

CELESTE:
I feel like running something by you.

NATALIE:
What?

CELESTE:
Maybe not.

NATALIE:
All right.

CELESTE:
I'm having an affair.

NATALIE:
Oh wow. Who?

CELESTE:
Six months now.

NATALIE:
Does Kenny know?

CELESTE:
He acts like he doesn't but I mean...There's evidence.

Natalie
Phone calls?

Celeste
No, bruises.

Natalie
So this guy's violent?

Celeste
We're violent. We both have a lot of anger. It's sort of Latin.

Natalie
He's Latin?

Celeste
No

Natalie
Uh -huh. So you hit him too?

Celeste
No but we're in it together. It's hard to explain. He knows what I
want, and he makes me do it. Get this. He gave me a gun.

Natalie
He What?

Celeste
Sometimes I'd be headed home late. He was worried about me.
So he gave me a little gun. How sexy is that? I know. Sick.

NATALIE:
Not necessarily. But, He's married.

CELESTE:
Yeah. I don't care.

Natalie
You care

Celeste
There's an atmosphere with this guy - of murder. Like an aroma. I could
smell this on him when we met. He was introducin' himself, sayin' hello,
bein' nice. I remember thinkin' he's going to rape me. And right out of that,
I gave him my phone number. I walked away like there was a camera
recording me and music I was walking to. A week later, we meet up.
I walk in his office. He closes the door. "Click. I was scared. 'Cause he was
going to do something to me. And I wanted him to do something to me.

I wanted fear. I was tired of being a "good girl". I had this book, Return of the Native. And I just started talking about Eustacia Vye because I was so nervous. And he didn't call me on it. He didn't say, "What are you talking about this book? That's not what's going on here." He just talked back to me about Eustacia Vye. But while he talked he put his hand on the bone of my chest. He never stopped talking about what I was talking about, but he was pushing and I was going down. We had a secret for ourselves.

There was a lot of blood. I got my period right in the middle...He's huge.

I guess it knocked something loose. He had to go out to a store and buy me a raincoat to put over myself. "Cause, Natalie, I looked like I'd just

been born. And this was in an office. This was in a man's office.

In the middle of the day. Do you know what I'm talking about?

You do kinda, don't you?

Natalie:

Celeste, I don't like this whole freaking thing! What are you doing?

CELESTE:

I know.

NATALIE:

I don't see you for two years...

CELESTE:

But you know what I'm talking about, don't you? In some way?

NATALIE:

No.

CELESTE:

God, I really thought in some way you would... I haven't told anyone. I thought you...

NATALIE:

You were mistaken.

CELESTE:

I guess we never knew each other that well.

NATALIE:

No.

CELESTE:

But you were more like me... before.

NATALIE:

Maybe. Maybe I was turned on by dangerous, stupid shit when I was younger.

CELESTE:

Okay. But I am a little bummed out that we can't talk. I need to talk to somebody. I can be pretty hard on myself.

NATALIE:

I think you're inviting a conversation you don't wanna have.

CELESTE:

But I do want to have it. Look, I'm in trouble.

NATALIE:

You're in some underworld.

CELESTE:

Yes, I am. That's true.

NATALIE:

But you wanna see it as positive, and I can't help you with that.

It's not positive. You've got it wrong.

CELESTE:

Then straighten me out.

NATALIE:
Are you sure?

CELESTE:
Yeah. I'm inviting it. I want a reaction.

NATALIE:
All right, I'll just lay it out for you. You're a whore.

CELESTE:
What?

Natalie:
Don't. Please. It's hard enough without you playing surprised. Don't tell me you haven't thought about the fact that you're a whore. A stupid whore.

CELESTE:
Natalie.

NATALIE:
I'll break it down for you. First thing. The count. Let's do the count. You're 31. Next year you'll be guess what? 23? No, 32. And it goes on from there. Older, older, older. You're like a quart of milk reaching its expiration date. Is it just? Pick a fight with God. See where you get. It's the truth of what it is to be a woman. Next. You gotta face the facts. You've got a birth defect. You've got a limp. How many parts are there for limping girls?

CELESTE & NATALIE:
Laura in "The Glass Menagerie."

NATALIE:
And that's it! Have there been any productions of that play?

CELESTE:
Yes.

NATALIE:

And did you get the part?

CELESTE:

No.

NATALIE:

Then it's time for you to stop office-temping and doing Romeo's girlfriend in acting class and get a bona-fide-fucking job. Next issue. Kenny. This may sound tough, but I'm going to say it anyway. Kenny's your best bet.

CELESTE:

No way!

NATALIE:

Yes, he's a loser. But what are you at this point? Maybe together you can pull your car out of the ditch and make some miles down the road.

You don't want to look at your story 'cause you don't like your story, so you just close your eyes and tell yourself a fuckin' fairy tale. And you know what that makes you in a word of men? Totally exploitable.

Which brings me to your mysterious, exciting cheeseball stud. Who smacks you around because he's afraid of his wife. Do I even have to talk about this rodent? You can't look at what this guy pegged the minute he smelled that thriftshop essential oil you use for perfume. You're a pushover.

CELESTE:

I can't believe you called me a whore. You have no right to call me what you called me.

NATALIE:

I have the right.

CELESTE:

How do you figure that?

NATALIE:

Because I was a whore, too. A sloppy, stupid whore. But then I made a choice.

CELESTE:

To what?

NATALIE:

Not be. There are two groups of women in the world. You've got a choice to make.

CELESTE:

What about following your soul?

NATALIE:

What if you have a damned soul? Are you gonna follow it down to the burning shitheaps of hell?

CELESTE:

Maybe.

NATALIE:

You don't get it do you? How about this, I wouldn't even introduce you to my husband. How about that?

CELESTE:

Why not?

NATALIE:

What if your soul told you to fuck him?

CELESTE:

What do you think I am?

NATALIE:

I already told you what I think you are. And what every woman like me

thinks every woman like you would do if she got the chance.

CELESTE:

But off what basis do you say such a thing?

NATALIE:

You like it to be wrong. To be a secret. A married man is the perfect thing.

CELESTE:

You have no romantic feelings!

NATALIE:

What I have and what I do are two separate things.

CELESTE:

You said you were a whore.

NATALIE:

And I was.

CELESTE:

So you were with a married man?

NATALIE:

No. But it was bad anyway.

CELESTE:

How?

NATALIE:

He wasn't a serious contestant. He was uneducated, he had a dead end job, health problems. He was rough with me. My feelings about him were cheap.

CELESTE:

Romantic.

NATALIE:

Same thing.

CELESTE:

Maybe you're the one who needs to be straightened out.

Natalie:

I don't think so.