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***My Heart is Laughing* by Rose Lagercrantz, illustrated by Eva Eriksson**

Publisher: Gecko Press

RRP \$19.99

Dani is usually a cheerful young girl, who likes to think about the places and people who make her happy. However, she is feeling lonely since her best friend, Ella, shifted to another town and she is finding it hard to fit in with other girls in her class.

Dani is surprised when she becomes the target of two mean girls who give her the cold shoulder. But she doesn't put up with their bullying. When they start to pinch her she retaliates with spirit, although the hilarious outcome lands her in trouble.

This sensitive tale gives a perceptive insight into a child's thoughts and experiences. Dani is understandably indignant when she is treated unfairly, but she also has a forgiving nature. The author depicts the classroom interactions with realism and humour. The discerning teacher is a gem.

Delightful black-and-white illustrations complement the story. The characters' expressions and body language convey the classmates' moods to perfection. Amusing detail adds pleasure when exploring the scenes.

Early readers will enjoy this quality chapter book. It is a stand-alone sequel to the first book about lovable, optimistic Dani, *My Happy Life*.

Reviewed by children's book author, Jean Bennett

