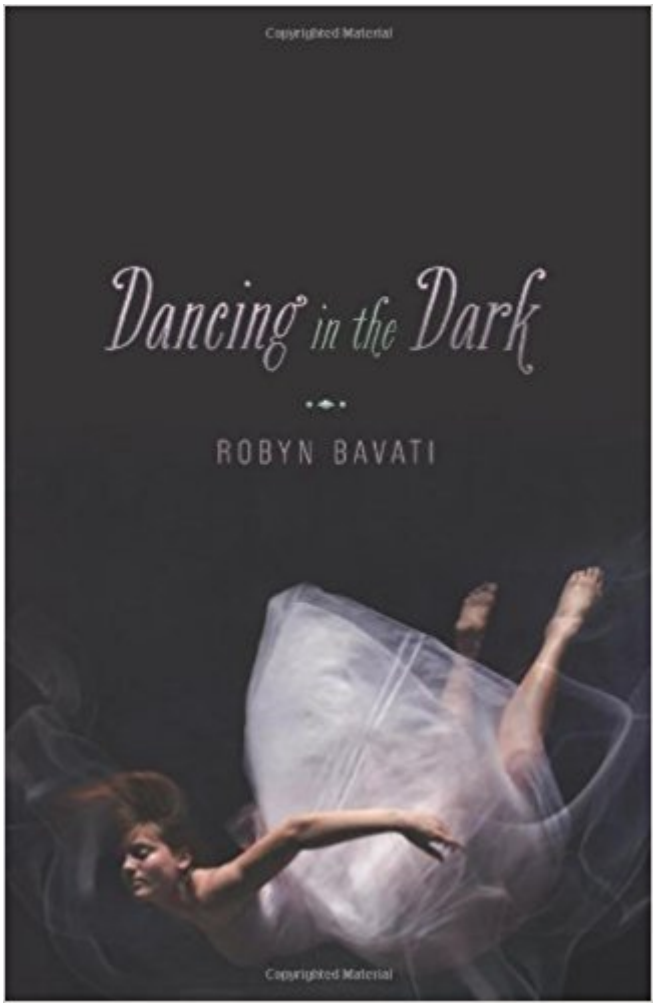
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Dancing In The Dark



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Synopsis

When her lifes passion is forbidden, how much will Ditty risk to follow her dream? When Ditty Cohen first sees a ballet on TV, the beautiful, gravity-defying dancing captivates her. Shes instantly connected to the graceful performers, and realizes that her passion is to be a dancer. Theres just one problem: Ditty is from an ultra-orthodox Jewish family and her parents forbid her to take dance lessons. Refusing to give up on her newfound love, Ditty starts dancing in secret. Her devotion to dance is matched only by her talent, but the longer Ditty pursues her dream, the more she must lie to her family. Caught between her passion and her faith, Ditty starts to question everything she believes in. How long can she keep her two worlds apart? And at what cost? Dancing in the Dark is the dramatic, inspiring story about a girl who discovers the trials and triumphs of pursuing her greatest dream.

Book Information

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Shipping Weight: 1.5 pounds
Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 9 customer reviews
Best Sellers Rank: #1,685,229 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #80 inÃ Â Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Religious > Jewish #112 inÃ Â Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Performing Arts > Dance #791 inÃ Â Books > Children's Books > Arts, Music & Photography > Performing Arts > Dance
Age Range: 12 and up
Grade Level: 7 - 12

Customer Reviews

To Ditty Cohen, Judaism means the comfort of her large, loving family; the camaraderie inherent in her tight ultra-Orthodox community; and the beauty of ancient rituals. The secular world does capture her curiosity, though, and after she views The Nutcracker ballet on a forbidden television, her world changes in a moment. Transfixed, Ditty feels every emotion in the perfect, lithe moves of

the dancers, and then, incredibly, she finds the opportunity to study ballet herself, although she keeps her lessons a complete secret from her family. Readers know from the prologue that Ditty will ultimately be forced to choose between her family and ballet, and many teens from all backgrounds will recognize the family conflicts and the pull of a forbidden passion. For more about teens growing up in close-knit Jewish communities, pair this with Deborah HeiligmanÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Intentions (2012), Eishes ChayilÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Hush (2010), and Leanne LiebermanÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Gravity (2008). Grades 7-11, --Diane Colson

Robyn Bavati (Melbourne, Australia) never did become a professional dancer, but sheÃ¢â ¬â„¢s thrilled to have fulfilled her dream of becoming a writer. Dancing in the Dark is her first novel.

