



3 Wishes for Pugman (2011)
Sebastian Meschenmoser,
 Wilkins Farago, 44pp.
 978 0 98060 709 3 **\$24.99** Hb

When Pugman finally wakes up, it's so late it hardly seems worth getting up at all. And when he does, everything goes wrong: there's no milk, no cereal, no coffee and a sodden newspaper. In the nick of time a fairy appears and offers him three wishes. Pugman isn't greedy; he chooses coffee and cereal for breakfast, a dry newspaper and someone to share his life—a fairy pig—and they lived happily ever after until the end of their days. This is a book that works on the principle that 'less is more.' There are forty-two pages and half of them carry no text at all. Similarly the illustrations, mostly in pencil with marginal colour added, contain the minimum of detail. Colour is used very sparingly until the arrival of the fairy who conjures up all sorts of possible wishes in violent technicolour.

The book abounds in visual jokes which young children will enjoy. When the pug goes to fetch his newspaper, for instance, it looks like the hallway of a house, but turn the page, and in the driving rain it is simply a dog kennel with an arched doorway. Similarly, the fairy isn't a traditional beauty, but a rather scruffy looking specimen with red blotchy cheeks and a big grin. She does have a golden wand, however, which is carried off by a couple of mice on the end papers. Originally published in Germany the book is notable for its unfussiness of approach and its drollness.

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