



Year of the Dunk: A Modest Defiance of Gravity

Asher Price

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By embarking on a quest to dunk a basketball at the age of 34, journalist Asher Price investigates the limits of human potential—starting with his own.

We all like to think that (with a little practice) we could run faster, learn another language, or whip up a perfect soufflé. But few of us ever put those hopes to the test. In *Year of the Dunk*, Asher Price does, and he seizes on basketball's slam dunk--a feat richly freighted with distinctly American themes of culture, race, and upward mobility--as a gauge to determine his own hidden potential. The showmanship of the dunk mesmerized Asher as a child, but even with his height (six foot plus) and impressive wingspan, he never pushed himself to try it. Now, approaching middle age, Asher decides to spend a year remaking his body and testing his mind as he wonders, like most adults, what untapped talent he still possesses.

In this humorous and often poignant journey into the pleasures and perils of exertion, Asher introduces us to a memorable cast of characters who help him understand the complexity of the human body and the individual drama at the heart of sports. Along the way he dives into the history and science of one of sports' most exuberant acts, examining everything from our genetic predisposition towards jumping to the cultural role of the slam dunk. The year-long effort forces him to ask some fundamental questions about human ability and the degree to which we can actually improve ourselves, even with great determination.

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