

Russian Schoolgirl's Art Picked for J.K. Rowling's 'The Ickabog'

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Severreal.org

A young Russian artist has won the illustration contest for J.K. Rowling's first post-Harry Potter children's book, "The Ickabog."

Artwork by Yevdokiya "Dunya" Obolenskaya, 11, is among 34 original illustrations chosen out of 42,000 submissions from around the world for Rowling's latest book published earlier in November.

"Mama had received a text message close to evening saying that I won the contest. I danced for joy," Dunya told the Sever.Realii news website, a northwestern Russia affiliate of the U.S.-funded RFE/RL outlet.

Dunya, who said she aspires to follow in her parents' footsteps as an artist when she grows up, worked on her version of the character Lord Spittleworth in her grandmother's village near the Latvian border in the Pskov region. Her illustration of the greedy wine-drinking monster is featured on page 107 of "The Ickabog."

“You feel pride and joy when you hold a book with your own illustrations in your hands,” the young artist told Sever.Realii.

As a prize, Dunya — who had never read Harry Potter or other Rowling books prior to “The Ickabog” — was offered 10 books of her own choice in addition to a signed copy of the latest novel.

“I don’t speak English well but if I met Joanne Rowling, I’d thank her for taking me in her book and tell her that it’s a very interesting fairytale,” Dunya said.

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