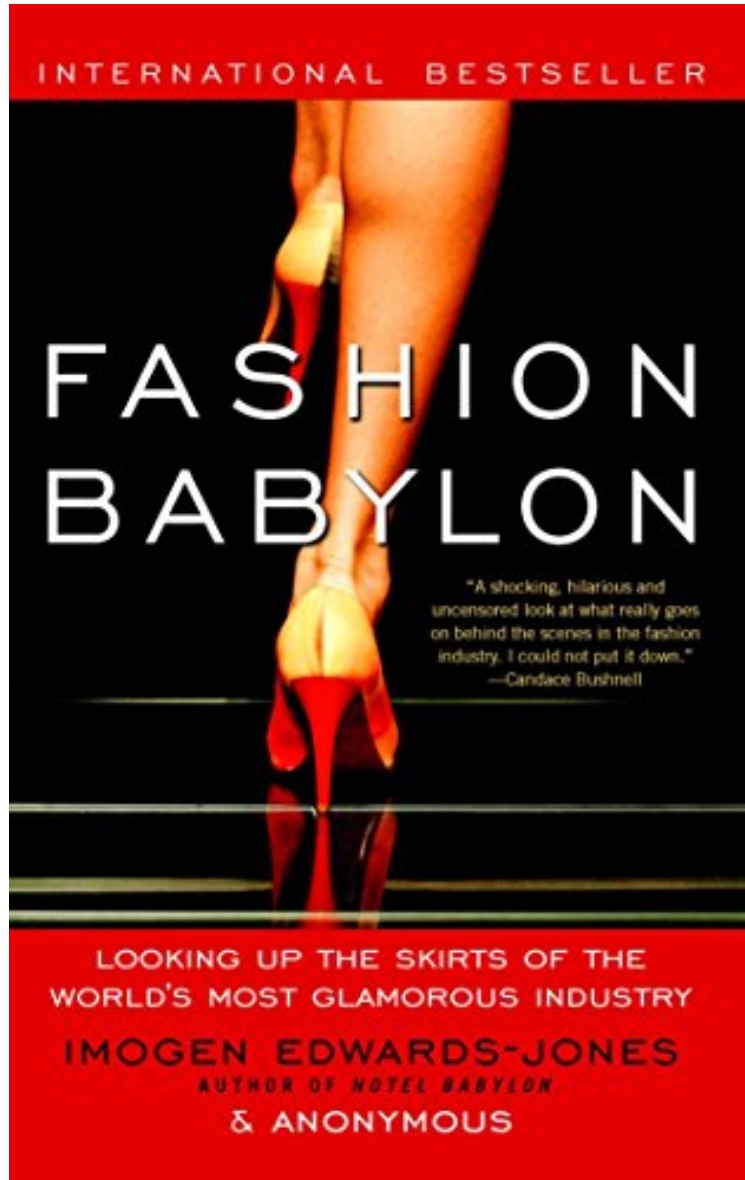


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Fashion Babylon

Imogen Edwards-Jones, Anonymous
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Imogen Edwards-Jones, Anonymous : Fashion Babylon before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Fashion Babylon:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good look into the fashion industryBy Amy Leah PotterIt was pretty good...dragged in a few parts but an interesting look into the fashion world. I really loved a few of Edwards-Jones other books, Hotel Babylon and Airline Babylon0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This is a must readBy jesperwVery accurate about the industry but don't follow the fashion tips in the book, because it is fairly old

now.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. boringBy P. MCNEILboring. can't recommend. Her other book revealing the background of the Hotel industry (Hotel Babylon) was more entertaining and worth the read.

What is fashion? What is fashionable? Who decides what's in and what's out? Why is it green one year and blue the next? Why is one little black dress worth five thousand dollars and another worth fifty? Is the catwalk really that catty? What makes a supermodel so super? And a designer too hot to touch? Who is making money? Who owns whom? Who hates whom? And who's in each other's pockets? The answers are all to be found in Fashion Babylon. Taking the reader through six months in a designer's life, it explains how a collection is put together -- from the objects of inspiration to the catwalk, into the shops and, hopefully, onto the cover of a magazine. It examines who goes to the shows and where they sit...and whose backside they have to kiss to get there. Narrated from the point of view of an anonymous A-list British fashion designer looking to break out across the pond and structured around three of the annual "must" industry events in London, Paris and New York, this irresistible work of reportage goes inside the well-cut seams of the fashion world, where women are paid tens of thousands of dollars for simply getting dressed and where a wrong skirt length can cost you your career. Fashion Babylon decodes the markups and the comedowns, the fabulous extremes and the shoddy shortcuts behind one of the most lucrative and secretive businesses in the world. Witty, naughty and packed with celebrity gossip, this book will forever change the way you peruse the racks at Bergdorf's or flip through the pages of Vogue.

