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# Shall We Dance

By Audrey Wells

A million and a half people  
ride the El trains every day.  
Over 20 years, I've written wills  
for about 8.000 of 'em.  
I've sat with 'em as they've  
combed through their assets.  
Figured out which kid gets  
the painting over the fireplace,  
which one gets the  
antique spoon collection.  
Last thanks, parting shots, confessions...  
People try to fit it all in.  
And once I've finished,  
another life has been summed up -  
assets and debts tallied,  
then zeroed out.  
You initial here and there,  
you sign at the bottom...  
then, If you're like most clients,  
you look up, smile,  
and you ask the question I've heard

**for 20 years:**

"That's it for the paperwork", I tell 'em.  
"The rest is up to you."  
# Happy birthday to you,  
Happy birthday to you  
# Happy birthday, dear Dad  
Happy birthday to you  
Ohh, wow. Beautiful.  
All right, make a wish.  
Sorry. I just have  
to take this call.  
- Did you win?  
- "Take this call"?  
- She's 14. How can she be "taking calls"?  
- Jen, not now. Now's not the time.  
Remind me, why was it we agreed  
to give her the phone?  
- Emergencies.  
- Which this is, by the way.  
Serious problem over there.  
Get off, Jen.  
Now, please. Come on.

- All right!  
- Come on, get off.  
Yeah, my dad's just gonna blow out  
about a million candles. Bye.  
All right, everyone,  
are we all happy now?  
Thank you. Thank you.  
Thank you. Thank you very much.  
Thank you. Thank you.  
- Sorry about the bathrobe.  
- What do you mean?  
Oh, I just had such a hard time  
getting you a present.  
I love this bathrobe.  
I think the problem is that  
you never really want anything.  
- That's not true.  
- That's true.  
- Tell me one thing that you really want.  
- What you gave me tonight.  
Evan coming home, everyone's  
at dinner, that cake you make...  
Tell me one thing that you want  
that comes in a box.  
I rest my case.  
Yes! That's it! That's it!  
That's what we needed.  
Good night, Mary.  
I left the Anderson will on your desk.  
Night, Bill.  
Next stop. Sedgwick.  
Hello. I'm home.  
There's a female bonding ritual  
going on in the den.  
- I know.  
- What are they doing in there?  
Tattooing "I love Satan" on their foreheads,  
piercing their bellybuttons, stuff like that.  
- Great. What did you say about that?  
- I said, "Don't get any blood on the couch."  
I worry about Jenna. She's  
too beautiful. That's your fault.  
- Here, sign this.  
- What is it?

- It's your mom's birthday card.

- Oh, God, thank you.

- How was your workout?

- Same. How are you?

Fine. You know, ordering the  
spring line at the store, yada-yada.

- I've got to get going.

- I thought you just got here.

Yeah, but it's the fundraiser  
at Jen's school.

So your dinner's in the oven  
and the girls have already eaten.

Can we go see a movie sometime?

Yeah. Or at least we could  
look at the ads in the paper together.

How are you doing?

Fine.

Check on them now and then, OK?

Don't wait up.

Get out of here, Dad!

Bev? It's not true

that I don't want anything.

Bev?

Doors open on the right.

- Doors closing. Next stop, Sedgwick.

- Excuse me.

Oh, my God. What are you doing?

What are you doing?

You know what?

I'm gonna just go up.

Oh, my God.

That was a great class.

Come on.

- Are we goin' up, or what?

- I'm just trying to...

Here.

- OK, don't do that.

- Do what?

Stand there looking dumb.

It's just not cute in a guy your age.

Be a doll and help me  
carry my clothes.

Come on.

And stop lookin' at my ass.

I'll try.

T... A... N-G-O...

T... A... N-G-O...

T... A... N-G... Oh!

- I found him at the bottom of the stairs.

- Um... Uh...

Paulina, could you help?

Excuse me.

May I help you?

The sign said

"Feel free to watch."

Are you here for lessons?

Yes.

- Mr...?

- Clark.

Are you registering

as a couple or as a single?

Single. I mean, not that I'm...

Single. Yeah, just me.

Single privates are \$45 an hour. If you buy six at a time, the price per class drops \$5.

- Have you ever danced before?

- No. No. But I'm a fast learner.

We're starting a new intro ballroom series for singles.

I recommend that beginners start with that.

There's still room in the class.

It meets every Wednesday

**at 7:**

All right.

Right, Wednesdays, 7:30. Great.

Great. Well...

- I'll come back then. Thank you.

- Mr. Clark?

Where are you going?

The class starts tonight.

Tonight?

Oh, right, yeah.

**Wednesday, 7:**

You can wait over there.

We'll begin shortly.

OK...

Hey. I'm Vern.

John.

- You beginning ballroom?

- Yeah, looks that way. Yeah.

- Chic. Hey.

- Hey.

So, you dance much?

High-school prom.

"Stairway to Heaven."

- You?

- Not even a prom. I didn't go.

Anybody see any girls?

I mean, I'm here for the babes, right.

I mean, it can't be just us, can it?

Guys dancin' with guys ain't my kinda thing, you know? No offense, sir.

None taken.

Hi.

See the slinky one with the eyebrows?

That's me - if you don't mind.

I know you won't mind.

- Be my guest.

- All right.

Work the goods.

Oh, yeah. Here they come.

Come to Papa.

Here they...

Ouch.

Memories of high school, huh, boys?

Good evening, gentlemen, and

welcome to the beginner's ballroom class.

My name is Miss Mitzi. I am the owner

of this dancing establishment,

and I am going to be your teacher.

Disappointed that I'm older?

Yes. I mean, no. I mean...

Hey, you look... experienced.

Forward, side, closed...

Back, side, close.

Very good, Chic.

Is it "Chick," or "Sheek"?

- Whoa! "Chick."

- "Chick."

- Yes. Very good.

- Easy.

Remember to use  
the balls of your feet.

Wait a minute, Vern.

Where is your right foot?

- It's right back there. See?

- Yes, I know. It hasn't moved, has it?

Not yet.

- Well, now would be a good time.

- OK.

