

That Night

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Her fingers rapped the rhythm of the music that commanded her hips.

The base of his neck was her drum.

There was something about the way he ran his hands down her sides as they swayed

As they flowed around the dance floor.

His mouth poured into hers

palms pressed underneath her chin

or clutched at her naked waist

or pressed against her ass as it moved in time with his

quickenning pulse

until their bodies vibrated into each other, and the entire world fell away.

It was just supposed to be dinner and a dance

with drinks in between.

During the day, they were each decidedly driven.

During the day, they followed their dreams and ambitions alone.

During the day they chuckled at the lovelorn, the ones who “followed their hearts”

comforted by delicious judgment

and the sense of security that comes with being unattached.

Their first meeting happened out of convenience, as it

often goes for the professionally overwhelmed; both, while

chasing their own ambitions, stumbled into each other's path.

They were only meant to pass each other, undeterred.

But one, out of equal parts rebellion and curiosity, asked the other; "Would you like to go out sometime?"

To which the other, out of equal parts boredom and sexual frustration answered, "Sure."

And it was decided.

Dinner and a dance.

And maybe some drinks in between.

They exchanged phone numbers, parted ways, and nearly forgot about each other. Were it not for their impressive time management skills, their phones would not have simultaneously dinged two days before the date, prompting a frenzy in both of them that neither can ever be expected to admit to.

He was wearing something his tailor advised him to wear.

She was wearing something a magazine had described as "tastefully sexy".

They meet up on a busy street in the middle of the dirty city they called home. It was a safe, sensible location with a bar close by to wait inside of in case of bad weather.

They greeted. Gave the appropriate compliments and shared a

respectable hug.

Ignored the electricity in their chests when their skin touched.

“Shall we call a cab, then?”

At dinner they made small talk drier than stale bread, nearly choking on the gulps of wine they took while the other wasn't looking.

They made comments on the meal's lightness and complimented the sommelier, even though they both wished for something stronger.

They joked about the date's awkwardness.

They joked about how dancing was probably a terrible idea for a first date.

Made the obligatory “two left feet” reference.

Skipped out on dessert. Both lied about being on a diet.

“Another cab, then?” even though they both longed to recoil into their separate lives and rinse the bitter taste of conformity out of their mouths.

It was competition that overcame the fright of closeness, if we are to have an honest moment.

It was competition with each other, and with the moment, and with the wild beating of their hearts every time their eyes met.

The exceptional are to be overcome by nothing less than

death, and certainly not disobedient bodies that inch closer to each other in the back seat of the taxi.

The driven are not to be distracted by their nervousness, nor be allowed to cave in under their insecurities, nor be frightened away by intense physical attraction.

No, exceptional people anchor themselves to their seats and chat politely about the weather. They tip the cab driver. They compliment the choice of venue as they approach the throbbing club, comment about the music, leave their jackets at the coat check and order fine bourbon at the bar.

They certainly do not order a second glass.

They absolutely do not allow its smoothness to erode their carefully constructed protections.

They don't begin to subtly sway as they shout over the music, leaning into each other to catch drowning words.

They don't lightly touch each other's arms, or lower backs, or tops of hands.

They don't abandon their drinks at the bar, and then, hand in hand, move to the dance floor.

Tonight, the music was lord and the rhythm, their master.

And so, in reverence, they closed their eyes

and for the first time all night, saw each other.

Skin to skin.

Hips to hips.

Palm to palm.

Lips to lips.

Thighs intertwined.

Breathing intensified.

The floor disappeared.

The crowd faded away.

And suddenly, despite being pressed together, their bodies seemed to impede their closeness.

In the vibrations that surrounded them

walls, clothes, palms, bodies

melted away

their naked souls free to intertwine and tangle impossibly together.

They could feel it, as they danced that hot, tiny club, surrounded by people who

They were starting to blend in with.

It was happening so quickly and profoundly that they didn't feel worthy to stop it.

During the day, this would not have been the case.

During the day, they would have been smarter than to let this happen.

During the day, sobriety would have guarded their soft hearts and made sure their defenses were intact.

But tonight
as the music commanded
they fell in sync
they fell in line
and they fell in love.

The music stopped and they opened their eyes, and tried to untangle the knot they had become.

Embarrassment settled in as they turned this way and that, under and over the sinewy strands that imprisoned them.

Her, exasperated, tugging harder and harder to get free while trying to avoid working up a sweat.

He, hurt by her effort and the force by which she tugged, biting his lip to avoid crying out pain.

This could not be. Not here. Not now.

Not among "them".

Once again, respectability had overcome them.

Separation had to follow.

Like the titans they were trained to be, they ignored their physical entanglement.

And so, one did not ask to go home with the other, and the other did not dare plant a deep kiss on the one.

Instead they rushed to their coats, he, chivalrously placing hers about her shoulders, fighting the urge to push his face into the back of her neck,

her, fighting the urge to fall into his chest and count his breaths as it rose and fell.

They parted.

Back to their lives, back to worship the elitism that placed them above un-impressive people with feelings and with hearts and with souls.

Far away from the feeling of vulnerability.

Far way from ever working up the courage to call each other ever again.

Far away from the tugging on hearts that they tried to forget they had.

Hearts attached to souls they would never claim.

Souls still tangled together where they had danced, stretching into flexible strands that ran in opposite directions, growing more taut every day, knocking down and nearly destroying everything they were forced to move through.

Strands tethered to two people who moved in fast-forward.

Strands and hopelessly tasked with compelling them to rewind.

Two people who overestimate their resilience.

Two people who, in time

will find their way back to each other

maybe

or tear their souls to pieces trying to run away.