

LINES IN THE SAND

BY

NATALIE LORD

When Analiese Jacob went to the gallery to meet Caio Ferreira she wondered how he would greet her. She arrived at the assigned meeting place, in front of the pre-determined painting, with precision. She glanced at her watch to ascertain how long she had until the designated hour then paused to survey each of the people in the room. It could be that he too had arrived early, and she was impatient to see him. After discounting each potential candidate she decided to check the other rooms and, under the guise of inspecting the works of art, went in search of him.

She wandered through the gallery chambers trying to distract her mind. She forced her attention to the paintings, the changing hues of the wooden floor, the sunlight adding its own artistic perspective; but what she was really looking at were the people around her, searching their faces for his. When she finished her reconnaissance she returned to the painting before which they were to meet, sitting on the bench nearest it, in reverence as much as in appreciation.

Analiese took a moment to adjust her posture. She sat upright before the painting, crossing her legs so that her calves cushioned each other at a 45-degree angle to her body. She'd once read this is how a lady would sit and wanted to appear to be as ladylike as possible. Not least because she hoped looking like a lady might somehow compensate for not having behaved like one.

Analiese was a firm believer in first impressions and wanted to make the right one this time round. The entrance to the room was to her right and she positioned herself so she could see everyone coming through it. Then, she tilted her head to look at the artwork, arranging her hair so it fell partially over one shoulder with the remainder flowing in waves against her back. She placed one hand on her thigh, the other on her bag, and waited, statuesque in her stillness.