

RS#2 Marie & Hertha

Start



HERTHA. *Marie*. I believe this is your...vial.

MARIE. Oh yes, thank you. Thank goodness it didn't float off.

HERTHA. I thought we agreed to leave the Radium in Paris.

MARIE. Yes but this vial is always with me. I never leave it.

HERTHA. But I asked you to leave it.

MARIE. And I didn't because I never do. Is this really a problem?

HERTHA. The problem is, you don't tell me it's here?

MARIE. Why would I tell you everything in my luggage.

HERTHA. Because that's not just anything *and it's not in your luggage*. Your children are coming, my daughters are coming, *I am here and so is that and I don't like it*.

MARIE. *I'm not asking you to like it, I like it, it's a rather big feature in my life, it reminds me of my husband, so I'll thank you to give it back*.

HERTHA. *And I'll thank you to put it on a boat back to Paris, I don't want it in my house*.

MARIE. *WHY*.

HERTHA. Because it's...

She doesn't say "dangerous."

It's an impressive thing but it's...

(Admitting.) I worry.

Your hands. Burned. Black, in places. You hide it but...I worry.

MARIE. About what exactly do you worry? Worry is not proof.

HERTHA. I know it's not, but this is a young field.

MARIE. So we are to fear it? You fear this?

HERTHA. No but we don't know everything about it, not even you!

MARIE. I know it stops cancer, is that not good enough for you?

HERTHA. If it's powerful enough to stop cancer, why the hell are they putting it in goddamn toothpaste.

MARIE. I didn't tell them to put it in toothpaste.

HERTHA. You didn't tell them anything! Creams, powders, women putting this on their faces, children drinking it in tonics! They would've listened to you if you would've told them that the science isn't ready.

MARIE. *The science is ready.*

HERTHA. *It's not, it's only been around a decade!*

MARIE. *You are not qualified to judge me.*

HERTHA. I'm not judging, I'm responding to the fact that you're sick all the time and I wonder what's to blame.

MARIE. You don't know what you're talking about.

HERTHA. I know that you've got burns on your hands, black patches on your skin, you've been ill since the moment we met, you can't breathe sometimes, you can't stand. When you went for your little swim I thought you would die because I've never seen you have to exert yourself for that long without collapsing. That is not everyone's burden, and this prolonged exposure to a substance with permeative energetic power might not be helping. Not everything in nature is good.

MARIE. You fear it.

HERTHA. Yes, I do.

MARIE. You fear *me*?

HERTHA. *What? No. No.*

MARIE. Yes, I know that voice, that look. It's a bit similar to the men chasing me down the street.

HERTHA. Oh piss off, Marie.

MARIE. *You trick me, invite me here.*

HERTHA. *This is not a trick, I am here for you.*

MARIE. *How could you possibly be and say that to me.*

HERTHA. *Because I see my friend dying in front of me.*

Beat. Beat.

MARIE. Then I shall leave in the morning.

HERTHA. That's not what I meant.

MARIE. It's clear what you meant. I'll leave right now. ← **End**