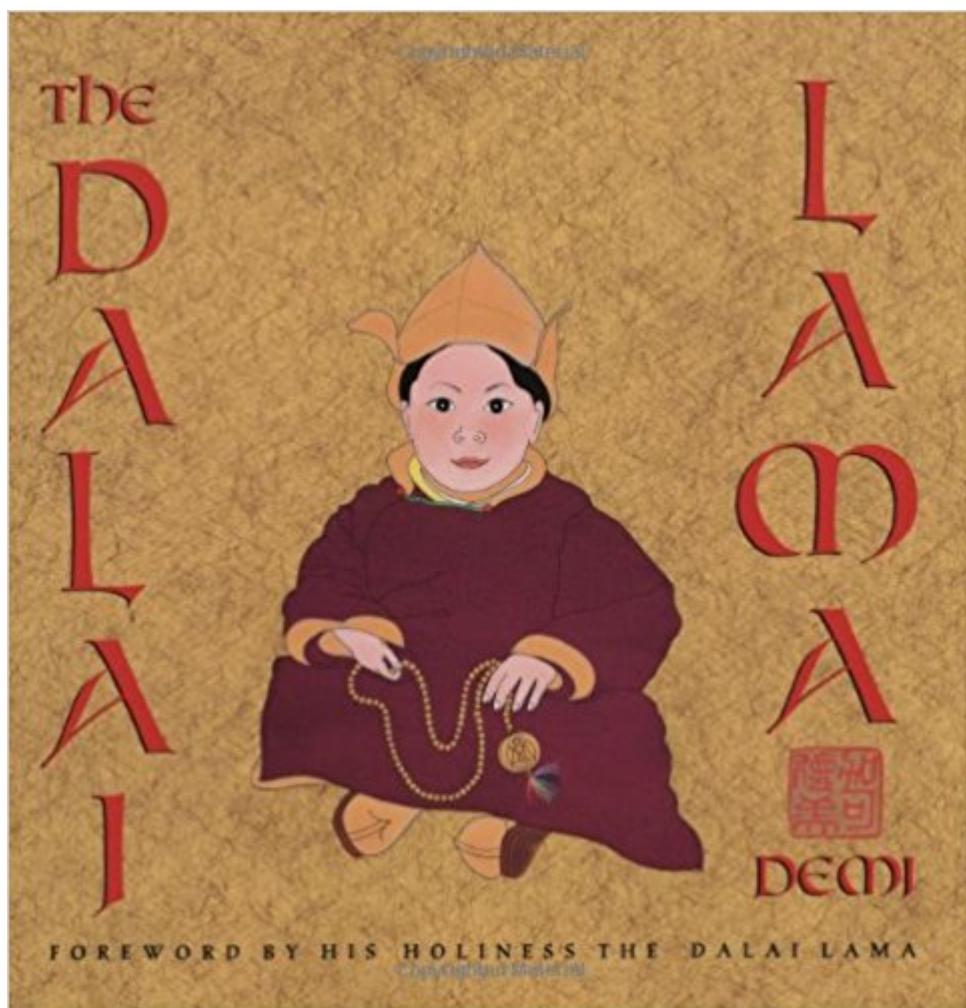


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# The Dalai Lama: Foreword By His Holiness The Dalai Lama



## Synopsis

Included is a foreword written by The Dalai Lama. When the thirteenth Dalai Lama died in 1933, the highest holy men in Tibet searched throughout the land for his successor. They were spiritually guided to the humble dwelling of a loving family high in the Himalayas. When the search party greeted the youngest son, the child told them, "Now I am going home!" At last the fourteenth Dalai Lama had been found, and at the age of two, the young boy was taken to the capital city, Lhasa, where he began his training to become the spiritual leader of Tibet. The work of the Dalai Lama and the fate of Tibet are topics of evergrowing international focus. In simple language and glorious art, Demi pays tribute to the fourteenth Dalai Lama's remarkable life. She captures the beauty of Tibetan culture, as well as the charm, talent, and vision of one of the world's best-known spiritual figures.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 32 pages

Publisher: Henry Holt and Co. (BYR); 1st ed edition (March 15, 1998)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 080505443X

ISBN-13: 978-0805054439

Product Dimensions: 10.1 x 0.4 x 10.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 15.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 10 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,278,082 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #26 in Books > Children's Books > Religions > Buddhism #70 in Books > Children's Books > Religions > Eastern #366 in Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Religious

