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Raising the Barre: Big Dreams, False Starts, and My ...

Raising the Barre: Big Dreams, False Starts, ... To me Raising the Barre, is the best D.I.Y. book for aging dancers ever written. Yes I enjoyed all the history, but mostly

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Raising the Barre: Big Dreams, False Starts, and My ...

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Raising the Barre: Big Dreams, False Starts, & My Midlife ...

An award-winning author's journey to break out of the expectations of midlife and reclaim the daring of her girlhood by dancing in the world's most popular ballet, The Nutcracker, with a professional company. Like generations of little girls, Lauren Kessler fell in love with ballet the first time she saw

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Like generations of little girls, Lauren Kessler fell in love with ballet the first time she saw The Nutcracker, and from that day, at age five, she dreamed of becoming a ballerina. But when she was twelve, her very famous ballet instructor crushed those dreams-along with her youthful self-assurance-and she stepped away from the barre. Fast forward four decades. Lauren-suddenly, powerfully, itchingly restless at midlife-embarks on a "Transcontinental Nutcracker Binge Tour," where attending a string of performances in Chicago, New York, Boston, and San Francisco reignites her love affair with the ballet-and fuels her girlhood dream. What ensues is not only a story about The Nutcracker

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itself, but also an inside look at the seemingly romantic-but oh-so-gritty-world of ballet, about all that happens away from the audience's eye that precedes the magic on stage. It is a tale told from the perspective of someone who not only loves it, but is also seeking to live it. Lauren's quest to dance The Nutcracker with the Eugene Ballet Company tackles the big issues: fear, angst, risk, resilience, the refusal to "settle in" to midlife, the refusal to become yet another Invisible Woman. It is also a very funny, very real look at what it's like to push yourself further than you ever thought you could go-and what happens when you get there.

On-stage beauty. Backstage drama. As a dancer with the ultra-

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prestigious Manhattan Ballet Company, nineteen-year-old Hannah Ward juggles intense rehearsals, dazzling performances and complicated backstage relationships. Up until now, Hannah has happily devoted her entire life to ballet. But when she meets a handsome musician named Jacob, Hannah's universe begins to change, and she must decide if she wants to compete against the other "bunheads" in the company for a star soloist spot or strike out on her own in the real world. Does she dare give up the gilded confines of the ballet for the freedoms of everyday life?

Ballet-inspired fitness for every woman! You don't have to be a professional ballerina to look like



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one! With Mary Helen Bowers' Ballet Beautiful, forget beating yourself up in the gym and suffering through starvation diets for some unattainable goal. You can achieve your ideal body and develop the strength, grace, and elegance of a dancer by following Mary Helen's proven program--one that's got everyone from celebrities to busy moms to executives raving! Ballet Beautiful is a fitness method that blends the artistry and athleticism of ballet with an easy, accessible eating plan that works for every body - and absolutely no dance experience is required. Created by professional ballerina Mary Helen Bowers, this transformative approach to fitness and health will reshape your body and your mind!

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## Ballet Beautiful's three-fold Quest

TO Dance The Nutcracker

approach is not an extreme workout nor is it a radical diet for an overnight fix; it's a roadmap to achieving and maintaining your ideal health, shape and size--all with the elegance and strength of a ballerina. Part One of the book introduces the program's empowering mindset, the key to supporting and guiding you through lasting change. Part Two, the Ballet Beautiful Method, consists of challenging, effective, and fun workouts that sculpt and tone sleek ballet muscles and build beautiful posture. Whether you have a full hour or only 15 minutes, you can tailor the program to your own schedule and needs. Part Three shares the Ballet Beautiful Lifestyle, a

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healthy, balanced approach to nutrition. With meal plans, shopping tips and quick but delicious daily recipes that will satisfy and nourish your entire body, it's a stress-free, diet-free plan that will help keep you feeling as strong and healthy as you look.

