

The Younger Girl Teaches Me How to French-kiss

(2.5 minute read)

Let's call her Natalie Beltran, a freshman in high school when I was a junior. She was a petite and pretty girl, with dark brown eyes and shiny black hair that fell below her shoulders. I don't remember how we drew close for a brief period of time. It probably began at a house party that one of my friends frequently hosted, and soon after my first flame, Donna, and I split up. Without my knowing how, Natalie Beltran effortlessly slipped into the space Donna had left.

During our first exclusive meet-up (was it a date?), she asked if I knew how to French-kiss. I did not. "I'll show you," she said, and instructed me by means of mouth-to-mouth practice sessions. I learned how to open my lips and meet hers; and the way lips flex and work together. It was a revelation.

During another meeting, Natalie Beltran showed me how to give a back massage. "Take off your shirt and lay down on the bed, face down," she said. She did not undress herself, but straddled my midriff, knees on the bed, her butt resting on mine, and legs folded back under her. She kneaded the muscles of my shoulders, back, and upper arms. Then my neck. She worked methodically and with care. On a later date, she showed me how to stroke another person's skin sensuously—face, neck, chest—with a soft caress of the fingertips. She showed me how to caress her hair with outstretched fingers that reached under her hair to the scalp, then gently moved outward through the hair, pulling ever so slightly until I reached the tips. Again and again. She told me it was both relaxing and a turn-on for girls. She had no reticence about introducing me to the arts of gentle romance, and I did not shy away from learning them. She had experience I had not had (I assumed she had dated older boys at an early age). Maybe she was grooming the inexperienced older boy and preparing him for initiation into . . . the golden mysteries? I never found out, but she did coach me in skills that have served me well ever since.

I don't remember how long we dated—or if we formally dated at all—but we met up at different places over a three or four week period. I recall the day she asked me if things were really over between Donna and me. She seemed very fond of me, and appeared to want a steady relationship. I assured her Donna and I were done (even though I secretly nursed a spark for her). Several days later, I walked Natalie Beltran home from school. She invited me into the house, where I met her mother. We then went to her bedroom to . . . what? Study? Talk? She had closed the door. We were in different grades, so would not have studied together. We likely just kissed.

We had not been at her house for long when her mother tapped lightly on the door, waited a few seconds, then poked her head in. “There’s a phone call for Kenny.” *For me?* Who could be calling me *here*? I walked out of the room and to the phone in the kitchen.

“Hello?” I said tentatively. At the other end of the line came Donna’s voice—her tender voice.

“Kenny, I want to get back together with you. I really do. I’m sorry about everything,” she said. “Will you come over to my house so we can talk things over? Right now?”

How did she know I was there? Turns out, one of her friends saw me walking Natalie Beltran home, and informed her. Hot with adolescent jealousy—she called my house; upon learning I wasn’t home, she called Natalie’s house. Her tender voice reached through the phone line, carrying her sparkling blue eyes with it. Then . . . boom! The residual spark in me burst into flame, like a struck match, making the decision easy for me. Without hesitation, I said, “Yes, okay.”

When I returned to Natalie’s room I told her I had to leave.

“That was Donna, wasn’t it?” she asked.

“Yes.”

“Are you going over to her house?”

“Yes.”

“Are you getting back together?”

“I think so.”

She sighed with disappointment. “Darn it. I knew this would happen.” She was the interim girl, and I had hurt her, without intending to. I really did enjoy her company. I said goodbye and left.

As I now reminisce on Natalie’s artful skills, I wish I had chosen otherwise that day. She was so very fine. If I had made a different decision, Natalie Beltran might have led me gently and steadily into that sweet land of sensual love making.