

Adam



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shall we dance?

Dancing was his profession; it was to become something more . . .

BEHIND THE pale blue eyes of 52-year-old Paul Kraft, was uncontrollable greed. A minor partner—twenty percent—in an enterprise he inspired, organized and promoted, Kraft wanted more for himself. The truth is he wanted it all—the whole kit and kaboodle control of the Winston Dancing Studios national chain. What, Kraft asked himself, did Winston contribute to the company besides his famous dancing name. From the beginning, it had been Kraft's idea to go national, sell the method and the famous name. He, Kraft, had organized the system of franchises all over the country, emanating out of New York. Now after ten years, Winston Dancing Studios were operating under expensive franchises in every major city. Kraft claimed the full credit for himself.

The time had come to push Winston out, but how? Jane, Kraft's wife, picked up his own lament and constantly nagged him at home. "Why don't you own the business—you do all the work!"

The buzzer on his desk summoned him. "Yes?" His voice took on silken tones and he composed his face.

"We're ready sir!"

"Thank you, Myra." He walked the length of his office and opened the door connected to the training studio. Before him were twenty well groomed, healthy looking men and women. They had eager expectant faces. They wore name tags on their chests. They gave him their attention. Paul gave them his famous smile. He *could* be charming.

"Welcome to the Winston Studios, and welcome to New York. You have been carefully selected for our highly specialized training program for very good reasons. You have all shown exceptional management ability. In the ten weeks you will spend with us here in New York, it will be our goal to develop every aspect of that latent ability. We will also polish your

teaching methods to a high finish. You will train new teachers and you will learn all about operating a Winston Studio.

Paul Kraft smiled again. "We must learn right off the bat to keep a friendly, relaxed atmosphere at all times. Our studios are famous for that. You must like the people who come to our studios. You have something they want and need, and they are more than willing to pay for it. Any questions?"

"Fine," he continued, "We will begin with the ten basic steps in the Tango, Myra, if you please." He held out his hand. A statuesque, carefully made-up girl walked over to him quickly.

They embraced closely, yet impersonally. Smoothly, efficiently they danced together. They were good, no doubt about that. Kraft stepped back away from Myra and said to the group,

"Now let me see you do that! Also the variations of the basic step patterns in the left and right turns, the cortez, the gauchó and la-aspa dance figures. Take partners, please.

The men stepped toward the women, embraced them closely and impersonally. It was all professional.

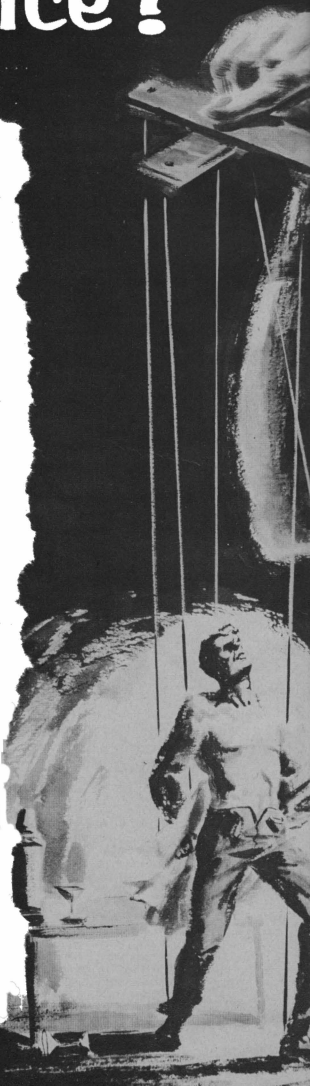
After they had danced for a few moments, Kraft motioned to Myra and she turned the music off. She knew his every gesture and thought; they had been through this routine so many times.

Kraft spoke again. "Each couple separately, please. I want to observe technique. Same pattern. All ready?"