- OK? Close.

- Close...

Excellent. Very good.

All right. Forward, side, close.

Back, side, close.

One, two, three, rise.

- Hey, hey, hey!

- You guys saw that?

Excellent, gentlemen.

Excellent.

Keep your sticks up.

Promenade.

- And...

- Counter-promenade.

Let me see what you're doing. Ah!

- Miss Mitzi, I'm sorry. Sorry.

- God! Jesus!

- I said I'm sorry.

- Put the stick down.

We're not gonna play with these sticks  
anymore if you boys won't behave.

A little faster this time. And...

Heel, toe, toe-toe,

toe, heel, toe-toe.

Excuse me. When we go forward,  
is it heel-toe or toe...

It's forward, heel, toe, toe...

So it's back... Whoa...

Harder than it looks,  
isn't it, gentlemen?

Well, you've all done very very well  
for your first lesson.

And before you leave tonight,

I'm gonna give you a little incentive

to keep on dancing.

Paulina?

Would you and Francesco mind giving  
our new students a little demonstration?

Certainly, Miss Mitzi.

Daphne?

Thank you, Paulina.

Whoo! Whoo!

That was beautiful.

- You all right?

- Yeah, I'm good.

Hey, guys, wait up.

I'm comin'.

Great. How lucky for us.

- Hey.

- Where are we goin'?

- Somewhere close.

- Yeah. I haven't got long.

Anyway. You guys.

Don't go to Jim's.

They got a bad roach problem  
there around the corner.

You're gonna go anywhere after class,  
you come here, OK? Thank you.

Why'd you guys decide  
to take dance, anyway?

- I'm gettin' married in September.

- Nice.

Yeah. My bride said she'd like  
to see me lose a few pounds.

She thinks the dancing will help.

I said it won't.

- I think you'll win that argument.

- I'm taking classes to impress the ladies.

You know what they say  
about guys who can dance, right?

- That they're great in bed.

- Yeah, baby.

- Where do you get that stupid crap?

- Everywhere. What do you think?

Everybody knows a guy who can move  
on the dance floor can move in the sack.  
Most guys, they can't dance at all. Guys  
who can, they get their pick of the litter.



That's why, when I'm done with this class,  
babes will drop at my feet.

They're gonna be droppin'  
dead at your feet.

When you took your shoes off in class  
today, I had to run to the window for air.

What kind of person says something like  
that to somebody they don't even know?

Hey, man, I'm doin' you a favor.

I'm telling you something obnoxious about  
yourself that you might not be aware of.

If there's something obnoxious about me  
that you don't think I'm aware of,

y'all should feel free to say  
something about it to me.

Shooting fish in a barrel.

- Where are all the ladies, anyways?

- I don't know what I'm talking about.

The ladies, they all go and take  
the classes down at Doctor Dance -

that's, like, the hip place to go downtown.

Ditzy Mitzi's is only hangin' on by a thread.

Only reason I go there is she lets me  
rehearse whenever I want for free.

I'm gonna compete in the  
Chicago Taittinger Trophy.

Soon as I find a partner.

So... that leaves you.

Leaves me? How? What?

Leaves you as the only one here  
who hasn't said why he's dancing yet.

Oh. Well, I'm dancing  
for exercise, like Vern.

Bull.

Because I'm lousy in bed, like Chic.

There, I've said it.

- That is bull! I didn't say I was bad in bed.

- You didn't have to.

Come on, why?

Is there any pepper here?

Could I have some?

That's what I thought.

She was a Blackpool finalist, you know.

Who?

The princess.  
The other teacher, Paulina.  
What's Blackpool?  
Every year, all the best dancers  
from all over the world...  
go to England to compete there.  
She was there last year with her partner -  
who they say was much more to her  
than just her partner.  
Anyway, he dumped her. That's the only  
reason she came back here to teach -  
mad at the world,  
boo-hoo-hoo and all that.  
- Why'd he dump her?  
- Yeah.  
How the hell should I know?  
God, they say women gossip! Golly!  
Hello? I'm home.  
Great. Great, Vern.  
Slow. The mambo is slow.  
Slide that hand one inch  
south of the equator...  
and I will bust you on your ass,  
twinkle-toes.  
Let's get something straight. I don't like  
the tropics any more than you do, OK?  
Five, six, seven, eight...  
Arms. And basic.  
And cross over.  
Right.  
One more time,  
and walk around.  
- And basic.  
- Watch out.  
And big ending.  
Look at you, John!  
- That was pretty good.  
- You were really good.  
Hey, I'm sorry I'm late.  
I'm gonna go up and change.  
Right.  
- Dad work late tonight?  
- Yeah, looks that way.  
Guess whatever he's working on,

he must like it.

- Why do you say that?

- He seems happier lately.

Does he?

I called the Halston people  
in New York.

We're gonna have trouble getting more  
stock in. Everything's on back-order.

Look, Carolyn, I'm gonna need you  
to go to New York and sweet-talk them.

- Can you leave tomorrow?

- No.

Why not?

My husband is having an affair.

How do you know that?

I picked up the receiver last night  
to phone a friend,  
not knowing that Greg was already  
on the other line in the den.

He was whispering.

What was he whispering?

I don't know.

I was so scared I hung up  
before I could hear anything.

Well, there's lots of other reasons  
why he could be whispering.

I mean, maybe he didn't wanna  
wake up the kids. Huh?

Or he could be planning a surprise for you.

I mean, your birthday's coming up, isn't it?

In two weeks.

That's it.

Take a breath, go get yourself a brownie  
in the kitchen, just chill. It's gonna be fine.

OK.

- Euh!

- Ooh-hoo-hoo!

You silly goose, you.

She'll be divorced by Easter.

Come on, John.

Join the warm-up.

Ow!

- Jesus! I'm sorry!

- Watch your floorcraft, spasm!

What, you think you own this floor? I'll  
have a bruise the size of Texas tomorrow!

- Go away!

- Go away? You go away!

Take your stupid music with you!

I can't dance to that crap.

You just gonna stand there  
and let that fat cow insult you?

- I'm sorry, what did you say?

