

## Chloe Cha Chas in London

**Corky Ballas**

**Carolina Orlovsky**

**David Estrada, Illustrator**

Mascot Kids!

(48pp)

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*In the picture book Chloe Cha Chas in London, a determined young dancer travels to London to become better at her craft.*

In Corky Ballas and Carolina Orlovsky's lively picture book *Chloe Cha Chas in London*, a ten-year-old dancer travels abroad to refine her skill set.

Chloe leaves Toronto to join her brother, George, in London. George, a ballet dancer, is studying with an award-winning couple at their studio. Scared and without her parents for the first time, Chloe fights her nerves. Upon arriving in London, she is pushed to dance with a new partner; she discovers that she can't keep up with them. Chloe faces a dilemma: she can either quit and return home, or keep fighting for her dream.

Chloe is a plucky heroine whose struggles are resonant. Though she cries after being told that she needs to improve, she also settles into working hard (though the text is vague about how long she works, and with what help). Her nervousness is portrayed in familiar physical terms: she has butterflies in her stomach, and she pulls her knees to her chest when she fails.

The illustrations also concentrate on Chloe's physical and emotional landscapes: she shares a joyous hug with George when they reunite; the distinctive footwork and hand placement of the cha cha and ballet steps are also portrayed. People in the book have enormous, twinkling eyes, though, almost like dolls.

A dog appears in most images of the studio, often performing silly dance steps or other hi jinx; he's a source of comic relief that softens the tension of Chloe's dedicated work. An illustrated guide to the steps of the cha cha is included in the book; it focuses on feet, but still holds those unfamiliar with the dance at somewhat of a distance.

In the inspiration-minded picture book *Chloe Cha Chas in London*, a determined young dancer travels to London to become better at her craft.

CAMILLE-YVETTE WELSCH (May 16, 2022)

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