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Dance With Me (Dancing Book 1)



Synopsis

Sometimes life requires a partner. Ed Maurer has bounced back, more or less, from the neck injury that permanently benched his semipro football career. He hates his soul-killing office job, but he loves volunteering at a local community center. The only fly in his ointment is the dance instructor, Laurie Parker, who can't seem to stay out of his way. Laurie was once one of the most celebrated ballet dancers in the world, but now he volunteers at Halcyon Center to avoid his society mother's machinations. It would be a perfect escape, except for the oaf of a football player cutting him glares from across the room. When Laurie has a ballroom dancing emergency and Ed stands in as his partner, their perceptions of each other turn upside down. Dancing leads to friendship, being friends leads to becoming lovers, but most important of all, their partnership shows them how to heal the pain of their pasts. Because with every turn across the floor, Ed and Laurie realize the only escape from their personal demons is to keep dancing together. This novel has been previously published and has been revised from its original release.

Book Information

File Size: 3387 KB

Print Length: 418 pages

Simultaneous Device Usage: Unlimited

Publisher: Heidi Cullinan; 2nd edition (August 28, 2015)

Publication Date: August 28, 2015

Sold by: Â Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B014N1CGQM

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Not Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #20,875 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #252

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Customer Reviews

I don't often take a second look at re-released books. Re-releases are generally for new readers. There's almost never enough new material, in most re-releases, to merit a new take on (or a new purchase of) a book I've already read. But "Dance With Me" blew me away when I first read it. Rarely have I been as moved (and aroused) as I was by the relationship between the two main characters and the vivid, sensual descriptions of them, how they moved, dressed, expressed themselves in both words and dance. At first glance, the theme seemed pretty trite, what with one macho almost-straight guy and another who is not just gay, but an artist, a dancer, someone who seems to hold the music of the spheres within his soul. Oil and water, of course, but not for long. There's not a false step in the entire book, not a word out-of-character, the emotional highs just keep on coming. In sum, "Dance With Me" is an exquisitely-written book filled with beauty, poetry and insight, well-worth re-releasing, over and over again, as far as I'm concerned. All too rarely, a book surfaces that is so far beyond the rest of my normal fare, that I am awed at the power and talent of the author. This is one of those. Yes, it has all the requisite Gay Romance elements: financial trouble, physical infirmity, emotional disability, life-altering events. It is also, in some ways, a conventional love story: boy meets boy cute, boys fight, boys fall in love. Been there, done that - but never before as beautifully and evocatively as Ms. Cullinan does it in "Dance With Me". This book offers another whole dimension beyond the expected, one that touched me deeply - a new, expressive vocabulary that I've never before encountered in any form of literature: dance.

Okay... first things first: five out of five stars obviously. This book is so adamantly, obviously superior to 90% of the gay romantic fiction being published that I feel like assigning it a comparative rank seems juvenile. At this level of craft, can the five stars be in question? I feel like when you have a gifted, warm, generous writer who consistently pushes into new terrain with grace and affection, the question is not if you will enjoy the book but why. The issue won't be the stars, it will be the ways the stars align in each book. I've said it before but it bears repeating, Cullinan writes her books. She doesn't merely type them and hope for the best; she doesn't cobble them together out of half-digested borrowings; she doesn't regurgitate the same bland book over and over in an Ourobouros of homoerotic hackwork. Cullinan writes; she writes beautifully; and she has written a marvelous book that you will enjoy if you have any interest in sexy, subtle, snarky romance fiction. Dance with Me is a contemporary Odd Couple narrative about two men who shouldn't work together, but almost cannot work apart. As with many of her books, Cullinan starts with a "cute" story germ that almost feels like a high-end porn setup (Dancer and Jock tussle!) and then refuses

to take the easy, sleazy road to their HEA. The story straddles the worlds of dance and football at several levels of professionalism and expertise... As always, Cullinan revels in the particulars of her characters' lives. Her characters inhabit the worlds of sports and art from limelight to ruin fully and viscerally because she spends time aggregating the tiny slivers of reality that make their jobs feel like more than a costumes her characters wear between sexy times and witty banter.

Dance With Me by Heidi Cullinan 5 stars!!
•Better to dance with the devil and enjoy yourself than hover under the glower of the nuns.
•This was one of those books that I just couldn't put down, such an intense and beautiful story where the character connection was second to none. This MM spoke to me, the characters spoke to me and the author spoke to me. When I read my first MM many moons ago I never expected to fall in love with this genre so much. I try and read at least one a month but one is never enough, I always find myself reading two or three one after the other. Ed and Laurie were opposites in all sense of the word, one was an ex semi-pro footballer and the other an amazingly talented ballet dancer. Both had their issues but both had hearts of gold, their paths crossing at a community centre where each gave a class. They hated each other, constant confrontations but we all know that there is a fine line between love and hate. Both made no secret of their sexuality and it seems that their hate for each other was just the kindling to an intense sexual attraction that neither were willing to admit in the first instance. It is this slow, sizzling burn that draws you into their story, that will they won't they push and pull that I love and crave. Never too much but enough to garner your interest and keep you invested on every level.
•and when he danced he made male beauty come alive. Laurie wasn't simply good. Laurie was a f***ing artist. As far as Ed was concerned, he was a legend. And I've kissed him.
•Ed's career was ended with a near life threatening injury, he somehow was lucky enough to survive but the ramifications left him with a life long neck injury that never let him forget.

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