

## 2. THE BREEZES OF SEPTEMBER

Saturday night was a welcome boost to Estelle's ego. If she had been having any doubts about herself, they were calmed by a room full of admirers at Facets. By Sunday morning, Estelle can already feel herself torn between the two men for her affections. Dan is still trying to realize his dreams. As confident as he appears, Estelle wonders if he really has what it takes to succeed. She still can't get over her first impressions of his awkward social skills. On the other hand, she has no doubts about Phil. He already radiates a grace that makes her feel at ease. She doesn't feel as if she need to help him along in any way.

There is something a little different about Phil on this meeting. They get together at a restaurant in Sandy Springs. They are eating outdoors on the deck. He bites into his steak and steals a look over her way. His hunger appears to betray something more. There is almost a ravenous look in his eye. He chews the meat with such zest. She senses his take-no-prisoners attitude.

Estelle almost feels like a little lamb being led to the slaughter. A few kisses on the neck, and he can make short work of her. Something is telling Estelle to avoid this kind of attention. But she is too far along to turn back. She is turned on by his sly glances. There is no doubt about his intentions, and she can imagine herself collapsing in his arms. He appears to have such a sure hand. Just sitting with him, she can feel his calming touch on her body. Just observing his hunger only encourages her appetite.

She has no fear about him rushing her back to his place and vanquishing her in his living room. The torrid fantasy only encourages a string of similar images. They are hardly saying anything between them. It is as if they both understand the inevitable resolution of their rendezvous. His kisses penetrate her most private secrets. His caresses know no end.

The longer that she sits with him, the harder it is to protect her modesty. Each word, each gesture is a further step along in his gradual seduction. It just seems so natural. All they are doing is eating their meal, but she feels under his spell. She surrenders to the passion. Nothing allows her to hold back.

Estelle jumps in her chair. She snaps out of the fantasy.

Phil notices her reaction, "Is something wrong?"

She takes a bit of her pasta. "No, everything is great. The food is delicious."

He says, "This really is a great place for casual dining."

Estelle changes the subject, "Just out of curiosity, you never called Lily."

"I meant to. When I first called you about the interview, I had planned to call her that evening. And then I got home so late for work.

She feels that he is trying to let her off the hook. But his excuse seems weak. Maybe Estelle just seems like easy prey. That is what she sees herself as at this moment. She doesn't mind being hunted. It is causing the blood to rush to her head. Even though he isn't feeling guilty about Lily, Estelle surely is. That only seems to add to the thrill of the chase. She embraces the illicit quality of it all. Sneaking around on Lily adds to the danger.

Estelle does a double take. She takes a good long look at Phil. What is she becoming? She never saw herself as some kind of sex monster. There is really no reason to change now.

She considers the alternative. She could head home after dinner and do school work. She

could live her completely boring life. Or she could lose herself in wild groping to a man who really knows how to open up a woman's affectionate side.

Estelle could use a little loving care on a lonely night. But who is she kidding? He is taking all this for granted. He has hardly said a word, and he can visualize them wrestling in the sheets. Estelle is not a prude. She doesn't abhor her physical nature. She just can't allow herself to give in so easily.

Her guilt continues to resurface. She is using Lily to help her work through her own misgivings. It is too strange. Each time that she thinks of Lily's feelings, it convinces Estelle that she needs to pursue Phil. Damn!

Estelle takes a couple of sips of her wine. She hopes that the alcohol will guide her through the confusion. The wine warms her insides. It reminds her of the soothing feeling of a man's deep kisses. She looks at his lips as they wrap themselves around another piece of steak. He feels totally comfortable with himself. She will have no fears in his arms.

As she is lost in her reverie, his foot brushes hers. She quickly pulls hers away. She wants him to touch her smooth legs, to slide his rough hands under her dress. She craves those bold actions on his part. He is reaching the point of no return. Again, a bite of her pasta returns her to reality.

