

## MAGPIES VOLUME THIRTY-NINE



**The Welcome Cookies** (2024) *Kaye Baillie*, ill. *Kirrili Lonergan*,  
EK Books, 32pp. 978 1 92253950 2  
**\$24.99** Hb

Author Kaye Baillie and illustrator Kirrili Lonergan have joined up to create a beautiful new picture book with a unique story. Mabel loves to visit Miss Plum's Sugar Plum Cafe and always looks forward to seeing Miss Plum's kind smile, and enjoying the community feel of the cafe. Until the day she goes and the cafe, and Miss Plum, are gone. With a new cafe in place, Mabel is anxious that a familiar setting has been taken away. Will she be able to adjust and accept the new cafe and still find the joy and comfort like she used to? I love Kaye Baillie's books and this was one I had long-anticipated when I heard of its release. Baillie's story succeeds in giving readers sincere emotional reactions; the book is lovely and warm and has a strong structure. An inviting story about how children take comfort in the familiar and how important community connection is for them, it must be noted the terrific job Lonergan's illustrations do in creating the perfect setting for the story. Her illustrations succeed in creating the heartfelt feeling of community connection through her visual representation of Mabel's world, and Miss Plum's cafe. Together, the text and artwork offer sensitivity, emotion, warmth and hope for young and older readers, inspiring us all to try new things, accept change, and cherish our favourite places and people. *Brenton Cullen*