

A PUFFIN BOOK

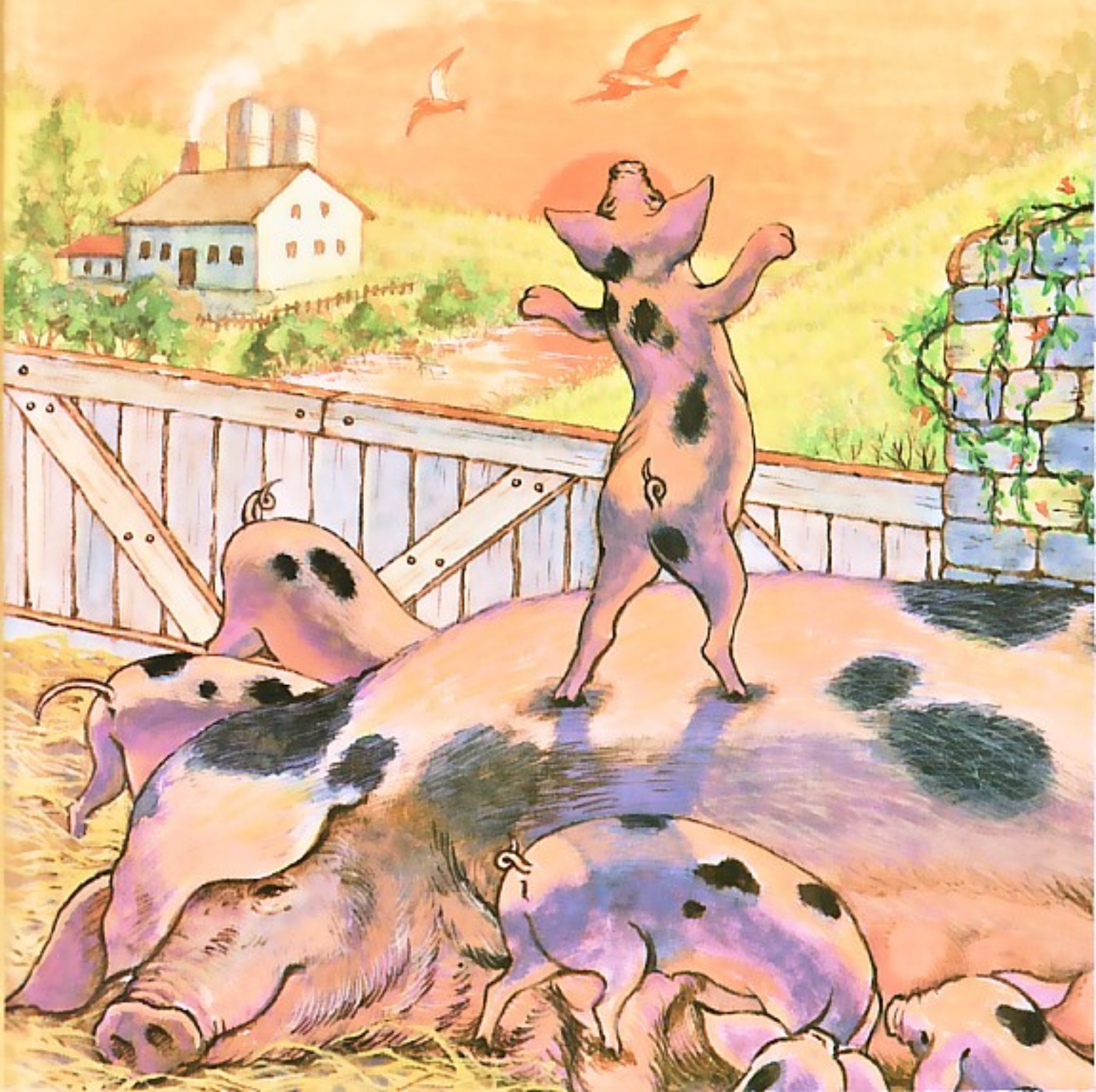


By the author of *Babe*

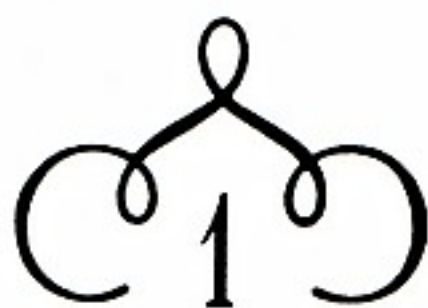
# pigs Might Fly

By DICK KING-SMITH

"Not since Wilbur in *Charlotte's Web* has a pig seemed so appealing. . . ." —*Booklist*







## Taken Away

"Oh, no!" cried Mrs. Barleylove miserably. "Oh, no!"