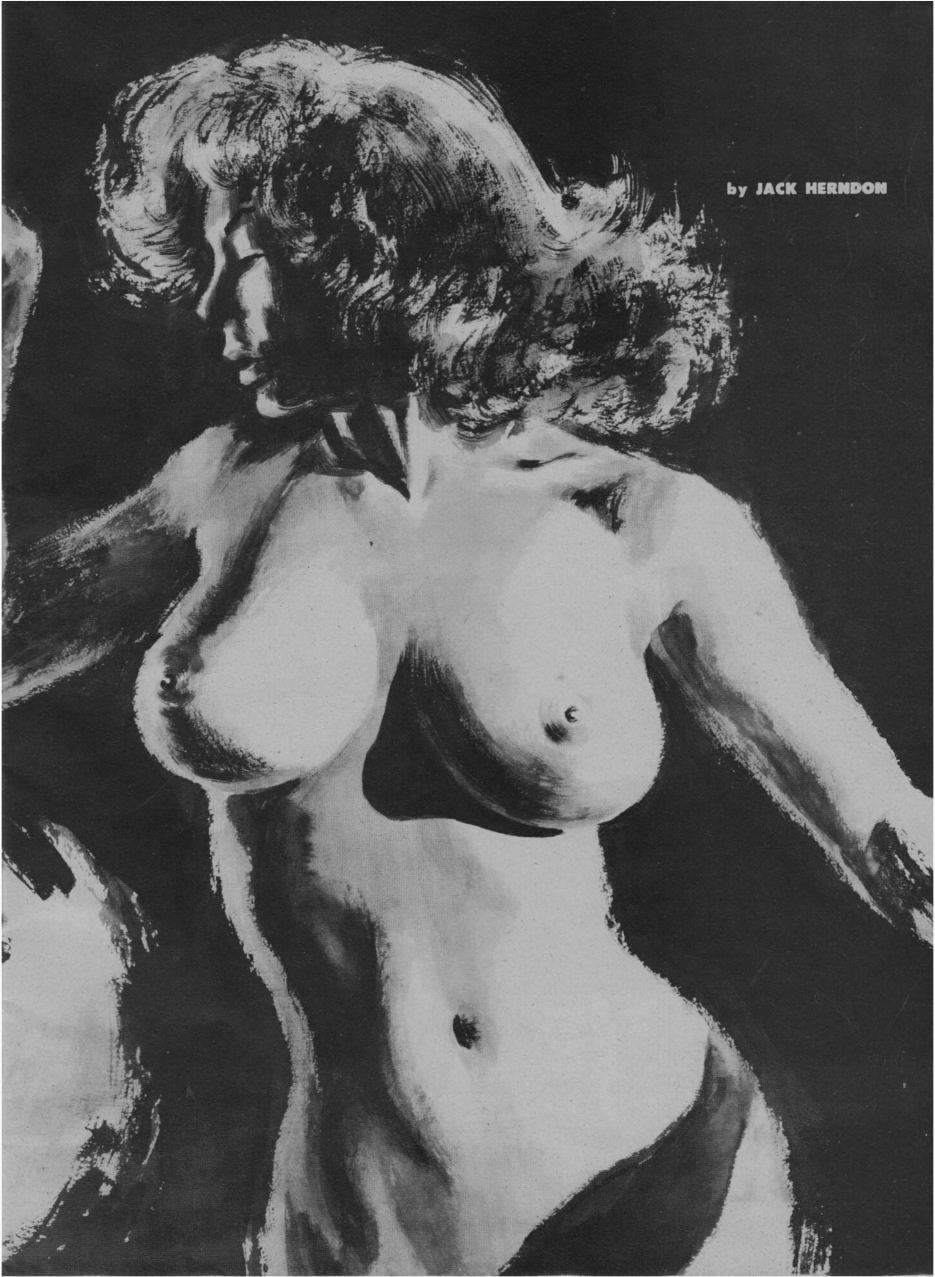
The individual couples went through their dance steps.

