



# Dancing in Red Shoes Will Kill You

*Dorian Cirrone*

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## **Dancing in Red Shoes Will Kill You** Dorian Cirrone

I hadn't really thought of my breasts as "problem breasts." It made them sound like children who wouldn't behave. No bra was going to keep these babies a secret. And those tips for the full-figured girl in the magazines? Please. Even NASA couldn't design a tank suit to camouflage my proportions.

Kayla Callaway has been studying ballet since she learned to walk, and her heart is set on a future in the dance world. She's sure she'll get a solo part in Cinderella, the spring ballet at her high school.

But when the parts are finally posted, Kayla is shocked that she's only landed a role as a stepsister — and an ugly one, at that! The brutal truth: Ballet and big boobs don't mix. Suddenly Kayla's dream for the future has become a real-life fractured fairy tale.

To make matters worse, bloodred pointe shoes with threatening messages start popping up all over school. When Kayla learns that she'll be wearing red pointe shoes in the ballet, she wonders if the messages are meant for her. But who are they from? And more important -- what do they mean?

## **Dancing in Red Shoes Will Kill You Details**

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# From Reader Review *Dancing in Red Shoes Will Kill You* for online ebook

## Candace Neal says

Quick read!

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## Sarah says

Mildly entertaining, but that's about it. The characters were very stereotypical and 2-dimensional, the writing was mediocre and the plot was extremely lacking, probably because it was just a thin disguise for *The Moral* - one thing I cannot abide in YA fiction. The issues that this novel was trying to deal with (censorship, body image & self-acceptance) were handled very clumsily and without any real depth. The whole mystery with the red shoes and threatening messages was mildly promising, but quickly turned out to be a simple misunderstanding. Boring!

I could see what D. Cirrone was trying to do by making Kayla decide NOT to have breast reduction surgery and pursue a different career path instead of following her dreams of becoming a principal dancer. Be yourself! Accept your body the way it is! I get that. But it didn't make sense in the story, because Kayla was a gifted dancer who had always dreamed of dancing professionally and had the talent and determination to do it; she loved dancing more than anything but admitted her breast size made it painful and difficult; her parents were willing and able for her to have the surgery but left the decision up to her. Having breast surgery for vanity or low-self-esteem reasons is one thing, but in those particular circumstances, I would say - have the surgery! Follow your dreams! Don't throw in the towel because of some vague sugar-coated propaganda about your large breasts being 'part of who you are'. This is real life, not *Glee*.

Of course I could just be biased because I too have mama jugs that are the bane of my existence (heavy, painful on the back, difficult to find bras/clothes that fit etc etc) so the whole time I was thinking "Yes, do it! Have them off so that I can live vicariously through you!" and was disappointed when she didn't. It's a shame, really, because a realistic exploration of a teenager having breast reduction surgery would've been a really interesting read.

A final gripe: the characters all had stupid names. Gray! Paterson! It's petty, but I felt irritated every time I read them.

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## Ms. K-M says

Kayla should have gotten the lead role in the Cinderella ballet--but the director won't cast her because of her large breasts. Her dance teacher suggests that she consider a breast reduction--a suggestion that horrifies her sister, and quickly polarizes the school into two camps--"Whack the Rack" vs. "Save the Hooters." But everyone's focus shifts when a pair of red ballet slippers and a note reading "dancing in red shoes will kill you" shows up in the dressing room. Is it a death threat? And who is the threat against?

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### **Morgan F says**

This book was utterly forgettable. The plot wasn't too good. The only reason why I gave this book as many as 2 stars is that it sometimes had odd moments of humor. The narrator, Kayla, was kinda repetitive. She just kept going on about her boobs. I loved Kayla's gay best friend, Joey. He was so funny and realistic. I didn't like her crush, Gray though. He was kinda odd. Anyway, there are better books out there. WAY better. And ones that don't use words that describe genitalia in every sentence.

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### **Adriana says**

The title and the plot of the story drew me to this title. Kayla is a ballerina who feels sometimes inadequate for ballet because of her large breasts. She has a rival who always finds a way to poke fun at her, an artistic and outspoken older sister, a gay best friend who also dances ballet, and a love interest who just moved to her school from New York. The story goes pretty fast, yet it took me 2 weeks to get through the book. I just didn't ever feel like I connected with Kayla. I wanted to, but the story didn't compel me to. It was a pretty light read, with all the loose ends tied up at the end. At first there was a lot made of the rivalry between Kayla and Melissa, but in the end it was never really resolved or addressed. I did like that Kayla did not conform to the pressures of being a flat-chested ballerina, but the story just didn't pull me in.

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### **Karissa Panzino says**

This book was kind of entertaining, but it didn't take the deeper level of meaning that I would have liked to see, especially because this book was meant to be a topic of discussion. I found the reading to be rather straightforward, without too much development of characters, which was disappointing. I also feel as though the title of the book was misleading. I found the mystery of the red shoes to be a minor problem compared to some of the other issues presented. I think that the book seemed a bit crude at first as well, which made it difficult for me to get into it. I haven't had any experiences in the dance world, so that was another element that I could not relate too. Had the book been more in depth, and had more connections between the elements of the stories been made, it would have been much more well written. This book seemed to be a lighthearted read, which is different from the other books that I have been reading lately, which would account for why I feel it didn't have deep enough meaning.

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### **Wisteriouswoman says**

I agreed with many of the other reviewers.

The book has good points to make about body image.

On the other hand it is clumsy and lacks flow. I was never sure what point the author was trying to make since there seemed to be several.

