

(Printed with the demonstration version of Fade In)

The Dance

Written by

M.E. McGann

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FADE IN:

EXT. V.F.W. HALL - NIGHT

A car pulls into the crowded lot of the Marblehead V,F.W, finds a spot, and parks.

INT. CAR - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Three people sit in the car. ESLIN, 20, an unkempt college senior. HANNAH 22, a perfectly coiffed writer from Boston. JAMIE, 17, a bright and shiny college freshman.

The building is brightly illuminated.

People coming and going. The band playing inside can be heard in the car.

A large American flag flies from a pole on the roof.

Moments pass.

JAMIE

We going in or what?

ESLIN

(To Jamie)

Like I said back at your house, I'm not really one for dancing.

HANNAH

Whatta you going to do, sit in the fucking car all night? C'mon, let's go in.

A pause.

JAMIE

Sit here if you want, Eslin. I'll see you later.

She jumps out and walks inside.

HANNAH

Do you ever think there might be something wrong with you?

ESLIN

All the time. You've your dance card with you?

HANNAH

Yeah, and it's all filled, sorry.

V.F.W. HALL INTERIOR

The place is packed. Wall to wall noise.

The dance floor is surrounded by a perimeter of tables and chairs.

Crowded bar.

A local band is doing their best on a small raised stage upfront.

Eslin, Hannah, and Jamie are standing together, looking around.

Jamie scans the crowd looking for something.

JAMIE

Those kids over there, I know them from high school. I'll catch up with you guys later.

Jamie goes over to see her old friends. Seconds later she's dancing.

Eslin and Hannah find an empty table and sit down.

HANNAH

I thought she said she wanted to dance with you. Make all of her friends jealous.

ESLIN

Guess not.

HANNAH

Jamie's the only one that's going to have any fun tonight. I didn't really want to come.

Eslin stares at Hannah.

ESLIN

Why the fuck did you say you wanted to back at the house?

HANNAH

I'm supposed to be your girlfriend remember. I thought it was the right thing to say.

ESLIN

Well, you're not, and it wasn't. Now we're both stuck here. Wanna beer?

HANNAH

Yeah.

Eslin gets up and walks over to the bar.

When he gets back to the table, Hannah is gone.

He sits down with the two beers.

A skinny blonde girl, FRANCINE, 20, walks over to the table.

SKINNY BLONDE

Your girlfriend took off. She's dancing with that guy over there. I thought you might wanna know.

Eslin checks out the dance floor.

ESLIN

Yeah, so she is. Thanks for the tip.

A pause.

ESLIN (cont'd)

Hey, I've got this extra beer. Wanna join me.

FRANCINE

Sure.

Francine sits down and starts to drink her beer.

FRANCINE

My name's Francine. That girl you're with, she's really pretty. Your girlfriend?

ESLIN

No. She doesn't like me. I'm doing some photo work for her. And when that's done, I'll probably never see her again. It's a screwy situation really. My name's Eslin.

FRANCINE

You live around here? I've never seen you before.

ESLIN

No, I go to college in Worcester. But I know someone who does, Jamie Adams.

FRANCINE

Hey, I know Jamie. We went to high school together. We graduated last June. Class of '69. Is she here tonight?

Eslin looks around, and spots Jamie.

ESLIN

Yeah, she's over there.

FRANCINE

We weren't real tight. She hung around with a different crowd than I did. How'd you meet her?

ESLIN

Jamie?

FRANCINE

Yeah.

ESLIN

We go to school together.

FRANCINE

The other girl. She go to school with you, too?

ESLIN

No. Her name's Hannah. She works in Boston at a magazine there. A wannabe writer.

The band starts playing. The dance floor fills.

Eslin motions to the dance floor.

ESLIN (cont'd)

Whatta you think?

FRANCINE

Yeah, let's go.

V.F.W. HALL INTERIOR - LATER

Eslin and Francine are back at the table talking.

Hannah returns and sits.

ESLIN

Hannah, this is Francine. Francine,
Hannah.

The girls barely acknowledge each other.

Francine looks around and spots Jamie and her friends.

FRANCINE

I see Jamie. I'm gonna go over and
say hello. I'll be right back.