He watched them carefully and observed every detail of their effort—not only their dancing, but their dress, confidence, animation, facial expressions, the flow of their body movements. He noticed particularly how masculine the men appeared and how

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by JACK HERNDON



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feminine the women. This was his business, his effort and he knew what he wanted and how to get it. To Kraft, these were not just people, but highly trained specialists, extensions of himself in hundreds of studios throughout the country. High gloss and young, with friendly faces. Their full efforts would be concentrated on selling dance courses to the lonely, frightened people who came into the studios.

He stayed with them for three hours and watched their intense practice in the fundamental patterns of all the ballroom dances. Kraft's eyes began to focus on one girl. She was a red head, with clear blue eyes, and flawless skin. She danced with suppressed energy. Her hips were slim and moved with hints of voluptuousness.

Finally he held up his hand; they all stopped and waited. "We'll take a fifteen minute break, then we will reassemble in the conference room."

He walked over to the red head. "I'd like to see you in my office . . . he glanced at the name tag on her breast, "Miss Sally Joyce."

Then he went over to Myra. "Give me the background file on Miss Joyce. I'll be in my office."

Myra placed the Joyce folder on his desk. "Miss Joyce is outside."

"Show her in." Kraft went to the

bar and mixed himself a highball. Miss Joyce walked in, slightly aloof, aware of her beauty. She used it well.

"Like a highball?"

Miss Joyce raised her eyebrows. "Now? During business hours?"

"In this office anything goes." Paul said, smiling.

"I see." She made a mental effort to relax, then said, "I'll have bourbon on the rocks." Her voice took on a musical, intimate quality. This guy is nobody's fool. Watch your step, she thought to herself.

Paul took the drinks over to a comfortable couch and asked her to sit down.

"I have your personal history in this folder, but it would be more interesting to learn all about you from you."

"What would you like to know?"

"How long have you been associated with the Winston Studios?"

"Two years and five months."

"What branch?"

"Chicago, in the downtown Loop."

"Earnings?"

"I was a prize winner six times, and second place four times."

Kraft looked up sharply. "My, My! Such ambition . . ."

She showed him her white teeth, looked him straight in the eyes. He spoke again.

"Why the unusually hard work?"

"I wanted to attract the attention of the National office."

"You've succeeded my dear girl. But why?"

"I want a franchise of my own, but I don't have the money to invest. I thought I would start by becoming a Studio Manager. Save all my money, and then perhaps interest a partner and buy a franchise. It's that simple."

Kraft laughed. "That's the spirit! And such a worthy ambition. How old are you?"

"Twenty-eight."

"Are you married?"

"I was, but my husband left me . . .!"

There was a long pause. Kraft was trying to piece what he knew about her: her working, ambitions, beauty — but a lost husband.

Paul decided he would take a chance. "It seems so strange."

"What?"

"You're a beautiful, desirable woman, hard-working, sensible. Why would any man walk out on you?"

She said nothing, only a faint smile clung to her lovely mouth. Then she finished the rest of her drink.

"Have another?" Paul asked.

She held up her hand. "Oh no. I get wild with two straight drinks."

Paul came back to what he wanted to know. "Why did your husband leave you?"

"How does that have anything to do with my job with Winston Studios?"

"Nothing. Nothing whatever. I'm just curious."

"He wasn't man enough for me."

Kraft looked at her sharply. She went right on, kept her eyes focused on Paul. "I need lots of loving. Something inside me craves love. I can't seem to get all I want." She took a deep breath bringing her breasts high, tantalizing Kraft.

He felt his palms begin sweating. He didn't expect this kind of answer. He went to his desk, pressed a button. Myra's voice answered, "Yes, Mr. Kraft?"

"When our teacher-managers reassemble in the conference room, give them our Sales Approach Manual; tell them to study the first ten pages and be ready for a quiz on Emotional Sales Technique at eleven o'clock tomorrow morning. Call the Radio City Music Hall and make reservations for all the personnel tonight. Tell them they are to be my theater guests. And Myra, I won't be needing you anymore tonight!"