- Nothing. She didn't say anything.

Sorry. These are the teeth

I wear for the Latin.

It gets your smile out there.

Just a little bit bigger smile.

Bam! Gets the judges right  
in the eye, catches the light.

And then the make-up -  
you know the make-up.

"Swish-butt," "Fancy pants,"

"Pinky boy"...

All these names, all these names I've been  
called ever since I was eight years old...  
and dancing around

to my mother's rumba records.

You know what

the worst of it is? Huh?

I'm not gay. Can you imagine how much  
easier my life would be if I were?

I mean, a straight man who likes  
to dance around in sequins...

walks a very lonely road.

I got news for you.

Look, you're not gonna  
tell anybody in the office, are you?

No, no, no. I wouldn't do that.

Look, I'm in the same boat, aren't I?

No, you're not. You're not.

- Why not?

- Because... people like you.

You know what I mean?

You're charming.

I'm Linky Link. They would  
crucify me if they found out.

I'm the sports trivia king,

I'm the super sports fan, you know?

- You don't like football?

- I... You know.

Run three yards, fall down, pile up.

Run three yards, fall down, pile up.

I mean, you know, four months of that,

I'm ready to put a gun to my head.

- Fooled me.

- I know. I fooled everybody.

You know what my dream is?

What?

My dream... is to be able

to dance free and proud.

Under my own name.

For all the world to see.

That's my dream.

Did I get it all?

Hey, Andy. It's Bev.

Look, I'm sorry to call you so late.

I was just trying to find John.

Called the office at six and Betsy said

that he'd left for the day, and I was just...

You got home by five?

How did you manage that, you lucky dog?

Ah, there's the door.

OK. See you. Bye.

Sorry I'm late.

I got hung up at the office.

I wish you'd call, 'cause we were looking

all over for your car keys forever...

- I thought you were shopping with Jenna.

- That was weeks ago.

I called the office and Betsy said

you left for the day at six.

Yeah, I did - for a sandwich.

Then I came back.

Oh. Well, I called your private line

a few times, nobody picked up.

That's because I wasn't working

in my office, I was in Andy's.

Oh. How is Andy?

We're working on a really big

estate plan together.

- So he was there?

- What?

Was Andy there?

Why are you asking me  
all these questions?

I don't know.

Anyway, I stopped off for a bite  
on the way home with Link Peterson.

Remember him?

Interesting guy.

Not what you'd think.

- How was your day?

- Great.

One, two, three, four...

One, two, three...

Mom?

Dad's acting weird.

They met five years ago  
in a chat room for gardeners.

He says they're in love.

He's moving out Saturday.

He'll be back.

He loves those kids.

I thought we were happy.

He seemed happy to me.

I didn't know anything.

I didn't know.

Oh...

Hi.

I, uh... I give free consultations  
during my lunch hour.

You sure you don't  
wanna come in?

So he comes home late  
on Wednesdays,

and when he comes home  
his shirts smell like perfume.

He's been seen making strange body  
movements and you feel he has a secret.

- That's correct.

- Ever think about just asking him?

- Yes, I've thought about it...

- Mrs. Clark...

things happen in long marriages.

To the best of people.

And sometimes the thing that happens  
doesn't mean anything.  
Doesn't need an investigator, just needs  
somebody to look the other way for a while.  
My husband is a serious man, Mr. Devine.  
If he's having an affair, it is not casual.  
In which case,  
the sooner I know, the better.  
All right. Give me a moment while  
I call in my associate, Mr. Harcourt.  
Scottie!  
Scottie Harcourt,  
this is Mrs. Clark.  
She suspects  
her husband's up to no good.  
"To catch a husband is an art.  
To hold him is a job."  
Simone de Beauvoir said that.  
It's very nice to meet you, Mrs. Clark.  
Same here.  
I think we can start this investigation  
without too much cost to Mrs. Clark.  
Yes. Follow that husband around for a few  
days, take some pictures, see what's up.  
But I have to warn you,  
if it goes to trial it's gonna be...  
Trial?  
In the event of a divorce.  
But we don't know if  
he's having an affair.  
I mean, he could just be  
involved with... I don't know...  
people who get together  
to invest things,  
and... and the place that they  
invest things is... filled with potpourri,  
and that's why his shirts smell so sweet  
when he comes home. It's possible.  
Yeah, it's possible.  
It's possible.  
It's possible we could find your husband  
neck-deep in potpourri, investing things.  
Not likely.  
Look, this is what we'll do.

We start out gently.

We look for the potpourri.

And if we find it, and it smells like flowers,  
then 2,000 ought to cover my time.

But if we find the potpourri and there's  
something big and stinky in the pot,  
then you and I renegotiate, OK?

That sound good?

OK.

- Hey.

- Hi.

- How you doin'?

- Good.

- I can tell, you know.

- Tell what?

That you've been dancing.

Your posture, it's a dead giveaway.

- You're kidding.

- No.

- How much you been practicing, anyway?

- Just in class.

No. Should be five to one.

Five-to-one ratio.

Five hours of practice  
for every one hour of class.

Doctor Dance has an open  
dance party every Thursday.  
Anybody can go and practice.

Even you.

Ballroom is all or nothing, John.

I'm draggin' your ass out of class  
and onto a real dance floor.

We'll go straight there  
after work.

- Link?

- Yeah?

Can you really tell?

Yeah.

Having fun?

- What are you doing here?

- Spying.

Excuse me, we were  
dancing together.

Dude, she does not wanna



dance with you. Now back off.  
Hey, you know, I...  
Link always insists on dancing  
with the youngest girls.  
I've never seen him with his perfect  
partner. Not that those are easy to find.  
Have you ever found one?  
Once. He was my  
dancing partner for 15 years.  
- We were husband and wife for 14.  
- Wow.  
Yeah. He was my perfect partner.  
Doesn't happen twice in a lifetime.  
I'm lucky it even happened once.  
Ah!  
At last, a song I know.  
Oh, I love this song.  
# Da da-da da...  
# Shall we still be together  
With our arms around each other  
# And shall you be  
my new romance?  
# On the clear understanding  
that this kind of thing can happen  
# Shall we dance, shall we dance,  
shall we dance?  
It's The King and I. Yul Brynner  
and Deborah Kerr. Do you remember that?  
They held hands like this...  
Oh, come on, John, let's try it.  
- No. No, no, no, I can't. No way. I can't.  
- Why not?  
- Oh, John, come on. Come on.  
- I don't... No, I don't want to...  
Let go, John.  
That's it, John.  
Whoa!  
- Sorry! I wasn't watching.  
- Hi! How are you?  
- It doesn't matter. We're finished anyway.  
- What do you mean?  
No offense, but I can't be  
your dance partner.  
- Why?