"Fashion Babylon -- juiced with tabloid-ready true stories of oft-repeated rumors -- has supplanted The Devil Wears Prada as the fashionista's trashy read of choice." -- New York Post "A controversial, deeply researched look at fashion's international 'process.' [Edwards-Jones's] coauthors, billed as 'Anonymous,' are an unnamed selection of stringers whom she has evidently taken out for dinner, plied with alcohol and guaranteed anonymity; a promise that she honours. Happily, they appear to have gone to town." -- Evening Standard (UK) "The revelations...leave you rubbing your hands with glee. The incidents are real, the celebrities play themselves...and everything you ever suspected is true." -- The Telegraph (UK) "A shocking, hilarious and uncensored look at what really goes on behind the scenes in the fashion industry. I could not put it down." -- Candace Bushnell About the AuthorImogen Edwards-Jones is the coauthor of the internationally bestselling Hotel Babylon and the novel Tuscany for Beginners. She lives in London with her husband and their baby daughter.-----A Simon Schuster author.Excerpt. copy; Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.Chapter OneToday is the morning after the night before, and if I look closely at Alexander's upturned nose I can see that both his nostrils are frosted like a margarita glass. He's been at the jazz. But then we all have. It's the end of another long and exhausting London Fashion Week; how else are we all supposed to remain funny and fabulous without a couple of grams of Bolivia's finest in our Chloeacute; leather Paddington bags?Not that we are this morning. Lying flat on his back, fully clothed, clutching an empty bottle of Grey Goose vodka tightly to his chest, Alexander looks like he is barely capable of speech let alone an amusing anecdote or witty quip. And I couldn't feel less fabulous. It was my sixth runway show last night, and lying here, staring at the ceiling of this overpriced hotel suite which we booked ourselves into to carry on the after-show party, I can't help thinking things might not be going my way. It won't be anything to do with the show. I mean, considering my lack of financial backing, all the time constraints and the fact that two of my stitchers walked out at the last minute, my collection wasn't actually that bad. I'd really gone to town with my tailoring skills. Well, that is my signature. I'm known for my cut. I love it. You can take pounds off people with a well-placed seam. My jackets were tight and short, my skirts skimmed the hips and pinched in the waist, my trousers were wide legged and my shirts had leg-of-mutton sleeves. I'd gone for a nautical theme, with stripes and sailor's hats. Lots of white. I think there was one killer white and silver dress in the show. I was actually quite pleased with the way that it all turned out. It arrived on time and in the right order. I didn't have a moment like one designer did, whose collection, entirely of navy blue, fell off the hangers and all he was left with was a pile of crumpled blue clothes and no idea as to which order to put them in. He apparently then sat on the catwalk and burst into tears saying that he would never design again. But my clothes did arrive. As did the models. A couple were late and a few more were a little worse for wear. They'd been at the champagne early but they were still capable of walking in a straight line; those who weren't had a line to straighten them up. Even the famously flatulent model who guffs her way up and down the runway managed to put a cork in it for my show. Perhaps she'd laid off the beans in my honour. So the smiles were genuine. Even if some were a little rictus. However, on the whole I thought it went well. Everyone made it there and back. No-one keeled over like Naomi Campbell in her heels, the fash pack flocked backstage to pat and preen and pretend, and we all tucked into the booze after the show. No, the real problem is that my last two shows were deemed hits by the press. Particularly my last Fall collection. Christ, even Anna Wintour liked it. Not that she saw it, of course. She doesn't really do London. We're too small, unimportant and lacking in advertising funds to warrant a visit from Nuclear. She does deign to descend on London Fashion Week occasionally. She is rumoured to be coming next season, but she is always rumoured to be turning up, on her way to Milan and Paris. Much like Madonna is always supposed to be coming to premieres and London fashion parties, so La Wintour is always anticipated and fecirc;ted and never shows. It was, therefore, one of the worker bees from US