I dislike what ballet does to girls since so many end up with anorexia. They have to retire young because it can totally ruin their bodies and keep them in physical therapy for life. I know of one in particular. Nothing should become a person's whole life and striving to be a good ballet dancer seems to fall into that category. Fortunately she is able to resolve some of her issues with ballet by the end of the story with the help of friends and family.

I loved the sister and might have enjoyed a book about her instead.

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### **Alicia Evans says**

Kayla is a ballet dancer at an arts school in Florida and all she wants to do in life is dance. There are indeed a few points of worry though, mainly her extremely large breasts which get in the way of what many people in her field consider superb dancing. In addition to worrying about having to possibly get a breast reduction to fit in with the ballet world's standards, the dance department starts to get threats of ugly painted red shoes with a note that says, "Dancing in red shoes will kill you." The dancers are worried, but none more than Kayle herself, who finds out that she is to wear red shoes in an upcoming production of Cinderella.

This book was fast-paced enough, but I really couldn't figure out what it was trying to do. The discussion of a ballerina who is having problems with body image would have been a good enough read, but the added "mystery/death threat" plot felt awkward and unnecessary. The characters were likable overall, but the main character was a little bit too flaky and ditzy for my taste.

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### **PVPA Library says**

can a girl be a successful ballerina with big boobs? kayla attends a performing arts high school in florida where she is one of the best dancers but then doesn't get the lead role in cinderella because she doesn't look the part. she considers breast reduction surgery at the suggestion of her teacher. meanwhile someone has left some red pointe shoes near the dance studios with the message "dancing in red shoes will kill you." the dancers all blame each other and get paranoid. there's also the new boy who is really good-looking and doesn't just look at kayla's chest kayla's visual artist sister who gets in trouble for painting a penis in her senior art portfolio and the gayboy best friend who just wants to dance without getting involved in politics. this book was a fast-paced story about believing in yourself and not giving in to the stereotypical mold.

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### **V H says**

Interesting book about a girl that doesn't fit the mould; a ballerina with a pair of double D's. Although I am no ballerina, always having had big breasts myself I could understand some of Kayla's thoughts about her double D's, many of the thoughts she had, I have had too.

Having been a ballerina herself, I am guessing that Cirrone knows what she is talking about. There is some rivalry in the troupe, not "Black Swan" bad, but suitable for young teens and over. It's also a good book about how women are supposed to fit into a mould that society creates and how that mould can be different depending on the time and place. Young teens reading this will hopefully understand that they don't need to fit into what society wants.

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## **Melanie Snyder says**

Kayla Callaway has been studying ballet since she was very young, and she wants a future in the dance world. She really wanted to have a part in the Cinderella play as Cinderella. Unfortunately, she got the part of the ugly step sister. She had something about her that was crushing her dreams, and she wanted to change that. Then, threatening messages about the school play started popping up all over her school. She begins to think that someone is trying to kill her because on the threatening messages the ballet shoes are red, just like Kayla's. While this was all happening Kayla starts to like a boy, and it all ends up being that this boy that is she likes is making all of these notes and threats. Sh confronts him, and then after his excuse they start to date.

I liked this book a lot. I thought it was funny plot, but it also kept me wondering.

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## **Jordan Funke says**

can a girl be a successful ballerina with big boobs? kayla attends a performing arts high school in florida where she is one of the best dancers but then doesn't get the lead role in cinderella because she doesn't look the part. she considers breast reduction surgery at the suggestion of her teacher. meanwhile someone has left some red pointe shoes near the dance studios with the message "dancing in red shoes will kill you." the dancers all blame each other and get paranoid. there's also the new boy who is really good-looking and doesn't just look at kayla's chest kayla's visual artist sister who gets in trouble for painting a penis in her senior art portfolio and the gayboy best friend who just wants to dance without getting involved in politics. this book was a fast-paced story about believing in yourself and not giving in to the stereotypical mold.

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## **May says**

It was a quick, light read. Something nice and easy after books like Clockwork Angel and Nightshade. However, it was ultimately disappointing.

Okay, I admit, I picked this up solely because I'm a dancer and it's a book about a dancer. And it seemed like it was going to be a funny murder mystery, which would be a nice change of pace. Unfortunately, it wasn't a murder, and there was little mystery.

Kayla, a big-boobed ballerina, ended up only getting the part of Cinderella's evil stepsister in the school performance despite being the best dancer in her year, though she did get to be Cinderella's understudy. Then there are some death threats saying that dancing in red shoes will kill you (hence the title), there's some drama about her bust size, her artist of a sister is outraged about censorship, and there's a new boy at school whom, of course, Kayla is falling for.

To make a long, meandering story short, the death threats are a part of a misguided art project, the evil principal who was the source of the censorship pretty much wins, and Kayla decides she likes her bust size. It seemed like every mini-plot, as there didn't seem to be one big plot, fell far short of the potential they had. It wasn't a bad book, badly written, or a bad read. It was simply disappointing.

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**Anne Nonymous says**

I read this when I was about thirteen and I must say I enjoyed it..... then. It was one of the few books that I ever read and reread but coming to think of it, the basis of the book wasn't much of a hype. However, I think the reason why people continued to read this book was because of the killer lines the author sneaked in. Like, "It's not everyday you find your best friend naked on your sister's bed." and note that it has been years since I read this book but I never forget the lines. It was nice and I really hoped for a sequel back then. But hey, you never know, it could be like finding dory. Twelve years in the waiting.

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**Ashley C says**

I liked this book because it is about dance and i can really relate to that because my favorite thing in the world to do is dance. But what i didn't really like about this book is that the story wasn't the very best and seemed almost shallow now that i think about it.

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