
Catherine Celestia Allen (b. ?)

Cathy Celestia Allen has written seven full-length plays and numerous one-acts. She won a 1993 Beverly Hills Theatre Guild Award for The Essence of Being.

Anything for You

Anything for You was originally produced at the Circle Repertory Lab in New York City, June 1993. Scott Segall directed the following cast:

Lynette Johanna Day

Gail Jo Twiss

CHARACTERS

Lynette: thirtyish, stylish

Gail: same age, a bit more conservative

Time: the present

Place: an urban café

At Rise: Lynette sits alone at a table for two, staring into her drink. Gail approaches the table, a bit harried. She kisses the preoccupied Lynette on the cheek, sits.

GAIL: Sorry I'm late. I was just about to walk out when this rap artist of ours plops himself in the outer office, announces he's not leaving until somebody acknowledges his artistic crisis. This is a kid, nineteen years old mind you, who has a house in the Hamptons and a hot tub for every day of the week, and he's having an artistic crisis. That needs acknowledgment. [*She picks up a menu.*] Have you ordered yet? [*perusing the menu*] So I have to sit there for twenty minutes trying to sound sincere when I tell him "It's not so bad, Roger. Money doesn't compromise your art. It just makes it more affordable." When what I really wanted to say was, This is the legal department. We work here. You're feeling screwed up or dysfunctional, go to artistic, bother them. So anyway . . . the squab looks good. What do you think?

[*Gail continues to study the menu. Lynette leans forward in her chair.*]

LYNETTE: I need to have an affair.
 GAIL: Hmm? did you say something?
 LYNETTE: I said, Gail, that I need to have an affair.
 GAIL: [looking up] You don't mean that.
 LYNETTE: Yes I do.
 GAIL: An affair?
 LYNETTE: Yes.
 GAIL: You?
 LYNETTE: Uh-huh.
 GAIL: But you and Richard—
 LYNETTE: I know.
 GAIL: Then I don't understand.
 LYNETTE: Neither do I.
 GAIL: So basically you're sitting here telling me for no good reason that you want to—
 LYNETTE: Not want. Need. Capital N. The big guns.
 GAIL: Why?
 LYNETTE: I don't know. An overwhelming biological necessity for alternate body types. I don't know.
 GAIL: I don't think this is the place we should be discussing this.
 LYNETTE: This is exactly the place. You are exactly the person. Gail. If I don't sleep with someone other than my husband very soon, I won't be responsible for myself.
 GAIL: Lynette.
 LYNETTE: Time bomb. Tick tick tick.
 GAIL: Don't you think you're being a little overdramatic?
 LYNETTE: No. Tick.
 GAIL: Have you met someone?
 LYNETTE: No. Although when you get right down to it, everybody's a candidate.
 GAIL: You're kidding, right? All right, joke's over, very funny, ha ha, you're kidding.
 LYNETTE: Gail, you don't know what it's like. I can't work. I can't sleep. All I know is I want a hot roll in the hay. That's the extent of my cognizant abilities.
 GAIL: I think you should try to show a little control.
 LYNETTE: Yesterday I looked at a clock. I forgot how to tell time.
 GAIL: What are you drinking?
 LYNETTE: I'm losing my mind.
 GAIL: You certainly are. Richard—

LYNETTE: Is sweet and kind and good, I know. He adapts, no matter how crazy I am. "You're right honey, I'll be more careful, I'll try not to let my heels touch the floor in that irritating manner anymore." I could tell him I want to chuck it all for a sugar cane farm in Borneo and he'd be researching farming techniques and plane fares within the hour.
 GAIL: So it seems to me you have nothing to complain about.
 LYNETTE: I'm not complaining. But God, if I don't find someone to sear me to the bones I am going to explode. Little pieces of me flying out my office window and over New York, settling on some old ladies in the park. Explode.
 GAIL: I don't know what to say. You've put me in a difficult position. I love Richard.
 LYNETTE: I do too.
 GAIL: He and George are best friends.
 LYNETTE: Like brothers.
 GAIL: And you're my best friend—
 LYNETTE: [expectantly] Yes?
 GAIL: Yes what?
 LYNETTE: I'm your best friend.
 GAIL: Yes.
 LYNETTE: You'd do anything for me.
 GAIL: Of course I would, you know that. What are you driving at?
 LYNETTE: Sleep with me.
 GAIL: What?!
 LYNETTE: Sleep with me, Gail. Make love to me until I beg you to stop.
 GAIL: You can't be serious.
 LYNETTE: I couldn't live with myself if I did it with another man, not to mention what it would do to Richard if he found out. But you—
 GAIL: Are astonished.
 LYNETTE: You're a woman, Gail. It wouldn't be cheating. It would be experimenting.
 GAIL: You're out of your mind.
 LYNETTE: Will you do it?
 GAIL: Of course not.
 LYNETTE: Why not?
 GAIL: In the first place, no offense, but I'm not physically attracted to you.
 LYNETTE: Liar.
 GAIL: What did you call me?

