

**I**N terms of pure physique, I believe I am normal. I am moderately tall (at least by sub-continental standards) and dark, not too sure though, whether I qualify for the third of the trilogy that would make me a 'TDH'. I have two feet, two arms, two eyes and the entire set of other accessories that you would normally associate with all those who aspire for the human grade. Trouble is somehow there appear to be either too many of them or too few, especially when confronted with lights, sound and a dance floor!

Allow me to begin from the beginning. I grew up in a small town which had robust traditions and great respect for family values. One of the abiding customs dictated that during marriages, all the near and dear ones of the would-be couples would come out in their bridal finery and dance on the streets, to the accompaniment of a live band. That this public display of private emotions, almost always led to utter chaos on the narrow lanes that our town boasted, was clearly the least of the priorities of the revellers. It was at one of these DOs, that a cousin first discovered that I was not particularly blessed when it came to matching steps with musical notes. And like Archimedes he decided that this was one discovery that had to be shared with the world without wasting precious time.

Which is why this ad in the daily news paper, 'You too can Dance...', from a renowned dancer, that claimed to 'cure' all dance related diseases with the accuracy of a broad band anti-biotic, had me dancing (only figuratively) with joy. Trouble was the Dance Master had banned entry for stags and would entertain applications for admission, only if it held out the promise that the applicant would be duly accompanied by someone from the gentler sex.

Now those of you who know me know that the name-board of my 'family' is mostly set on the 'away' option what with my wife working and posted out in a neighbouring country. A close friend agreed to help out provided I lent a helping hand in correcting the answer scripts of her students, over 50 of them, who had all written essays on 'Why honesty is the best policy...'. Some people never learn!

The dance master was a serious threat to the gymnasts of the world. With a neatly proportioned body that responded to commands like a well oiled machine, he was doing things with his feet and hands that I find it a strain even describing. Those of you who are familiar with the modern trends in music in the sub continent would immediately know what I

# Tango Trap

NEERAJ SINHA

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am talking about when I say, that there was loud music playing in the room of the kind, which lays more emphasis on the baseness of the guitar than the freshness of ideas or lyrics. Well that is to put things diplomatically. Actually, there was sheer cacophony with different kinds of sound instruments, stringed and otherwise trying to outdo each other in a manner that was not funny. In the background, one could barely make out the lyrics wherein, a strained male voice was trying to convey utter helplessness at his inability to reach his lady love (who presumably stayed on the 24th or 25th floor) as the lift of her building was out of order!

The D Master was clearly very fond of this number as he had set his music system on the 'repeat' mode and we were made to suffer again and again the agony caused by an impaired lift. With a few words of advice on how I should make a mental note of the steps that he was practicing, the said Master took hold of my companion and started dancing. Between then and subsequent days that I went to take lessons, nothing changed. Not our hero's continuing difficulties with a malfunctioning lift, not the Master's supple and graceful movements, nor his insistence on dancing the entire length of the class with my friend on the pretext, of giving me a lecture demonstration! I too remained where I was, like our tragedy struck star, at the very bottom of the proposed destination.

Last evening though, I realised there had been some progress. Alas, not in terms of my dancing skills..., but a perceptible and incremental change was evident in the progress that our male protagonist was making in the aforementioned song.

Truth is, my family is back in town on a short vacation. And I have just heard my daughter, a 5 year old, who like all 5 year olds is full of indefatigable energy and enthusiasm, play a re-mix version of the same song. Here our lead actor has informed all concerned that the defect in the lift has now been rectified and it is 'power' (rather the lack of it) which is now playing the truant. But that, as the great lyricist and master poet in the song has correctly diagnosed, is easily corrected with the help of a generator.

Friends, I too am looking for 'help' to rectify my birth defect relating to dance deficiency. The syndrome am told, is easily corrected. All it requires is patient handling.

Any Dance Masters out there willing to give dance lessons to a 'single' male? The family you see, is leaving again in a week's time. And the friend of mine has taken enough dance lessons to last her a life time!