



On Pointe

Lorie Ann Grover

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Our feet slip
into satin shoes
with stiff shanks,
hard boxing,
tight elastic,
and slippery ribbons
that wrap and end
in hard knots.
The frayed edges
are crammed
out of sight.
We stand.
A row of bound feet
rises
to its toes.

For as long as she can remember, Clare and her family have had a dream: Someday Clare will be a dancer in City Ballet Company. For ten long years Clare has been taking ballet lessons, watching what she eats, giving up friends and a social life, and practicing until her feet bleed -- all for the sake of that dream. And now, with the audition for City Ballet Company right around the corner, the dream feels so close.

But what if the dream doesn't come true? The competition for the sixteen spots in the company is fierce, and many won't make it. Talent, dedication, body shape, size -- everything will influence the outcome. Clare's grandfather says she is already a great dancer, but does she really have what it takes to make it into the company? And if not, then what?

Told through passionate and affecting poems in Clare's own voice, *On Pointe* soars with emotion as it explores what it means to reach for a dream -- and the way that dreams can change as quickly and suddenly as do our lives.

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