



Kiss and Tango

By Marina Palmer
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Introduction

Approaching her dreaded 30th birthday without a doting husband, a fabulous apartment, or a satisfying career, Marina Palmer found herself adrift in anxiety. Then, on a vacation to South America, Palmer discovered the passion that her life was missing. At a steamy 2 a.m. *milonga*, she caught her first glimpse of the tango, Argentina's signature dance, and fell head over heels from the sidelines.

Leaving behind her life in New York, Palmer returned to Buenos Aires to pursue a new dream. She arrived in Argentina seeking a dancing partner, storybook love, and the tango lessons that might ultimately help her earn a place on the professional circuit. From auditioning for the Broadway hit *Forever Tango*, to becoming a street dancer on the infamous *calle Florida*, to discovering just how irresistible the sizzling Argentines can be, Marina Palmer chronicles her misadventures in Buenos Aires in no-holds-barred diary-style confessions full of adventure, romance, heartbreak, and steamy sex.

Questions for Discussion

1. Why does Marina Palmer's first experience of a *milonga* while on vacation in Buenos Aires set her off on her quest to become an expert in tango?
2. To what extent do Marina's criteria for her ideal tango partner correspond with her criteria for an ideal boyfriend?
3. How would you describe the roles played by Marina's parents and her therapist, Beth, in supporting her decision to quit her job and move to Buenos Aires to study the tango?
4. "A *milonga* is not a party....[i]t really *is* like going to the office." What does Marina Palmer mean by this, and to what extent do you agree?
5. How does the tango function as a metaphor in *Kiss & Tango*? What does it represent to Marina and to the *porteños* with whom she dances?
6. Why does Marina fall into a series of sexual liaisons with her many dancing partners, and to what extent does the success of those encounters seem dependent on the quality of the dancing?
7. How would you describe the city of Buenos Aires, its culture, and its inhabitants, based on Marina Palmer's accounts of them?
8. Of all of Marina's romantic partners in Buenos Aires, which relationships seem to have been the most significant in terms of her development as a tango dancer?
9. What does Marina's decision to dance on a notorious street, *calle Florida*, for pocket change from local spectators reveal about her commitment to the tango as an art form?
10. To what extent does Marina's experience in Buenos Aires change her life for the better?

About the Author

Marina Palmer was born in New York City and raised in England, where she attended the Lycée Français and Cambridge University. She lives in Buenos Aires.