

<<Mini Shopaholic 小小购>>

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### 内容概要

Becky Brandon (nee Bloomwood) thought motherhood would be a breeze and that having a daughter was a dream come true - a shopping friend for life! But it's trickier than she thought - two-year-old Minnie has a quite different approach to shopping. She can create havoc everywhere from Harrods to Harvey Nicks to her own christening. She hires taxis at random, her favourite word is 'Mine', and she's even started bidding for designer bags on ebay. On top of everything else, there's a big financial crisis.

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作者简介

Sophie Kinsella is the author of the bestselling Shopaholic series as well as *The Undomestic Goddess*, *Can You Keep a Secret?* and *Remember Me?* She lives in England.

## 章节摘录

CHAPTER ONE#160;OK. Don't panic. I'm in charge. I, Rebecca Brandon (née Bloomwood), am the adult. Not my two-year-old daughter. Only I'm not sure she realizes this. "Minnie, darling, give me the pony." I try to sound calm and assured, like Nanny Sue off the telly. "Poneeee." Minnie grips the toy pony more tightly. "No pony." "Mine!" she cries hysterically. "Miiiiine poneee!" "Argh. I'm holding about a million shopping bags, my face is sweating, and I could really do without this. It was all going so well. I'd been round the whole shopping mall and bought all the last little things on my Christmas list. Minnie and I were heading toward Santa's Grotto, and I only stopped for a moment to look at a dollhouse. Whereupon Minnie grabbed a toy pony off the display and refused to put it back. And now I'm in the middle of Ponygate. A mother in J Brand skinny jeans with an impeccably dressed daughter walks past, giving me the Mummy Once-Over, and I flinch. Since I had Minnie, I've learned that the Mummy Once-Over is even more savage than the Manhattan Once-Over. In the Mummy Once-Over, they don't just assess and price your clothes to the nearest penny in one sweeping glance. Oh no. They also take in your child's clothes, pram brand, nappy bag, snack choice, and whether your child is smiling, snotty, or screaming. Which I know is a lot to take in, in a one-second glance, but believe me, mothers are multitaskers. Minnie definitely scores top marks for her outfit. (Dress: one-off Danny Kovitz; coat: Rachel Riley; shoes: Baby Dior.) And I've got her safely strapped into her toddler reins (Bill Amberg leather, really cool; they were in Vogue). But instead of smiling angelically like the little girl in the photo shoot, she's straining against them like a bull waiting to dash into the ring. Her eyebrows are knitted with fury, her cheeks are bright pink, and she's drawing breath to shriek again. "Minnie." I let go of the reins and put my arms round her so that she feels safe and secure, just like it recommends in Nanny Sue's book, *Taming Your Tricky Toddler*. I bought it the other day, to have a flick through. Just out of idle interest. I mean, it's not that I'm having problems with Minnie or anything. It's not that she's difficult. Or "out of control and willful," like that stupid teacher at the toddler music group said. (What does she know? She can't even play the triangle properly.) The thing about Minnie is, she's . . . spirited. She has firm opinions about things. Like jeans (she won't wear them) or carrots (she won't eat them). And right now her firm opinion is that she should have a toy pony. "Minnie, darling, I love you very much," I say in a gentle, crooning voice, "and it would make me very happy if you gave me the pony. That's right, give it to Mummy." I've nearly done it. My fingers are closing around the pony's head . . . Ha. Skills. I've got it. I can't help looking round to see if anyone's observed my expert parenting. "Miiiiine!" Minnie wrenches the pony out of my hand and makes a run for it across the shop floor. "Shit." "Minnie! Minnie!" I yell. I grab my carrier bags and leg it furiously after Minnie, who has already disappeared into the Action Man section. God, I don't know why we bother training all these athletes for the Olympics. We should just field a team of toddlers. As I catch up with her, I'm panting. I really have to start my postnatal exercises sometime. "Give me the pony!" I try to take it, but she's gripping it like a limpet. "Mine poneee!" Her dark eyes flash at me with a resolute glint. Sometimes I look at Minnie and she's so like her father it gives me a jolt. Speaking of which, where is Luke? We were supposed to be doing Christmas shopping together. As a family. But he disappeared an hour ago, muttering something about a call he had to make, and I haven't seen him since. He's probably sitting somewhere having a civilized cappuccino over the newspaper. Typical. "Minnie, we're not buying it," I say in my best firm manner. "You've got lots of toys already and you don't need a pony." A woman with straggly dark hair, gray eyes, and toddlers in a twin buggy shoots me an approving nod. I can't help giving her the Mummy Once-Over myself, and she's one of those mothers who wears Crocs over nubbly homemade socks. (Why would you do that? Why?) "It's monstrous, isn't it?" she says. "Those ponies are forty pounds! My kids know better than to

