

all over the shop

THE CULT SHOP

A pleasing purveyor of quality and quirk

FOR GOODNESS' SAKE

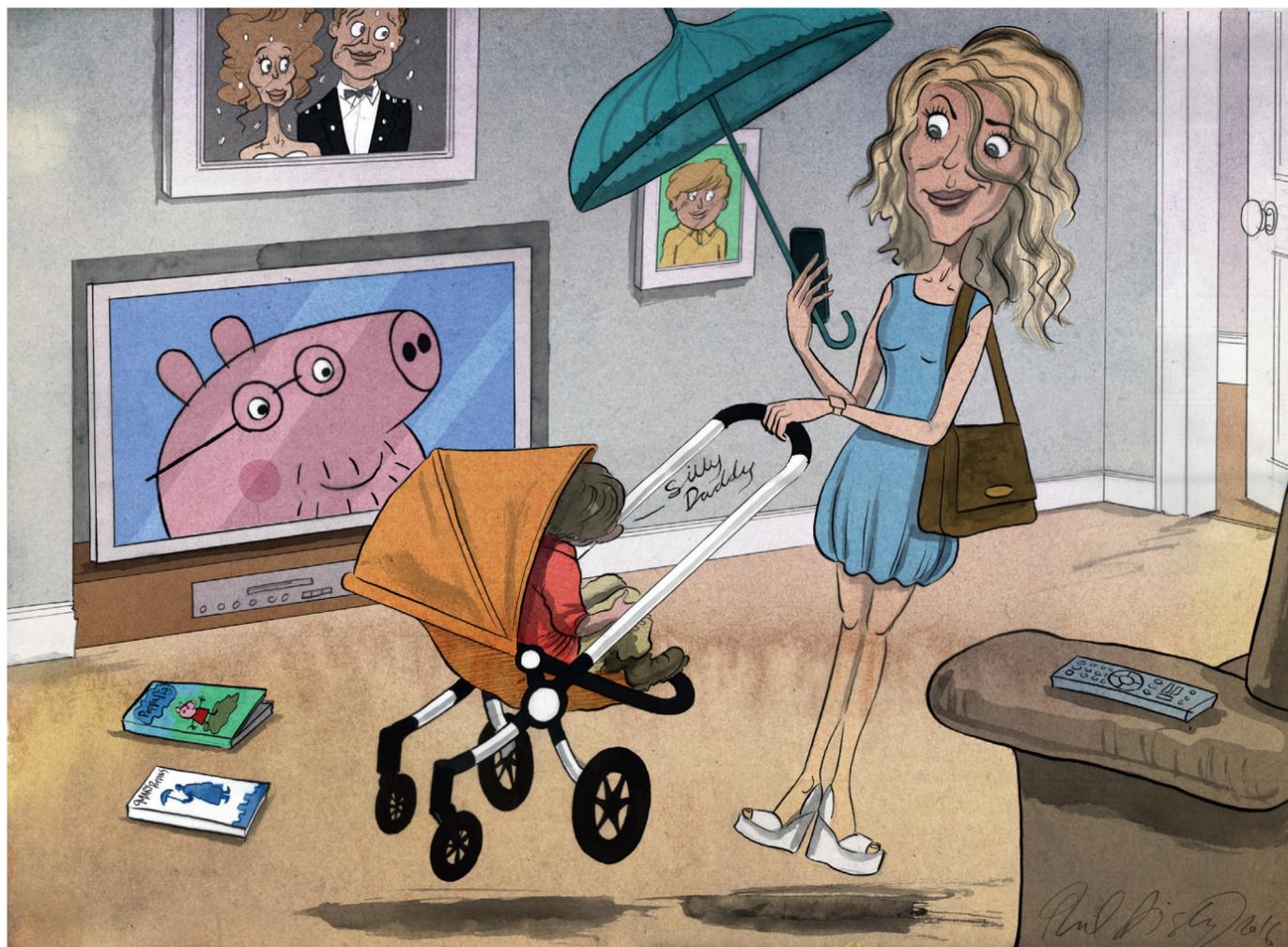
A trinity of channels for charitable urges

THE SMART MONEY

Studying form for the speculative enthusiast

THE GANNET

Tucker tips for the galloping gourmet



WRY SOCIETY

the modern nanny

Will *Peppa Pig* and premiership footballers prove more potent than spoonfuls of sugar for a contemporary Mary Poppins?

