

# LOVE'S LANDSCAPES



Don't Read in the Closet 2014

## DANCE WITH ME

Suzanne Simon

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# Love's Landscapes

*An M/M Romance series*

## DANCE WITH ME

**By Suzanne Simon**

### Introduction

The story you are about to read celebrates love, sex and romance between men. It is a product of the *Love's Landscapes* promotion sponsored by the *Goodreads M/M Romance Group* and is published as a gift to you.

### What Is Love's Landscapes?

The *Goodreads M/M Romance Group* invited members to choose a photo and pen a letter asking for a short M/M romance story inspired by the image; authors from the group were encouraged to select a letter and write an original tale. The result was an outpouring of creativity that shone a spotlight on the special bond between M/M romance writers and the people who love what these authors do.

A written description of the image that inspired this story is provided along with the original request letter. If you'd like to view the photo, please feel free to join the [Goodreads M/M Romance Group](#) and visit the discussion section: *Love's Landscapes*.

No matter if you are a long-time devotee to M/M Romance, just new to the genre or fall somewhere in between, you are in for a delicious treat.

### Words of Caution

This story may contain sexually explicit content and is **intended for adult readers**. It may contain content that is disagreeable or distressing to some readers. The *M/M Romance Group* strongly recommends that each reader review the General Information section before each story for story tags as well as for content warnings.

This story is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are the products of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental.

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[Arizona sunrise](#), [Yellow sunset with boats](#)

[Poollicht](#), [Perfect white beach](#)

[Sunset in Prague](#), [Purple mountain sunset](#)

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# DANCE WITH ME

By Suzanne Simon

## Photo Description

Two dark-haired, slimly built men are dancing close to each other in the middle of a black-and-white, checkered dance floor. They are wearing dark dress pants with suspenders, white dress shirts, and both are barefoot.

## Story Letter

*Dear Author,*

*It all started with a brochure from a local dance studio left in my mailbox...  
Please give us a happy ending, and you won't go wrong!*

*Note: I'd like a story that revolves around Argentine tango. Bonus points for featuring men of short stature.*

*Sincerely,*

*Natālija*

## Story Info

**Genre:** contemporary

**Tags:** sweet/no sex, friends to lovers, secret admirer, dancing, teachers

**Word Count:** 2,729

# DANCE WITH ME

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This was it.

Noah Walker took a deep breath and touched the pocket of his black dress pants, the crinkle of the letter that rested there reassuring him as he waited to learn the identity of the man who had written him such beautiful letters, whose faceless figure had slowly started haunting his dreams.

It had all started when a brochure had been left in his mailbox, a glossy tri-fold page that had featured the most beautiful man Noah had ever seen, accompanied by a letter written on plain cream-colored paper. The man had been facing the camera, holding out one hand towards it as if he were beckoning a faraway lover. The words “*Come dance with me*”—*Viva Dance Studio* spilled across the bottom of the photo in large block letters. Noah had gotten goose bumps when he had first seen the brochure; it had felt as if the man in the photo had been staring right at Noah, encouraging him to join the man on the black and white checkered dance floor.

The letter that accompanied it had been short and to the point:

*The tango is a beautiful dance if you are paired with the right partner. I don't know if I am the right partner for you but I think you deserve the chance to find someone for yourself— whoever he will turn out to be. I have arranged lessons for you at the Viva Dance Studio so that you can begin to live again.*

At first, Noah had put the brochure and the letter aside intending to forget all about it. It was too unusual, letting someone that he didn't even know pay for lessons at a dance studio near his apartment. And who even did that, buying something that extravagant for a complete stranger?

Then the thought occurred to him that just because he didn't know who had sent the letter didn't mean that the person did not know him. It could be someone that he saw every day; perhaps the man who he saw when he bought his morning latte on the way to work. He never failed to give Noah a nod as he sat at one of the tables near the front, working on his laptop.

Or it could be one of the men who lived in his apartment complex. There wasn't any one man that stuck out in his mind since Noah lived in a large complex and wasn't particularly close with any of his neighbors, other than an occasional "hello" as they passed in the hallway.

