

Remember When We Danced?

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Remember When We Danced?

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Summary

Summary: The night he realizes he loves her, Monk remembers the first time he and Natalie danced.

Notes

Written for the "Older Not Dead" community on LJ ,Prompathon 21- Remember When? The prompt chosen was "Remember when we danced?"

"Remember When we danced?"

The first time they danced was when she helped him practice for his date.

He was nervous and fumbling and had to stop three times between attempts.

"I'm nervous about this date!" He said before she could ask the question. "I'm not used to being around attractive women!"

Natalie abruptly stopped dancing and dropped his hand.

"Wow, thanks a lot! What am I, chopped liver?"

Adrian vaguely realized he had made a mistake as his mouth once again went ahead of his brain.

For a brilliant man he could be remarkably challenged when it came to social interactions.

"What- I wasn't talking about you! I don't think of you that way!"

"What way? As a woman?" Natalie's eyes flashed and for a moment Adrian thought she looked hurt. But that wouldn't make any sense.

"Yes-no. You know what I mean." Adrian sputtered and realized he should just shut up.

"I do know what you mean. That's the problem." Natalie put her shoes back on and picked up her purse. "Good luck on your date with the "attractive woman"," she said as she walked toward the door."

"Please don't do this, Natalie," he begged, frantically. "If you don't help me now I don't think I can go on this date!"

"That's all you care about?" She asked.

"What else-oh, come on! You know I didn't mean it the way it sounded. You know I'm hopeless when it comes to anything between" he lowered his voice, "a man and a woman. I have to put you in a separate box than I do -you know- women."

Natalie rolled her eyes in exasperation. "Okay, you can't see me as a "woman". That doesn't mean you had to say you're not used to being around "attractive women." I mean, I don't look at you as "a man" but I'd say you were attractive!"

"Come on, Natalie-you would?" Adrian asked in surprise.

"Yes- "Natalie sighed. "You know what, forget it. Let's go back to practicing. You're not bad. You're just out of practice."

"Yes, I am," Monk said and he wondered if that were true about more things than just dancing.

The second time was at the surprise birthday party she threw for him.

He had driven her crazy about not being able to surprise him and ended up making a fool of himself several times by assuming she'd have his party at a morgue, or a crime scene! When he realized she had in fact surprised him he was overcome with emotion. The fact that she made sure his childhood hero was there and he had all the things he missed the last time he had a birthday party made it even more special.

The thing that touched his heart the most was when she told Disher he couldn't leave the

party.

Poor guy, the party was basically over then, and Adrian wouldn't have minded. But Natalie said, with a smile on her face and steel in her voice "Not a chance."

Although she told him he was "being ridiculous" for not wanting another party (because his friends had left his childhood party after the star attraction did), her actions showed she knew what it had meant to him.

"Would you like to dance?" She asked, and he noticed, not for the first time, that she had the most beautiful smile.

"I'd be happy too," he said and took her hands.

It wasn't lost on either of them that he didn't use any wipes after they finished dancing.

The third time was at Randy and Sharona's wedding.

Finally feeling more whole after solving Trudy's murder, Adrian had felt like celebrating. He was happy for his old assistant, his good friend. Someone who had gotten him so far in his recovery.

Happy for Randy, who was also a good friend.

Everyone seemed to be finding love that spring: the Captain and TJ, Sharona and Randy. He had thought that Natalie was going to end up with that Naval friend of Mitch's (he never could remember the guy's name). When that didn't happen, he had been relieved, although he couldn't have said why at the time.

Those were all good memories, but they were nothing compared to tonight.

Tonight, holding her in his arms, he could finally feel.

"Remember when we danced?" He asked as he slowly twirled her.

She laughed. "What are we doing now?"

"I mean, the first time we danced? Do you remember what I said?"

Natalie frowned. "Okay-why are you bringing this up? That was not a happy memory for me! You told me you didn't see me as a woman-that you couldn't."

"I know. I was a fool. I knew it then and I'm telling you now. I saw you as a woman then. I see you now. I loved you then- "

Natalie gasped. "Loved me- "

Adrian nodded. "I loved you then. I couldn't let myself admit it. It was too much. I hadn't solved Trudy's murder, how could I let myself be happy? I didn't deserve to be happy, I deserved to be miserable. I thought I HAD to be miserable. Like it was my penance or something! I'm not saying I knew any of this, not consciously anyway. But I think a part of me has known for a long time."

"Adrian- "

"No, please let me finish this or I swear I won't be able to! You probably don't feel the same, maybe you never have or never will. But you should know how I feel. "

She smiled. "How do you feel? You still haven't said it. Although you have been talking a lot!"

"I -you know."

Natalie smiled. "I'm waiting."

"I love you", he said the last two words so softly she had to lean forward to hear.

“I think you know my answer,” she said with a smile. “Remember when we danced? How upset I was with the way you spoke? That was the reason why. “

Adrian smiled and for the first time in years it was reflected in his eyes.

“So, let’s continue dancing.”

Natalie smiled and then he kissed her.

In true Adrian fashion, it was a little awkward but Natalie didn’t care.

She knew it would come back to him.

Just like dancing.

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