

A New Years to Remember

By Jenny Dee



A brand-new pair of hot, velvety red heels meant for dancing remain untouched in their original box, along with the matching slinky dress hidden in the deep recesses of my walk-in closet. How splendidly they had looked together against my olive skin, blonde tresses and long legs. How melancholy they looked now all tucked away.

Another year had come and gone. Another resolution wasted in the hopes that this year would be different; this year I would not ring in the new year alone.

One day to the big countdown, and I was facing the endless tradition of a chick flick in pajamas, toasting to the happy couple on screen as I dived into a box of chocolates that a well-meaning friend gave me for Christmas.

An array of dazzling attire and accessories awaited adoration, and there was nowhere to sparkle.

It was like Groundhog's Day—well, more like a repeat of Valentines Day in my case.

All my friends seemed to be coupled up with exciting plans that didn't include me as a third wheel. Nothing that I hadn't gotten used to over the years, but still: an invite would have been wonderful. Those shoes were meant to grace a dance floor!

I didn't want to be like those depressed people on New Years, but I was starting to wonder if my fate would ever change. Would I ever experience the fanfare of the time change outside of my four walls again?

Even though my solitary celebration became a pastime, I still enjoyed the concept of New Years. I liked the idea of waving goodbye to the last twelve months, remembering all the wonderful (and not-so-wonderful) moments, and then looking forward to what's yet to come. I even love to create a wistful new vision board for the year ahead, putting thought and positive energy into my latest dreams.

I've always been hopeful and excited as the clock struck midnight. Even as I counted down from ten alone in my house, I would remain optimistic that this coming year would be different.

As I resigned to making my big stay-at-home plans, scrolling through potential movie options, that's when I got the call that change my whole year.

One of my rare single girlfriends had decided to cancel a group trip she had planned. There may have been some behind-the-scenes drama with a few of the other trip-goers that she wanted to steer clear of—well, their loss became my winning wheel of fortune!

Her change of plans just so happened to open her social calendar for New Years Eve, so we decided to book a last-minute reservation for one of those fancy dinner dances to ring in the new year together. We went for the works! It didn't matter the cost; we knew we deserved a magical evening out on the town.

I hung up the phone in sheer delight. I had a date! I had plans! My red dress and shoes would be worn, after all!

Curls in my hair, eyes and lips popping with color and a smile bigger than the full moon itself accompanied me on what was sure to be a luxurious night.

The evening was more spectacular than either of us ladies had expected. Sure, there were happy couples surrounding us, but being each others' plus one had empowered us to live in the moment and enjoy everything the experience had to offer. We didn't need a man by our side or to party with a big group of friends; we were in perfect harmonic company as just ourselves.

The food was exquisite—and we expected no less considering the pretty penny we paid to attend this extravaganza. We indulged in upscale appetizers, buttery cuts of filet mignon and decadent desserts. We sipped on fabulous champagne, the bubbles of which make us feel wonderfully giddy.

We danced in between morsels, enjoying the diverse selection of hip-swaying music that took over our bodies. I underestimated the comfort level of those sexy reds, and before long, I kicked those heels to the curb and danced barefoot to the beat, without a care in the world.

We chatted with new friends at our table, laughed with joyous abandonment and toasted to our friendship as midnight arrived with fireworks. It was nothing short of spectacular to be a part of the world that night.

Deep down, I know I would have been just fine snuggled up into my couch watching the ball drop. I don't dislike quiet evenings at home, and my outlook on the entire year ahead doesn't necessary depend on where I am on December 31st.

But, I will say that who I was with—a dear friend who enjoys eating, dancing and laughing as much as I do—made the spontaneous, alternative celebration an even more magical holiday to remember.