



***When I am Happiest* by Rose Lagercrantz illustrated by Eva Eriksson**

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Another illustrated chapter book for young readers in the series that features the sweet-natured Dani. She has a positive outlook on life and can usually find the 'up' side of most situations that would leave other kids out-of-sorts.

Dani lives with her father, and the pair care for each other. Occasionally she feels different from other children in her class who have mothers. Dani can't remember much about her mother who died when she was little, although she has the loving support of her grandparents.

She's a sociable girl who gets on well with her classmates and teacher. The students are looking forward to the last day of the school year and the excitement of holidays ahead. But when the principal comes to their classroom and Dani is called outside she has a terrible shock. Her father has had a cycle accident and is in hospital.

Dani's life turns upside-down as worries tumble around in her head. She faces a situation beyond her control and must rely on others for support. Can the resilient young girl find a way to cope with the unexpected turn of events? Can anyone else help her?

Black and white illustrations show the emotions of the lovable girl as she beams with pleasure, frowns in concentration, or her face crumples with grief. The artist displays Dani's vulnerability through her slight body, fly-away hair with a wispy ponytail on top, cute nose and expressive eyes.

Short sentences, realistic dialogue, and double-spaced text are suited to early readers. The heartfelt storyline is spot-on to share with a child going through a difficult time, or to help children learn empathy for others.

**Reviewed by children's book author,
Jean Bennett**