He uses dessert to further unlock her passions. As she digs into the chocolate cake, there is nothing more heavenly around. He could ask for the world, and she would easily oblige.

Phil asks her, "Would you like to come over for a movie? My service just sent me a couple of DVD's."

It is so obvious what is going on. This is thinly disguised code for an invitation to stay the night. Estelle hesitates, "I'd love to. I really want to. I just have so much home work. I don't want to get behind."

He won't give up, "It will just be for a couple of hours. It's still early."

The sun hasn't gone down. It makes his proposition harder to resist. He does live on the way to her place. She accedes.

For someone who is so sure of himself, she wonders why he hasn't tried to touch her. When they get to his place, he offers her a drink. Under the effects of alcohol all pretense of resistance will slip away.

Phil's apartment is too luxurious for words. Antique coffee tables, elegant furnishings that have an air of history. Everything is there to distract her from the purpose of her visit.

Phil is a seasoned pro. Now that he has home court advantage, he only has to play a waiting game. When she is overcome by the incredible longing of the endless night, she will collapse in his arms. "Please hold me, please keep me safe!"

Estelle is waiting for him to start the DVD. Fatigue is setting in. She hates her sense of helplessness. This is the perfect moment for him to make his move. She looks around the room for some image that might allow her to recover her composure. She only wants to do what is right for her.

His delay had become critical. He comes back to the room with another drink. That only prompts her to get up.

She stumbles slightly, and he catches her. She tells him, "I better go."

Estelle can feel his warm breath next to her body. He is holding on to her arms. He pulls

her close. Her heart skips a beat. She knows what is happening. She gasps.

His kiss is slow and plaintive. She feels herself being carried down a lazy river. She is wrapped up in the suspense of the instant. Waves of passion flow over her. She puts her arms around his neck and pulls him closer. His body now rests against hers. She has little doubt what will happen next.

As she tries to regain her balance, she falls again. She catches herself against him.

“That’s a sign that I’ve been out too long. I really have to go if I’m going to make class tomorrow. I also have to work.”

Phil has a long day. That’s not going to stop his amorous pursuit. He runs his hand tenderly down his arm. She pulls away.

“Don’t think that I don’t want this. I do. It’s just too soon. Trust me. We can do it another time.”

Her dress has ridden up her legs. She looks at herself in a mirror. She feels like a tramp. Her desire has gotten the best of her. Estelle uses the alcohol as a convenient excuse. But that is no reason for her desperation. She needs to get out of their fast.

When she gets home, the first thing that she sees is Dan’s number on her monitor. She has to do something with that card of his. She needs to hop in the shower just to recover her well being. It’s not as if it was wrong to be with Phil. But it isn’t something that she really planned out. If she wants to work in the same office, she can’t let something like that happen.

Everything tells her that Phil is a mistake. She just loves being with him. Why can’t she just have a guiltless fling. It would probably be the best thing that could happen to her. There would just be too much to explain. She has to break it off immediately with him.

After her shower, she looks at a couple of chapters in her finance book. She starts to do her homework problems, however, she is too tired to do much of anything. On her way to bed, she checks her email.

Dan has sent her a cute message thanking her for hanging out yesterday. He wants to see her again. He seems like such a relief compared to the full onslaught of Phil. Dan doesn’t have that same naughty magic. She can’t let it concern her. She needs sleep.

After her rather disastrous date with Phil, she really hopes that he doesn’t call again. She is not ready for an ill-conceived explanation of why they shouldn’t get together again. The second that she hears his voice, she realize that all her arguments will vanish in thin air. She needs an out.

It has been an absolutely insane day at work. Someone in billing has misfiled all the Medicare claims under private insurance. It has been entered on the computer that way too. When Estelle tries to balance the invoices, nothing matches. It takes hours to get everything sorted out. They are all frantic. Fortunately, she doesn’t have very much homework for Tuesday.

When she gets home, Estelle doesn’t want to talk to anyone. She takes a shower, and she just closes the door on the world, slammed shut! She falls asleep while thumbing through one of her text books.

