

A dance with a stranger

The violent rain showered me and the sky was gloomy and lifeless. It was a solitary visual; it reflected exactly my melancholy state of mind. The air was thick with the scent of rain-damp clothing. Coldness crept round me, like water surrounding an island. The brightly lit front of the Moulin Rouge caught my attention from the soaking street corner. I was glad when I was finally allowed inside.

Two grand mahogany French doors opened slowly, but surely. As I peered in I could see that the room looked luxurious. It was the beautiful golden spotlights above that caught my eye, which twinkled just like stars in the night sky. My mood changed to a feeling of warmth and bliss. Perhaps this wasn't going to be so bad after all.

I merrily strolled in. I was expecting it to be just like heaven, like I had seen at that quick glance. Then that foul smell hit me, the combination of cigars and alcohol. It lingered in the air. I started to realize that this place wasn't as good as I first thought. To make matters worse, I could even taste a disgusting lump of smoke in the back of my throat, which had been collected from the atmosphere. It was beginning to feel as if my throat had totally swollen up, as the amount of smoke was so thick. Surely no one else could put up with this?

I started pushing forcefully through the many crowds of sweating, screaming people, to try to get to the exit. It was no use though; as the people who were just arriving were pushing and shoving me back. This was becoming beyond a joke. The next thing I knew, I was deafened by the sound of music, which had just started to play. I turned round to face the front, and noticed the room was strangely filled with much hyperactivity. Whatever could be happening in this house of mayhem? I also noticed that I had been pushed forward so far, that I was right at the front of the theatre – incredibly close to the stage. The rouge, heavy, velvet stage curtains that dragged on the floor, were eagerly waiting to

be opened. Once again, that vile stench of cigars wafted past me. Then to my relief, the curtains unveiled that night's act. I thought maybe this would cheer me up after the disappointment I had had all night. Let's just say the act wasn't quite what I was expecting though.

I saw the madness of the vibrantly coloured dresses being worn by women, whose faces were caked in layers of overdramatic makeup. They were stamping their feet enthusiastically to the rhythm of the music, on the dull and tarnished floor; while swaying their silky dresses to and fro. This was unusual, but bizarrely entertaining! I clapped and cheered them on, and tapped my foot to the music, keenly. It was amazing.

Then out of nowhere, I sensed someone was behind me. I swiftly turned around, to be confronted by a young man of smart appearance. As our eyes met, he took me gently by the hand and asked me to dance. I paused for a moment, as I was slightly taken aback by his question. His clammy hand lingered on mine, as he nervously awaited my answer. 'Such a charming man' I thought, so how could I refuse? His beautiful smile lit up his face as I returned my pleasing answer. He offered his arm, and led me to the floor. We gleefully danced around the room, interchanging arms – as we interpreted the music into action. The music stopped; we cheered and clapped our appreciation of the musical atmosphere. The band began to play. We engaged arms and vigorously danced again. The music ended. We were exhausted.

My companion escorted me to my seat, placed a kiss on my cheek and bid me farewell, then vanished through the crowd. My happiness came to an abrupt end.