- You're too much of a freak.  
I mean, look at your palms. They're  
bright orange from self-tanning lotion.  
Don't you know you're supposed to wash  
your hands after you use that stuff?  
Excuse me.  
Miss Mitzi couldn't make it tonight,  
so I'll be your teacher.  
I'm Paulina.  
And you're...  
Chic and Vern and...  
- Tom.  
- John. It's John.  
What would you like  
to work on tonight?  
Well, in my opinion - Chic - I think since  
we're beginners, a good idea would be...  
Waltz.  
Maybe the waltz.  
OK. Um...  
I'll work with you one at a time  
and you can be first.  
OK. All right.  
- Oops.  
- I'm sorry.  
So are you really  
a reporter for The Times.  
Or are you just pickin' up on her,  
like everybody else?  
I'm a reporter.  
Plus, she's not my type.  
I like a woman built for comfort,  
not for speed.  
Really? Why don't you put the camera  
down and take me out on the dance floor?

**Two reasons:**

and this is not my type of dance.  
Well, how do you know  
if you've never tried?  
Come on, put the camera down.  
Come on, give me a shot.  
Oh, dear!  
Sorry, sorry!

- I'm sorry.  
- It's gonna stain.  
Don't... worry.  
I'll take care of it.  
- Would you like to use this?  
- Excuse me?  
Just to wipe your coat, or...  
Go ahead, just take it.  
Please. Go ahead.  
- It's silly, but it's my favorite coat.  
- I'm sorry.  
It's vintage.  
But this part's real suede,  
so now it's ruined.  
You sure?  
Maybe they can fix that.  
No. I know about stains. It's...  
You know, I never understood that.  
I never understood -  
live cows get dirty all the time,  
they don't get stained.  
All that leather stands in the mud,  
nothing happens. Go figure. What is that?  
Exactly.  
Get a little sauce  
on your coat and look.  
- Why is that?  
- I don't know.  
We'll have to ask the  
next cow that comes by.  
A man with a handkerchief. Wow.  
I didn't know they made those anymore.  
I haven't eaten yet. If you haven't eaten yet,  
maybe we can go and... get a bite.  
Someplace close. You know,  
I saw a Chinese over here.  
We could use chopsticks and drop an  
endless variety of things on our clothes.  
I'm sorry, I prefer not to  
socialize with students.  
Oh. OK. All right.  
I shouldn't have taken this from you.  
I'll buy you a new one.  
Please. I didn't...

I didn't mean anything by that.

I'll buy you a new one.

Excuse me.

Mr. Clark, I take dance  
very seriously.

Miss Mitzi's is a school,  
not a disco.

And I hope you didn't join class  
with me as your goal,  
because you'd be  
wasting your time.

Don't dance if that's  
what you're after.

Dance lessons? My husband  
is taking dance lessons?

Well, I've found a lot worse hiding  
in the potpourri over the years.

Consider yourself lucky.

What's this beautiful  
young woman? Who's she?

His substitute teacher.

His regular teacher's a much older woman.

Great legs, but older.

Mr. Devine, what would make a man who's  
done the same thing for the last 20 years...

suddenly do something so completely  
out of character just out of the blue?

That's a question for a shrink.

I'm just a detective.

I'm not asking you as a detective.

I'm asking you as a man.

Scottie? What would cause  
a man after 20 years...

to do something completely  
out of character out of the blue?

- Did I get that right?

- Yeah.

"The mass of men  
lead lives of quiet desperation."

Maybe the desperation  
can't be quiet anymore.

Bingo.

That's a wonderful use  
of Thoreau, Scottie.

Thank you.

Hello again, Mrs. Clark.

Hey.

- Desperation.

- Well, that's a possibility.

Mrs. Clark, the point is  
your husband's dancing,  
he's not checking into  
hotel rooms.

We can continue to keep an eye  
on things for you,  
but my guess is your husband will hang up  
his dancing shoes shortly anyway.

- What makes you say that?

- Voice of experience.

You give him some time.

He'll be home soon.

"The rest is up to you", I tell my clients.

"The rest is up to you."

Every few years they come back.

So I have these snapshots in my head  
of how they've changed over the years.  
The ones who've changed the most finally  
bought that boat. Moved to that island.  
Those who haven't changed...

I suppose they take comfort in  
knowing what course their lives are on.

They like to believe  
they know what lies ahead.

Shit!

Dad!

Evan!

What are you doing here?

Trying to meet up with some friends.

What are you doing here?

Well, you know, work...

I had to come to visit a client  
over here. I had to come by and...

- It's really weird.

- It is?

Yeah. Because I've been wanting you  
to meet this girl that I'm crazy about,  
and I'm going to meet her right now  
at this bar with my other friends.

So can you...  
Do you wanna go?  
Of course I do.  
Lead on, my son.  
Come on, let's get out there.  
So, does your dad  
wanna dance?  
I don't know. Dad, you haven't  
danced in, what, 90 years?  
You two go. Go.  
It's been a long day for me.  
Mr. Clark?  
Mr. Clark?  
Do you wanna dance?  
Yes. Yes, I do.  
OK.  
Could you say goodbye  
to Evan for me? Thank you.  
Sure.  
- Sorry I'm late.  
- Don't let it happen again.  
Join the warm-up, John.  
Come on!  
Christ, Vern!  
You're soaking wet, man.  
I already had a shower today.  
- Sorry.  
- You're disgusting!  
You don't have  
to put it like that.  
Why not? It's the truth.  
And I prefer to tell the truth,  
unlike some people who make up stories  
about nonexistent fiances.  
What are you talking about?  
He's getting married in the fall.  
Oh, come on.  
What, are ya dumb?  
People who are engaged take the classes  
together, or what the hell's the point?  
Come on, tell the people the truth.  
You're not engaged, are you?  
Huh?  
- Not exactly.

