



***My Happy Life* - Rose Lagercrantz illustrated by Eva Eriksson**

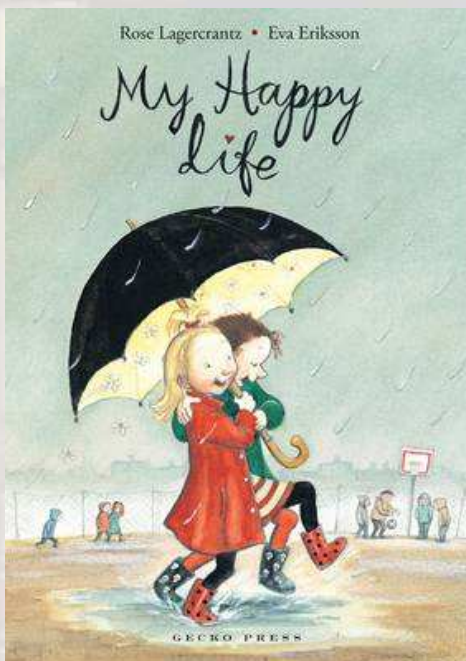
Published by Gecko Press, RRP \$19.99

Some children descend into gloom at the first hint of a problem. Yet Dani, who has coped with big challenges in her life, is a little ray of sunshine. At night, instead of counting sheep, she counts the ways she has been happy. Like the time she swam three strokes without drowning and the day her cousin gave her a frog.

Dani's happy life centres on her caring father and her friendship with Ella. The friends sit together at school, have sleepovers, share fun times and recover from the occasional tiff. However, Dani's spirits plummet when events take an unexpected turn. Her raw emotions and the physical rough and tumble of school life leave her battered and bruised. But Dani is no shrinking violet, she's a brave little girl who makes you want to cheer when she finds her way forward.

The black-and-white illustrations by Eva Eriksson are funny and appealing. Kids are centre-stage with adults in the background in supportive roles. The school scenes are hilarious with the classmates interacting in typically annoying ways. Written with humour and pathos this is an up-beat chapter book for five to seven-year-olds learning how to face the challenges of the big world. Dani's courage and her optimistic view of life are a lesson for readers of all ages.

Reviewed by children's book author, Jean Bennett



Rose's website: www.roselagercrantz.se

Promoting the enjoyment of children's literature.