

*SHE wears beat-up saddle shoes and white anklets and carries a clear plastic cleaning bag which contains a party dress.)*

SISSY. *(As they enter.)* Stella May, you old shit-kicker, how the hell are you?

EDNA. I didn't have time to change after work cause Stella May was in such a hurry to get here... I feel so embarrassed.

SISSY. Edna, you got somethin' cookin' there in your oven?

EDNA. *(Dumbly.)* I beg your pardon? *(SHE suddenly realizes the joke and holds her pregnancy.)* Oh! *(Giggles.)* Yes... my seventh.

STELLA. Seven kids! Can you imagine anythin' more horrible! *(SHE models the jacket.)* Hey!... Hey, everybody, look what I found up in my attic. *(SHE laughs... SHE always laughs.)* Ain't it a hoot?!

MONA. The old club jacket.

EDNA. *(Frantically trying to pull hers out of her bag.)* I have mine too... it seems to be stuck here in my bag, but... I do have it!

SISSY. Jeezus, can you believe we used to wear them things?

STELLA. Sissy, my God it's so good to see you... Last I heard of you was a Christmas card from Oklahoma City 'bout five years ago.

SISSY. Lived there ten years... I'm back here now, goin' on three... been workin' ever at the "Flyin' 'H' Truck Stop" down by the highway. Got me plans for movin' on though... real soon.

STELLA. From the looks of things out there, you'd better start movin' on quick. Christ, what's happened

to this town, anyway? I've seen dead dogs layin' out 'long the side of the road with more life than this town's got.

JUANITA. Lack of rain's just about dried us all up.

EDNA. *(To JUANITA.)* I will have to use your bathroom to change. *(SHE wanders around the store, looking.)*

STELLA. Mona, you ain't changed a day... hell, none of you has. *(Laughs.)* Hey, what about me? *(Twirls around.)* Think I've changed, huh?

SISSY. Honey, you look like a million bucks.

STELLA. Million an' a half. *(Laughs.)* My Merle just brought him in another one. That man can smell oil, I swear.

EDNA. *(Who has put a penny in the gum-ball machine and holds up the gum-ball.)* Look!... Look, everybody... Red, my favorite color. My fortune in the newspaper said today would be my lucky day... *(Pops it in her mouth.)* an' it is.

STELLA. Ain't she a dip though? *(Looks around.)* Anybody else show up yet? *(JOANNE enters through the curtains. STELLA sees her.)* Don't tell me now, let me guess.

MONA. Stella, that's not...

STELLA. No!... no, let me guess. *(Quickly.)* Alice Ann Johnson!

MONA. Stella, she's not...

STELLA. I said don't tell me, for Chrissake! *(SHE sees the group picture on the table.)* Oh, my God... the old group photograph... aw! *(Goes to Sissy with it.)* My God, tell me that's not me.

SISSY. It ain't... *(Points to opposite side.)* You're

over there with your tongue stickin' out. (EDNA rushes over to look.)

STELLA. My God, would ya get a look at that outfit I'm wearin'? (Laughs.) If any of the girls at the country club got their hands on this, I'd be black-balled.

EDNA. I have a party dress here in the bag. I haven't worn it in so long it smelled like moth balls, so I sent it to the dry cleaners, which is why it's...

STELLA. Oh Edna, quit belly achin' about the way you look. She's been harpin' about that damn dress all the damn day. Go put it on an' shut up. (To JOANNE.) As if it would make any difference.

JUANITA. The bathroom's right where it always was, Edna.

EDNA. I won't take very long, I promise. (SHE exits.)

SISSY. (Calling after her.) Don't flush the toilet whatever you do. It's the only water left in this whole damn town.

STELLA. (Looking at JOANNE and then the picture.) I just love to try an' guess at people from old photographs.

SISSY. (Quietly to JUANITA.) Who the hell is she?

JUANITA. Just someone passin' through.

STELLA. Hey Mona, is that fancy yellow sports car parked out front one of the purchases you made with all that money you raked in off Jimmy Dean?

MONA. There was no charge to see Jimmy Dean.

STELLA. There wasn't? You sure did miss out on a golden opportunity to cash in on a craze. (To JOANNE.) Then, it's gotta be yours then...You

look like you've done pretty good for yourself.

JOANNE. I managed to do all right. (A glance to MONA.)

STELLA. You sure you're in this picture?

MONA. (Very unnerved by JOANNE's continuous stares; quietly to SISSY.) Did you see Jimmy Dean out there anywhere?

SISSY. Nope.

MONA. (Goes to the door.) Then where is he?... He couldn't have just disappeared into nowhere. (SHE starts to wheeze and gasp for breath.)... Some... some... thing's... ha... happened... I... I can't catch my breath. (SHE grabs onto the door frame for support.)

STELLA. Get her some ice water. She's gonna faint for Chrissake.

SISSY. There ain't no water. (JUANITA helps MONA to a seat.)

JOANNE. Give her a swallow of whiskey.

JUANITA. There is no alcohol in this store an' there never will be.

JOANNE. What about that bottle Sidney used to keep hidden under the hardware counter?

JUANITA. (Stunned.) What do you...?

STELLA. (Quickly.) Martha Jane Gibbons!

JUANITA. Sidney did not drink!

JOANNE. Then how did he die from it?

SISSY. Who the hell are you?

JOANNE. He died from a decayed liver...he was eaten-up by alcohol.

SISSY. You can't go talkin' like that to her.

JUANITA. Sidney was a saint and he's in heaven now with God.