

Evelyn and Me

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VIVANT

Evelyn and Me

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BY MONIQUE GRANT

When Evelyn Hugo, legendary actress, producer, and philanthropist, died earlier this year, she and I were in the process of writing her memoirs.

To say that spending the last couple of weeks of Evelyn's life with her was an honor would be both an understatement and, to be frank, somewhat misleading.

Evelyn was a very complex woman, and my time with her was just as complicated as her image, her life, and her legend. To this day, I wrestle with who Evelyn was and the impact she had on me. Some days I find myself convinced that I admire her more than anyone I've ever met, and others days I think of her as a liar and a cheat.

I think Evelyn would be rather content with that, actually.

She was no longer interested in pure adoration or salacious scandal. Her primary focus was on the truth.

Having gone over our transcripts hundreds of times, having replayed every moment of our days together in my head, I think it's fair to say that I might just know Evelyn even better than I know myself. And I know that what Evelyn would want to reveal in these pages, along with the stunning photos taken just hours before her death, is one very surprising but beautifully true thing.

And that is this: Evelyn Hugo was bisexual and spent the majority of her life madly in love with fellow actress Celia St. James.

She wanted you to know this because she loved Celia in a way that was in turns breathtaking and heartbreaking.

She wanted you to know this because loving Celia St.

James was perhaps her greatest political act.