Hell, it could even be the parent of one of his students. Noah taught English to ninth and tenth graders, and was an advisor for both the Adams High newspaper and the Yearbook committee. For that matter, it could even be a fellow teacher. Noah's mind immediately focused onto Marco Olivares, his best friend and fellow co-worker. He just as quickly forced that thought out of his mind.

It wasn't that he thought Marco was unattractive; it was just that Noah couldn't think of his best friend of five years that way. He had been so great to Noah, both when he first started working at Adams High, and later, when living with Sam had turned out to be such a horrible mistake. Marco had been there for him through it all, and the last thing that he deserved was to have his best friend lusting after him.

Besides, Noah had taken note of the type of men Marco had dated over the years. Every last one of them had been tall, muscular blonds. There had not been one short, dark-haired, dark-eyed man in the bunch. Noah knew because he had carefully scrutinized every man that Marco had brought around, trying to see whatever it was that his friend saw in them. It wasn't until Sam had betrayed Noah's trust so spectacularly, and Marco had worked so hard to try to console him, that he finally realized why the other man's obvious type had bothered him so much.

It was because Noah was so obviously *not* Marco's type.

Noah took a deep breath. The brochure had burned at him until he had taken the plunge and started taking those dance lessons. And he had become more and more aware of Marco's attractiveness as the last month of lessons had progressed; when he was twirling around the studio's dance floor twice a week with various partners, it was Marco's arms that he pictured around him. He had also watched carefully over that month for any sign that Marco might return even a little of the attraction that he felt towards his friend, all without success. His friend was warm, attentive... and treated him like any other man would treat a buddy.

It was time to put this foolish crush behind him and move on. He had given Marco a hundred different openings over the last month, secretly hoping that

there might be even a hint of jealousy at the possibility that another man might be interested in him, but there hadn't been even a tiny spark of green envy from his friend. Though there had been... something in his eyes when Noah had received the last letter; the one that currently resided in his pocket.

His mystery man would remain a mystery no longer. The letter praised him for his willingness to follow through with the dance lessons, two a week for a month, and the letter stated that his prize would be the opportunity to meet his benefactor face-to-face. To add to the mystery, a beautiful black suit, complete with suspenders and a blue silk tie, had been delivered to his apartment. Like the envelope that had contained the brochure, there was no return address, nor any other indication of who had sent it to him. Noah had put the suit on, but since he had never been a fan of getting dressed up, he had left off the jacket and the tie.

*Time to move on*, he thought to himself, but he was no longer sure of who he was trying to convince. He no longer believed that Marco was just a friend to him, and there was no one else in his head to listen to his little white lie.

Noah took a deep breath and opened the door to the dance studio. A shadowy figure hovered just outside the doorway. He held his breath in anticipation when he saw that the man was short in stature and had dark hair. Until that moment, Noah had not realized how much he had hoped that his mystery man would turn out to be Marco.

The man stepped out of the shadows into the brightly lit hallway, and Noah's heart seemed to stop for just a second, as brown eyes met his own blue eyes. His heart began to beat rapidly and thick disappointment settled into his stomach. The mystery man had brown eyes, but they were dark brown instead of the lighter brown shade of Marco's eyes. *It wasn't him.*

"Why so down, *cariño*?" Diego smirked in amusement. "You were maybe expecting someone else?"

Noah shook his head in denial and hoped that he could keep the bitter regret from showing on his face. Yes, he had been expecting someone else to be standing in front of him. He shouldn't be this upset at having his mystery man turn out to be the owner of the dance studio; the man that had spent the last four weeks teaching him how to dance. Diego was a sweet, handsome, successful man... but he wasn't Marco. *Damn it.*

Noah opened his mouth to say something, anything to try to make this situation less awkward when a voice came from behind him. "Were you expecting me?"