As the days pass, she realizes how much it has been a mistake to see Phil. She doesn’t want to compound her error by going out with him again. She really wanted the job at his firm, and she resents the fact that he has compromised her future.

Dan uses the situation to his advantage. He is able to keep in touch by email.

“I owe you a real date. I’ll call Thursday.”

At this point, Thursday might as well be next year. But he has cleverly staked his claim.

Tuesday evening, she decides to field that dreaded call from Phil. He is inviting her to dinner on Thursday. “I’d love to Phil, but I have other plans.

He tries again, “How about Friday?”

She doesn’t want to be rude, but she needs to tell him straight out, “Phil, I don’t think it would be a good idea to see each other again “

He won’t give up, “I thought that we had a good time. You were laughing. I felt so good with you.”

She can tell that he is trying to play upon her memory. If he can just provoke a nostalgic feeling on her part, then Estelle will hardly be able to restrain herself. She has to make sure that she sticks to her resolution.

“Sure, I had a good time. But that’s not it. I’m just thinking about my future.”

Phil keeps coming, “You don’t really have a future if you can’t have fun in the present. You don’t want to deny yourself.”

He is almost forcing her to see Dan in a different light. At this point, she is hardly ready to switch all her energy in Dan’s direction. She just wants to be left alone.

When she finally hangs up on Phil, she hopes that is the end between them. She still can’t believe how she wrecked a great opportunity for her future. Here Phil is going on about how important it is to have fun, and it has been his handiwork, which has practically dismantled her hope for the future. She just wants to wring his neck.

Her day at work hasn’t been quite as bad as Monday, but when 10:30 rolls around, she is dead to the world. She lies on her bed with the light on. She feels too weak to get up and turn it off. She just hates thinking about waking up in the middle of the night with the light still shining on her.

Estelle drags herself from her bed and goes to the washroom so she can brush her teeth one more time before settling off to sleep. She notices the fatigue in her face. She would hardly want to share this look with the outside world.

She heads back to bed and finally turns off the light. Now she can hide in the darkness. Her dreams are a her own world that she can protect from the outside world. She is glad that she has escaped the monsters for another night. It is a cool September night. Her window is open. She feels the refreshing breeze on her face. She pulls the covers around her and settles into sleep. By the time Wednesday morning rolls around, all of this will be history.

At lunch Lily calls her, “Have you been avoiding me?”

Estelle is a little defensive. She tries to hide how she feels. “Not at all. I’ve been meaning to call you. I’ve had two terrible days at work. In the evening, all that I’ve wanted to do is my homework.”

Lily sounds sympathetic, “I wish that I could do something to help.”

Estelle wonders why she doesn’t tell Lily about Phil. She realizes that she has to keep her mouth shut. She’s not even going to tell Crissy. But Estelle has built up so much tension with Phil that she just wishes that she could share how she feels with another person.

She agrees to meet Lily after class. Wednesday is a good day to let off some steam. She

doesn't work in the morning, and there are no classes for her tomorrow.

Before she gets back to work, Estelle decides to delete Phil from her phone. This removes any temptation to call him. She is removing that brief episode from her life for good.

After work, she has to rush over to class. She usually misses the traffic, but there's still a back log of work from Monday. It's only after 5 that she catches up. And then she just sits in gridlock for an hour or so. When she makes her evening class, she hides in the back. She pulls out her finance book to follow along. But she is too tired to keep up. She starts to close her eyes.

Estelle is lucky that she doesn't snore. No one seems to have noticed that she was asleep. After her first class, she needs to get upstairs for Spanish. She continues to study Spanish in the hope that it might do her well for a job in the future. Someday, she'll visit Mexico.

When she gets home after class, she decides to have a quick nap. She has promised to meet Lily. Better no Estelle at all than a tired Estelle. So it ends up being after 10 before they actually get together. They get together at a bar in Brookwood. It's a little place that just recently opened near Piedmont Hospital.

