

Secrets & Lies

Hortense
Excuse me

Cynthia
What is it sweetheart?

Hortense
Are you Cynthia?

Cynthia
Yeah how'd you know?

Hortense
Hello, I'm Hortense

Cynthia
What cha talking about

Hortense
Hortense Cumberbatch, I spoke to you on the telephone

Cynthia
What, that was you

Hortense
Yeah,

Cynthia
Oh no, no sweetheart, no darling, you've been ringing the wrong person

Hortense
Cynthia Purley

Cynthia
Where'd ya get my name from anyway?

Hortense
It's on my birth certificate

Cynthia
What cha talking about on your birth certificate, can't be

Hortense
It's got your name and your address on it. There.

Cynthia

Well, that's all wrong darling they've made a mistake down the offices. You want to get down there, get that sorted. That's someone having a joke.

Hortense
Don't think so

Cynthia
Let me have a look at that. I'm ever so sorry, sweetheart. I must be a bit of a disappointment for you.

Hortense
Look, I really think you ought to see these documents.

Cynthia
Well, what is it?

Hortense
Why don't we eh, go somewhere have, sit down

Cynthia
No, I think I'd better be going darling

Hortense
Look, you've come all this way, please. Let's, let's go and have a cup of tea or something. There's places down there.

Cynthia points in the direction as if agreeing to go

Hortense
Come on

Cynthia
Well, I hope you find you mum, sweetheart. You keep looking. (Offers her a cigarette)
go on.

Hortense
No thanks, I don't smoke.

Cynthia
Oh, nor should ya. My daughter smokes like a chimney.

Hortense
Got a daughter?

Cynthia
Yeah. (Looks around) Ain't never been in here before. They shouldn't go raisin your hopes like that, it t'aint fair.

Hortense
Is this your signature?

Cynthia
This is stupid. I don't understand it. I mean I can't be your mother, can I?

Hortense
Why not?

Cynthia
Well, look at me.

Hortense
What?

Cynthia
Listen, I don't mean nothing by it darling, but I ain't never been with a black man in my life. No disrespect nor nothing, I'd of remembered, wouldn't I?
(She remembers) Oh bloody hell. Oh Jesus Christ, oh my. I'm sorry sweetheart. I'm so ashamed.

Hortense
You shouldn't be ashamed.

Cynthia
I can't look at you. I didn't know sweetheart, honest I didn't know.

Hortense
What didn't you know?

Cynthia
I didn't know you was black. Daft, I thought they got the dates all wrong. All this time I thought you was born 6, 6 weeks premature, but you weren't you wasn't.

Hortense
Who was he?

Cynthia
You don't want to know that darling.

Hortense
I do.

Cynthia
Listen, I want to be honest with ya, but I can't tell you that sweetheart, I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Look at cha. I'm a bit of a disappointment to ya ain't I.

Hortense

No.

Cynthia
You don't have to say that darling.

Hortense
I know.

Cynthia
You'd been better off without me, I'll tell you that much. I done you a good turn.

Hortense
Your tea's getting cold.

Cynthia
What was your mom like then? Did she mind you looking for me?

Hortense
My mom died recently

Cynthia
Oh, I'm sorry. What about your dad?

Hortense
He's dead. Are you married?

Cynthia
No, no I ain't, I ain't married sweetheart. Are you?

Hortense
No

Cynthia
I'll bet cha got a boyfriend though ain't cha

Hortense
No not at the moment

Cynthia
A nice looking girl like you.

Hortense
Have you got a boyfriend?

Cynthia
(Na) I'll give them all a wide birth. They've gotten me into enough trouble in the past
ain't they (laugh into cry) you got a job have ya

Hortense
Yeah

Cynthia
That's good. What doing'

Hortense
I'm an optometrist

Cynthia
Ay

Hortense
I test eyes. Optician

Cynthia
Are ya? Well, there's a turn up.

Hortense
What do you do?

Cynthia
I work in a factory.

Hortense
Do you like it?

Cynthia
It pays the rent.

Hortense
How about your daughter

Cynthia
She works for the council. You got any sisters?

Hortense
Nah, two brothers

Cynthia
Are they uhm, adopted?

Hortense
No

Cynthia
What they do?

Hortense
One's a computer salesman and the other one's got his own garage

Cynthia
I bet your mum was proud a you, wasn't she?

Hortense
Yeah, she was.

Cynthia
Yeah, a course she was. I'd a been proud.

Hortense
Why didn't you want to see me?

Cynthia
Well, cause nobody knows about cha sweetheart. I don't want to upset my daughter, do I?

Hortense
I mean when I was born?

Cynthia
Well I couldn't, I was too upset see. They wanted me to. They wanted me to hold you, but I couldn't, I just couldn't. I didn't know if I was coming or going. I was only a little girl myself, 16. I didn't have no choice. If I'd of seen you I'd of wanted to keep you, you do believe me don't cha sweetheart? I don't blame ya darling. You only just found out?

Hortense
Na, known since I was seven.

Cynthia
What cha mum and dad told ya did they?

Hortense
Yeah, they did

Cynthia
They sound like nice people

Hortense
Yeah, my mom told me on the plane on the way back from Barbados

Cynthia
Was you upset

Hortense
I just looked out at the clouds

Hortense

Haven't you ever thought about me?

Cynthia

Yea, of course I have, but it ain't no good point in what you ain't got, is it?

Hortense

But you didn't think I'd look for you?

Cynthia

No I didn't as it happens, wish you hadn't bothered not don't cha?

Hortense

No I'm glad. I don't want to disrupt your family or anything, I just had to see you, I had to know who you were.

Cynthia

Listen, I want to wish you all the best sweetheart, whatever you do and ill be thinking of ya.