



**The Piggy Wears Prada: A New Book Introduces Old Mother Hubbard to Armani, Missoni and Gaultier**

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By Anna Weinberg

"This little piggy went to Prada," the poem reads. "This little piggy went to Cannes / This little piggy dined at Nobu / And this little piggy, Hakkasan. / And this little piggy went 'Wee wee wee wee!' / All the way home because she had a fat bottom!" This brand-conscious bit of verse is not in fact an advertising tagline, but instead the title poem of a new book of nursery rhymes, originally published in October in the U.K. by Spy Publishing. American rights were bought recently by the HarperEntertainment imprint of HarperCollins, for U.S. release in fall 2006.

*This Little Piggy Went to Prada*, written by events manager Amy Allen, an Oxford-educated first-time writer and mother living in Singapore (where she's been called one of the city's most stylish women), seems the next logical step for the Bugaboo-and-Burberry parenting set. Containing "twenty-two humorous, name-dropping nursery rhymes for Birkin-toting, Blahnik-wearing It moms and mommies-to-be," according to HarperCollins, the re-fashioned rhymes for the fashionably inclined riff on lust for Louis Vuitton, Manolo Blahnik and Armani in verses like: "There was a young woman who lived in her Choo / Though she once had a house in a smart Chelsea Mews / So much on Jimmy / The house had to go/ And with it, her Amex and husband in tow!" **Story continues below ↓**

*Piggy* came together two years ago, shortly after Allen's daughter, Mimi, was born. "I tried reciting nursery rhymes to her but could never get beyond the first two lines . . . so I started to make them up as I went along. I figured since she had no idea what I was talking about anyway, it didn't really matter," says Allen. "Talking to newborns can be incredibly boring, dare I say it, so I thought I might as well try to amuse myself in a way that dancing fluffy bunnies simply would not."

The book has thus far sold 1,620 copies in the U.K. Allen's U.S. editor, Jennifer Pooley, predicts it will do well here, especially as a gift title in specialty markets. When Pooley first requested a copy of *Piggy* from Spy (after reading a short item in the *New York Post's* Page Six column), she says, so many friends coveted her copy that she found it hard to hold on to. "I have a number of friends who became parents in the past year . . . and wished that there had been something like *Piggy* for a shower gift," says Pooley. "During the baby's first year, mothers are constantly singing to and interacting with their babies in order to amuse them—if these fashion-forward nursery rhymes can make their sleepless moms smile too, all the better."

Both Allen and Pooley emphasize that the book is more for mothers—those whom Allen calls "the Blahnik Brigade"—than for children. Allen says *Piggy* is ideal for "someone with a passion for fashion and a certain style, someone with an appreciation of beauty and fine craftsmanship." And Pooley says the book is "a humor title for anyone who loves fashion—whether that be on an Old Navy budget, or their Bergdorf charge account."

*Piggy* is in many ways redolent of another recent HarperCollins project, *Cashmere if You Can*, the story of Wawa HohHot, a Mongolian cashmere goat who lives on the roof of a Saks Fifth Avenue store in Manhattan, and who trots through high-end locales like Elizabeth Arden's Red Door Salon on her way to fashion fame.

That book, however, was the brainchild of a Saks marketing executive, who, while not the credited author (Wawa is) gets an "as told to" credit on the front of the book. For publishing the book, HarperCollins received a fee from Saks, as well as a share of the revenue. And on the Saks website—one of the only places, the other being Saks stores, where the book is available now (nationwide distribution begins in January)—*Cashmere if You Can* is listed alongside other potential and presumably complementary purchases, including two stuffed cashmere goats, one 15 inches and one 8 inches, selling for \$195 and \$90, respectively.

According to a recent article in the *New York Times*, Saks and HarperCollins have already contracted for another children's book. And according to the *Times*, the publishing company—which, as a News Corp. unit, **champions synergy in all its possible forms**—has taken the model to "sports and entertainment entities and packaged goods companies," to see if it will work elsewhere.

Allen and Pooley say that no such deals were made for *Piggy*. "None of the brands featured paid to be included in *Piggy*," says Allen. Nor are Prada stores currently carrying the book. "It would be nice but I think if we had done this through the respective legal and corporate communications departments, we would have lost much of our creative freedom," Allen says. "From my perspective, all I did was write some funny rhymes."