Lilly tells her, "You look pretty good for having such a terrible week."

"I fell asleep in my finance class."

Lilly teases her, "You did tell me that you wanted to have a nap before getting together."

"I did have a nap when I got home. That was just the pre-nap." They both laugh.

"You've been working too hard, Estelle."

The fatigue continues to show in Estelle's face. Estelle has planned to tell Lily about Phil. But now that they are face to face, she can hardly say a thing about it. She tries to pretend that none of it happened. After all, Estelle hopes never to see Phil again.

Lily wonders what is going on with Dan.

Estelle informs her, "I'm not really feeling it. He's been sending me emails. We're talking about getting together on Thursday. But it's not as if I'm holding my breath."

Down deep, she feels as if she's still waiting for something to shake her out of the doldrums. That night with Phil really did reawaken something in her. It was lucky that she didn't follow through any more than she did. But now that is done, she is looking for something to perk her up.

Estelle begins to wonder what is going on with Lily, "You always have these guys chasing you. What's happening now?"

Her eyes get wider and she is all excited. "Estelle, remember that guy Phil that we met."

For the moment Estelle hardly reacts.

"I'm not sure who you're talking about."

Lily nods her head up and down, "Yes, you do. I started talking to him. And then you talked his ear off for the rest of the night."

Estelle plays dumb, "Oh yeah, now I remember. What about him?"

"He's asked me out."

Estelle is flabbergasted. It shows in her face. She notices her shock when she sees her face in the mirror. She does everything that she can to hide it, until she can put on a poker face for Lily.

Estelle can't hold back any longer. She has to tell her how Phil has screwed her over.

But that will only make Lily hate her more. *You just want him for yourself.* Let her learn from experience.

Estelle asks, "Are you going to go out with him?"

"Duh! Does a girl like shoes? Of course, I'm going out with him. What else do you think that I can do? He's successful, he's gorgeous, he knows how to dress. He's got a nice car."

Estelle wants to add that he's an A-1 jerk! But she bites her tongue. Lily can't tell a thing about what really went on.

"That sounds fantastic. When are you going to see him?"

"We're going out Thursday night."

Estelle says ironically, "Thursday sounds like the night for magic."

Lily perks up, "Yes, it does."

Lily can barely contain herself for the rest of the evening. Estelle does everything that she can not to show her cards. She really wants to get blitzed, but Lily will wonder what's the problem.

As it is, Lily does notice something a little later.

"Estelle, you're not your usual self. Are you depressed or something?"

"I'm a little tired."

Lily accepts her explanation on face value.

For the time being, Dan is starting to look better and better. If Lily is going to have fun on a Thursday evening, so will Estelle. She just wants to get home so that she can email Dan back. All this excess emotion seems to be driving her into his arms.

After her sudden realization about Dan, Estelle can think about nothing else. It is almost as if she wants revenge. For the moment, she'll accept the role of the avenger. Anything that she can do to get back at Phil is welcome. If that means embracing Dan, so be it. She just wishes that she could do more to affect the outcome between Phil and Lily.

When she arrives home, she emails Dan even before she gets ready for bed. She wishes that she could talk with him. She needs some level of acknowledgment just to get over this thing with Phil. But if she calls at this point, she will only seem too eager.

As she gets ready for bed, she realizes that she is playing a waiting game. She plans to take a shower in the morning. She hangs up her clothes and hops into bed. In her imagination, she tries to see Dan in a pleasant light. For the moment, she needs that star to burn brighter. If there is a bleakness to the darkness, she reminds herself that things can only get better when she sees him tomorrow.

Estelle has been feeling a little like a blob. She heads to the gym first thing in the morning. As the sweat is pouring off of her, she barely thinks about guys., even if some of them are roaming around half-naked in the exercise room.

