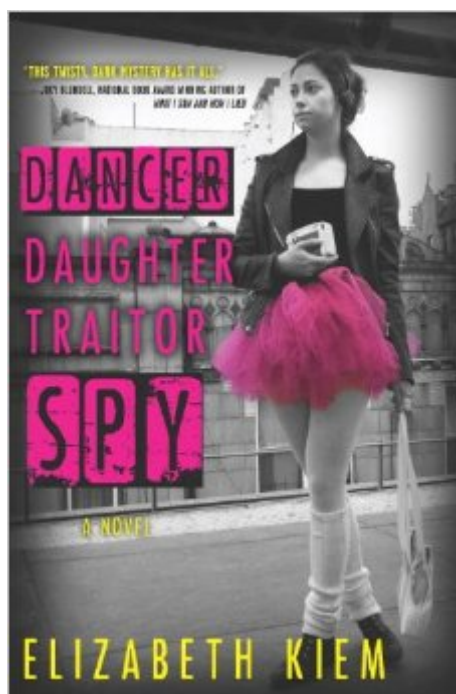


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# Dancer, Daughter, Traitor, Spy



## Synopsis

A new breed of spy novel combines classic thrills (The Americans, John Le Carre, and Alan Furst), Bolshoi intrigue, and elements of the paranormal. Marina is born of privilege. Her mother, Sveta, is the Soviet Union's prima ballerina: an international star handpicked by the regime. But Sveta is afflicted with a mysterious second sight and becomes obsessed with exposing a horrific state secret. Then she disappears. Fearing for their lives, Marina and her father defect to Brooklyn. Marina struggles to reestablish herself as a dancer at Juilliard. But her enigmatic partner, Sergei, makes concentration almost impossible, as does the fact that Marina shares her mother's "gift" and has a vision of her father's murder at the hands of the Russian crooks and con artists she thought they'd left behind. Now Marina must navigate the web of intrigue surrounding her mother's disappearance, her ability, and exactly whom she can't trust.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Narrated in Marina's voice, the story starts quickly, and manages to introduce Marina and her curious "ability" quite effectively. Not only has she inherited her mother's ballet talent, she also has similar "spells" where she is able to see events, present and past. Moscow, in fact the whole of the USSR is in a holding pattern because of Brezhnev's death: Marina's mother has disappeared (not entirely uncommon) but her father is curiously circumspect and anxious. When they learn that Sveta is in the State's custody, plans are made for their escape from Moscow, and entrance into the United States. From here: both the subplot of intrigue that will eventually reshape Marina's entire life,

and her solidly voiced and quite realistic adaption to the differences in life from Moscow to Brooklyn are intermingled and present what feels like a truly authentic representation of a teen's feelings, interests and concerns. Elizabeth Kiem does a marvellous job of introducing characters that feel real, if not always wholly developed, obviously secondary to the plot and mystery/suspense.

Conversations, descriptions and even word use feels current to the time, and adds sparkle to all of the characters. The additions of music, classical and modern, and the overall tone of the story all did 'feel' very Russian in tone and approach: this is not a light read, even though it is highly entertaining. The weighty approach that is embedded in the Russian soul tends to infiltrate and add to this story, improving the sense of difference that Marina feels in America, while highlighting her essential Russian-ness.

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