

The Secret Prima Ballerina



Miss B walked with a cane.
Tap, tap, tap went the cane
on the studio floor, like a tired
old clock. Every morning, she
watched her three girls leap
and spin across the room.
'Higher!' she called. 'Lighter! You
are dancers, not elephants!'
The girls giggled. They loved
Miss B. Her face gave no **sign**
of her secret. They had no
idea who she really was, or
what she had been.





Miss B had a big secret, one her girls would never guess. When she was young, Miss B danced through the streets at night. She swung around lamp posts with just one hand. She leaped past the clock tower and the **gnarled** old stone bridge, with nothing but the stars watching her fly. She did not walk anywhere in those days. Miss B floated above it all, light as air.

Miss B found a partner who could keep up with her. Most dancers could not. 'You're fast,' he said, the first time they danced together. 'You're not bad yourself,' she said. And she meant it. When the two of them took the stage, something magic happened. Two dancers felt like one. They moved in perfect **alignment**, every step a match. The whole crowd forgot to breathe.





Word spread fast. Letters came from **foreign** lands, begging Miss B to come and dance. So she packed her suitcase, slapped a bright sticker on it, and leaped across the world. Paris. Tokyo. New York. Rio. Every city had a new stage for her. Every stage gave her a huge roar from the crowd. The whole planet knew her name by heart.

But here is the part no one tells you about being great. Miss B kept going when her feet screamed stop. She danced past midnight, past the moon, past the point where every muscle in her body begged her to quit. She would not **resign**. She would not give in. 'Not yet,' she whispered to herself. 'Not yet, not yet, not yet.'





And on the big night, the biggest night of her life, Miss B took the stage one last time. Every step she made was **designed** to shine. The crowd clapped so hard the walls of the theatre shook. Her partner held her steady as they floated across the golden stage light. 'Wow!' the crowd roared. 'Ooh!' They could not help it. And neither could she.

The spotlight wrapped around Miss B like a warm cloak. Red roses rained down at her feet. She closed her eyes and soaked it all in. Then a voice boomed across the theatre: 'Prima Ballerina Assoluta!' That was her new title. It was the highest title a dancer could ever earn. In that moment, Miss B **reigned** as queen of the stage. And she had earned every single letter of it.





Back in the studio, one of the girls stopped mid-twirl. 'Miss B, were you ever a real dancer?' Miss B looked at her cane. She looked at the oak floor. She looked at those three little faces, full of the same fire she once had. She gave them a wink. 'What do you think?' Then she tapped her cane twice. One, two. Right on the beat. It was a small **sign**. A **sign** that a prima ballerina was still in the room.



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Miss B walks with a cane and taps her way around the dance studio, calling out to her three giggling girls. But what if their sweet old teacher used to leap past gnarled bridges and float under starlight? What if she once danced on every stage in the world, from Paris to Rio? Could Miss B be hiding a dazzling secret behind that quiet tap, tap, tap? This decodable reader practises the gn phonogram in words like 'gnarled,' 'reigned,' 'foreign,' and 'sign.'

Reading Skills: <gn>

alignment, designed, foreign, gnarled, reigned, resign, sign, signs

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