As she lets the hot shower spray down on her, she is beginning to feel like herself. She doesn't need a guy to remind her that everything is all right. Her body is telling her that just by its confidence. She runs her hands through her hair and closes her eyes as the water soaks her face. She lets it run against her lips and teeth. It is utterly relaxing.

As she dresses for work, she realizes that there's a part of her that has nothing to do with Dan or Phil. She is going to let that part shine forth today. No worries.

Thankfully, things have finally returned to normal at work, as if things at a hospital can

ever be normal. But she absorbs the usual level of managed chaos and rides it for a successful day.

In class she begins to think about her meeting with Dan. Now she is beginning to feel the anticipation. That makes her excited. She needs a miracle to really get going. And she is ready to give her belief to whatever comes along.

By the time that she arrives home, she is again her old self. As she gets ready to meet Dan, she thinks about what she really has to give. She is trying not to be vain, but with each step she feels more and more glamorous. This is what she needs to project when they get together.

Estelle is wearing a shiny cream colored skirt and dark blue blouse. She is trying to look dressy, but she also needs to be ready for casual dining. She lets the choice of restaurant be Dan's surprise. Whatever happens, she is going to enjoy herself. She erases everything from her mind that might interfere with having a good time. Even before she's left the house, she already feels like a drink. She considers that this is just pre-date jitters. She takes a glass of water, double checks herself in the mirror, and then it's off she goes.

When Estelle meets Dan for dinner, she expects that he's going to take her to a fancy restaurant. It will be her payback for having to endure all the crap with Phil. Instead she has to settle for pizza at a joint near Tech. It really feels like a comedown. Maybe she expects too much.

Dan has a big smile on his face.

"You look great," he tells her. It is almost as if he has just captured the big fish at a catching contest. She can hardly put too much faith in his pleasant attitude.

Estelle thanks him for his compliment. Then she asks, "Are you a big pizza fan?"

"I come here with my buddies loads of times."

She is waiting to get a football tossed at her head. Maybe she has become too much of a snob. She looks around and sees a couple of families eating. They are focused completely on their food. They hardly interact. Estelle just has to make the best of things.

"I had a really terrible week at work. It's settled down now. But it was hellish."

She has already shared some details in her emails. Now she goes into full detail.

"That sounds just crazy." He tries to be a good listener. What more does she expect?

She recalls that spark that got her going with Phil. She just felt so much sexier with him. Now, it just seems that she is Dan's companion at a flower show. She can almost sense them waiting for a bud to blossom into a flower. This is worse than watching paint drip.

When they finally get the pizza she is getting a real kick watching the cheese drip from his chin. He wonders what she is laughing at. She tries to tell a silly joke, but it comes out all wrong. Even Dan realizes that he has to do something if this date isn't going to turn into a total disaster. For the time being all that he can do is eat.

He asks her, "How's your pizza?"

"It's good. I just wished that it was cooked a little more."

Now she's the damn chef. At least, he is enjoying it. She is pleasant to look even if they aren't getting along that well. Of course, he feels desperate. He is scrambling to make something happen. He takes a sip of his Coke and lets it soak into the pizza. When he can, he grabs another piece.

Estelle is trying to maintain the pose of the elegant diner. She takes small dainty bites.

Her manners almost seem a direct challenge to Dan. Dan is hopeless to respond. She is showing him up on his home turf. He is getting frustrated. He needs immediate rescue.

What happens couldn't be less helpful for him. A waitress who is walking by loses her balance slightly. She is carrying a pitcher of water and most of it spills. Estelle is unfortunately drenched by the falling water. Not only had the night already been terrible, but now Estelle is faced with the indignity of having her clothes soaked.

He immediately has the waitress reach for a dry dish towel.

Dan suggests, "I live near here. You could come back to my place."

She wonders why she would want to do that. He has already ruined her night. But she's not ready to go home yet. And she can't stay in these wet clothes. So she agrees to his suggestion.

