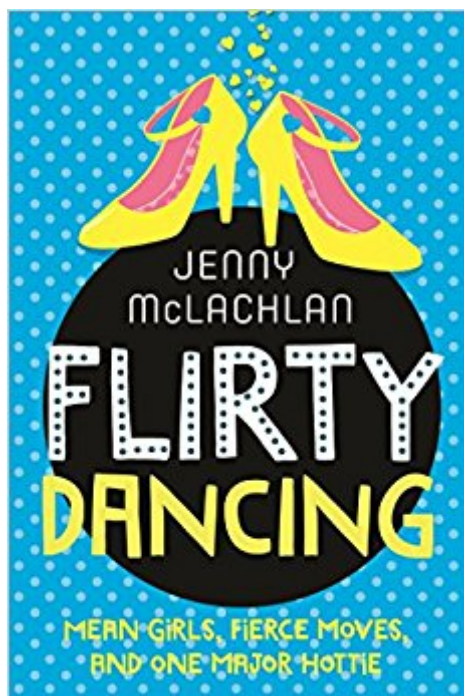


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Flirty Dancing: Book 1 Of The Ladybirds (Ladybirds Series)



Synopsis

Bea Hogg is shy, but she has a fiery core that she doesn't let many see. When the national dance competition Starwars comes to her school looking for talent, she wants to sign up. It's just her luck that her best friend Kat ditches her and agrees to enter with school super-witch Pearl Harris (and Bea's former best friend). Bea is determined to fight back! But when the school hottie, Ollie Matthews, who also happens to be Pearl's boyfriend, decides to enter the competition with Bea to jive dance, she will have more than a fight on her hands. Debut author Jenny McLachlan weaves a warm and hilarious story of friendship and dance starring the refreshing and plucky Bea Hogg in this first book in the Ladybirds series, *Flirty Dancing*.

Book Information

Series: Ladybirds Series (Book 1)

Paperback: 208 pages

Publisher: Square Fish; Reprint edition (April 26, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1250073537

ISBN-13: 978-1250073532

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 3.5 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.6 out of 5 stars 9 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,293,770 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #83 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Performing Arts > Dance](#) #530 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Bullying](#) #2802 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Friendship](#)

Age Range: 12 - 18 years

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Gr 6-9 • Bea Hogg leads a typical adolescent life. She yearns to embrace who she really is deep inside but lacks the courage to do so. Bea seems unable to take the lead on any part of her life. She meekly allows her so-called best friend to betray her and never even considers standing up for herself to the school bully. Things takes a turn when her grandmother arranges for her to be paired with the quietly handsome Ollie Matthews to perform a dance routine on national television. The preparation for the dance is the catalyst for Bea's coming into her own: she finds her

voice to combat the bully and predictably wins the love of Ollie. The characters are somewhat two-dimensional: the mean-girl bully, the disloyal best friend, the shy but handsome dance partner, and Bea's irreverent grandmother. The plot is a little slow and predictable, with an obvious ending: the ugly duckling turns into a swan. Further, the protagonist isn't very empowered, and her good fortune seems accidental. VERDICT The plot-driven story is entertaining but lacks real substance. — Patricia Feriano, Montgomery County Public Schools, MD --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

“Entertaining.” — School Library Journal “Readers have all been a Bea. If reading her story inspires other Beas to shine, well, then, so much the better.” — VOYA

Flirty Dancing is such a fun read. It kind of reminded me of the British Georgia Nickelson series. Laugh out loud antics with a refreshingly levelheaded main character. I don't know how to best describe Bea. She is her own person, she is nice, has a good little group of friends (most of the time), is quirky funny, has eclectic interests and is such a great big sister. She just seems like a well rounded girl that I would love to be friends with. And she brings Flirty Dancing to life. I loved watching her Jive. The more she jive danced, the happier she got. It was like she just started glowing as the book went on. I know that sounds kind of dramatic and strange, but dancing really brought Bea to life. It was lovely to see. In Flirty Dancing, a show like Britain's got Talent, was search for high school students all across the country. First up was dancing. And Bea's school was one of the schools on the auditions list, so naturally the whole school went crazy forming dance groups. First, of all I give Bea major props for even deciding to do a dance. She didn't have any training and she was already kind of picked on at school. And both of her best friends joined other dance groups, leaving Bea all alone. (I think if she really wanted to she could have joined Betty's group, but that is besides the point.) Just deciding to try out, won Bea huge points in my book. And then her grandma talked her into doing jive and swing dancing. I loved the throw back feel, plus I think Jive dancing is awesome. I had big band music playing in my head every time I watched Bea practice. And then can we talk about Ollie?? And how awesome he is. This is a guy that is genuinely nice and doesn't care what anyone else thinks. I wish that more Ollie's went to my high school. He is a rare breed. He didn't even think twice about dancing with Bea, when his sister paired them up. He was never anything but totally nice and fun with her. I just loved Ollie. When Bea was made fun on right off the bat in the book, I was kind of worried that Ollie was going to take some warming up to her, because

