

This is me, Debbi, David – by Alec Clayton – excerpt – mud flat press

This is me, Debbi

I'm a loudmouthed, fun-loving, rabble-rousing, perverse woman. That's just the kind of gal I am. I'm wild as wild can be, except for one thing, I don't curse. Or hardly ever. Strange, I know, for a twenty-first century party gal, but at some point growing up I just got fed up with hearing the f-word every day from everybody every other sentence. F-this, F-that, what the F is that all about, you effing F-wad? I figured there had to be a better way to talk. I was an English major, after all.

Want to know what kind of wild woman I am? I got arrested once for yanking off my top and running down Bourbon Street with my beauties bouncing in the rain. And it wasn't even Mardi Gras. It was just me letting it all hang out in a fit of exuberance. It was when the Saints won the Super Bowl. I was watching it with about a gazillion other people jammed into Lipstix, a bar on Bourbon Street. I didn't even like football, but I joined in for the excitement of the crowd. Plus David loved the game. Everybody was screaming and sloshing drinks on each other, and I jumped up and yanked my top off and ran out in the street, oblivious to the crowds and winter weather. I got from the corner at Bienville all the way to St. Phillip before the cops stopped me and hauled me off to jail. They made me wear something like a hospital gown, and they tossed me in with the drunks and told me to sleep it off. That wasn't the wildest thing I ever did, but it was doggone close to it.

David came to get me out of the slammer the next morning.

I think he was embarrassed. He's something of a prude, kind of old fashioned, which is kind of cute. Kind of sweet. But oh how I loved that man. Leaving him for Bryce was just about the dumbest thing I ever did.

This is me, David

I've always been something of a nebbish little mama's boy. Can't help it. Never took a chance on anything in my entire life. Not until the day Debbi walked into the bookstore. Well, actually it was the third time she came to the store. She spent a lot of time perusing the shelves, mostly the fiction sections and self-help, and she glanced up at me a lot. Did I catch a flutter of her eyelashes? Yes, I think I did. She wanted me to ask her out. Dropped hints all over the place, but I was slow to catch the hints. Hopper was there the second time she came in, and after she left with her purchases he said, "Man, that woman wants to jump you."

“What do you mean?”

“I mean she’s got the hots for you. It was written all over her.”

Apparently I couldn’t read the message. I’ve always been that way. I never notice when they’re hinting, if they are, and even if I do notice, I never let myself believe it.

The next time she came in she asked, “Are you ever going to ask me out or not?” Well, I couldn’t exactly ignore that now, could I? So we dated, and dating became an almost every day affair. We spent almost every moment together for a glorious month, and then she moved in with me—with me and Lucy and Randy and Hopper in our Ninth Ward menagerie. It was not too awfully long after Katrina. Well, actually, a few years, but the Ninth Ward was still a mess. The few rentals that were available were dirt cheap, and the four of us—five after Debbi moved in, took advantage of the cheap rent. But then not too long after she moved in, she left me for another man. It was after she ran off that I took what was the most foolhardy or courageous leap I ever took in my life.