



A Poor Excuse for a Dragon (Step into Reading)

Geoffrey Hayes

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"Punchy dialogue and compact sentences should make this a read-aloud delight."—*Publishers Weekly*

"Part-slapstick, part-fairy tale, the gently humorous plot has enough twists and turns to keep newly independent readers engaged."—*School Library Journal*

Fred the dragon has a list of tasks he must complete in order to be a successful dragon—none of which comes naturally. But he's determined to make #5—eat people—work. Before you can say "pass the salt" he's gobbled up three people even though he doesn't have the stomach for it. Luckily a local shepherd, with the help of a giant and a witch, knows how to cure what ails him and get those pesky people out of his belly. It's happily-ever-after for everyone in ways you'd never expect.

Geisel award-winning author/illustrator Geoffrey Hayes is a stepped reader maestro. The common threads between his wildly popular Uncle Tooth and Otto SIRs and the more recent Benny and Penny series (Toon Books) are clear and constant. The art is adorable, the characters are bursting with personality, and the stories are humorously subversive. From marauding pirates to misbehaving mice to a dragon who swallows people whole (and then continues to communicate with them in his belly!), Geoffrey always hits that sweet spot for the stepped reader audience—easy to decode, illustrative tales that tickle the funnybone.

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