She gets up and walks over to Jamie's group.

Eslin watches as she goes.

HANNAH

Who's she?

ESLIN

Someone I was sharing a beer with
because the girl I was with vanished.

HANNAH

You're not really with me, Eslin.
Y'know that, right?

ESLIN

Yeah, I get it.

HANNAH

I don't think you do. I need you to
do the photo work for my article. I
don't need a boyfriend.

Eslin looks at Hannah.

ESLIN

Loud and clear.

HANNAH

The guy asked me to dance. I thought
I'd give him a little thrill, that's
all. Shoot me.

ESLIN

Jesus, you're a piece of work.

HANNAH

Whatta you mean by that crack?

ESLIN

"Little thrill." Christ, do y'know
what you even sound like sometimes?

Hannah looks over at Francine.

HANNAH

Your new best friend is getting the
brush-off big time from Jamie and her
pals.

Eslin watches as Jamie and her friends ignore Francine.

Francine stands at the edge of the group trying to be
noticed.

She doesn't know what to do exactly. She just stands there.

Eslin has seen enough, he get up.

ESLIN

(To Hannah)

I'll meet you in the car.

THE BAND LEADER

Well, we're almost ready to call it a
night. You've been a great group to
play for. And we have one last number
to do. So, ladies, if you haven't
done it yet, now's the time to dance
with the one that brung ya.

The band starts playing.

Eslin crosses the floor to where Jamie is.

Jamie sees him coming and starts to move towards him to
dance.

Eslin dodges past her and asks Francine instead.

They dance and after the music ends, Eslin and Francine
drift off to the side.

ESLIN

I had a pretty good time night.
Better than I expected.

FRANCINE

Same here. If you want, we could,
um... go back to my place for a
drink?

ESLIN

Sorry, can't. I'm with a coupla other
people.

They stare at each other. Moments pass.

They share a quick kiss. Brief but heartfelt.

INT. ESLIN'S CAR - NIGHT

They're in the car sitting in the V.F.W. lot.

The engine's running, but the car isn't moving.

HANNAH

We're getting old here. We gonna be moving sometime tonight, Eslin?

He ignores her.

ESLIN

(To Jamie)

When Francine went over to you and your friends, why didn't you say hello to her? She was standing right there.

JAMIE

I hardly knew her in high school. I kinda remember she had a rep as a slut. Why'd you even care?

ESLIN

I care because it was mean spirited, trashy behavior. All you had to do was say hello to her.

JAMIE

She got plenty of attention from you, so I think she'll get over my snub.

Hannah is looking out one of the car window's. She sees Francine walking to her car.

HANNAH

Jamie, there's Francine now. Please go say hello to Slutty Sally and shut Eslin up or we'll be stuck in this parking lot all fucking night.

Jamie laughs.

EXT. V.F.W. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Eslin turns off the engine and gets out.

He tosses the car keys to Hannah.

ESLIN

You drive. Don't wait up.

HANNAH

Where the fuck are you going? What about tomorrow?

Eslin walks over to Francine.

ESLIN

What about that drink?

FRANCINE

Yeah, c'mon get in.

INT. FRANCINE'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Eslin gets in her car.

ESLIN

I dunno if I should be doing this.

FRANCINE

Are you involved with either of those girls?

ESLIN

I haven't known Jamie very long, besides she's too young for me. And Hannah, she's more interested in her job than me. So, no, I'm not.

FRANCINE

Well, what's the problem?

ESLIN

I guess there isn't one. Let's go.

FRANCINE

And afterwards?

ESLIN

Whatta you think?

FRANCINE

"And you sit wondering where you're going to turn I got it. Come. And be my baby."

Francine gently touches Eslin's face.

FRANCINE (cont'd)
Maya Angelou wrote that. It's the
only poetry I know.

Eslin reaches over and takes hold of one of her hands.

ESLIN
"And hand in hand, by the edge of the
sand, they danced by the light of the
moon, the moon, the moon. They danced
by the light of the moon." Edward
Lear wrote that. And that's the only
poetry I know.

And with that, Francine's car vanishes into the night.

FADE OUT.