- Uh-huh.  
- I haven't asked her quite yet.  
- Thank you very much.  
Look, I was gonna lose  
some weight first,  
and then I was gonna take  
her dancing somewhere romantic.  
And then maybe pop the question.  
But I guess if I'm sweating all over the  
place, that wouldn't be too romantic, huh?  
She's a great dancer.  
Well, hey, don't listen to me.  
What, are you...  
C'mon, don't be a big baby. I didn't mean  
to upset you or anything. Jesus, Vern.  
I said I was sorry.  
Bobbie!  
Somebody call a doctor.  
Are you all right? She's out.  
It's her electrolytes. They get crazy  
because she overworks herself.  
She's been in here twice before.  
And it's getting so boring, Mom.  
- Shut up, Tina.  
- No, you shut up. God, she pisses me off.  
She pulls a 12-hour shift at  
Jimmy's Diner, working five till five,  
and then she goes and cooks and  
cleans for an old feeb in a wheelchair...  
to earn extra money  
for her crazy costumes.  
And then she plays Cinderella  
every night at dance practice.  
- When you should be home, resting.  
- I don't need rest.  
Right. You need to hang out and flirt with  
the shy guy with the nice-smelling sweat.  
- She told me all about you.  
- Shut up, Tina.  
I never said his sweat smells nice.  
I never said...  
She said it was the best-smelling sweat  
she'd ever smelled.  
OK, kill me now.

It's all right, Bobbie. I've smelled his sweat and I agree, it's not bad. Well, I mean, it's no field of flowers after a spring rain... Yeah, I think we've talked about this enough. Maybe we should all go home now and let Bobbie get some rest.

- Yeah.

- Bye, sweetheart.

Thank you. Thank you. Bobbie needs a partner for the competition. Why not you, John? Me? Competition? No, no, I can't... She'd never go for it anyway. Forget it. Why not? What are you talking about? You heard her daughter - she likes you. And dance begins with the dancers' feelings. I'll work with the both of you after class. Two extra hours. The Miss Mitzi Special. We've got three months. This is good. What do you think? I think you better stock up on deodorant. Anything a client says in a lawyer's office is confidential. So I've gotten used to holding onto secrets. They're usually nothing incriminating. But a lot of people have accounts they haven't reconciled - things they're just not ready to share. I took the liberty of ordering for you. Bombay Sapphire, three limes. I hired you to watch my husband. You're not supposed to be watching me. It's very hard not to, Mrs. Clark - with all due respect.



- Are you a married man, Mr. Devine?
- I was.
- Oh, what happened?
- Unfaithful.
- She hired a detective?
- No, no, no.

When she found out,  
I was too far gone, so...  
You're smiling at me.  
You are on a strange journey  
to redemption, Mr. Devine.  
And a very long one, Mrs. Clark.  
All these promises  
that we make and we break.  
Why is it, do you think,  
that people get married?

- Passion.
- No.

That's interesting. Because I would've  
taken you for a romantic. Why, then?  
Because we need  
a witness to our lives.  
There's a billion people on the planet.  
I mean, what does any one life really mean?  
But in a marriage, you're promising  
to care about everything -  
the good things, the bad things,  
the terrible things, the mundane things...  
All of it.

All the time, every day.  
You're saying, "Your life will not  
go unnoticed, because I will notice it.  
"Your life will not go unwitnessed,  
because I will be your witness."  
You can quote me on that,  
if you like.  
I'm sure I will.

Anyway, the reason  
that I called you here today,  
to tell you in person that I won't  
be needing your services anymore.  
Oh.

I think to continue...  
would be an unwarranted invasion

of my husband's privacy and...

Anyway, even though

there was a reason...

I'm sorry for what I've done

and I know enough now and...

it's time to stop.

Thank you for everything

and... goodbye.

Bye.

Mrs. Clark?

I was right.

You are a romantic.

Bobbie!

- A new costume.

- Yeah.

I got it from this mermaid dream

I had in the hospital.

Just floated up from

my subconscious.

Where, tragically,

it did not stay.

Come on, partner.

What are you waiting for?

Divine intervention?

You're a brave man, John Clark. Not

just anyone could take on the Bobbinator.

Yeah.

Good luck, man.

We're with you.

Somebody help me up! Please?

John!

OK. 55 days from today you two

are gonna win the novice competition.

That means you're gonna

have to master five dances.

I've asked Paulina

to videotape you tonight,

so you can see what

you're doing wrong.

Let's start with a rumba.

What? What is it?

It's the rumba.

It's the dance of love.

And he's just not

giving me anything.  
What does she want me to do?  
I'm doing it exactly the way I was taught.  
You think it's easy...?  
The rumba... is a vertical expression  
of a horizontal wish.  
You have to hold her like the skin  
on her thigh is your reason for living.  
Let her go like your heart's  
being ripped from your chest.  
Pull her back like you're gonna have your  
way with her, right here on the dance floor.  
And then finish...  
Like she's ruined you for life.  
See? Why can't you  
just do it like that?  
Anyone else care  
for a glass of water?  
Damn it!  
No, not you.  
Look, I have to call you back.  
No, he's not home yet.  
What was the score at half-time  
in the NBA playoffs last night?  
Why?  
Why? You said you watched.  
What was the score?  
- I forget now.  
- You didn't forget. You didn't watch.  
You don't care about playoffs.  
You care about dancing!  
Shh!  
I do not.  
Yeah? Then what's this?  
Give me that! No!  
Give me that! Give me...  
It's not even mine.  
It's my mother's.  
At least, it was my mother's until I took it  
to this wonderful alterations guy...  
who had it tailored for me.  
Look, it's not like I've  
figured this out either.  
- Hey, listen...

- What?

- Come back to class.

