

Wilderness House Literary Review 10/3

Tom Miller

THE DANCER

The room is elegant.

The ceilings tall.

Windows covered with white flowing curtains

Accented by dark drapes and swags.

White columns and arches.

Gilded frames and sparkling mirrors.

In the middle a dance floor of dark wood,

With white railings knee high

Supported by hand carved balustrades,

An entrance on each side.

Empty now.

Quiet.

Around the room two and three deep

Tables covered in white.

Diners dressed in formal suits

And gay gowns

Laughing, chatting,

Toasting. Candles glowing.

The room darkens,

The dance floor dims,

Then goes black.

A murmur.

A hush.

Quiet.

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A circle of white light snaps on
From the ceiling.
A spot in the middle of the dance floor.
Then goes black.
Only the ghost of the railings
Can been seen.

The light snaps on again.
She is there.
Her black hair pulled back.
Her creamy skin glowing.
Her red dress shimmering.
Her black shoes shinning.
Her right arm gracefully arched over her head.
Her left hand grips the ruffled hem of her dress.
A note from a Spanish guitar.
Another.
And another, and another, and more.
The beat quickens slowly.

A strum. Another. And another.
Castanets click to the rhythm.
Heels clack the floor.
One two. One two.
One two. One two.
One two. One two.
Onetwo. Onetwo. Onetwo.

OnetwoOnetwoOnetwoOnetwoOnetwoOneTwoOneTwo!!!

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The sound of her feet is a blur!
The guitar matches her rhythm!
Movement!
Swirls!
Head tosses!
Ruffles flash!

OnetwoOnetwoOnetwoOnetwoOnetwoOneTwoOneTwo!!!

Head dips!
Arm sweeps!
Body twirls!
The beat of the shoes on the floor is loud!
Continuous!
Movement!

Swaying!
Light flashing!
Black hair shimmering!
Red dress glimmering!
Heels beating the floor!
Guitar louder! Faster!

Faster! Faster! Faster!

FASTER! FASTER! FASTER! FASTER!

AND THEN...

Two loud heel clacks. A final chord on the guitar...
Ole!
And she is done!

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The light snaps off.
The room is quiet for a heart beat.
Then loud with applause.
The light comes on.
She curtseys and bows.
The light snaps off.

More applause.

The room lights return slowly.
The darkness lessens.
And the dance floor is empty.

And she is gone.