"What is it, dear?" came the voice of Mrs. Gobble-spud next door. "One dead?"

"No," said Mrs. Barleylove. "Not yet anyway."

Mrs. Barleylove was a pedigree Gloucester Old Spots, a flop-eared white pig spotted with black blobs of color, as though a giant had flicked his paintbrush at her. During the night she had given birth to eight babies, seven of them all of a size, round and strong-looking and already plumped out with their first milk. But the eighth, she now saw, was a poor spindly little creature, half as big as the

## PIGS MIGHT FLY

rest, with a head too large for its scrawny body and a look of hopelessness on its face.

It was a runt, a piglet born for some reason far smaller and weaker than its brothers and sisters. In different parts of England they are called by different names—cads, wasters, or nesslegrafts. In Gloucestershire they call them dags.

There was a rustling and a scrabbling in the next sty, and Mrs. Gobblespudd's head appeared over the wall.

"Oh, dear me," she said. "Oh, dear me, Mrs. B. Oh, I am sorry. It isn't just a smallish one, is it?"

"No," said Mrs. Barleylove. "It's a real dag."

Most of the Old Spots sows in the range of nine sties had probably had a dag at some time in their careers as mothers. It wasn't thought of as a disgrace, something to be whispered about, because it didn't seem to be anyone's fault. But it was thought to be a pity, a great pity, for every sow's ambition was to rear a fine litter of healthy, evenly matched youngsters, and as the news spread that morning, there was much worried grunting and rolling of eyes and shaking of long, droopy ears.

The servant wouldn't like it either, they said to each other. They thought of the Pigman as a servant since he did nothing but minister to their wants; he fed them, he watered them, he cleaned them out and brought them fresh bedding. They spoke of him



—and to him, though he could not understand this—simply as “Pigman,” as a Roman nobleman might have said “Slave.” Pigman wouldn’t be pleased about Mrs. Barleylove’s dag, for dags, if they survived, grew very, very slowly and were more trouble than they were worth.

Mrs. Barleylove’s neighbor on the other side was called Mrs. Swiller, and she was leaning over her wall, gossiping with the next lady down the line, Mrs. Swedechopper.

“It’s not just that it’s a dag, Mrs. Swedechopper,” she said sadly. “From what I can see of the poor little soul, it’s deformed.”

“Deformed, Mrs. Swiller?” said Mrs. Swedechopper in a tone of horror. “Why, what do you mean?”

“Well, its front feet aren’t right.”

“Not right?”

“No. They turn inward. And they don’t look like pig’s trotters. More like dog’s feet.”

Mrs. Gobblespod, too, had noticed this further piece of misfortune for poor Mrs. Barleylove and had told her neighbor, Mrs. Maizemunch, and everywhere heads were sticking up as the sows rested their forefeet comfortably on their boundary walls and discussed the situation. Only at Number Five, in the center of the row of sties, was no head raised, for Mrs. Barleylove still stood sadly contemplating her misshapen child, while its seven brothers and sisters



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**Daggie may be the runt of the litter,  
but he's destined for greatness.**

Daggie Dogfoot, the runt of Mrs. Barleylove's litter, is in danger. Not even Mrs. Barleylove knows what the Pigman does with runts when he takes them away from the pen. But Daggie is a pig of remarkable qualities, and he's not about to let the Pigman get him. Instead, Daggie runs away and decides to learn how to fly. But when he tries leaping off a cliff, he discovers another talent—a talent he'll need to save the entire farm. . . .

"It's impossible to remain unmoved . . . a soaring, heartening fantasy."  
—*Publishers Weekly*

**An ALA Booklist "Best of the Decade"**

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