Age Range: 6 - 10 years

Grade Level: 1 - 5

## Customer Reviews

Grade 3 Up? Tibet is a timely topic. However, in telling the story of the political and religious leader of the country, Demi does not aim at trendiness, controversy, or even high drama. This picture-book biography speaks simply and respectfully of the history and the mission of the Dalai Lama. The author focuses on the search for, and childhood of, the 14th reincarnation of the "ocean of wisdom." As a boy, he was both mischievous and mysterious, with ordinary childlike traits as well as deep spirituality. His accession to temporal power coincided with Chinese Communist control over Tibet,

and at the age of 24, in the face of the Cultural Revolution's "madness," the Dalai Lama went into permanent exile. The last pages stress his universal message of peace and his compassion for his people. Demi's figures in this book are nearly as tiny as ever, but the format and watercolor-brushed Himalayas convey the sweep of the Tibetan setting, while minute details suggest the grandeur of its culture. Unlike *Buddha Stories* (Holt, 1997), this book is as colorful as the country it depicts, and uses gold as a color rather than a glittering line. Few readers will be able to resist the combination of the exotic background, the human interest of the main character, and the vision of peace he represents. This is a book as beautiful as it is moving, and one hopes it will make an impression on as many sensitive children as possible. ?Patricia Lothrop-Green, St. George's School, Newport, RI  
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Gr. 3^6, slightly younger for reading aloud. Several recent movies about the Dalai Lama have sparked adults' interest in the life of the Buddhist spiritual leader. This glorious picture book for older children should do the same for middle-graders, thanks in no small part to Demi's very special artwork. The book begins with a letter from the Dalai Lama in which he describes his concern about the current political situation in Tibet, though in language children can readily understand. Then Demi briefly introduces Tibet and the Buddhist religion. She begins her biography with the death of the thirteenth Dalai Lama and the search for his successor, who turns out to be a two-year-old boy. The lad readily passes the tests that the monks have devised and moves to the holy city of Lhasa, where he studies Buddhism, as well as academic subjects, and is described as a "holy terror" by the monks. Demi does a good job of humanizing this "god-king," showing him to be a boy who loves taking things apart and putting them back together and watching the mice run up and down the curtains in his room. The book concludes with the Chinese takeover of Tibet and the Dalai Lama's life in exile. Demi's artistic style, with its diminutive figures and intricate lines, is familiar, but here she takes that style to a new level. Soaring landscapes, in which the Himalaya mountaintops peek out from a turquoise sky, are beautifully juxtaposed with spreads of palace pageantry and more personal scenes of the Dalai Lama's childhood. Demi, a practicing Buddhist, clearly shows the love and reverence she has for her religion in this special book. Ilene Cooper

Gorgeous illustrations. Sweet story.

This book was delightful! It prompts lots of great questions from the kids. One never knows what to expect from kids but the kids in my Sunday School class all wanted to know more and the questions

were all loving, just as the Dalai Lama is.

## EXCELLENT HEARTWARMING WELL TOLD TALE ONE TWO THREE FOUR FIVE SILLY REQUEST YOU CAN SAY A LOT IN 5 WORDS

We have a few books by Demi and thought this would be equally as good as the others. Definitely a terrific book and not only did I love it but my 5 year old daughter loved it.

This book will be shared with my students. They have often endured many hardships in their lives and would enjoy hearing others' stories. The Dalai Lama is a very important person in the world and can not be ignored.

I had low expectations of this book before I read it because I had just read Demi's "Lao Tzu and the Tao te Ching" which I gave a 2-star review. I gave Demi's book on Lao Tzu a 2-star review because it contains so many fabulous, supernatural elements that it is more tall tale than reality, and although this book on the Dalai Lama is more reality-driven, it too suffers from some of the same problems -- which I think is inexcusable. Children need a solid grounding in reality if they are going to grow up sane and psychologically whole: children understand that fables and fairy tales take place in the imagination, but if you are going to read them a story which purports to be biographical reality, it had better (in fact) be biographical reality! Otherwise you are distorting their perception of reality by leading them to believe in superstitious untruths. I have read several books about the Dalai Lama's childhood, and most of them suffer from this same problem (which is a travesty) but an older child will be able to read these books more critically than a young child, so personally I would skip this book and introduce the topic of the Dalai Lama's life to an older child via a different book. If you doubt that the worldview of traditional Tibetan people is so steeped in superstition and irrational thinking that they cannot even relate their own stories in a realistic manner, I challenge you to read "Dalai Lama, My Son: A Mother's Story" by Diki Tsering. I have empathy for the Dalai Lama as a person, but the culture into which he was born was almost completely delusional and should not be emulated by westerners in any way, shape or form, amen.

Demi outlines the story of the fourteenth Dalai Lama, or spiritual leader, of Tibet. Tibetans believe that the new Dalai Lama is a reincarnation of the previous. Therefore, the story begins with the death of the thirteenth Dalai Lama and the search for his predecessor. Once the new child was

discovered, the monks put him through several tests to determine if he was in fact the reincarnated Tibetan leader. Beautifully written and illustrated, the book chronicles his early life and exile in India. Additionally, it includes a letter from the Dalai Lama which reinforces his dream for Tibet of freedom, peace and happiness. Overall, the book is very informative, yet easy to read and understand.

Demi tells a potentially complicated story with clarity and simplicity. The illustrations are beautiful and evocative of the magical land in which the story is set. Where the takeover by Chinese Communist forces is concerned, you may need to fill your child in on some of the political background. Otherwise, the book is very accessible.

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