

Lynne struggles to find her place in the world of professional ballet while her own world is turning upside down.

Lynne Meadows has a chip on her shoulder. Her two best friends are gone. Bartley had died, and Marta left the Intermountain Ballet Company after breaking her ankle. Now Lynne's alone and a perpetual thorn in the directors' lives. An accident and a string of sabotages disrupt the career she's always wanted, and she wonders how long she'll be welcome at the company.

Damien Black, the artistic director, suggests she represent her fellow dancers on an injury committee. If that goes well and her attitude improves, he and Madame Cosper, the company director, promise to recommend her to a summer dance troupe performing across France. He even asks her to introduce his new ballet, *An American in Paris*, in France. However, they do not promise even a limited contract once she returns.

Because the cost of the trip is beyond her means, her mother asks Lynne's Uncle Leo for help. He offers to pay for her ship's passage and give her the car he plans to buy while there if she will drive him around Europe for a month after she finishes performing. The free trip and new car excite her; she agrees to the arrangement despite his legendary lack of dependability.

After the Intermountain Ballet season ends, she works feverishly with Damien Black to learn the choreography for the trip as well as his new ballet. Her aunt sells the property where Lynne's lived for two years, so she must pack up and store her possessions, then find a new home once she returns. Two weeks before departing, she meets Noel Elijah, a rancher, who captivates her interest. Very different from the guys she's dated in the past, he's a perfect gentleman. But she's leaving. The coveted tour in France stands in the way of their budding romance.

Her summer begins on the ship to France, where Lynne meets Lucia, a dancer who is also part of the troupe; together they are invited to perform on the ship. Once they reach Paris, Lynne is assigned to share housing with Arty, another troupe dancer; and the girls form a friendship with fellow dancers Wallace and Karl. Cheryl, the dance director, approaches their practices with enthusiasm, passion, and a positive attitude that encourage Lynne to renew her love of dancing.

One day during their rare free time, the girls visit a fortuneteller, who predicts their futures. Lynne scoffs at the whole idea, but is taken aback when hers start to come true. The prediction about two men coming and going in her life unnerves her: she hopes the one leaving is not her father with new heart problems and that Noel is the one stepping into her life.

The dancers complete the tour, as well as extra performances, and are well received at an invitational waltz festival. Then they go their separate ways. Lynne must gather up the energy to stay another month with her Uncle Leo while she longs to return home to Noel and rejoin the Intermountain Ballet Company—if they will take her back.

Uncle Leo returns a day late to pick her up in a tinny mini car instead of the plush one she expected. Next, he changes their plans daily to accommodate his own whims and sleeps while she does all the driving. Then he loses their money, leaving them nearly destitute. Her final and most devastating disappointment comes when he strands her in Portugal with no car, no return ticket, and only thirty dollars to make her own way over a thousand miles back to Paris and then home to Montana. She walks, hitchhikes, works for meals, and sleeps in hostels, sheds, and bus stops along the way. Through the kindness of strangers and Noel, she finally returns to Billings, only to discover Madame Cosper has had a stroke.

Tendul Press

ISBN 978-0-9858933-9-2



Scan this Code to
Connect with the Author Online
www.PaddyEger.com

Paddy Eger

D: 425.420.5161

Paddy@PaddyEger.com

