



Illustration by Dean Griffiths from  
*Ballerinas Don't Wear Glasses*

yet fully matured who read adult sociocultural messages unsupervised. For example, charming though it seems, scraping food off the floor in *The Bye-Bye Pie* and serving it to guests who eat it, apparently unquestioningly, is an act that could have lethal consequences if copied in today's world. Similarly, a feminist field day is possible with *Ballerinas Don't Wear Glasses*, where the girl is cast in the role of the one less capable and dependent on the older, wiser male. While it may seem a "funny and warmhearted tale" to adults, with its resonances of *The Ugly Duckling* and *Cinderella*, *Ballerinas Don't Wear Glasses* is no fairy tale to children.

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### Gangling Grace

*All I Need and other Poems for Kids*. Deb Loughead. Illus. Mary Camozzi. Moonstruck, 2nd edition, 1999. 32 pp. \$9.95 paper. ISBN 0-9682680-0-5.

Deb Loughead's book is being promoted by Frontier College in Toronto as part of their program to encourage reading among children; some of the proceeds will go to the program. The poems show a strong grasp of children's experience, everything from dust bunnies under the bed to a game of Tug-o'-War. They are written without condescension and with a good sense of humour. Typical of her wit is "Like a Weed," which takes the adult remark "you're growing like a weed" and examines

its absurdity, considering the qualities of crabgrass and ragweed. The poem ends with the wish:

Maybe I'll be lucky  
and grow up  
like Queen Anne's lace,  
with solid roots, a slender stem,  
a sort of gangling grace.

The images in the poems are vivid and Loughead should be commended to for appealing to all of the senses. The style uses rhyme with ease: nothing jangles, nothing is forced, and the poems hold up well in oral reading. She is not on the level of Dennis Lee — but who is?

Mary Camozzi's illustrations in coloured pencil are witty, like the poems: her rabbit-like dust bunnies are especially droll. Where she excels is in the night scenes, which manage to be scary but not frightening. The poet and illustrator were well matched throughout.

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### **Chloe's Capricious Foul-weather Friend in Nancy Hundal's *Snow Story***

*Snow Story*. Nancy Hundal. Illus. Kasia Charko. HarperCollins, 1997. 32 pp. \$16.00 cloth. ISBN 0-00-224388-1 (bound), ISBN 0-00-648095-0 (pbk).

In *Snow Story* author Nancy Hundal puts a delightful new spin on the classic "dark and stormy night," as she leads her readers through a snowy six-day tempest in a teapot. When an unexpected blizzard descends on Chloe's temperate west-coast Canadian town, Hundal's young protagonist finds herself with a mercurial uninvited guest. The snow quickly takes on a life — and personality — of its own. A frosty shape-shifter, it "flutter(s) in like a secret," upsetting the apple-cart of her everyday existence, putting pay to "a birthday party, Chloe's dentist appointment, school." This white wizard transforms the little girl's garden into a pristine playground, and beckons her out of her snug house to make snowballs and a snow family, while it frost-nips her boot-clad toes. The next morning, the snowy muse offers Chloe an irresistible canvas, "a world that (is) white and still, a smooth piece of drawing paper." She responds by creating (and befriending) a splendid "snow-angel," which she adorns with food-colouring "snow paints," sequins, and glitter.

By the third day into the occupation, Chloe is getting to know her wintry companion pretty well. This snow is a bit like a petulant child: if you make friends with it as does Chloe's mother, who takes off her hat so that the "laughing flakes" can tickle her face, it will reward you with starlit toboggan rides; if you pitch the