he was the hot guy, but that wasn't the case at all. Ollie is a gem. Flirty Dancing is the first book in the Ladybirds series. The second book is already out in Australia and Britain, but I don't think we will get it until next year sometime. It is Betty's story. The Ladybirds is the name of the group that Bea, Betty, Kat and Pearl (the mean one.) formed when they were younger. I want to find out more about Pearl and Kat because I don't know what caused Pearl to turn into a mean girl, and Kat disappointed me with her sheep-ness in this book. But Jenny McLachlan is an author that I want to see lots more of. I love her writing style. Humor seems effortless in Flirty Dancing. I was smiling and laughing with every turn of the page. If you are looking for a Laugh out loud, flirty fun read, look no further than Flirty Dancing. It is great.*Disclaimer- I got a copy of this book for free in exchange for my honest thoughts. I was not compensated for my review.

See more of my reviews on The YA Kitten! My copy was an ARC I got from the publisher for review.

Diversity Rating: 0 [What Diversity?](#) Racial-Ethnic: 0 (Pearl has brown skin but is the very flat antagonist; debatable identity) QUILT BAG: 0 Disability: 0 Intersectionality: 0 Funny contemporary YA is my thing in case you don't know me very well or didn't already figure it out based on what I read and review.

There's always the risk of said funny contemporaries not being that funny, not having a strong enough narrative voice, or not feeling right in general, but I'm a glutton for punishment and you encounter similar issues in any other genre. Too bad Flirty Dancing turned out to be a total bust. Though it has a few cute moments, it adheres too much to the YA contemp formula and comes off as a Georgia Nicolson wannabe without any of the heart as it skews younger than its intended audience. The dancing element meant to make Flirty Dancing stand out on the shelves is probably what works best. Communicating dancing in words is difficult, but McLachlan does it well and readers will be able to fill in the blanks, especially if they've seen someone dance the jive before. Bea starts out ridiculously shy but blooms throughout the book. Having been that shy girl who bloomed with the help of books instead of dancing, it feels read. That's about where the good, genuine stuff stops. "Artificial" is what I'd say if asked to describe this novel in one word. Bea's toddler little sister Emma acts more like someone's idea of a toddler than an actual toddler (or maybe my three-going-on-four niece is an anomaly among toddlers). News media covers the semifinalist groups before the episode that reveals they made it through and Starwars proceeds unusually quickly for a reality show of its kind. If there are more than three episodes, I didn't

see anything about them. Mean girl characters are difficult to write well and Pearl's characterization is all kinds of poor. As soon as Ollie and Bea enter the contest, Pearl starts bullying Bea in the most cartoonish of ways. When Ollie gives Bea a little candy, Pearl responds by smacking Bea hard in the back of the head with a backpack. She's a horrible, mean person who leaves panty liners on Bea's locker, uses the r-word just to get called out for it, and is almost hilariously flay. I know she will get her own book in this series and we will see her as a character with depth then, but all I have is this for now and what I have is awful. Oh, and she's the only nonwhite character. Because making the only brown girl in the book the antagonist isn't problematic at all. (I'm going off a description of her having brown legs, but for all I know, she's as white as the rest of the cast.) I wish that were the only problematic thing, but Ollie and Bea's group name Jive Monkey must not have the connotations in the UK that it does in the US. Like the word "bae" and twerking, jive dancing is one of the many things created/commonly used by the African-American community that got stolen, popularized, and beaten into the ground by white people who then looked down on the group they stole from for continuing to twerk, use bae, or jive dance. Monkey, of course, is something derogatory/racist a person can call a black person. Two white kids dancing the jive under the banner of Jive Monkey is so many kinds of wrong. SO MANY KINDS OF WRONG. The ending is a bit obvious and there's a good bit of drama drummed up over nothing and that drama even comes with a plot hole. If Ollie called things off with Pearl when he says he did, he let Pearl do a lot of couple-looking things with him so Bea would have to wait to get the guy. The second book Love Bomb will likely make it over to the US eventually it's already out in the UK but I won't stick around for it. Try the genuine article instead and splurge on the ten Georgia Nicolson books. Then you'll be able to join in on the fabby-fab Georgia lingo parties we have on Twitter!

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