Diego suddenly ceased to exist in his mind, as Noah turned to find Marco standing in the doorway to the studio. He was wearing a pair of dark dress pants, black suspenders, and a white dress shirt opened a few buttons to show off a vee of dark, tan skin. In his hand was a single red rose, which he held out to Noah as he stepped closer to him. "Am I late?"

"Better late than never," Noah quipped nervously through lips that were suddenly dry. He hardly noticed when Diego turned to leave.

Marco's lips quirked up into a smirk as he acknowledged the clichéd saying with a slight nod. "I was stuck in traffic." He reached Noah in a few long strides and pressed the rose into Noah's hand as he slid past him and into the dance studio. "Come with me. I want to show you something."

Noah's grip tightened around the rose as he followed Marco out onto the middle of the black and white checkered dance floor. Marco held his hand out to Noah, an almost exact duplicate of the brochure photo that had enthralled Noah so much the first time he had seen it. Now, the pose affected Noah even more because it was Marco's hand being held out to him; Marco's warm eyes staring into his own. "Dance with me."

Noah laughed breathlessly up at him before glancing down at his shiny black dress shoes. "I know it's hardly a romantic thought but I'd fall right on my ass if I tried. I know I've had a few lessons over the last month, but I think navigating this slick floor with these on will take more skill than I possess at the moment."

Marco shrugged his shoulders and Noah swallowed his disappointment that the other man was going to give up that easily, though he had not been kidding about sliding and falling on the highly polished tile floor. Then he held his breath as Marco leaned over and began to untie his shoelaces. "Not much chance of falling if you're not wearing your shoes." His eyes held Noah's as he began to slip the shoes and socks off of his feet. It only took Noah's brain a few seconds to catch up to what Marco was suggesting, and then he too was removing his shoes and socks with one hand.

When his feet were finally bare, Marco straightened up and again held a hand out to Noah. Noah reached to take it with his right hand, the hand that still held the red rose, and stopped in confusion as he realized that he couldn't hold the rose and Marco's hand at the same time. "You might have to let go of that for a few minutes, *mi amor*." The endearment that Diego had used to refer to Noah had had no effect on him, but being called Marco's love in that husky, lightly accented voice was a different story.

“What should I do with it?” He teasingly held it up to his mouth as if he intended to clench it between his teeth. Marco’s amused laugh sent goose bumps traveling along his arms. How had he managed to deny his attraction to this wonderful man for so long?

Marco shook his head with a smile. “Though I would like us to tango, I’m not sure I can dance with you while you have a flower between your teeth.”

“I guess I’ll just have to improvise.” Noah walked to the edge of the dance floor and gently set the flower onto a black lacquered counter, before rejoining his best friend in the center of the floor. When Marco held his hand out to him again, Noah grasped it firmly and let out a shaky breath as that hand was used to pull him tightly to Noah’s chest.

Noah began to follow Marco’s lead competently, though he was lacking the careless grace that Marco’s dancing seemed to possess. “This isn’t the way that Diego taught us to tango. I seem to remember more... personal space.”

“Complaining?”

Noah shook his head as they danced across the floor. “Just curious.”

“This is Argentine tango, rather than the traditional tango that you might have seen in movies.” Marco lowered Noah into a dip towards the floor, before slowly pulling him back up, sliding his body against Noah’s. “I prefer it to the traditional style.”

Noah smiled against Marco’s cheek. “I could be persuaded to see your point of view.”

“I knew it,” he whispered softly into Noah’s ear as he guided him around the dance floor. “Tell me, what was the deciding factor? Was it my flawless dancing technique?”

Noah abruptly stopped dancing and pulled away from Marco so that he could look him in the eyes. “I think it was realizing how perfectly we fit together when you hold me close like this.”

“A beautiful dance when you find the right partner. And am I?” Marco asked softly.

“There’s no one else that I would rather tango with,” Noah responded as he pulled his best friend in for a kiss.

**The End**

## **Author Bio**

*Suzanne Simon decided to try her hand at writing when she realized that the stories in her head were taking over her real life and discovered that the voices in her head are much more manageable when on paper.*

## **Contact & Media Info**

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