Dan lives in an apartment not far from the restaurant. It is a house that has been converted into individual units. He immediately gets her some shorts and a t shirt. She feels a little vulnerable after it all. Here she was dressed for dinner, and now she is reduced to shorts and a t-shirt. She feels that Dan is getting a kick out of looking at her in such a weakened state.

She even comments on it, "Are you laughing at me?"

"It's just that you always look so proper, and now you almost look human."

She makes a funny face, "Are you calling me a freak. Now I look human!"

"I mean, you almost look like a fashion model all the time. And now you're the girl next door."

She counters, "You've only seen me two time before today."

"But you're always so prepared as if you're on a set."

She feels a little embarrassed by his attempts at complimenting her. It makes her feel as if she is some viper waiting to strike.

Estelle tells him, "I'm not something to be afraid of."

Dan is honest, "I've never been afraid of you. It's just that you've seemed so intimidating."

She lets down her guard, "Have I really seemed like that to you?"

"I just feel like some college student who can't quite meet your expectations of high fashion glamor."

"It's not as if I'm that high maintenance."

He tries some humor, "I guess after getting doused with water, any maintenance looks pretty good."

"Thanks for the clothes. I've never felt so well dressed for the situation," she tries to play along.

Dan wonders, "Does my apartment really look that bad?"

"No, not at all. I like it. It's kind of quaint."

Everything is very tidy. But there is a bare quality to the walls and the furnishings. Everything seems so Spartan. She expects more luxury. Maybe, Dan has a point. She has been spoiled all along. Dan never really had a chance against the Phils of the world. The water incident has taken Estelle back to the real world.

Estelle still has a towel on her shoulder. She can see her hair has lost some of its body from the accident. She doesn't want to give in to her vanity. She brushes her hair down with



both her hands.

“I’ve got some wine. Would you like a drink?”

She agrees to have a glass. It’s not a bad tasting wine. She was expecting some cooking wine that his mother might have given him in a glass jar.

“Are you a wine connoisseur?”

He admits, “I know a little.”

She wonders what other secrets he knows.

After spending time in his apartment, she realizes that he isn’t as much as a geek as she assumed. Estelle may not realize but beneath the loose-fitting clothing is a finely-chiseled body. He prefers to play the part of the clumsy geek from Georgia Tech rather than the superman of her wild desires. The nights of passion remain the imaginings of her mind. In her fantasies, she sees herself resting her head on his bare chest. She can sense him protecting her against those phantoms that prowl the night. But when she looks at him face to face, all that she can see is Clark Kent. Her swashbuckling rescuer simply vanishes in the wind.

After a while, he begins to seem much more appealing. But there is still something that doesn’t seem right.

She teases him, “You’re just like all these Yankee boys. You just come to the South to deflower sweet innocent things like me.”

He tries to play along with her old-fashioned gentility, “I respect you completely. I would never do anything to you that you wouldn’t enjoy doing to yourself.”

She gives him one of those all-knowing smiles. She is totally aware of the ins and out of what they are discussing. But it is better for effect if she keep up the act of being a babe in the woods. After all, she is still unsure if she can trust him.

For the moment, he barely fits the tales of chivalry which are the stuff of her dreams. She senses years of heartache if she gives in to him. She visualizes tear-filled nights waiting for him to come while he is immersed in some new project for work. Would he ever be the man to give of himself totally and completely to her?

She is waiting for a sign from providence. If lightening would just strike her, she might rush to be by his side. But for the time being, she only feels a paralysis with regards to matters of the heart. She has to console herself with long lonely stares his way, the occasional hug and an innocent peck on the cheek.

She realizes that she has started to think about Dan in a new way. But she has not accommodate herself to him completely. That may only come in time. The wine has already done it work. Her clothes are almost dry enough to wear.

“You can borrow the t-shirt and shorts.”

“That’s OK. “ She goes to the bathroom and puts on her damp clothes. She has a strange feeling of excitement as she dresses in his bathroom. When she opens to the door, he is directly in front of him. She stands still for a few moments and looks into his eyes. He moves closer to plant a kiss on her lips. There is no hesitation on her part. She gives herself completely.

