in the air, flipped and landed on Spike's head.

Mum stood up. Her face was red. “That dragon has got to go!”
Chapter 4

Fireball

We stared at poor Spike. Mashed potatoes dripped down his face. His tongue chased a blob of potato around his snout. His big purple eyes went cross-eyed trying to see it.

Kurt and I began to giggle but then Spike’s nose twitched. There was a bit of potato in his nostril. His nose twitched again. We all looked at each other and ran.
Spike sneezed. A fireball shot out his nose. It set fire to the curtains.

“That’s IT!” Mum said as she beat out the flames. “Rock-dragons are supposed to live on rocks. Not in houses that can catch fire!”

Mum was right.

How do you think mum was feeling? Why?
A New Name

I wiped away a tear. "It's not your fault, Spike," I said as I washed him.

Spike knew I was sad, so he did his trick to cheer me up. He rolled. Water sprayed everywhere.

"Stop it, Spike!"

Spike looked surprised. I had never shouted at him before.
I wiped the water off the floor. When I looked up, Dad’s razor was gone and Spike was chewing on the soap. His nose twitched. I ducked but it was too late!

“I was covered in ... bubbles?”

“Bubbles!” I grabbed the soggy dragon and ran through the house. “Yahoo! All we have to do is feed him soap! Soap puts out his flame!”
Mum looked at Spike. He hiccuped again. Spike’s cheeks turned pink when he saw the bubbles.

Spike hiccuped and bubbles floated up to the ceiling.

“Good boy, Fluffy!” Kurt said, as he rubbed the dragon’s scaly head. “Can we keep him now, Mum?”
"If you build him a nice rock pen outside and give him some soap before you bring him inside, I think we'll all get along," Mum said.

Kurt and I renamed our dragon Bubbles. Dad still thinks he's useful. Dad uses Bubbles to clean the car.
Questions to think about

• What does the word ‘plonked’ mean?
• Why did dad say to Holly to hold out a tin can?
• How do you think mum was feeling? Why?

What was your favourite part of the story?