A Heart Beating Hard
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LD closed the door and Margie was left alone in the flashing-bulb-lit hallway outside Apartment #1. Margie heard LD lock the door. She stood there in the hallway, beside the creaking wooden stairs, in that place between her home and Lucy’s, that dark downstairs space they shared, for a long time. Margie put her arms inside her t-shirt and held her breasts in her hands. She touched them, squeezed them, pretended. That her hands were not her hands. That she had not seen.

But this touch, this grab, this needing to feel, this was Margie. Margie, alone, left behind by Lucy, let out by LD, feeling the soft heat of herself, of her body. Margie on the outside, feeling. Finding out what was there, what was hers. This was Margie shut out, alone, with nowhere she was wanted, nowhere safe from the sounds of other people living lives that had nothing to do with her. Margie, heavy in her own hands, keeping this to herself, giving herself over to the soft, safe care of Margie.

32. MARGE

What’s this, Marge?
I see you.
Playing with your big titties down there in the hallway.
Trying to hide.
Your ma is going to crack up.
Marge the Barge caught red-handed.
Titty-handed.
Squeezing her big balloons.
Those dykes get you all worked up, Marge?
How do they feel?
Good, right?
Maybe I won’t tell your ma.
Maybe this will be between me and you, Marge.
Me and you and your big bags you’ve got.
Our secret.

33. MARJORIE

Spring Is Here.
Marjorie stands in the center of it, in the People-pushing-carts heart of the Store, next to a big yellow cardboard display with huge orange letters that say