After discovering sheet music from a long-lost production of Song of Solomon, novice dancer Colette Larsen is thrust into the elite world of professional ballet. Sparks fly when she meets James Brennan, the fun-loving soloist tasked with choreographing a new pas de deux to the music, but Colette is forced to watch from the sidelines as he rehearses with the company's prima ballerina. As Colette's relationship with James

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deepens, so does her need to find the purpose beneath her latent passion for dance—a purpose that manifests in new friendships, rediscovered talents, and in the pages of Song of Solomon.

Humorous and heartfelt, this debut novel reveals a lighter side to ballet that resonates with dancers and non-dancers alike. Cantique's heroine is witty, whimsical, and highly relatable as she navigates love and dance in the midst of a quarter-life crisis. What readers are saying: "The novel is more than a simple love story... It's a journey of self-discovery and a tale that reminds us to pursue our passions... Cantique is suitable for a broad range of readers, young adult and up, dancers and non-dancers. Certainly many adult

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dancers, much like my own Quest

students, could see themselves in Colette's story." - Leigh Purtill, Dance Advantage

"I don't think I've ever related more to a protagonist.

Love the story, love the message,

love the characters, love the

writing. Love it all." - Hannah,

Overland Park, KS "There were so

many moments where the main

character experiences or feels

things that I have literally

experienced or felt in my ballet

journey... It just felt good to read

this, and I think adult ballerinas in

particular will find this very

satisfying." - Jana Carson,

Ballerinas by Night "The plot is

unique, engaging, and extremely

well structured... I found the

overall story of Colette

discovering the music and bringing

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it to life very compelling. A lovely mixture of art, history, and her self-discovery." - Megan Records, New Jersey "It's romantic and funny and moving... grounded in reality but still has a little bit of that fairytale that we are all looking for when we pick up a book." - Emilie B., Kansas City, MO

Throughout her history, the ballerina has been perceived as the embodiment of beauty and perfection—the feminine ideal. But the reality is another story. From the earliest ballerinas in the 17th century, who often led double lives as concubines, through the poverty of the corps de ballet dancers in the 1800 ' s and the anorexic and bulimic ballerinas of George

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Balanchine, starvation and exploitation have plagued ballerinas throughout history.

Using the stories of great dancers such as Anna Pavlova, Isadora Duncan, Suzanne Farrell, Gelsey Kirkland, and Evelyn Hart, Deirdre Kelly exposes the true rigors for women in ballet. She rounds her critique with examples of how the world of ballet is slowly evolving for the better. But to ensure that this most graceful of dance forms survives into the future, she says that the time has come to rethink ballet, to position the ballerina at its center and accord her the respect she deserves.

“ A glimpse into the fragile psyche of a dancer. ” —The Washington Post Jenifer Ringer, a principal

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dancer with the New York City Ballet, was thrust into the headlines after her weight was commented on by a New York Times critic, and her response ignited a public dialogue about dance and weight. Ballet aficionados and aspiring performers of all ages will want to join Ringer behind the scenes as she shares her journey from student to star and candidly discusses both her struggle with an eating disorder and the media storm that erupted after the Times review. An unusually upbeat account of life on the stage, *Dancing Through It* is also a coming-of-age story and an inspiring memoir of faith and of triumph over the body issues that torment all too many women and



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Profiles the life and career of the professional ballerina, covering from when she began dance classes at age thirteen in an after-school community center through becoming the only African American soloist dancing with the American Ballet Theatre.

David Hallberg, the first American to join the famed Bolshoi Ballet as a principal dancer and the dazzling artist *The New Yorker* described as “the most exciting male dancer in the western world,” presents a look at his artistic life—up to the moment he returns to the stage after a devastating injury that almost cost him his career. Beginning with his real-life Billy

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Elliot childhood—an all-American story marred by intense bullying—and culminating in his hard-won comeback, Hallberg ' s “ moving and intelligent ” (Daniel Mendelsohn) memoir dives deep into life as an artist as he wrestles with ego, pushes the limits of his body, and searches for ecstatic perfection and fulfillment as one of the world ' s most acclaimed ballet dancers. Rich in detail ballet fans will adore, Hallberg presents an “ unsparing...inside look ” (The New York Times) and also reflects on universal and relatable themes like inspiration, self-doubt, and perfectionism as he takes you into daily classes, rigorous rehearsals, and triumphant performances, searching for new interpretations of ballet ' s greatest roles. He

