

Bourne toWrite...

creative writing
workshops

A Plain Man

by Sue Hitchcock

I have a love, a secret lover. He doesn't know. If he did, he might avoid me, or if he liked me, it would all change and not in a good way. He isn't much to look at, but he is something to think about. You'd probably pass him by, he is quite ordinary, no taller than me and somewhat older. He has already lost most of his hair and his scalp is a bit sunburnt, although he works in front of a computer most of the time. His eyes look very small, distorted by his strong spectacles, but his nose is fine with sensitive nostrils. He isn't fat but he is broad, especially in the shoulders. I've seen him in a red fleece and it makes me want to cuddle him.

What we have in common is a love of dancing. The first dance tonight is an Italian tarantella. The girls make a line facing the men. I am wearing a full skirt with loads of petticoats underneath. The men wear white shirts and funny little caps. We start with the little kicking steps to our partner, then the men approach twirling their hands, pretending to count the number of petticoats their girl is wearing. Then the girls dance forward clapping their hands in their man's face. They finish dancing a twister together, always with the spritely kick step.

Next we do a French dance, where each man has two girl partners, one each side. Firstly the three dance holding hands from side to side, then the man dances with one girl, leaving the other behind to dance alone. After another threesome, he dances with his other partner. Wouldn't you know the French would have a dance for a man with a wife and a mistress?

Our last dance is a polka and I am wearing neat, heeled boots, a full brocade dress and ribbons in my hair. He is wearing knee-high riding boots and a splendid uniform. We dance in the Polish way, he holding me by the waist and I having my

hands on his shoulders, then off we go bouncing and twirling around at frightening speed – one, two, three, hop! One, two, three, hop!

My husband is playing the violin in the band and he is looking annoyed at my breathless panting and red cheeks. Still, we shall go home very soon and I shall sleep soundly.