

He Goes, She Goes

By Joanna Torrey

In this novel, "he goes, she goes" refers to dance instruction first the male partner makes his move, or "goes," then the woman follows although the heroine applies the phrase to her life in general. When Alice's cold, distant father passes away, she is surprised by her sorrow: he always favored her older sister, Gwen, and managed to ruin any fun the two girls initiated. Their English-born mother isn't any help during this somber time. She was once a martyr who repressed her love of dancing, drinking, baking anything that brought her pleasure because her husband disapproved. Now that he is dead, she tries to miss him for the sake of her daughters, but finds it difficult to sacrifice her happiness again. Depressed and terribly lonely, Alice drowns her sorrows in alcohol while her 70-year-old mother lives it up. Suddenly, Alice must question everything. Is her writer boyfriend, Jack, too much like her father? As a career temp in New York, can she really hope to make something of herself? For answers, she turns to her first love dance and pushes away anyone who would be her partner. Alice's self-deprecating black humor and earnest exploration of her troubled life make her a spunky heroine. Her conflicting feelings about relationships (with others and herself) will resound with readers who have lost a loved one. With surefooted writing and sensitive characterization, Torrey choreographs a graceful, heartfelt drama.

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Step Ball Change

By Jeanne Ray

Ray's snappy second novel takes place in a chaotic but comfortable Southern household led by an appealingly down-to-earth matriarch. Caroline McSwain, a dance instructor in her 60s, is sitting down to dinner with her devoted husband, Tom, a public defender, when two phones ring simultaneously to interrupt their rare moment of privacy. Ten minutes later, her estranged, flighty sister, Taffy, newly separated from her husband, has decided to come from Atlanta for an extended visit, with her nasty terrier in tow. And the McSwains' only daughter, Kay, has just gotten engaged to Trey Bennet, a member of Raleigh's bluest-blooded family, but she still hasn't gotten over Jack, a charming district attorney. Meanwhile, Caroline and Tom's home is undergoing what seems like a never-ending renovation, eating up their retirement fund. Kay's wedding plans get complicated (and expensive); Caroline and Taffy start finding common ground; even the terrier calms down, thanks to Woodrow, a contractor who has taken a shine to Taffy. Caroline is an endearing narrator, realistic and self-deprecating; when things start to get out of control, her love for her family helps her to keep things on track.

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Dancing - lightens the spirit and the mind



Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, will you join the dance?

~ Lewis Carroll from Alice in Wonderland

**True ease in writing comes from art,
not chance,**

**As those move easiest who have
learn'd to dance.**

~ Alexander Pope

**Music begins to atrophy when it
departs too far from the dance;...
poetry begins to atrophy when it
gets too far from music**

~ Ezra Pound

The Ballroom on Magnolia Street

By Sharon Owens

If you're young and single (and even if you're not), the hottest place to see and be seen in Belfast is the ballroom on Magnolia Street. Oh, it may sound stuffy and old-fashioned, but with bouncers at the door and a DJ spinning alternative rock, it's anything but. Owned by Johnny Hogan, a Hollywood wannabe still sporting the slicked-back hair and outlandish clothes from his 1950s heyday, the thriving nightclub is where sisters Shirley and Kate Winters go to meet men. While Shirley fantasizes about meeting Mr. Right (in the person of Declan Greenwood), footloose Kate is happy to settle for Mr. Right Now. Before long, Shirley's dreams come true when she and Declan fall madly in love. Their sudden engagement forces Kate to ratchet up the race to beat her kid sister to the altar. She's missing only one thing: a groom.

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Dancer: a novel

By Colum McCann

McCann breathes new life into the story of Rudolf Nureyev, one of ballet's greatest performers. As a 7-year-old boy, Rudi dances for wounded soldiers in a hospital ward during WWII. By the mid-1950s he has outgrown life in the tiny Soviet town of Ufa, his unflinching determination to perform (against the stern wishes of his father) driving him into the wider world. It is his stubborn persistence more than his natural talent that distinguishes him, but his first teachers see great potential in him, and he is accepted into a ballet company in Leningrad. He defects to France and later to Italy, where "the ovations become more exhausting than the dance" and he is sucked into the drug and disco culture of the late '70s, even after his partner urges him to stay focused. A relationship with NY gay hustler allows Rudi to indulge his wildest impulses, but his brashness and self-absorption are tempered when he journeys back to his homeland in 1987 in the touching conclusion. Faithfully capturing the pathos and grim poverty of the Soviet Union at mid-century, McCann also reveals a splashy tabloid affinity for the excesses and effects of fame and notoriety.

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Dead on the Dance Floor

By Heather Graham

At the Moonlight Sonata Dance Studio in Miami Beach, coaching for professional competitions is available, as is recreational dance instruction. When Lara Trudeau, imperious star professional, drops dead after a performance, authorities, citing a lethal combination of pills and alcohol, deem the death accidental. But patrolman Doug O'Casey, a new dance student and Lara's most recent lover, suspects foul play, as do some associates, including the studio manager, Shannon Mackay. Doug finally persuades his brother Quinn, a private investigator, to sign up for dance lessons so he can look into the case. Meanwhile, in the vicinity of the dance studio, several seemingly unrelated murders occur. Quinn begins to fall in love with his dance instructor, Shannon, although she could be the murderer he seeks for that matter, so could his brother. When Shannon gets a cryptic message, "You're next!" she's determined to find the killer herself; her efforts put her in harm's way. The story isn't all suspicions and chills: readers can learn something about salsa, tango and waltz contests... Graham's more suggestible fans will doubtless put on their dancing shoes and head for the nearest Arthur Murray studio.

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Considering Kate

By Nora Roberts

She'd turned her back on glamour and fame and Kate Stanislaski Kimball had come home to begin a new life. The only thing more perfect than the beautiful—dilapidated—building she'd bought for her new dance school was Brody O'Connell, the frustrating, surprisingly fascinating contractor she'd hired for the renovation. A man didn't often come across a woman as gorgeous, sensuous, provocative...and utterly irritating as Kate. But Brody was determined to resist her effortless allure. She was Natasha Stanislaski's pampered, perfect daughter, and not at all the right woman for him. But every fiber of his being longed to make her his....

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Corpse de Ballet: A Nine Muses Mystery - Terpsichore

By Ellen Pall

Terpsichore, the ancient Greek goddess of dance, must be smiling down from her home on Mt. Helicon at Pall's (Back East) splendid first entry in this cleverly themed series with its insights into the egos, jealousies, pains and passions of a Manhattan ballet company. Juliet Bodine, a successful writer of Regency novels and ex-professor of English literature at Barnard, puts aside her own deadlines to give literary advice to her longtime friend, Ruth Renswick, choreographer for the Jansch Ballet Company of New York, who is creating a new ballet based on Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations*. A ballet fan herself, Juliet is fascinated by the personalities of the company and the process of creating a new production. When a lead dancer dies suddenly, she's convinced it was murder, but her old Harvard friend, police detective Murray Landis, concludes the death was a suicide. Case closed, but not for Juliet. From the executive director to the lowliest member of the corps, the characters come alive through Juliet's astute observations and the extremely well-crafted dialogue. Vivid settings capture summer in New York, and one can almost feel the heat and steam of the ballet studio. Both mystery fans and ardent balletomanes will be left with great expectations and eager anticipation for the next in the series.

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