A wonderful account of a young dancer’s break for freedom

Absolutely enjoyed reading dancing in the dark found storyline very interesting and could see that all religions have their own type of cults

I usually don’t read too much multicultural fiction, recently I’ve been more interested in stories about dance. This book also sounded kind of like A World Away by Nancy Grossman, which I also enjoyed. So, when I saw this book on NetGalley, as well as a handful of good reviews from GR friends, I picked it up and enjoyed the book (:Ditty was a likable and somewhat complex character, though I wish she was a bit more developed. I definitely admired her commitment to sacrificing her security, friends, and family for something she truly loved - I mean, how often do you see most people these days stepping out from a crowd, away from their past lives, friends, and family, to chase their true dreams? That was what made me really enjoy her character.Other than that, I also was intrigued as to how Ditty made each of her decisions and what internal conflict she went through. However, at times I felt like her thinking seemed skimmed over or oversimplified. For example, though I thought Ditty’s conflict about lying to parents was interesting, it seemed like Ditty would mention it once or twice per chapter, then move on without a second thought. Nevertheless, by the end of the novel, I really felt like I cared for and liked Ditty’s character.As for the other characters, I also liked them, though they also seemed undeveloped. Specifically, each character had a different personality and part in the story that I thoroughly enjoyed, but at times I felt like I might have preferred more focus on a smaller group of characters, rather than less focus on each individual character, on a larger cast of characters. In particular, I might have liked more

devolopment on Ditty’s relationships with her mother, father, and siblings. On that note though, I thought Ditty’s friendships with Sara and Linda were sweet, well-developed, and, in a way, unique because of their religious background.It was the plot though, that I felt like I had the biggest trouble with. I’m not saying that I disliked or hated it, but I still felt like I had the biggest issues with it, compared to the other aspects in the book. First of all, it seemed like religion was portrayed as a result of some kind of brainwashing. Though I’m not a religious person, I don’t feel like religious people, even those that are really devout to their religion are necessarily brainwashed. In my opinion, it’s definitely a more complex issue than I thought the book portrayed religion as, so I suppose it left me with some questions :/ I also felt like some parts of the storyline were undeveloped or kind of unexplained, like Ditty’s long years between age twelve and seventeen.However, I want to emphasize that I still found the overall story enjoyable. Though the idea of "breaking free" might be a bit clichÃƒÂ©, Ditty’s journey from a more outspoken person, to someone who stands up for herself and takes action was heartwarming. The book also tugged on my heartstrings with its own heartbreaking and hopeful moments. So, if you’re the type of person who might enjoy this type of story, reads in the multicultural genre, or are just looking for a short but different type of feel-good story, definitely check out this book ^__^

First I have to say that I absolutely love the cover of this book. That and the title was enough to pique my interest about it.Ditty first falls in love with ballet, when she and her friend Sara watch it on television in secret (watching TV isn’t allowed for them). From that very first moment she becomes mesmerized by ballet. Because of this she decides to ask her parents if she can take ballet classes a couple of times during the week and also on Saturdays. They say no due to the fact that they are Orthodox Jewish and are against dancing and Saturdays are considered the Jewish Sabbath (Shabbos). Ditty is disappointed, but she does not let that stop her. She practices in secret and she begins to take classes without her parents knowledge.Ditty has real promise when it comes to ballet. She shows true talent, and the classes help her to grow and improve as a dancer. She falls in love with ballet even more. The big downside is that she is lying to her parents about what she is doing. Then before she knows it, one lie turns into another and another, until things start to spiral out of control and her lies catch up with her.This is not the same run of the mill story about a girl who loves dancing and has to choose between a hot guy and her passion for ballet. Dancing in the Dark is about a girl who loves her family and embraces her religious upbringing, but one day discovers something that she not only has a passion for, but is good at. And that makes her question everything, even her faith. She realizes that her dancing comes at a price. The close

relationship she used to share with her family becomes strained and she has to decide if she has made the right choice. Her struggle with doing what she feels is right and living out her dream versus what her family expects her to do felt realistic and well done. The Prologue pulled me in, but the author's fluid writing and real characters kept me reading.

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