"Goodnight Mr. Kraft." She clicked off the intercom.

He walked back to the bar, mixed another batch of drinks. He put them

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down on the table in front of the soft couch. "Well, here's the second round. I like wild women." He smiled. He could be a smooth operator.

She picked up the drink. Her look was challenging. With one long gulp down it went. Paul watched her with a growing excitement.

She lifted her arms and said to him. "Dance with me."

Kraft lifted her to her feet. Her face was beginning to flush. They walked into the training studio. Paul turned on the music. It was a tango.

"Turn out the lights." Her voice had authority.

He turned the lights out, then went to the door and locked it.

She fitted into his arms perfectly. He turned her into a deep dip and she pressed her hips tight against him. He could feel his own hips burning and the music lifted them into a new, wonderful world.

"Wait, there is something I have always wanted to do." She went back into his office.

Paul heard a zipper, then a rustle of cloth. He saw a faint shadow, then she stood in the doorway, completely nude, silhouetted against the light of the office. The outline he saw showed full rounded hips, tapering into a narrow waistline, the unmistakably full ripe breasts. Her thighs were soft, still in shadow.

Paul could feel the back of his neck growing tight; a tiny trickle of sweat dropped down his back. She walked toward him.

"I want to dance the tango like this." A lyrical tinkly laugh came out of her. "Care to join me?"

The music, sensually throbbing in the background began to beat inside his head. He quickly undressed and clasped her in his arms. He was shocked at the heat of her body. They began to dance. It was awkward at first, and he felt a little foolish. But she pressed close to him, following his every move and turn, and finally he got the idea that she really wanted to dance like this. He was intrigued; this was his first experience and he gave it everything he had. It was so different he could easily forget about Jane — his wife. He held her tightly, crushingly, pressing her breasts flat against him. Then in some of the steps, he released her and tantalizingly, softly let their bodies touch again. He could hear her breath getting deeper, and fuller. He himself was reaching a point where this dance would have to end; she again plunged her smoothly rounded hips against his. An electric current pulsed through them.

Suddenly she stopped and grabbed

him and kissed him open-mouthed, hungrily.

Paul felt her quivering down to her toes.

Her breath was hot against his ear. She took his hand and pulled him hurriedly into the office. The lights were too bright; he turned them out. She lay on the couch, waiting, not with love, but with passion. Their dance was only a small beginning of the dance she began on that couch. She seemed possessed by a demon. She made all kinds of sound and movement, deep throated cries and thrust her hips about with wild fury.

Kraft felt like the star attraction in a bucking bronc rodeo.

* * *

She was quiet, breathing regularly. Lingeringly she let her hands roam over his body. Kraft felt like a giant of a man, for in the back of his mind, he knew this was no ordinary, bloodless, and passive creature. She was hot-blooded, aggressive, and demanding, and any man who could meet the challenge of her hips was a man indeed.

His pride was short lived. She began caressing him all over. "More. I want more."

With no decision involved of his own, Kraft was again in her grasp; she entwined him in her thighs and arms, possessing him unlike any woman in his experience, including the passionate Jane. She used him like an instrument to satisfy her unfathomable well of desire.

Kraft got up. "Don't leave me," she cried.

"I'm thirsty. I'll be back. He poured himself another drink. The faint light of the bar reflected in his face.

Suddenly, his plan was clear. "I got it!" He knew now how he'd get control of the Winston Studios. He laughed to himself.

He walked back to her. "Here is another drink. Time out."

"No! No more drinks. It takes the edge off my feelings, I want to be alive to everything."

"Haven't you had enough?" She laughed. "Enough? I'm just beginning. C'mere, I still got a few tricks up my sleeve!"

The rich, full passion flowed like a raging river between them. Kraft found himself in a quandary. Never had he known a woman of such immense passion. Her body seemed alive, throbbing, aching for more contact, more pressure. He had the body of a young athlete, hard and smooth-muscle. His years of dancing gave him reserves of stamina and power beyond ordinary men, but he had met his match. Finally he pleaded with her. "Let me rest, please. Just for a

little while . . . please."

