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Ginger and Petunia

Holly Dickman

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Polacco, Patricia. *Ginger and Petunia*. Illustrated by Patricia Polacco. Philomel, 2007. ISBN 9780399245398. \$16.99. 40 p.

Reviewer: Holly Dickman

Reading Level: Intermediate, All

Rating: Outstanding

Genre: Humorous Stories; Picture Books;

Subject: Pigs—Juvenile Fiction; Human-Animal Relationships—Juvenile Fiction; Celebrities—Juvenile Fiction; Books—Reviews;

Nobody loves their pet as much as Virginia Vincent Folsom loves her pig Petunia. Virginia, also known as Ginger, a member of high society and an elite pianist seems an unlikely match for Petunia, a lovable pig who enjoys taking mud baths. However unlikely this pair may seem, they are more alike than meets the eye! One day, Virginia must rush out of town, and calls a sitter to take care of Petunia for her. Unfortunately, the sitter never shows, and the lonely pig decides to take matters into her own hands (or hooves). To show her love and devotion for Ginger, Petunia sets out to accomplish everything Ginger would do if she were there. Pushing aside her strong desire for a mud bath, Petunia dresses in Ginger's extravagant gowns, teaches the piano students, attends art shows, goes to elegant dinners, and gets invited to a ball by the Mayor himself! After the ball, Petunia arrives home to find Ginger waiting for her. Finally the long days of Petunia pretending to be Ginger are over, and the two are reunited.

Ginger and Petunia provides a comic insight into the world of dedicated pet lovers and their spoiled pets. Polacco's attention-grabbing illustrations, done in pencil and marker, not only mirror the eccentric characters but give the reader a window into a humorous and even more entertaining storyline than is expressed in the text. The reader will smile at the depicted facial expressions, extravagant gowns, and the silly dance scene that takes place at the end of the book. Useful for read-aloud in elementary school and for any home library, Polacco has created a humorous and lovable story through text and pictures that every pet lover will cherish.