



2007

Being Bee

Holly Dickman

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Bateson, Catherine. *Being Bee*. Holiday House, 2007. ISBN 9780823421046. \$16.95. 126 p.

Reviewer: Holly Dickman

Reading Level: Intermediate

Rating: Dependable

Genre: Contemporary realistic fiction;

Subject: Guinea pigs--Juvenile fiction; Bereavement--Juvenile fiction; Unmarried couples--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

After the death of Bee's mother, Bee's heart only has room for her father and her two guinea pigs, Lulu and Fifi. Unfortunately her father's new girlfriend, Jazzzi, would like a spot in Bee's heart as well. To Bee, her father's girlfriend is the worst thing that could possibly happen to her small family. Jazzzi's strange cooking and overly frequent visits are unwelcome. Life gets worse for Bee when her father invites Jazzzi to move in. An unpredicted discovery of a brother, Harley, that Jazzzi has chosen to keep secret, kindles a bond between Bee and Jazzzi. As a result of meeting Harley, as well as additional influences such as receiving notes from her guinea pigs, talking with her grandmother, and running away, Bee begins to accept Jazzzi as a permanent member of her family.

A humorous and touching story of the struggle a young girl must go through in order to let her life change, even if it is for the better. Bee is a loveable character with a strong personality and blunt opinions. The realistic and serious issue of opening one's heart to new love is addressed with humor (especially relating to Bee's pet guinea pigs) and heart warming incidences. Not only will readers fall in love with Bee, but they will also form a connection with Jazzzi as the two characters struggle to develop. Useful for elementary or middle school libraries. Recommended for reluctant readers.

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