

A COOLER CLIMATE 7-1

IRIS

I brought you some lunch. You could eat it outside if you wanted. (pause) Leo's lawyer called again this morning. He wants you to call him.

PAULA

Well I'm not going to. This divorce talk is nothing but nonsense. This affair will wear itself out like all the others. (beat) Leo knows how ridiculous he looks. And it's obvious what *she* wants. His money, his connections. If I were a young actress just starting out, I'd pursue him too.

IRIS

She's not an actress, Paula. She's a banker.

PAULA

I don't care what she is. He's always had these women. It's inevitable; really, for a man like him. But he'll come back. You'll see. He always has.

IRIS

And what if he doesn't? (pause) I'm going to take the station wagon to the garage in town later. Would you like to come along for the ride?

PAULA

Don't do that. Leo always fixes the cars. Just leave it 'til Leo comes.

IRIS

Oh, I don't think it can wait that long.

PAULA

Oh all right. Take it then.

A COOLER CLIMATE 7-2

IRIS

Don't you want to come?

PAULA

I don't want to breathe, Iris. Why the hell should I want to come to town?

IRIS

It's daytime, Paula. Not night. Day. Now leave the damn shades open.

PAULA

No, please. The house feels so empty when you're gone.

IRIS

Then don't stay in the house. Take a drive. Go for a walk. Come outside with me.

PAULA

Where are you going? You just got here!

IRIS

I'm finished with my work for the day. I'm taking a walk.

PAULA

Why are you always leaving me? (beat) Did Leo tell you to do this? Make me go out?

IRIS

No, You need help. Professional help. You're depressed.

PAULA

Tell me about it.

A COOLER CLIMATE 7-3

IRIS

I don't know what to do for you! You've got to--

PAULA

Don't tell me what to do! I may agree to a walk, but not a lecture! Leave me alone, do you hear me? I may never listen to anybody ever again!

IRIS

Well if you weren't so closed off, Paula, you'd be able to see what you're doing. It's what you've always done-- put the covers over your head and blame everybody else for your problems! It's always somebody else's fault, isn't it, Paula. First Leo's. Now mine.

PAULA

I'm not helpless, you know! You think I'm helpless!

IRIS

That is not what *I* think of you, Paula. It's what *you* think of yourself.

PAULA

Don't kid yourself, Iris. You've been feeling sorry for me ever since you got here.

IRIS

That's not true! (beat) How can I possibly feel sorry for you? You've got it made.

PAULA

Screw you, Iris. You make me sick.

A COOLER CLIMATE 7-4

IRIS

I bet it was really fun being married to you, Paula. All the time making people feel like they're just some mess you have to clean up. No wonder he left you.

PAULA

He didn't *really* leave me. I mean, he hasn't really *left* me-- he's just sewing his oats. I know him. He's not really gone. It just seems that way...

IRIS

You're a real piece of work, Paula. Clue in. He's gone. He loves another woman. He's fucking another woman and he'll continue to do so. If not with her then someone else. But not you, Paula. He doesn't want you, so snap out of it. Grow up and get on with your life. And when you do all that... give me a call... that is if you still want to be friends.