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even ask," she adds, shooting a glance at her two boys, who are slumped silently, thumbs in mouths. "Once you give in to them, that's the beginning of the end. I've got mine well trained. Show-off. Absolutely," I say in dignified tones. "I couldn't agree more." "Some parents would just buy their kid that pony for a quiet life. No discipline. It's disgusting." "Terrible," I agree, and make a surreptitious swipe for the pony, which Minnie adeptly dodges. Damn. "The biggest mistake is giving in to them." The woman is regarding Minnie with a pebblelike gaze. "That's what starts the rot." Well, I never give in to my daughter," I say briskly. "You're not getting the pony, Minnie, and that's final." "Poneeee!" Minnie's wails turn to heartrending sobs. She is such a drama queen. (She gets it from my mum.) "Good luck, then." The woman moves off. "Happy Christmas." "Minnie, stop!" I hiss furiously as soon as she's disappeared. "You're embarrassing both of us! What do you want a stupid pony for, anyway?" "Poneeee!" She's cuddling the pony to her as though it's her long-lost faithful pet that was sold at market five hundred miles away and has just stumbled back to the farm, footsore and whickering for her. "It's only a silly toy," I say impatiently. "What's so special about it, anyway?" And for the first time I look properly at the pony. Wow. Actually . . . it is pretty fab. It's made of painted white wood with glittery stars all over and the sweetest hand-painted face. And it has little red trundly wheels. "You really don't need a pony, Minnie," I say—but with slightly less conviction than before. I've just noticed the saddle. Is that genuine leather? And it has a proper bridle with buckles and the mane is made of real horsehair. And it comes with a grooming set! For forty quid this isn't bad value at all. I push one of the little red wheels, and it spins round perfectly. Now that I think about it, Minnie doesn't have a toy pony. It's quite an obvious gap in her toy cupboard. I mean, not that I'm going to give in. "It winds up too," comes a voice behind me, and I turn to see an elderly sales assistant approaching us. "There's a key in the base. Look!" She winds the key, and both Minnie and I watch, mesmerized, as the pony starts rising and falling in a carousel motion while tinkly music plays. Oh my God, I love this pony. "It's on special Christmas offer at forty pounds," the assistant adds. "Normally this would retail for seventy. They're handmade in Sweden. Nearly fifty percent off. I knew it was good value. Didn't I say it was good value?" "You like it, don't you, dear?" The assistant smiles at Minnie, who beams back, her stropiness vanished. In fact, I don't want to boast, but she looks pretty adorable with her red coat and dark pigtailed and dimpled cheeks. "So, would you like to buy one?" "I . . . um . . ." I clear my throat. Come on, Becky. Say no. Be a good parent. Walk away. My hand steals out and strokes the mane again. But it's so gorgeous. Look at its dear little face. And a pony isn't like some stupid craze, is it? You'd never get tired of a pony. It's a classic. It's, like, the Chanel jacket of toys. And it's Christmas. And it's on special offer. And, who knows, Minnie might turn out to have a gift for riding, it suddenly occurs to me. A toy pony might be just the spur she needs. I have a sudden vision of her at age twenty, wearing a red jacket, standing by a gorgeous horse at the Olympics, saying to the TV cameras, "It all began one Christmas, when I received the gift that changed my life. . . ." My mind is going round and round like a computer processing DNA results, trying to find a match. There has to be a way in which I can simultaneously: 1) Not give in to Minnie's tantrum; 2) be a good parent; and 3) buy the pony. I need some clever blue-sky solution like Luke is always paying business consultants scads of money to come up with . . . And then the answer comes to me. A totally genius idea which I can't believe I've never had before. I haul out my phone and text Luke: Luke! Have just had a really good thought. I think Minnie should get pocket money. Immediately a reply pings back: Wtf? Why? So she can buy things, of course! I start to type. Then I think again. I delete the text and carefully type instead: Children need to learn about finance from early age. Read it in article. Empowers them and gives responsibility. A moment later Luke texts: Can't we just buy her the FT? Shut up. I type: We'll say two pounds a week shall we? R u mad? Comes zipping back: 10p a week is

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plenty.I stare at the phone indignantly. 10p? He...

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