

No Way Home A Cuban Dancers Story

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Carlos Acosta, the Cuban dancer considered to be one of the world's greatest performers, fearlessly depicts his journey from adolescent troublemaker to international superstar in his captivating memoir, *No Way Home*. Carlos was just another kid from the slums of Havana; the youngest son of a truck driver and a housewife, he ditched school with his friends and dreamed of becoming Cuba's best ...

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The rags-to-riches story of one of the world's greatest dancers, from his difficult beginnings living in poverty in the backstreets of Cuba to his astronomical rise to international stardom. In 1980, Carlos Acosta was just another Cuban kid of humble origins, the youngest son in a poor family named after the planter who had owned his great-great-grandfather.

No Way Home: A Cuban Dancer's Story - Carlos Acosta ...

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In 1980, Carlos Acosta was just another Cuban kid of humble origins, the youngest son in a poor family named after the planter who had owned his great-great-grandfather. With few options and an independent spirit, Carlos spent his days on the streets, dreaming of a career in football.

In this literary "Billy Elliot," international ballet star Acosta relates his journey from the impoverished suburbs of Havana to stardom and fame on ballet stages throughout Cuba, America, and Europe. 8 pages of b&w photos.

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Carlos Acosta's beginnings were humble (Acosta was the name of the plantation owner who employed his great grandfather as a slave) but his extraordinary talent was evident from a young age. His earliest dreams were of becoming a footballer but as a delinquent Havana schoolboy he found his earliest expression through break dancing, quickly developing into one the hottest contenders in the fiercely competitive street dance-offs, where dance was only a few degrees removed from the violence of the streets. With Carlos constantly playing truant, his father, who saw ballet as his son's only chance of escape, enrolled him into The National Ballet School of Cuba. Unhappy and homesick, Carlos continued to cut class, get caught and receive punishment, in the form of beatings 'to within an inch of his life', brutal reminders of the path he was being forced to choose. With little money, his mother ill and his father unfairly imprisoned, ballet became increasingly Carlos's one chance to escape a life of hardship, uncertainty and struggle. This magical memoir, however, is about more than Carlos's rise to stardom. It is the story of a childhood where food is scarce but love is abundant, where the smells of the Cuban streets and the souls of the people come alive to influence the young dancer's art. It is also about the internal struggles of a man who has to abandon his roots in his beloved Cuba, leaving behind many of the people he loved for a life of extreme self-discipline, constant displacement and brutal physical hardship. Carlos Acosta makes dance look effortless, but the grace, the power and the effortless charm have come a cost - this is the story of the price he has paid.

Carlos Acosta, the Cuban dancer considered to be one of the world's greatest performers, fearlessly depicts his journey from adolescent troublemaker to international superstar in his captivating memoir, *No Way Home*. Carlos was just another kid from the slums of Havana; the youngest son of a truck driver and a housewife, he ditched school with his friends and dreamed of becoming Cuba's best soccer

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player. Exasperated by his son's delinquent behavior, Carlos's father enrolled him in ballet school, subjecting him to grueling days that started at five thirty in the morning and ended long after sunset. The path from student to star was not an easy one. Even as he won dance competitions and wowed critics around the world, Carlos was homesick for Cuba, crippled by loneliness and self-doubt. As he traveled the world, Carlos struggled to overcome popular stereotypes and misconceptions; to maintain a relationship with his family; and, most of all, to find a place he could call home. This impassioned memoir is about more than Carlos's rise to stardom. It is about a young man forced to leave his homeland and loved ones for a life of self-discipline, displacement, and physical hardship. It is also about how the heart and soul of a country can touch the heart and soul of one of its citizens. With candor and humor, Carlos vividly depicts daily life in communist Cuba, his feelings about ballet -- an art form he both loves and hates -- and his complex relationship with his father. Carlos Acosta makes dance look effortless, but the grace, strength, and charisma we see onstage have come at a cost. Here, in his own words, is the story of the price he paid.

In February 1962, three years into Fidel Castro's rule of their Cuban homeland, the González family—an auto mechanic, his wife, and two young children—landed in Miami with a few personal possessions and two bottles of Cuban rum. As his parents struggled to find work, eleven-year-old Gerardo struggled to fit in at school, where a teacher intimidated him and school authorities placed him on a vocational track.

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Inspired by a close friend, Gerardo decided to go to college. He not only graduated but, with hard work and determination, placed himself on a path through higher education that brought him to a deanship at the Indiana University School of Education. In this deeply moving memoir, González recounts his remarkable personal and professional journey. The memoir begins with Gerardo's childhood in Cuba and recounts the family's emigration to the United States and struggles to find work and assimilate, and González's upward track through higher education. It demonstrates the transformative power that access to education can have on one person's life. Gerardo's journey came full circle when he returned to Cuba fifty years after he left, no longer the scared, disheartened refugee but rather proud, educated, and determined to speak out against those who wished to silence others. It includes treasured photographs and documents from González's life in Cuba and the US. His is the story of one immigrant attaining the American Dream, told at a time when the fate of millions of refugees throughout the world, and Hispanics in the United States, especially his fellow Cubans, has never been more uncertain.

This whole country is nothing but a nation of immigrants, Jan. That's what makes this nation so great! Our forefathers got kicked out of every respectable country in the world! Jan Sharanski would never see the humor in his wife's cynical joke. Having been born in America, she had known nothing but freedom her entire life. He, on the other hand, came from a world where freedom existed so long as no one asked any questions...and that Jan Sharanski, a partisan in the Polish underground during the Second World War, finds he must flee his native Poland for the United States in order to escape communist oppression. Arriving in Chicago, Jan settles in the city's Near-Westside Polish community. There, amidst the

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backdrop of the Cold War, the Chicago mafia, and the Daley political machine, he will build his life. In the process, Jan discovers that yes, America is the land of opportunity but sadness is also a part of that Great American Dream. Capturing the true essence of that American Dream falls to Jans daughter, Drusilla. Putting her faith in the Black Madonna, Drusilla sets out on her own personal quest to fulfill her fathers ambitions. Steeling herself in the rough and tumble world on the mean streets of Chicago, Drusilla will discover the love, hurt, pain, and success first known by her father. In the process, Drusilla Sharanski discovers her own appreciation for what it is to truly be an American.

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