

MAGGIE. (*Still detached.*) The apartment is nice. It was closer to work.

JOE. (*Starting to get really angry.*) Work? Shit. Fifty weeks a year in a flat-wire shop. Twenty-four years.

MAGGIE. We had the saloon in between. And the oil truck . . .

JOE. A bartender and a truck driver in between.

MAGGIE. We *owned* the bar. That was ours.

JOE. Gone.

MAGGIE. And the truck, we owned . . .

JOE. All gone. Christ, even the factory is gone.

MAGGIE. They couldn't get along without you.

JOE. Twenty-four years. Two weeks a year at the beach. One week off for Christmas . . . (*Pause.*) Talk to me, Maggie. Talk to me.

MAGGIE. What? What can I say?

JOE. I don't know. Somebody walks up one day, one day, somebody walks up and tells you it's finished. And me . . . all I can say is 'what?' . . . *what's* finished? What did I have that's finished? What?

MAGGIE. We give up too easy. We don't fight hard enough. We give up . . . too easy . . .

JOE. We got to tell him, Maggie. We got to face it and tell him. Some son of a bitch walks up one day and tells you it's finished. What? What did we have that's finished?

MAGGIE. (*Breaking down.*) Us. Us. For Christ's sake, don't make me say things I don't understand. I don't want to hear them. I shake all over when I think about them. How long? Two weeks? Three? A month? And then what? What have I got *then*? An apartment full of some furniture I can't even keep clean for company, a closet full of some old pictures, some curtains I

made out of my wedding dress that don't even fit the windows . . . What? What do I do? Sit down with the TV set every night, spill my coffee when I fall asleep on the sofa and burn holes in the carpet, dropping cigarettes?

JOE. Maggie . . .

MAGGIE. No. I want you to come home. What is this place, anyway? They make everything so nice. Why? So you forget? I can't. I can't. I want you to come home. I want you to stay out four nights a week bowling, and then come home so I can yell and not talk to you, you son of a bitch. I want to fight so you'll take me to a movie and by the time I get you to take me I'm so upset I can't enjoy the picture. I want to get up too early, too goddamn early, and I'll let you know about it, too, because I have to make you breakfast, because you never, never once eat it, because you make me get up too early just to keep you company and talk to you, and it's cold, and my back aches, and I got nothing to say to you and we never talk and it's six-thirty in the morning, *every* morning, even Sunday morning and it's all right . . . it's all right . . . it's all right because I *want* to be there because you need me to be there because I want *you* to be there because I want you to come home.

JOE. Maggie . . .

MAGGIE. Come home, that's all. Come home.

JOE. I can't, Maggie. You know I can't.

MAGGIE. No, I don't know. I don't.

JOE. I can't.

MAGGIE. You can. Don't believe what they tell you. What do they know? We've been through worse than this. You look fine. I can see it.

JOE. No, Maggie.