

MUSIC MAN

NOAH H.

“I Know the Music Man”

The music man smiles at you, his polished teeth sharp as a saw. A bow saw maybe? Now they're a bow to a violin. Sorry, viola. Wait, no, cello. He holds out his hand to you. It's a clock hand, probably the second one. There are two? There are supposed to be three. Must be missing his hour hand. He taps his foot to the beat on the marble floor. Somehow, he changes the pitch. They're notes! “No, foot notes,” he says laughing at your face.

You dance a bit with the music man until he bores you. You leave him without a goodbye, but you'll tell others you know him. Others dance around you. The money man dances with fame. You catch a glimpse of the love man. He sees you and approaches. You dance a bit.

It's better than last time you think. “This dance will last,” you say, but he leaves you abruptly with his friend the alone man, just like last time. The alone man apologizes, but he just can't dance. You pardon him and leave searching for another, more pleasant partner to dance with.

Fun pulls you to the side and praises your dress to make you smile or maybe to forget about the love man. The alone man tries to follow but the fun woman shoes him away. Those cleats probably hurt his face when they're thrown that hard. The sports man catches a sneaker that ricochets off the alone man's back. You laugh at his face. The fun woman laughs too. The love man passes, dancing with beauty. You wish the fun woman would shoe them away, but she doesn't. She's staring as well. You elbow her. She apologizes.

The sports man asks you to dance. Fun urges you on as you follow him back onto the dance floor. You try to keep up, but up is a squirmy creature and slips away. The sports man's feet cover yards while yours cross each other as you trip in pursuit. He laughs at your face, “Nice cross up!” You know he means well. You dance a bit to be polite but excuse yourself after with appropriate pleasantries. The punch bowl has a kick to it, but your cup subdues it. You sit at a white table. The alone man is at your shoulder. You hint to him that he should leave but soon give up. “What's the point?”

“Usually the tip,” he says.

You shoe him away with a high heel.

The fun woman sets down a cross from you to talk. You don't remember giving her a cross. She asks if there is anyone else for you to dance with. You point across the ballroom. “I know the musicman,” you say.