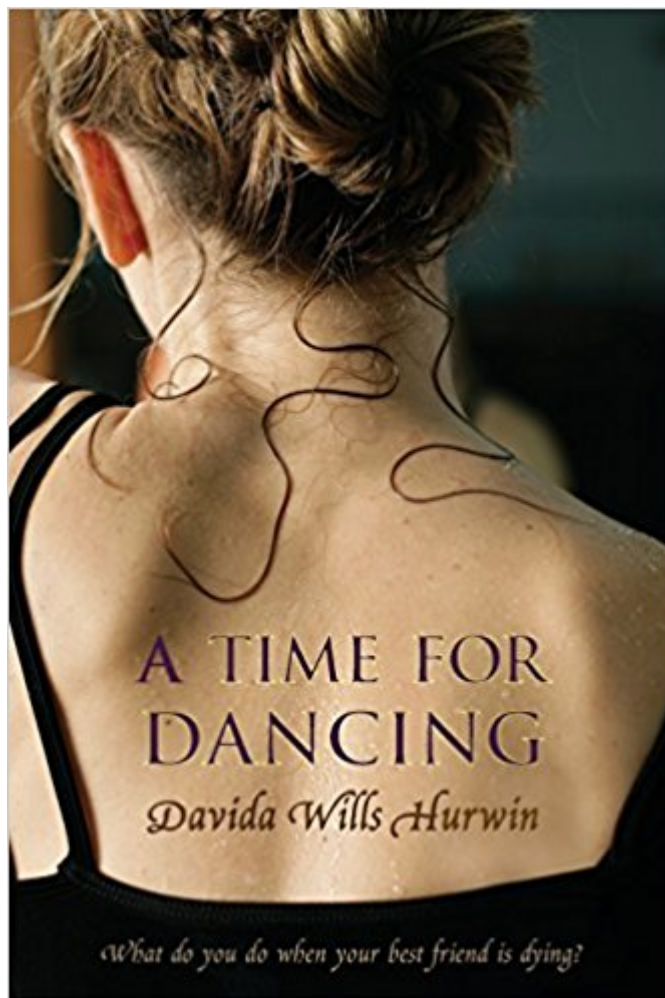


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# A Time For Dancing



## Synopsis

Sam and Jules - everyone knows that when you see one, the other can't be far behind. Best friends for more than half their lives, the two are practically inseparable. And in the summer before their last year of high school, Sam and Jules are certain that whatever the future brings - college or professional dance careers or both - they'll be ready for it, sharing the triumphs and facing the tears together. But nothing could have prepared them for Jules's sudden illness and the discovery of its cause - cancer. Sam tries to be a true friend, supporting Jules during the weeks of testing and doctors and treatments, but the horrifying pain and indignities that Jules suffers, and the feeling that she has lost control over her own life, force Jules to a place where even Sam cannot follow. Now both Jules and Sam must learn to accept the unacceptable - that Jules's cancer may not go away. How each, in her own way, comes to face the possibility of Jules's death, and learns to celebrate her life, makes for a searingly honest, unforgettable novel.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Few YA dramas deal with the issue of terminal illness as intimately as this gripping first novel, which alternates between the points of view of Juliana, at 16 a gifted dancer, and her "one-and-only" best friend, Samantha. The girls' initial concerns about boyfriends and dance class seem trivial after Jules is diagnosed with histiocytic lymphoma, a deadly form of cancer. Through graphic depictions of what follows?endless sessions of chemotherapy, emergency runs to the hospital and Jules's periodic escapes into a dream state?readers will feel the young victim's weariness as she fights

against the body which has betrayed her. They will also experience Sammie's complex responses as she watches her friend embark on a "solo journey" toward death. The dissipation of Jules's hopes, her growing acceptance of the inevitable, and the reactions of peers and family members are hauntingly true to life; they camouflage the less credible episodes (Jules's brilliant performance in a dance concert during the last weeks of her life). Although the subject matter may be too intense for some, others will come away from this book with a deeper respect for mortality. Ages 12-up.

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Grade 7-10?A personal look at how terminal illness affects the lives of best friends and those around them. Juliana (Jules) and Samantha (Sam) have been dance partners since they were nine years old. The summer before their senior year holds promises of good times and hard work at the studio. Then Jules is diagnosed with diffuse histiocytic lymphoma and needs massive doses of chemotherapy immediately. Despite everyone trying to act "normal," Jules faces greater and more difficult choices each day. And Sam becomes increasingly confused as to how to live her own life and stay true to her dying best friend. Each girl, in turn, narrates a chapter, and family and friends' reactions to the crisis are genuinely portrayed. The impact of illness is accurately balanced with the rising crescendo of impending death. This novel compares favorably with Cynthia Grant's *Phoenix Rising* (Atheneum, 1989), Alden Carter's *Sheila's Dying* (Putnam, 1987; o.p.), and Lurlene McDaniel's series, "One Last Wish" (Bantam). While the ending is not upbeat, the closeness that the two teenagers feel and their bonding that transcends the body when death occurs come through clearly. A good choice.?

Jana R. Fine, Clearwater Public Library System, FL  
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A tear jerker for sure even the second and third times I have read it.

I bought this book for my 14 year old, because she loves dancing and she heard about it and wanted it. I picked it up to have a look and I just cried straight through the last 2/3 of the book. I had to skim some of it (it is a teenage read), but it's really quite good. There's a nice play back and forth between best friends: one lovely girl with cancer, and another equally lovely girl without cancer. The first has a very creditable relationship with her mother and family (a big part of the cry) and the other has an absolutely awful mother and an absent father. Both of their lives trickle down the drain pretty realistically during a relentless year of chemotherapy. Altogether well done - though I didn't appreciate the insensitive woman doctor - no pediatric cancer doctor could possibly be that

hard-edged. I think of my daughter sitting in her big chair and reading this book in one sitting, thinking about her own friends, and dancing, and trying to figure out what cancer is and why people die, and crying. Of course, she's a girl, and she'll really love it. Big recommendation to all the soft-hearted teenage girls out there.

Saw the movie before I actually read the book I love the book more now. Jules and Sam relationship is amazing and how they cope when one of them gets sick. They still go through the ups and downs or being a teenage girl.

Honestly, I adored this book. Its characters were real and honest. Also, I cried about sixteen times throughout the whole duration of the story.

This was one of the most realistic looks at the raw emotion surrounding a child with terminal illness that I've read. I loved that we got to see the decline of a lovable character both through her eyes and her best friend's.

Good book

Very good book

Delivery was quick and product was in great shape. Loved this book in High School and cannot wait to dance with Jules and Sam (I think) again :)

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