

The Conversation

By

Celeste Williams

A Dream I had while cuddling with my Wubba

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ACT I

Scene 1

Celeste walks down the aisle or from the side to the middle section in front of the communion table. She rubs her head and then her face and stretches. Her robe is pulled closed tightly.

CELESTE

I freaking hate going to church!!!

Celeste drops the things in her hands on the floor.

CELESTE

I hate everything about going to church. Nowadays, it makes my skin crawl just to think about walking into that place.

Celeste grabs the chair and drags it to the front of the room. Then, she sits in the chair and brushes her hair.

CELESTE

The problem is, I just can't compete with... THEM! All the nice fancy clothes, and hats and fascinators and everything. I won't never look like them or be like them. I need a place where I fit in. God, why can't you understand that?

Celeste sighs deeply and closes her eyes.

CELESTE

This past year has been hard for me, you know. My mother is CRAZY, my brother can't get off the street corner, my daughter is bugging and my son can't read! Oh, and let's not forget the DROVES of women who can't understand that the wedding ring on my husbands finger is NOT an invitation to slip their phone number into his tool belt.

Celeste laughs.

CELESTE

I know he's handy! And I know he can swing a hammer. They think I don't see it but I wash the clothes. I know what they are up to. God, how come you can't do something about that? Why do you allow so many temptations to come into play??? Temptations that could ruin everything that I have worked so hard for? It's like sometimes you don't even like me.

(CONTINUED)

Celeste scoffs.

CELESTE

Yea, now you wanna be silent. You been silent for quite a while now, haven't you? I been talking and talking and you been quite as a church mouse. All these years I been going to that church and all these years I been seeing people dance and shout and hearing Pastor Wilson go, "What's his name??" But when I have problems, I mean real problems, there is no place for me to turn. NO one I can talk to that can really help me out.

Celeste looks puzzled. Maybe she cries a little. She stands and walks around.

CELESTE

Is that why you put me here? So I can get more and more down on myself? You have kept me at that church for 12 years and in that time, I done got worse than I was before I even came there. I mean, you let the people talk about me, ridicule me, hurt my feelings and drive me back to the bottle. It's like you want me to stop even trying to come to your house. You sure haven't been past mine at all lately.

Celeste slumps back into the chair. Each lines get more and more emotional. They start out depressed and transition to angry. There is shouting by the end.

CELESTE

Is this what you wanted? Me broken and hurt. Confused and suicidal? Why couldn't you make me pretty, like Dawn or Ms. Adrienne, or a GREAT singer like Erica or Arngelette, or give me FANTASTIC coordination like Frances or Darby? Why did you have to make me plain and UNTALENTED? Someone that no one likes but everyone likes to abuse. WHY COULDN'T I BE SPECIAL?

Celeste unties her hair and pulls out her curls.

GOD

Well, it appears as though you really have quite a few questions for me Celeste.

Celeste takes a deep breath. Pure shock rolls over her face. She stops pulling out her curls.

GOD

Why you scared now Celeste? All these years you been talking and talking and I have been silent. You been begging me to talk back to you all these years and now all of a sudden, when I give you what you want, you scared. Well, don't be scurred now.

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Celeste sits up straight and heaves in breaths.

GOD

I think it's time our conversations stopped being so one-sided. Or rather, I think it's time that instead of talking so much you listened to the words that are coming out of my mouth.

Celeste bites her lip.

GOD

Now, I think it's real messed up you don't like coming over to my house anymore, even though you expect me to keep coming over to yours, but it's cool. I understand and I forgive you for the hypocrisy. I never asked you to compete with anybody. Not a single soul on the face of the planet. My Word says nothing about you needing to wear fancy clothes or fascinators or even having nice hair or any of that to come to my house. I'm not some superstar that you need to impress by how nice you look or act. I am family. You don't do that for the Walkers, or the Williams', so why try and stunt for me? In fact my Word specifically says "All those the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away." That means I'm not driving you away from me or my house. Your halfway out the door because you wanna be.

Celeste lowers her head.

GOD

Naw, don't put your head down. You wanted to talk, right? Well, now I'm talking and you better be listening. You think this past year was hard for you, but in actuality, I've been with you this entire time. Let me break this down for you. Your daughter is wilding out because she is a teenager and you keep treating her like she's 5 years old. Have you even taken the time to talk to her about what it means to have all those hormones surging through her body with little direction as to how to handle them? No, you just been sitting around asking me why is she bugging. But when you were her age, you were bugging too. In fact, that's why your Momma is crazy right now.

Celeste shakes her head no.

GOD

Don't shake your head no. I was there, remember. And your son can't read because he has special learning needs. You would know that if you paid more attention to him than to yourself and what you need. I know you know the song that says, "Love is patient and love is kind...", well, they got that from me.

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Celeste looks around.

GOD

Kindness is something that you desire. From me and from everyone you meet. So, you should give it right back. Like to your brother. The one that can't get off the street corners. Have you ever thought that your harsh words for him are part of the reason he can't get off the corners? You say that you love me, but "How can you love someone whom you have never seen, but not love someone you see everyday?" You want kind, but you have to give kind to get it, and you know this, MAN!!

GOD

And let's not forget the droves of women that surround your husband. You know, the husband I created for you. The man I gave you to protect. Didn't I tell you that "What God has joined together, no man will separate"? Did you think that was a game? Naw, with all these games I have created, I ain't even trying to play with you! You should know by now that I was the one who protected your marriage and gave your husband the strength to resist all that was thrown at him. You need to know that I got your back even when you think that NO ONE else has your back!

GOD

Oh, and I been "quiet as a church mouse" because I needed you to remember that the teacher is always quiet during the test. And if I'm talking while your talking, I can't hear you tell me what you THINK you need. But you need to remember, I created slot machines, but I'm not one. You don't just get to push a button and out comes a solution. Through fasting and praying, your heart is revealed and so is my glory.

GOD

And, for the past 12 years, you have been watching the man of God preach my Word and call my name, but while you were watching, did you learn anything? I can tell that you didn't because if you did then you would know "...that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed..." You would know that all that you have gone through these past 12 years has been to prepare you for where I am taking you. It's to prepare you for what I'm gonna do for you. But, you can't see that because you're too busy talking about what I haven't done to notice what I have.

Celeste lowers her head again.

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GOD

I'm saying these things to you because I love you. I love you just the way you are because I made you that way. I didn't give you Dawn and Adrienne's looks because I needed your face to shine bright like a diamond. I didn't give you Erica or Arnette's voice because I need to be able to hear you when you finally decide to "call my name". And I didn't give you Frances and Darby's coordination because... well, you have been falling a lot lately, but just know that I have a plan for that as well.

Celeste laughs.

GOD

I made you unique, not a carbon copy of my other children because I needed you to know when I see you, I see my self. I made you in my image... with the frailty of glass but the strength of steel. That alone makes you special. And I have kept you where I needed you, for you to understand that what I do for others I CAN do for you. I need you to show people what I do for you, I WILL do for them. When will you get that time after time, I was the one who carried you when you were too simple to carry yourself!!!

GOD

Now remember, just because I don't answer the question, doesn't mean I didn't hear it. Sometimes, the silence is the answer. I already told you that faith is believing without evidence, but apparently you're like Thomas and need a little talking to. I hope we don't have to have this conversation again.

Celeste shakes her head. Celeste takes off her robe and her church clothes are gorgeous and prefect. She slips on her shoes.

GOD

Good. Now, get dressed and get to my house. And don't be late!!!

Celeste drapes the robe over the chair and leaves. JAMES then comes and removes everything.

THE END