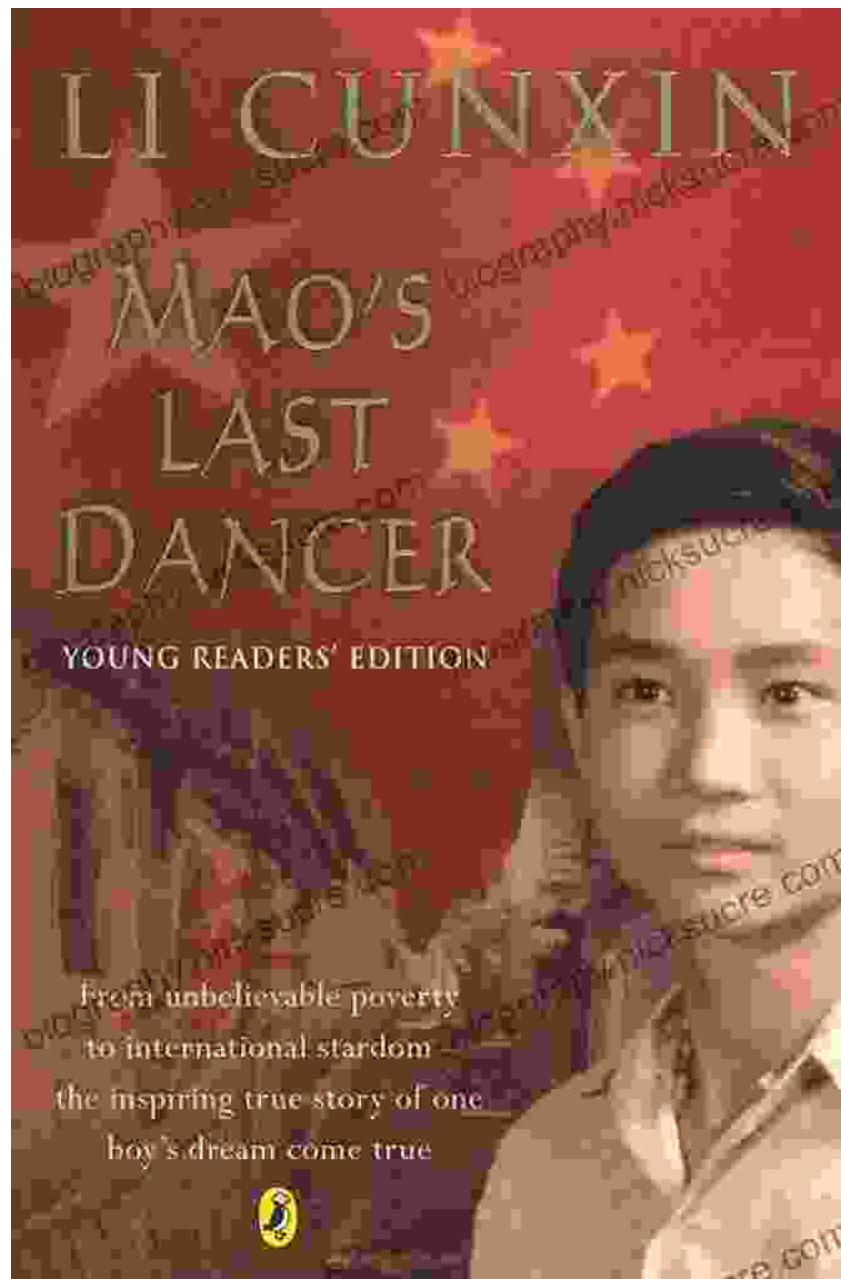
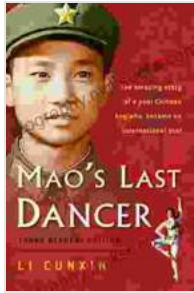


Mao's Last Dancer: A Young Reader's Edition of Li Cunxin's Incredible Journey from Poverty to International Stardom

A Captivating Tale of Resilience, Triumph, and the Power of the Human Spirit



Set against the backdrop of China's Cultural Revolution, *Mao's Last Dancer* is a captivating memoir that chronicles the extraordinary life journey of Li Cunxin, a young boy from a remote village who overcame countless obstacles to become an international ballet star.