When it came to organising her life, Lucy found that *Peppa Pig* was a much more effective time-management aid than the Apple Watch her employers, Georgia and Joel, had given her for Christmas (alongside the Elle Macpherson lingerie from just Joel).

The *Peppa Pig* Code for Living broke down roughly as follows. One episode gave her enough time to check the bank balance (always a pleasure, never a chore); two for a Net-a-Porter order;

three for full hair and make-up before heading out to the swings. Since she'd seen Kate Middleton, three bodyguards and little George at the Diana Memorial Playground in Kensington Gardens last week, she had made an extra-special effort to look her best. After all, you never knew who you might lock eyes with over the Bugaboo (the silver foxes weren't her favourites at the school gates, it had to be said, but an appreciative glance was always appreciated).

Lucy looked at her reflection and smiled gratefully. Practically Perfect in

Every Way. Mary Poppins had always been her role model, although she'd never understood why she wasted her time on Bert when she could have set her umbrella at Mr Banks.

The gods, it seemed, had been smiling on Lucy's career choice. No sooner had she graduated from Scoreland College (with a diploma in Early Years Development & Learning, AKA Wiping Bottoms and Doing Jigsaw Puzzles) than fatherhood had become especially fashionable among the rich and famous. And where David Beckham and Brad Pitt went, mere mortals must follow. The fees that trained nannies could command had skyrocketed, and at just 23 she was earning nearly twice what her dad was being paid on the eve of his retirement from the Post Office. Her mum was dead proud too, but did insist on calling Lucy's favourite shoemaker "Christian

Loo Boot Man" when she'd had one too many Tia Marias.

Lips glossed and ready to go, Lucy took a deep breath before switching off *Peppa Pig*. The inevitable wails didn't last much beyond her promise of an ice cream in the park. Bribery hadn't been part of the syllabus, but she'd swiftly picked up the one basic rule of nannying: Make Them Like You At All Costs.

A not entirely unfortunate by-product of this career code was that it wasn't just the children who fell in love with her. Within weeks of Lucy's arrival in Glebe Place, Georgia had come up to her room to check that she was settling in OK and ended up sobbing about the state of her marriage. Any fool who read *Grazia* magazine could have told her that hiring a nubile nanny would be the final nail in her marital coffin, but poor, misguided Georgia had always been more of a *Vogue* girl.

Now, barely a day went by that Joel didn't send her an overly friendly WhatsApp or engineer some quality time alone. He had even begun modelling himself on Jude Law and Ben Affleck – the 21st century's most famous nanny seducers – by wearing a cashmere beanie hat and a permanent expression of lovelorn angst.

Naturally, Lucy hadn't given in to his ploys. It didn't take a brain surgeon to work out that this would be the quickest way of putting a stop to the presents. And besides, she had much bigger fish to fry. Only yesterday a premier league footballer had sounded her out at the school gates about spending the summer holidays looking after his boys in Marbella.

Coats on and precious toddler cargo loaded into the pushchair, Lucy stopped to check she had her cashmere gloves and Jimmy Choo compact in her new Mulberry messenger bag. As she did so, a text came in from Georgia, who was spending the day shopping for a new yoga outfit.

Joel has lost his job. Wants to collect children from school. Says he will see you there.

Without hesitating, Lucy wheeled the pushchair in front of the television and put *Peppa Pig* back on. One episode should be enough to email the footballer her CV and change into some slightly higher heels. Spit Spot. **CHLOE FOX**

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