

it. (SHE exits.)

MONA (THEN). Sissy, I don't want you to even see him no more... (SHE follows Sissy (THEN) off.) ... do you hear?

Sissy. O.K. You got all your revenge out now... let's get on with the party. It's hotter'n hell an' I'm dyin' for a cold beer.

JUANITA. Where do you have beer?

Sissy. Luke's keepin' a case cold for me in his soda-pop cooler.

JUANITA. You're not bringin' beer in here.

Sissy. Ah, come on Juanita... turn off God for tonight an' have a good time, huh?

JUANITA. I won't have a good time so long as he's in here.

JOANNE. She!

JUANITA. You are not a she... you're only pretendin' to be one like you always did.

JOANNE. (Goes toward her, breasts high.) Feel, go on and give them a good squeeze... there's no strawberry jello in these boobs.

MONA. Stop it... it was funny back then, but...

Sissy. (Laughs.) Aw, Mona, he's just pullin' her leg. (Her laugh turns to surprise as JOANNE doesn't respond.) ... aren't ya Joe?

JOANNE. I'm no longer Joe... I'm Joanne.

Sissy. Joanne?!

MONA. What do you mean?

JOANNE. I mean unlike all of you... I've undergone a change.

Sissy. A change?! What the hell are you talkin' about?

JOANNE. I don't have to pretend any more.

Sissy. You mean this is all... real?!

STELLA. (Shocked.) Holy shit!

MONA. No... No, I don't believe you.

Sissy. (Stunned.) Good God, Maude... the wonders of modern science.

MONA. (Moving away.) That is disgustin'.

STELLA. (Studying her.) I've seen things like you on the T.V... but I never saw one before, up close (To everyone.) any of you?

JUANITA. You're just one of them "perverts"... that's what you are! (SHE goes outside. MONA retreats to the shrine. The lights fade on the store and brighten in the backroom on MONA (THEN) and JOE.)

JOE. I can't take any more crap from this town, Mona.

MONA (THEN). They're stupid. You have to remember that.

JOE. Run away with me, Mona... The two of us could go away and...

MONA (THEN). I can't leave, Joe... I just got back... the climate here is perfect for my asthma, the doctors said so. I might die if I ever leave again...

JOE. Please, Mona... we'll find another place... It could be just like it was in Marfa, forever.

MONA (THEN). (Disturbed.) What happened in Marfa was... we promised not to talk about that, remember?

JOE. You don't know how much I've missed you, Mona.

MONA (THEN). (Nervous.) I missed you, too, Joe... an' Sissy, an'...

JOE. You bein' away made me realize how much

I care for you, Mona...how much I...love you.

MONA (THEN). Love!...no, you only *think* you...

JOE. No, it's real...I know it's real...love me back, Mona...please?!

MONA (THEN). I can't do that, Joe...not now.

JOE. One day?...Do you think you will, one day?

MONA (THEN). One day...maybe, but...

JOE. We could get married, eventually...that would show them I'm not the freak they think I am, wouldn't it? Mona, that night in Marfa was the happiest time of my life. (*Takes her hand.*)

MONA (THEN). (*Nervously pulls her hand away.*) I don't want to talk about it, Joe.

JOE. I actually *felt* like James Dean, there on the porch of...

MONA (THEN). (*Angry.*) Joe, stop it! Maybe...maybe you should go away...just for awhile, until they all forget what's happened...You could go visit your cousin in Tucson...then, in a couple of months you could come back and...and, maybe then...

JOE. Would you marry me, then?

MONA (THEN). I don't know...I need time to think about everythin'...this summer has been so...so, confusing

JOE. I need you, Mona...I need you to help me decide just what the hell I am.

MONA (THEN). Everythin's come about so sudden...so, unexpected (*Starts to move away.*) I don't know what's gonna happen, now. (*SHE rushes out of the store.*) SISSY (THEN) enters the backroom as it slowly fades and the store brightens.)

SISSY (THEN). Where's she runnin' off to?

JOE. (*HE throws and hugs SISSY (THEN) desperately.*) Oh, Sissy!

SISSY. I just can't get over it. Time sure does play crazy tricks, don't it?

SISSY (THEN). C'mon, I got some beer hidden out back...looks like you could use one. (*THEY exit.*)

SISSY. When'd this change-over of yours take place anyhow?

JOANNE. Thirteen years come January. Mama died from whatever it was she died from, and left a bundle in insurance money...and with it I became what Mama wanted all along...ironic, don't you think?

STELLA. I saw me a morphodite on a travellin' carnival once. They said it was a half-man, half-woman. Is that what you are?...in case anybody I know should ever ask.

JOANNE. Honey, you just tell 'em I'm a freak. All your friends should know what that is.

SISSY. C'mon, Stel, let's go get the beer. I need me one now more'n ever. (*THEY start to exit.*)

MONA. If you see Jimmy Dean out there, you drag him on back with you, you hear.

(EDNA LOUISE enters wearing her party dress which is entirely too tight across her middle. SHE also wears high heels SHE can barely stand up in.)

EDNA. Is everybody leavin' already?

STELLA. Good God, get a look at her, would ya? (*Laughs.*)

JUANITA. (*Entering from outside.*) Edna Louise