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Jon Remmerde

Winter of Dancing

Mountain wind
blew cold rain
through conifer trees.
Big sedan, rusty and dented,
waddled up my muddy driveway.
Diana called to me
between east wind and west wind,
black hair blown wild in cold wind,
pale, high cheekbones, hawk eyes.
Words rose to the storming sky
close against my mountain.
“Let’s go dancing.”

I said
“Are you outa your mind?
I almost can’t walk
and you want to go dancing?”

She yelled into rain
furiously washing
her words,
“You told me one time
death would be the only thing
could stop you from dancing.”
Fierce wind
bent pine trees away from dark sky.
“You don’t look dead to me.”

She warmed by my stove
while I got ready.
I had said more than that.
I knew she remembered.

As long as I didn’t
come down hard
on my injured leg,
I danced wild,
lost my balance sometimes,

but Diana caught me,
laughed,
“You’re starting a whole new style.
By this time next week,
‘Catch me honey,
I’m headed for the floor again’
will be the rage
of the ridge.”

Very late
I drove to her place
from the bar
in town
where we danced together
helped her to bed
took her babysitter home,
slept on the floor
by her son’s crib.

She was still a little drunk,
in the early morning
She said
“I’ll take you home.
Rain’s turned to snow.
Look. Windy and cold out there.”
Trees bent in snow-laden wind.
“You’re still too drunk to drive,”
I said
I hiked up my mountain alone,
saluted the cold sky
with my thumb.
caught a ride,
built a new fire in my stove,
assessed the damage
I’d done
stomping a wooden floor.

I walked a lonely mountain
that week,
through new
powdery snow,
built muscle and stamina.
I was ready to go
when she came

to get me again,
end of the week.

We weren't lovers anymore.
me busted up
and poverty
helped keep that from starting again.

This love meant more to me.
Through cold
mountain winter,
when I walked
deepening snow,
lonely weeks of pain,
uncertain balance.
She drove up the mountain,
weekends.
Twenty miles up winding road
in falling snow.

We danced wild together
fed each other
love of life
more than
enough to live
and find our futures.