Vogue who turned up to my last show. Anyway it was deemed hot and happening, on the button, fashion forward enough to have a whole corner of a page in US Vogue. They even included a couple of my blouses and a trapeze coat in the round-ups. Elle magazine ran a feature. Marie Claire asked for an interview. Harper's did a shoot. The Evening Standard gave me a double-page spread, suggesting that I might be the new Roland Mouret. A hack from the Telegraph came to my after-show party. Even Style.com couldn't summon the energy to slag me off. In fact they were nice. Everyone was nice. Which is a dangerous thing in fashion. A lot was expected of last night's show, and I'm not sure I could ever have delivered. The British Fashion Council were kind enough to give me the slot I requested, 6.30 P.M. on Thursday, which is a first. Every year they ask me which slot I would like, every year I ask for Thursday evening, and every year they give me Tuesday at 9.30 A.M. No-one wants to go at the beginning of the week, as it means none of the US buyers have made it across the Pond after the close of New York. And no-one can face a morning show. Who wants a glass of champagne before they've managed to get a skinny latte down their necks? But this year I was given the best slot, on the best day; I was even scheduled next to Betty Jackson, so everyone could come. My front row was full, my back row was full. I also had a sniff of celeb - an Appleton, that girl from The X Factor. There was even talk of Posh, but Alexander stamped his foot. Not that she would show up anyway. But he was certain to make sure. 'She is all tan, tits and hair extensions,' he pronounced at the mere mention that her people might be calling my person for a front-row ticket. 'And to me quite frankly she just isn't fashion.' 'Cavalli is all over her,' I replied. 'Purlease,' he said. 'That old arse. I reckon he's got as much style as a remainder bin.' Alexander has lots of grapevine stories that frankly I think are untrue, and he launched into one of his old favourites. A few years back when Tom Ford was still at Gucci, he allegedly called up his PR in London demanding to get 'that woman' out of his clothes. The PR is supposed to have said she couldn't as Posh was buying their clothes. And Ford is said to have paused and then shouted, 'How can we stop her?' 'So, if Posh is not good enough for Tom Ford,' Alexander continued with a shrug, 'we don't want her skinny arse anywhere near our collection.' Now, Alexander starts to cough himself awake next to me. It is one of those hacking coughs where you can hear lumps and lungs curdling together. The bed is shaking. Finally there is one loud hack as he sits up, releasing the vodka bottle which rolls off the bed onto the heavily carpeted floor. 'Oh, fuck!' he says, opening his eyes, rubbing his pale face and running his hands through his slick mousey hair. 'I feel shit.' He coughs again. 'You got a ciggie?' 'Umm,' I say, looking out into the room. I have slept with Alexander twice a year, every year, ever since we got together some time in the last century, and I have to say he isn't any more charming in the morning. 'Jesus,' he says, rubbing his small nose as he surveys the scene. 'What the fuck happened to this place? It's trashed.' He's not wrong. There are glasses and bottles and fag butts everywhere. There are half-drunk drinks, butts in half-drunk drinks, and one smeared CD case in the middle of the table. Someone's been wearing the complimentary dressing gown. It's lying by the door. The free slippers are out of their plastic, and someone's left a white and gold handbag behind. 'Oh I say,' says Alexander, carefully getting out of bed, holding onto his head. Dressed in his black suit and white shirt he looks like a magpie on a mission as he gingerly picks his way through the debris in his black silk socks. 'Look at this. This looks quite nice,' he says, picking up the bag and sniffing the leather. 'A possible party steal?' 'It looks like a Tanner Krolle to me,' I say, sitting up in bed. 'Oh, you're right,' he says, dropping it straight back onto the floor. 'Suddenly I'm liking that a whole lot less.' He sits down on one of the two grey felt sofas and starts going through the empty packets on the table until he finds a cigarette. He sparks it up and inhales. He dissolves into a fit of coughing which culminates in a loud snorting of phlegm, which he swallows. 'God,' he says. 'That's much better. Oh, look,' he adds, cheering up no end. 'Look what we have here. My Selfridges card.' He smiles, holding it up for me to see. 'With my name written in coke.' He taps the card out onto the CD packet and gathers together the remainder of the drugs into a thin line. He searches the table and then eventually in his own suit pockets for some money. He finds one squalid-looking fiver, which he rejects in favour of a taxi receipt. He rolls it up. It's poised by his nostril when he suddenly remembers his middle-class manners and private education. 'Want some?' he asks. 'No thanks.' 'Righty-ho.' He smiles before he snorts the CD clean. 'OK,' he says, clapping his hands together and rubbing the sweat down the front of his Dior trousers. 'How are you feeling?' 'Not terribly confident,' I reply. Actually, that's a bit of an understatement. I feel sick, scared and deeply unconfident. This has to be the worst moment in any fashion designer's year. You've worked your arse off. You've done your best. Had no sleep for weeks. Nothing to eat or drink other than Haribo sweets and full-fat Coke for days. Yet this ordeal is nothing compared to the reviews. They can make you or crucify you in one morning. They can close your business. Make sure no-one places any orders. Wipe the floor with you. And send you back to fashion ignominy with one swift slip of the pen. My heart is racing, my mouth is dry, and I can barely breathe. I have had two good shows and one great season. I'm sure they are all queuing up to knock me down. That's the thing about the London shows: they only really like you if you are really new, really young and really really poor. They like to discover you and give you your first break. They love it if someone like Isabella Blow swoops in and buys your entire collection. Or if Kate Moss walks off in all your clothes. But if you are already doing ok, chugging along nicely with a rack in Harvey Nichols and some Matches orders under your belt, then they have nothing to write about. There's no story. They are looking for the next fashion forward freak with Perspex frocks and feather knickers to put on...