## Quillbot, Expand:

Li Cunxin's birth into a poor family located in a tiny rural hamlet in the Shandong Province, where he is destined to work as a labourer in the fields, marks the beginning of his lifelong path of servitude in the agricultural industry. Li was first missed, but he was picked following a request by his teacher during a school visit. Li appears to be perplexed by the brusque preliminary inspection screening that took place in the city of Qingdao, which is the capital of the province government. He was selected to fly to Beijing to apply for a seat in Madame Mao's Dance Academy, and after successfully completing a series of physical exams, he was accepted into the academy's ballet school.

After that, there will be seven years of rigors instruction. At the same time as he is working hard to overcome his homesickness, he is having trouble performing well at the academy. There is no room for flexibility within the rigors curriculum, which requires him to juggle lengthy periods of time spent in dancing courses with extended periods of time spent in academic studies. In addition, he attempts to join the Communist youth party, going through a series of intense interviews in order to do so; after he is accepted, he is required to devote an additional percentage of his time to attending meetings. But that doesn't bother Cunxin since he now has a mission in life: to serve the wonderful cause of communism. His pessimistic view on dancing was completely transformed when a new instructor who was less prone to yell took over. He places a greater priority on being able to laugh at oneself as well as understanding one's own capabilities and limitations. Teacher Xiao is keeping an eye on Cunxin, and she has noticed something that the other instructors have not yet noticed. The instructor is also (dangerously) distinct from others at the academy due to his dedication to classical ballet, which is seen as being too Western to be taught at the institution (as opposed to the politically motivated, strident form favoured by Madame Mao). Together with Teacher Xiao's guidance and encouragement, his doggedness and bravery have propelled him to the head of the class, where he is continually being given more and more opportunities to shine. This results in him being granted, albeit reluctantly, permission by the Academy to travel overseas to Ben Stevenson's Houston Ballet company as a visiting student for a period of six weeks. This is possible because the government has slightly loosened its censorship of Western culture as a result of recent shifts in position.

After moving to the United States, he starts to have second thoughts about the dictums of the Chinese Communist Party that he was brought up on. It is very evident that China is the nation that is struggling with poverty given its vast riches as well as the size of its buildings and its population, in contrast to the United States, which does not include any individuals who appear to be dirty capitalists. However, he is aware that it is unwise to express these feelings aloud, so upon his return to China, despite the fact that he cherished every aspect of life in the United States, he softens his tone and recites some Communist propaganda in order for the report to be submitted and to ensure that he will be allowed to go back in two months. Nevertheless, in spite of the falsehoods, the administration has decided not to permit him to come back to the United States. After another three months, he is finally successful in obtaining his visa and departs, this time to spend a whole year performing with the Houston Ballet. He begins an illicit relationship with Elizabeth Mackey, an aspiring dancer in the United States, but he conceals it from his government in the hopes that they won't find out and send him back. Instantaneously, he is elevated to the soloist position, and he is given an additional five months. Cunxin has been hesitant to leave in the last month, so he and Elizabeth have hurried their wedding so that Cunxin can remain in the United States permanently, so avoiding a defection that could have repercussions for his family. Visiting the Chinese Consulate to announce his decision while also attempting to prevent the certain backlash on Stevenson, the resident Chinese diplomat forcibly detains Li in an attempt to coerce his return to China; when he continues to refuse to go willingly, the Party agrees to release and allow him to stay, but revokes his citizenship and declares he can never return to the land of his birth. Visiting the Chinese Consulate to announce his decision while also attempting to prevent the certain backlash on Cunxin continues to dance even though he is deeply concerned about his family, but his marriage to Elizabeth fails, and he gives the reasons for their breakup as being his age and the cultural differences between them.

Cunxin is swiftly elevated to the position of principle dancer, during which time he performs in a number of premieres and wins accolades. Unfortunately, he suffers a terrible injury to his back that takes him out of commision for more than two months. He continues to dance in spite of the setback, and not long after that, the Chinese government gave permission for his parents to go to the United States and see him after they had been separated from him and his family for a period of six years. They weep when they are reunited after having travelled to see him perform in The Nutcracker, which elicits a standing ovation from the crowd. After meeting and marrying an Australian dancer named Mary McKendry, Li and his new wife make their way back to his hometown. Cunxin reunites with his former Teacher Xiao and gives a performance for him, as well as for his mother and father. Afterwards, he experiences an unexplainable amount of guilt due to the vast disparity between the way he lives and the way the rest of the village lives, but he finds solace in the fact that he has accomplished everything his mother ever desired for him. They dance all the way through their return to the United States.

Sophie, Cunxin and Mary's first child, is born severely deaf, much to their dismay. This is a tragedy for the family. As a result of Mary's decision to give up her job in order to care for Sophie, Sophie has been able to have a normal life and is even attending dancing classes in order to follow in her parents' footsteps. They proceed to have two more children, both of whom are born in great health, but ultimately make the decision to go to Mary's native nation of Australia. Their last performance, Romeo and Juliet, is being shown live throughout China to an audience of 500 million people. He continues to dance after moving to Australia, but he also finds employment managing one of the major stock trading businesses in that country. He never forgets where he came from, therefore he makes it a point to return to his hometown and see his mother often.