- No.

You could take over as  
Bobbie's partner in the Latin dances.  
You've got those knocked already.  
There's no way I could learn 'em in time.

I'm not comin' back as  
the Bobbinator's partner!

We'll look like an olive  
and a toothpick together.

Besides, she would  
never dance with me.

Sure she would.

Just the Latin dances.

I'll still do the waltz and the quickstep.

She would.

No!

Not if he was the last bald, bad-breathed,  
heterosexual sequin-freak on earth -  
which he probably is.

I'm not doin' it.

You wanna win the Latin competition  
or not? It's up to you. I don't care.

Link already knows the dances.

And he'll be a good competitor.

Right, Link?

So, finally giving up  
on the underage bimbettes...  
and gonna go for a real woman?

Is that it?

Yeah, no more underage bimbettes for me.

Only real women from now on.

Don't even think about coming near me  
without a breath mint. You got that?

And quit lookin' at my ass.

We'll try.

Vern, you know, there's a  
joyful freedom in your Latin.

And Chic, you have an innate sensuality  
quite uncommon in a man.

I've entered you both in the  
competition along with John.

Good. That's settled.

You... are the frame.  
I'm the frame.  
- She is the picture...  
- She is the picture...  
...in your frame.  
Everything that you do  
is to show her off.  
- You got that?  
- I didn't hear that.  
Nice. Invite the lady in.  
And... make the connection.  
Projecting to the third balcony.  
911! 911, quick!  
Quick, 911! 9...  
And start here with an  
initial sweep past the crowd.  
Watch.  
And contra-check.  
Excellent.  
Oh, Jesus.  
We wanted something unusual.  
- Are you OK?  
- Yeah.  
- You sure?  
- No, I'm good.  
But you guys look exhausted.  
I tell you what,  
why don't we call it a night?  
For your sake, John.  
You look like you're toast.  
- And tomorrow's a big day.  
- Yeah.  
- Get home safe.  
- OK.  
- I'm wearing you guys out.  
- No. No, no, no.  
It's good. I like it when my feet hurt.  
Takes my mind off my knees.  
I've just been getting carried away, you  
know, working hard with the two of you.  
I guess I like it.  
Feels good, you know?  
For me too.  
All right.

Well, I'm going home.

Hey, wait.

I wanted to talk to you about  
that night that you asked me to dinner.

I'm sorry about  
how I treated you.

It's just, you know, that people get  
the wrong idea about me all the time.

Paulina, you don't have to  
explain anything to me, ever.

Well, I know I don't have  
to explain anything to anybody...

because I don't care  
what people think about me.

Good. Good.

- I mean it.

- Yeah, uh-huh. Good. Good.

I'm sorry. I shouldn't  
be here right now.

No, it's OK. I think I'm just  
hungry or something.

- Hungry?

- Very.

- Oh, this is so stupid.

- No.

No, not at all. No, no.

I cry too when I'm hungry.

For French fries, usually. You?

Cake.

Careful. Don't spill it  
on your new coat.

- Old coat, new color. I had it dyed.

- Yeah?

Yeah, my dad did it.

He's a dry-cleaner.

As is my mom, my brother,  
my two older sisters and me.

I told you I know about stains.

- You're a dry-cleaner?

- Well, I was. Until I was eight.

Actually, that's when  
I started dancing.

I was helping out in the store  
one day after school...

when my mom asked me  
to go in the back and get an order.  
It was this incredibly delicate sequined  
thing, held together by a gold thread.  
Well, I carried the costume  
like it was gonna break.  
And then I saw the customer.  
She was the most beautiful woman  
I had ever laid eyes on.  
She invited us to see her dance that night.  
And my mother said yes.  
It was like the whole world had suddenly  
gone from black-and-white to color.  
The beautiful woman and her partner  
stopped right in front of us...  
and did a waltz pose.  
She tilted her head back  
and she winked at me.  
And I felt like she was trying  
to tell me something.  
I took it as a sign.  
And from then on. I knew that  
ballroom dancing would be my life.  
It wasn't the kind of dream  
my parents had in mind.  
What made you wanna dance?  
You.  
Looking out that window,  
right up there.  
You can see it from the train and...  
every night I'd come home from work  
and I'd look for you, your face.  
You looked on the outside  
the way I was feeling on the inside.  
I was watching you too.  
From the window I saw you  
practicing on the platform.  
No! Oh...  
That night I said all those things to you,  
I didn't think I'd ever see you again.  
But you kept coming back.  
I didn't want to.  
But I figured if I hadn't, you'd have been  
right about everything you accused me of.

Then I started dancing and I found  
I really liked it. It made me happy.  
Yes, it shows.  
I mean, I feel excited about something  
for the first time in such a long time.  
- Aren't you?  
- Excited?  
About tomorrow.  
The competition.  
No, no, no.  
I'm petrified. I'm...  
I'm gonna forget everything, I won't be able  
to put one foot in front of the other,  
- I'll make a mess of the whole thing.  
- No.  
Give me one hour.  
Leave it. Leave the light.  
Don't say anything...  
and don't think.  
And don't move  
unless you feel it.  
Be this alive.  
Be this alive tomorrow.  
Thank you.  
God, I'm sorry.  
I'm sorry, I lost my balance.  
Oh, that's OK.  
I lost my fianc.  
Lisa! Lisa.  
- There you are.  
- Found the earring.  
John Clark.  
Photo op. Come on.  
Smile, everyone.  
Paso doble!  
- Good luck, everybody.  
- Good luck.  
- Hey.  
- Yeah.  
So what did I tell you?  
Girls love guys who can dance, right?  
Even I got a partner.  
Check it out.  
Cute.



