

From Chapter Fourteen, *He Goes, She Goes* by Joanna Torrey

(This is a scene with physical action and gesture. It includes description of people, description through detail and through imagery. Logistics, metaphor. Very full and novelistic. Note structure: Sets up with description, expands with metaphor, then the narrator's feeling. Also note the narrator's voice)

The second I enter, I spot Carlos. He's changed into a cream suit with a black shirt and a black tie, a gangster outfit except for the ballroom dancer's pin, which shines from across the room like a sheriff's star. He's standing at the bar stirring a drink, hair slicked back, tight as a baby seal's. He's with a beautiful woman who looks as though she might have bad skin if the lights were up. Hair almost to her waist, a big dark curtain of it. I know what a great dancer could do with that hair. She swings it back, all of a piece, and smiles up at him with her too-white teeth. Carlos leans down and whispers something to her. Already, before making even a baby step onto the dance floor, before eating so much as a mini-egg roll from the free buffet, I feel like a failure. This has to be his dance partner. I know by the way he touches her, the way he's touched me so recently, just a glance here or there, waist, shoulder, not completely sexual, not completely fatherly, just familiar.

Once they start dancing, it doesn't take long for everyone to clear the floor. I move closer, too, into the crush of perfume and human smells. I hardly even recognize what they're doing, except for the occasional turn or movement of her feet, here and gone again in a fantastic blur. She isn't wearing student shoes. Hers are purely professional, heels like knives (the ones I've kept at home until I deserve them). Her slender arm, pale as skim milk, slithers up past her ear and on into the air, a move that somehow brings him in closer to her. Her long red nails point up at the ceiling. If I did that, I'd look like I was directing traffic.

It's impossible to count the number of times she turns. She turns and turns without beginning or end, her hair its own weather pattern. She goes and goes. His movements around her are almost in her, liquid and insinuating, a snake charmer's. Obviously they're ignoring all those silly spotting rules he's explained to me, Adam's apple rules, don't-touch-the-breast rules. His hands know exactly where to return on her body, beautiful homing pigeon hands. They're looking straight at each other, smiling as though they have a private joke. I could cut in on her. I could cut in on him.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Joanna Torrey, *He Goes, She Goes*, (New York: Crown 2001), pp. 143-144.