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Sinopsis

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In this propulsive novel by the author of *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World* and *The Elephant Vanishes*, one of the most idiosyncratically brilliant writers at work in any language fuses science fiction, the hard-boiled thriller, and white-hot satire into a new element of the literary periodic table.

As he searches for a mysteriously vanished girlfriend, Haruki Murakami's protagonist plunges into a wind tunnel of sexual violence and metaphysical dread in which he collides with call girls; plays chaperone to a lovely teenaged psychic; and receives cryptic instructions from a shabby but oracular Sheep Man. *Dance Dance Dance* is a tense, poignant, and often hilarious ride through the cultural Cuisinart that is contemporary Japan, a place where everything that is not up for sale is up for grabs.

In this impressive sequel to *A Wild Sheep Chase*, Murakami displays his talent to brilliant effect. The unnamed narrator, a muddled freelance writer, is 34 and no closer to finding happiness than he was in the previous book. Divorced, bereaved and abandoned by his various lovers, he is drawn to the Dolphin Hotel--a strange and lonely establishment where Kiki, a woman he once lived with, "upped and vanished." Kiki and the Sheep Man, an odd fellow who wears a sheepskin and speaks in a toneless rush, visit the narrator in visions that lead him to two mysteries, one metaphysical (how to survive the unsurvivable) and the other physical (a call girl's murder). In his searchings, he encounters a clairvoyant 13-year-old, her misguided parents and a one-armed poet. All the hallmarks of Murakami's greatness are here: restless and sensitive characters, disturbing shifts into altered reality, silky smooth turns of phrase and a narrative with all the momentum of a roller coaster. If Mishima had ever learned the value of gentleness, this is the sort of page-turner he might have written.

Writing in a style that is deceptively plainspoken, Haruki Murakami finds a dreamlike common ground between Japan and the West, conscious and subconscious. His heroes lose themselves in quests that we may not always understand, but are hopelessly compelled to follow.