LYNETTE: You're lying. You've wanted me from the day we met.

GAIL: Oh, now I agree with you, Lynette, you have gone over the deep end.

LYNETTE: You stare at me. You watch my mouth when I speak. When we kiss hello you let your nose linger in my hair a little bit longer than necessary and you breathe in.

GAIL: I can't really have this conversation anymore, okay? Can we order? [pause] I think you should see a doctor.

LYNETTE: You're angry.

GAIL: I'm not, I'm flabbergasted. To think that after all these years of what I thought was a close friendship you would suddenly come up with this insane notion that I—that we—I'm married, Lynette.

LYNETTE: I know.

GAIL: And I love George. Not to mention I'm one hundred percent heterosexual.

LYNETTE: I'm going out of my mind.

GAIL: I wish I could help you. I really do.

LYNETTE: You love me.

GAIL: Of course I do. But that doesn't mean I desire you in a sexual manner.

LYNETTE: What about New Year's Eve?

GAIL: [after a pause] What about it?

LYNETTE: New Year's Eve, two years ago. The four of us spent it together. I drank too many peach margaritas.

GAIL: I remember.

LYNETTE: I got sick. Richard ended up carrying me into the bathroom and you stayed to help.

GAIL: You were so sick. Richard was so angry.

LYNETTE: I thought I'd never stop throwing up. When I finally did, I laid down on the bathroom floor, closed my eyes, and you kissed me. On the mouth.

GAIL: I didn't.

LYNETTE: You did. For a good long time.

GAIL: You must have dreamt it, Lynette, I think I would remember—

LYNETTE: I remember thinking, "how soft her mouth is." You held my lower lip for an extra second. Then you let go and the air hissed out of me like a balloon.

GAIL: I did not kiss you, Lynette. I mean, I may have given you a peck on the cheek because I felt sorry for you, but beyond that, you are mistaken.

LYNETTE: I felt your tongue.

GAIL: Lynette! [She looks around, lowers her voice.] This is really inappropriate.

LYNETTE: Why are you so against this? You have me, I have my fling—everybody wins.

GAIL: Except Richard, and George.

LYNETTE: We don't tell them. This is a secret between friends. Inviolable.

GAIL: It's not that simple.

LYNETTE: Why not?

GAIL: Lynette, look—do you want me to fix you up with someone? There are a lot of lesbians in the music business.

LYNETTE: I want you.

GAIL: No you don't.

LYNETTE: I do. You're my friend, I can trust you, there's no danger of falling in love. I was going to say you're honest but you can't even admit to kissing me when we both know—

GAIL: All right, all right, I kissed you, I kissed you! I'd had a little to drink myself that night— [to an unseen patron] Can I help you?

LYNETTE: You were stone cold sober. The antibiotics, remember?

GAIL: [helplessly] You looked so pretty. Lying there with your hair spread out over the mat. So vulnerable and so . . . beautiful, actually.

LYNETTE: Sleep with me, Gail.

GAIL: I can't.

LYNETTE: Why not?

GAIL: Because I'm in love with you.

LYNETTE: What?

GAIL: I'm in love with you, Lynette. You think I go around kissing drunken smelly women on the mouth because it's a thing of mine?

LYNETTE: But I thought—

GAIL: That my heart couldn't possibly leap every time I see you? That I don't feel profound jealousy when you and Richard reach for each other like any other happily married couple? That my feelings can't be real?

LYNETTE: No, I mean . . .

GAIL: What, Lynette? What did you think?

LYNETTE: I don't know. A harmless crush. Like schoolgirls.

GAIL: Not exactly.

LYNETTE: No. [pause] So where does this leave us?

GAIL: I don't know.

LYNETTE: [after a pause] Maybe I do drink too much.

GAIL: Maybe.

LYNETTE: I have a problem.

GAIL: Yes.

LYNETTE: And you have a problem.

GAIL: Yes.

LYNETTE: What do you think we should do?

GAIL: I think we should order.

[They return to looking at their menus.]

END

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