- But who's the guy?  
- Oh, that's her brother.  
Yeah, we play basketball together.  
Aren't they adorable?  
They're gonna get slaughtered.  
Oh, shh. Don't say that.  
Mr. Clark.  
John?  
You look blue. Breathe.  
Thanks.  
Ladies and gentlemen,  
good evening.  
The Chicago Taittinger Trophy  
Latin competition will now begin.  
Judges, this is a semifinal round  
with 11 couples on the floor.  
And now, ladies and gentlemen,  
your first dance is the cha-cha.  
Music, please.  
Nice chass, Vern!  
Whoa!  
Let's hear it for the cha-cha,  
ladies and gentlemen.  
Who's your favorite couple out there?  
Let them hear their numbers.  
We danced like shit! All you did  
was worry about that stupid wig!  
Well, what did you  
expect me to do? You saw...  
I know, he's a pig.  
But you know what? This is Latin.  
The judges are looking  
at your hips, not your hair.  
So unless that thing  
looks good on your ass, lose it!  
Fine!  
We love you, baldy!  
Thank you, dancers.  
Please take your positions for your  
second and final dance of this competition,  
the paso doble.  
Music, please.  
Looks like he got rid of  
a lot more than the wig.

Ladies and gentlemen, I have the  
final results for the Latin competition.  
Your finalists are...  
couple 102...  
We did it! Lisa,  
we did it, we did it!  
Couple 104.  
- Oh, my God! Oh, my God!  
- Couple 106.  
Couple 109.  
Couple 110.  
And couple 105...  
has been disqualified.  
What?!  
I thought Slick Willy  
was pretty good.  
Bad attitude. Ungentlemanly behavior.  
It's a British sport, after all.  
- The man was working it.  
- Well...  
Immediately following,  
the standard competition.  
Ladies and gentlemen,  
the Chicago Taittinger Trophy  
standard competition will now begin.  
Judges, this is a semifinal round  
with ten couples on the floor.  
They'll be dancing the waltz  
and the quickstep.  
Now, ladies and gentlemen,  
let's bring our dancers out...  
with a nice big round of applause.  
Couples 115...  
Couple 116.  
Couple number 117.  
Couple number 118.  
Couple number 119.  
Couple 120.  
Couple 121...  
Wow.  
Come on, come on,  
we're gonna be late.  
Hey, you're not gonna  
choke on me, are you?

I think my feet are asleep,  
I don't remember anything...  
Don't worry. You're great.  
You look beautiful.  
And finally, couple number 126.  
- There they are.  
- Yeah. They look nervous.  
No, not them. Them.  
You invited them?  
She said she wanted to be  
a witness to her husband's life.  
I thought she should witness this.  
So you're a marriage counselor now. But  
could you at least bill Mrs. Clark for that?  
As our dancers take their positions  
for their first dance,  
I'd like to remind the judges that you'll be  
recalling six couples for the final round.  
Ladies and gentlemen,  
your first dance is the waltz.  
Music, please.  
Well done!  
He's awesome.  
Dad is awesome!  
Spectacular.  
It's spectacular.  
- 116!  
- Whoo!  
Way to go, Dad!  
Such a beautiful waltz.  
We weren't terrible.  
I can't believe it.  
Of course we weren't - you were  
dancing with me, you big nut.  
...the second and final dance  
of this competition, the quickstep!  
- Hey, is your daughter here tonight?  
- No. Why?  
I thought I heard someone  
yell at you "Go, Dad."  
Yes!  
126!  
Go, Dad!  
Way to go, Dad!

- Beverly!  
- Dad.  
- Wait a minute. Wait, wait.  
- Dad, you were terrific.  
Get in the car, Jen.  
Just get in the car.  
Beverly, how did you know?  
Because I hired a detective. Yeah.  
I thought you were having an affair.  
- It's ridiculous, I know. OK. I feel...  
- Hey, listen, that was really bad luck.  
Don't worry.  
There's always next year.  
Oh, "there's always next year." Thanks.  
Well, I have a whole year to prepare for it.  
- Beverly, please, can we talk...  
- No, there's nothing to talk about.  
Please.  
Will you please stay here...  
Stop. No.  
- Please, will you talk to me?  
- If you want to talk,  
you can start by explaining what was it  
that I just saw in there? What did I witness?  
I'm not having an affair.  
There was no aff...  
What's goin' on?  
- Let's go!  
- They're new friends.  
But you could've told me about it, couldn't  
you? You just completely left me out.  
Why didn't you tell me, John?  
You've gotta answer that.  
- I was ashamed.  
- Ashamed of what? Of dancing?  
- Well, no, no...  
- Well, then of what?  
Of wanting to be happier.  
When we have so much.  
And it's not your fault.  
Hey, Fred Astaire!  
You're blocking traffic!  
Finally! Thank you!  
The reading of a will can actually

come as a kind of relief.  
After the initial shock wears off  
about that trust fund for the family dog,  
or the opera seats  
left to the gardener,  
there is at least the sense that  
everything is finally out on the table.  
This, you are not gonna  
believe this, guys. Louis, Louis.  
"Link started dancing in 1985.  
"It soon became his passion and he  
started dancing six days a week.  
"Lawyer by day and dancer by night,  
"Link really lights up the floor  
with all of his energy."  
See? I told you. I knew it.  
I knew Link Peterson was a freaky bastard.  
I think Linky Link might be batting for  
the other team, you know what I mean?  
Could those pants be any tighter?  
Look at his package!  
Somebody get a magnifying glass!  
There is nothing wrong  
with ballroom dancing.  
Sorry.  
Oh...  
Fuck you all.  
And football sucks.  
- Hey, how you doin'?  
- Hey.  
Surprise.  
- This is gorgeous.  
- Yeah, it's a pretty spot.  
Thanks.  
John, look, we just wanted  
to talk to you for a minute.  
Yeah, I just hope that you weren't  
staying away from class on account of me.  
I'm not mad about you ripping  
my dress or anything. Seriously.  
I mean, I know you always  
wanted to look at my ass...  
and I think you picked a pretty weird  
time to do it, but I forgive you, John.

- Thanks. Thank you.

- Honestly. OK?

Come on, can we tell Miss Mitzi  
you're coming back?

I'm sorry, guys, I'm not coming back.  
It's... It's... I'm done with that now.  
But thanks a lot for coming out here.  
I really appreciate that.

John, look...

Paulina, you know, she's gonna  
go to England to study dance,  
and we're havin' a little, you know,  
going-away party for her...  
and we'd love for you to come.  
Really love it if you would come by.