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reveals the loneliness he felt as a teenager leaving America to join the Paris Opera Ballet School, the ambition he had to tame as a new member of American Ballet Theatre, and the reasons behind his headline-grabbing decision to be the first American to join the top rank of Bolshoi Ballet, tendered by the Artistic Director who would later be the victim of a vicious acid attack. Then, as Hallberg performed throughout the world at the peak of his abilities, he suffered a crippling ankle injury and botched surgery leading to an agonizing retreat from ballet and an honest reexamination of his entire life. Combining his powers of observation and memory with emotional honesty and artistic insight, Hallberg has written a

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great ballet memoir and an intimate portrait of an artist in all his vulnerability, passion, and wisdom. “ Candid and engrossing ” (The Washington Post), A Body of Work is a memoir “ for everyone with a heart ” (DC Metro Theater Arts).

Communists vilified her as a raging neurotic. Leftists dismissed her as a confused idealist. Her family pitied her as an exploited lover. Some said she was a traitor, a stooge, a mercenary and a grandstander. To others she was a true American heroine—fearless, principled, bold and resolute. Congressional committees loved her. The FBI hailed her as an avenging angel. The Catholics embraced her. But the fact is,

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more than half a century after she captured the headlines as the "Red Spy Queen," Elizabeth Bentley remains a mystery. New England-born, conservatively raised, and Vassar-educated, Bentley was groomed for a quiet life, a small life, which she explored briefly in the 1920s as a teacher, instructing well-heeled young women on the beauty of Romance languages at an east coast boarding school. But in her mid-twenties, she rejected both past and future and set herself on an entirely new course. In the 1930s she embraced communism and fell in love with an undercover KGB agent who initiated her into the world of espionage. By the time America plunged into WWII, Elizabeth Bentley was directing the

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operations of the two largest spy rings in America. Eventually, she had eighty people in her secret apparatus, half of them employees of the federal government. Her sources were everywhere: in the departments of Treasury and Commerce, in New Deal agencies, in the top-secret OSS (the precursor to the CIA), on Congressional committees, even in the Oval Office. When she defected in 1945 and told her story—first to the FBI and then at a series of public hearings and trials—she was catapulted to tabloid fame as the "Red Spy Queen," ushering in, almost single-handedly, the McCarthy Era. She was the government's star witness, the FBI's most important informer, and the darling of the Catholic anti-

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Communist movement. Her disclosures and accusations put a halt to Russian spying for years and helped to set the tone of American postwar political life. But who was she? A smart, independent woman who made her choices freely, right and wrong, and had the strength of character to see them through? Or was she used and manipulated by others? *Clever Girl* is the definitive biography of a conflicted American woman and her controversial legacy. Set against the backdrop of the political drama that defined mid-twentieth century America, it explores the spy case whose explosive domestic and foreign policy repercussions have been debated for decades but not fully revealed—until now.

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Hollywood legend Michael Caine shares wisdom and stories from his remarkable career in this "engrossing" memoir that "shines with positive energy" (Library Journal, starred review). One of our best-loved actors, Michael Caine has starred in over 100 films in his six-decade career, spanning classic movies like Alfie, Zulu, and The Italian Job to playing Alfred opposite Christian Bale's Batman in Christopher Nolan's blockbuster Dark Knight trilogy. Caine has excelled in every kind of role--with a skill that's made it look easy. Caine knows what success takes. He's made it to the pinnacle of his profession from humble origins. But as he says, "Small parts can lead to big things."



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And if you keep doing things right, the stars will align when you least expect it." Still working and more beloved than ever, Caine now shares everything he's learned-and "his fans will be rewarded, as will anyone seeking an enjoyable, inspirational read" (Library Journal).

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