Mao's Last Dancer, Young Readers' Edition by Lynn Mann

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 1962 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 313 pages
Lending : Enabled



From Peasant to Prodigy

Li's story begins in the impoverished village of Laixi, where he lived in a small mud hut with his family. At the age of 11, he was selected by Madam Mao's Cultural Revolution officials to attend a boarding school in Beijing, one of many young children chosen for their athletic potential.

With no prior dance experience, Li endured rigorous training and unwavering discipline at the Beijing Dance Academy. Amidst the political turmoil and cultural suppression of the Cultural Revolution, he found solace and freedom in the world of ballet, discovering a hidden talent that would ultimately shape his destiny.

Breaking Through Barriers

As Li's talents blossomed, he faced numerous challenges and prejudices. His peasant background and lack of formal dance education were seen as obstacles by some, but his tenacity and determination to succeed proved unwavering.

In 1979, a groundbreaking cultural exchange program gave Li the opportunity to travel to Texas to train with world-renowned ballet master Ben Stevenson at the Houston Ballet. This was a pivotal moment in Li's career, as he embraced the freedom and artistic expression that the West offered.

International Acclaim

Li's exceptional talent and unwavering work ethic quickly gained recognition. He became a principal dancer with the Houston Ballet, performing to sold-out crowds and receiving critical acclaim for his riveting performances.

Li's remarkable journey from peasant to international ballet star not only showcased his extraordinary talent but also highlighted the transformative power of perseverance, passion, and the pursuit of dreams.

A Young Reader's Inspiration

The *Young Reader's Edition of Mao's Last Dancer* has been thoughtfully adapted to engage young readers with Li's inspiring story. Deborah Heiligman, an award-winning author, skillfully condenses Li's memoir into a compelling narrative that is accessible and relatable to children.

Through Li's journey, young readers learn the importance of believing in themselves, overcoming adversity, and embracing their dreams. The book

also provides a fascinating glimpse into Chinese history and the transformative power of art.

Critical Acclaim for *Mao's Last Dancer*

Mao's Last Dancer has received widespread critical acclaim, capturing numerous awards and accolades:

- American Library Association Newbery Honor Book
- National Book Award for Young People's Literature
- Boston Globe-Horn Book Award for Nonfiction
- Sibert Medal for Nonfiction

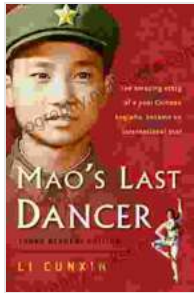
The book has also been praised by critics for its engaging storytelling, historical significance, and its ability to inspire young readers.

Mao's Last Dancer: A Young Reader's Edition is a truly remarkable memoir that captures the remarkable life journey of Li Cunxin. Through his inspiring story of perseverance, triumph, and the pursuit of dreams, Li not only defied societal expectations but also became a beacon of hope for countless young people around the world.

This captivating tale is not only a testament to Li's extraordinary talent but also a powerful reminder that with determination and the pursuit of excellence, anything is possible.

For young readers seeking an inspiring role model and a story that will ignite their own passions, *Mao's Last Dancer* is a must-read. This empowering memoir will leave a lasting impact, reminding them that even

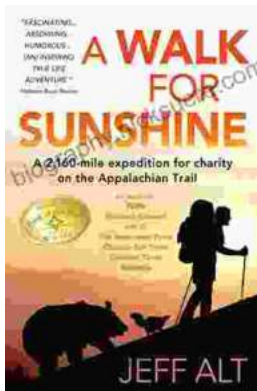
the most daunting challenges can be overcome with perseverance, resilience, and the belief in oneself.



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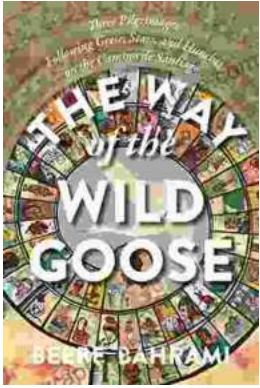
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