The kiss is sufficient for the moment. As she walks out the door, she begins to doubt herself again. She feels a closeness to him. But doubts remain. That is why it is much better to leave now.

The next day he sends her a cute email. It shows a hopping rabbit followed by his

message. It brightens up her day.

She tells him that she has a great deal of school work on the weekend. The only plans that Estelle has are to meet Lily for drinks. They again meet at the bar in Brookwood. For a Friday night, there is a brisk crowd. But it continues to have its comfortable atmosphere.

Estelle is the first to strike, "Tell me about Phil." She feels that she needs to cover her tracks. Offense is the best defense.

"He wanted me to come over to his place. I made out with him in the car. I felt like such a teenager."

"You are looking old for 22."

Lily shares more with Estelle, "I just didn't want him to think that I was cheap."

Estelle wants to say something. Phil just seems so smooth. If he could, he probably would sleep with both of them.

"Are you sure that he's the one?"

Lily tries to be assertive, "He doesn't have to be the one; he just has to be the one for the night."

Estelle asks, "So what stopped you?" Maybe there is something wrong with Phil that Estelle can exploit in her favor.

"I just didn't feel it. That's not to say that I won't feel it next time,"

"A girl has her needs," says Estelle.

"You just didn't say what I think you said."

Estelle is working to provoke more of a reaction in Lily. Lily doesn't seem to want to oblige her.

Estelle probes further, "He didn't make you uncomfortable or anything. He wasn't pushing you to do anything that you didn't want to do."

"No way, girl, I was doing all the pushing!" Lily laughs.

"What would you say if I told you that I slept with Phil?"

Lily has a quick answer, "If I thought that you were serious, I'd kill you!"

"I almost slept with him."

Lily shows a confused look. She doesn't know what to say. "Tell me that you're joking."

"I knew that you'd be pissed at me. Phil talked to me about this job. So I went on the interview. And it was terrible. I thought that it was. The next thing that I know, we're hanging out talking about the job. He was trying to cheer me up. And we got on so well."

"How well is well?" Lily now seems angry.

Estelle doesn't want to confess. But she has already started. And Lily is becoming a relentless interrogator.

"I made a dinner date with him. And I went back to his place. Things happened."

Lily interrupts, "I'm not sure who to hate more. You were supposed to be my friend."

Estelle wants to explain, "I think that I felt good because he actually helped me get the job. Now I think that it was all just to get in my pants."

Lily is not taking kindly to the explanation, "I was interested in him first, Were you trying to prove something to yourself?"

"I never thought about you?"

Lily corners her, "Exactly! You didn't care about me."

Estelle attempts to backtrack, "I mean that I didn't do it to hurt you."

Lily is feeling sick. "But you hurt me nevertheless."

"He's not a nice guy."

"You're not a nice girl. You just feel that you have to have all the guys."

At that moment, she notices that a guy is staring at her. Even though Estelle keeps on making excuses to Lily, it is as if she and the guy are the only people in the room.

Estelle can feel that her admirer is about to approach. She gives him a cold stare as if to back him off.

The more that she talks to Lily, the more that Lily seems to soften her stance. Lily realizes how Phil used his position at work to take advantage of Estelle.

Lily concludes, "I always thought that there was something weird about him. He was really good. He made me think that I wanted it more than he did."

Estelle adds, "That's what he did to me."

Lily and Estelle make up. They hug.

"We can't let some stupid guy come between us" says Estelle.

Lily agrees, "Especially an asshole like Phil."

As Estelle exits the bar with Lily, her lone fan gives her a concerted stare. For her part, Estelle obliges him. For those few seconds, nothing stands in their way. But Estelle has already committed to leaving. And it is too late for him to comfortably catch up with her.

When she makes herself ready for bed, she realizes how unsure her heart is. She is attracted by Dan. But the man at the bar touched something deep in her. She is so unsettled.