She gave me this  
to give to you, so...

Anyway, we hope that  
we see you there. All right?

All right, come on.

- Bye, John.

- Bye.

"I hope you're not upset about  
what happened with you and Bobbie.

"Because you were  
wonderful that night.

"I'd hate to think that what happened  
would make you give it all up.

"You looked so graceful  
and brave out there -  
a different person from the one who  
first walked into Miss Mitzi's studio.

"But a lot has changed for both of us  
over the last few months.

"When my partner and I  
went to Blackpool last year...

we were so excited  
to make it to the finals.

"Everyone was convinced  
that we were going to win.

And we wanted  
to prove them right.

"We'd been together as a couple  
for as long as we'd been partners.

"But we began training too hard.  
Pushing each other. Expecting too much.  
"Well, we didn't win.  
Not even close.  
"I came back without  
my trophy or my partner.  
"And all this time I've been  
hiding out at Miss Mitzi's.  
Angry at myself.  
Frustrated and embarrassed.  
"But coaching you and Bobbie,  
seeing how alive you were out there...  
made me realize  
just how much I'd given up.  
"And now,  
for the first time in a long time...  
I want to dance again.  
"So I need to thank you -  
thank you for helping me to see this.  
"I hope I get to see you and dance  
with you once more before I leave.  
"Paulina."  
Thanks.  
By the way, I'm not  
going to this party.  
Oh, OK.  
But you're not  
giving up dancing, are you?  
You could...  
teach me to dance.  
Beverly, I'm not  
dancing anymore.  
Why not, Dad?  
Why don't you teach  
Mom how to dance?  
The one thing I am proudest  
of in my whole life...  
is that you are happy with me.  
If I couldn't... if I couldn't tell you  
that I was unhappy sometimes,  
it was because I didn't want to risk  
hurting the one person I treasure most.  
I'm so sorry.  
# The book of love

# Is long and boring  
# And no one can lift  
the damn thing  
# It's full of charts  
# And facts and figures  
# And instructions for dancing  
# But I...  
# I love it when you read to me  
# And you  
# You can read me anything  
# The book of love  
#Has music in it  
# In fact, that's where  
music comes from  
# Some of it's just  
transcendental  
# Some of it's just  
really dumb  
# But I...  
So, John, I'll see you  
at the party, huh?  
# I love it when you sing to me  
# And you  
# You can sing me anything  
# The book of love  
is long and boring  
# And written very long ago  
# It's full of flowers  
and heart-shaped boxes  
# And things we're all  
too young to know  
# But I...  
# I love it when you  
give me things  
# And you  
# You ought to give me  
wedding rings  
# The book of love  
has music in it  
# In fact, that's where  
music comes from  
# Some of it's just  
transcendental...  
I like this palette.



It looks lovely.  
I just am now worried, though,  
that these guys are too dark...  
# But I...  
# I love it when you sing to me  
# And you  
# You can sing me anything  
It's a silly rose.  
It's beautiful.  
Why aren't you at the party?  
Oh, because it's a dance,  
and to dance you need a partner and...  
my partner is right here.  
Beverly... dance with me.  
I don't know how.  
- Yeah, you do.  
- No, I don't.  
You've been dancing with me  
for 19 years.  
But I don't know the steps.  
I'll teach you.  
Here?  
Right now.  
# And you  
# You ought to give me  
wedding rings  
# And I  
# I love it when  
you give me things  
# And you  
# You ought to give me  
wedding rings  
# You ought to give me  
# Wedding rings  
And now Paulina will choose her partner  
for her special farewell dance.  
Paulina.  
- You taught me well. Come on.  
- It'd be my pleasure.  
- Let me show you how much I learned.  
- I'm available.  
There's John!  
- Come on!  
- Come on!

Shall we dance, Mr. Clark?

I would love to.

- Beverly, this is Paulina.

- Hi. Nice to meet you.

- C'mon, c'mon. C'mon, c'mon, c'mon.

- Thank you.

Come on, let's go dance.

# When the rumba rhythm'n's  
started to play

# Dance with me

# Make me sway

# Like a lazy ocean

hugs the shore

# Hold me close

# Sway me more

# Like a flower bending

in the breeze

# Bend with me

# Sway with ease

# When we dance

you have a way with me

# Stay with me

# Sway with me

# Other dancers may be

on the floor

# Yeah but my eyes

will see only you

# Only you have

that magic technique

- # When we sway I go weak

- # I go so weak

# I can hear the sound of violins

# Long before it begins

# Make me thrill

as only you know how

# Sway me smooth

Sway me now

# Mi amor

# Sway me

# Take me

# Thrill me

# Hold me

# Bend me

# Ease me

# You have a way with me  
# Yeah, yeah  
# Sway me  
# Other dancers may be  
on the floor  
# Yeah but my eyes  
will see only you  
# Only you have that  
magic technique  
# When we sway I go weak  
# I go weak  
# I can hear the sound of violins  
# Long before it begins  
# Make me thrill  
as only you know how  
# Sway me smooth  
Sway me now  
# Make me thrill  
as only you know how  
# Sway me smooth  
Sway me now  
# Yeah  
# Yeah, yeah  
# Let's dance  
# Put on your red shoes  
and dance the blues  
# Let's dance  
# To the song  
they're playing on the radio  
# Let's sway  
# Let's sway  
While color lights up your face  
# Let's sway  
# Let's sway through the crowd  
to an empty space  
# C'mon, c'mon, c'mon, c'mon  
#If you say "Run"  
# I'll run with you  
# And if you say "Hide"  
# We'll hide  
# Because my love for you  
# Would brake my heart in two  
# If you should fall  
Into my arms

# Tremble like a flower  
# Take me to the floor  
# Let's dance  
# Let's dance  
# Let's dance  
# For fear your grace should fall  
# Should fall  
# Let's dance  
# For fear tonight is all  
# Let's sway  
# And then I can look  
# I can look into your eyes  
# Let's sway  
# Underneath the moonlight  
# I'm talkin' about the moonlight  
- # Let's...  
- # Dance