"I must tell you, Paul," She used his name with a sure sense of power, "you are a magnificent lover. You should be proud of your body. You have made me a happy woman."

"You mean you've had enough?"

"Paul, darling, for me there is no such thing as *enough*. Let's say for the moment, I am happy."

Kraft lay quietly in the dark. His mind raced ahead to his plan for getting full control of the Winston Studios. The old reprobate, his partner Winston was 10 years his senior—63, and had a tired heart.

"Miss Joyce," he began.

"Call me Claudia."

"Claudia, I have a business proposition."

She sighed and said, "What's on your mind?"

"I will provide you with the franchise for any Winston Studio in any city in the country. Outside of New York, of course."

"Paul you don't have to buy me, I'm available for you at any time."

"It's not that, Claudia. I need you for business."

"What kind of business?" Her voice sounded flat.

He tried to ease into her part but she was sharp. "Look, you mean you want me to work the old guy over until he drops dead, right?"

"He's got a bad heart, it shouldn't take long."

"You low-life bastard." She laughed.

"What a way to kill a man. Let's eat, I'm hungry. Nothing like a session like this to stir up the appetite."

Paul was pleased she wasn't revolted by his plan.

He took her to the most exclusive restaurant in town. Let her get used to luxuries, he thought.

* * *

Two days later, Kraft arranged a party and presented Claudia to Richard Winston. Winston was a well-preserved man, with charming manners and a roving eye. It didn't take long for Claudia to attract his full attention. She was wearing a sheer nylon blouse and a half-bra. Her full, rich bosoms were practically exposed. Her long slim legs and muscular hips were in a tight sheath skirt, showing off her rounded body.

Richard Winston had a way with women. His long experience in dancing gave him a polished attentive veneer. Claudia found him easy to take.

A few days after she met Winston, she called Kraft and told him they were going to Atlantic City for a week's vacation.

He reminded her, "Remember our

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agreement."

"I remember everything," she said. A few days later, Kraft received a postcard. "Having a wonderful time; we're staying a little longer. Will call you when I get back. Love, Claudia."

Kraft busied himself with the details of the studio, happier than he had been for years. Soon, he would own it all, a full victory for himself and the grandest gift possible for his wife, Jane.

The buzzer sounded on his desk. "Yes?"

"It's the newspapers, Mr. Kraft. It's about Mr. Winston."

Paul's heart jumped. He picked up the phone. "Paul Kraft speaking."

"This is the New York Daily Press, Mr. Kraft. We just got word on the teletype that Richard Winston is dead. Heart attack. Sorry to report this. Have you a picture of Mr. Winston we can use?"

Sweat broke out on Kraft's forehead. She did it. Victory! "Yes, I have a photo you can have. Send a messenger." He hung up.

Why hadn't he heard from Claudia? The elation became anxiety.

The next day the phone rang. "Paul, this is Claudia. I'm at the Astor Hotel. Can you come right away."

Twenty minutes later he knocked

on her door. She opened the door, wearing only a negligee.

"Hardly a fit costume for a mourning girl friend," Kraft kidded.

"Sit down. We have a few things to straighten out. First, as soon as possible I want a full financial statement of the Winston studios."

"Why should you want that?"

"I'm entitled to it. I am Winston's widow. We were married in Atlantic City."

Kraft was shocked. "Why you double-crossing bitch!"

"Watch your language and manner, Mr. Kraft. You have twenty percent of the business, but your position as executive vice-president depends on me."

He was trapped. He had poured ten years of his life into this, and now he was too old to go job hunting. What could he say to his wife, Jane? She would probably belittle him with that trick of hers. She will demand more in bed; she will be hungrier and insatiable in her bodily wants.

But the worst was yet to come.

"Now, Mr. Kraft, I have a duty for you. This will be part of your daily schedule morning and afternoon. Take off your clothes. We're going to tango."