No. You are not going back inside. You are going for a ride.
Good, fuck.
Don’t touch anything. Get in.
Get back there. I don’t trust you up here.
Can you fit? You fit back there, Marge?
Life hurts, Marge. Deal with it.
Now listen to her. This baby purrs. Like a little kitty cat. Like a fucking woman, Marge. Listen to this baby moan.
You hear that?
What’s wrong with you back there? Like you never been in a car before.
Your ma don’t need a car. She’s got me. I’ll take her where she wants to go.
Okay, Marge, hang on tight. Here we go.
No belts back there, Marge.
Just hold on.
Fast? You think this is fast? Fucking fast my ass.
I’m going to show you fast, Marge.
You hold on and you watch. Fast is coming. We’re getting to fast.
See that? You hear that? Get your stupid fucking head up out of your lap and look.
I told you to look.
Look at me, Marge. Look at this baby.
I’ll decide when we go home. You just fucking sit and watch and like it.
We’ll drive around all day like this if I say so.
Tell me you were wrong. Good is fucked up. Good is an insult to this beautiful baby.
Say you’re sorry, Marge.
Louder. Say you’re sorry for what you said.
Not to me, stupid. Say it to my baby. Say it to her.
Apologize. Now.
Say it. Tell my baby how fucking sorry you are for insulting her.
Now lean down and kiss her.
Do it, Marge.
Do what I fucking say.

36. MARJORIE

Angry. A lot of angry.
Do you really think it’s the store that makes people angry? Or do you think the store is just a place that might bring out anger that’s already there?

How to know, Dr. Goodwin? But a lot of angry passes by. A lot of angry happens in the Store.

What do you think makes people angry, Marjorie?


Those sound like very different reasons.

Well, lots of different kinds of angry.

What do you mean?

I mean what I say. All the kinds of angry. I don’t have a good way to say it like you, Dr. Goodwin, like a psycho-doctor, but what I mean is different kinds of angry. Like, little boy angry, like red faces and little cheeks popping out. Like little girl angry or men’s angry. How they carry it around. Like lady angry. In the forehead. The eyes. Like a lady’s angry in the Store.

This is a specific woman’s anger you’re talking about, Marjorie?

Yes. In the Store. That lady’s angry. Hers was all in her face. Held tight in the lines of her cheeks, you know? Between her eyebrows, like her eyebrows were holding on hard to the angry there. And her shoulders. All of her. All angry, but held in, under her skin.

What was she angry about?

I don’t know. Just angry.

Was she angry with you?

I don’t know, Dr. Goodwin. I can see the People and talk with the People but I can only know my self and what I am thinking about.

What do you feel angry about, Marjorie?

No angry, Dr. Goodwin. I am fine. No more angry with me.

I don’t know if I can believe that. You’ve just told me that everyone has her own kind of anger. What is your kind?

I am no kind of angry, Dr. Goodwin. I am done with all my angry.

So I should believe that you are different from other people? That you don’t feel any anger at all?

I am different, Dr. Goodwin. Yes. I am not like People. I like People and I am like People in some ways but like I said. I am my self and my self is not the same as People.

Okay, Marjorie. I don’t mean to upset you.

I am not upset.

You look upset. You’re sweating.
I am not upset. Sweating is hot, not upset.
So who else around you is angry, Marjorie? It sounds like you spend a lot of time watching people and thinking about what kind of anger they carry.
Steve. The manager. At the Store.
The man who sometimes pinches you? The one who you don’t like to be near?
Yes. Steve.
What kind of anger do you think Steve has?
Fat man angry. Sorry to say but it is a kind. I know I am big too, Dr. Goodwin, but not like Steve. Steve has his big huge belly. His skin shows. He has his fat all around him and the fat makes him angry. You can see it when he walks away, how his arms move fast next to his big belly. Like he is pretending he is not how he is. And how he puts his head to one side when he talks to you and he spits when he talks and he never says, Sorry. Steve’s angry comes out all through his body in this. This.
This.
What is the word, Dr. Goodwin?
What word are you trying to think of? Describe it.
Like an explosion? You mean his anger seems explosive?
Exploding. Yes. It is exploding out of his body and Steve tries to seem like the men on television but his body is not that way. And he pinches my arm and tells me, Try. I try, Dr. Goodwin. I am a good worker. And People walk in and Steve tries to put the big of him on display. And I know all of that is his angry. And he is exploding.
He doesn’t sound like a very safe person for you to be around.
No, Dr. Goodwin. Steve is not safe.
What do you do to protect yourself from Steve?
I stay quiet. Step away. Hold my arms tight around my self like this.
You know that you could file a complaint if you want to, Marjorie.
I don’t want to complain, Dr. Goodwin. I like my job. Steve is just Steve in his angry.
Well, I know you make good decisions, Marjorie. But I hope you will continue to stand up to Steve.
Yes.
Anyone else? What about your mother? What kind of anger did she have?
Ma again, Dr. Goodwin. You know I don’t know about Ma. Ma is much harder.
But you know so much about Steve’s anger. Why not your mother’s? You’ve known her for so much longer. You must have spent a lot more time watching her than Steve, right?

Ma was always so up close, you know? Like you look at a thing up in front of your eyes and all you see is color. You don’t see the thing until it is far away. Ma is like that I think.

What color is your mother, then? What do you see when you think of her up close, as you say?

Oh. I don’t know. Red, I guess. But red is not just angry. Red is all things.

Is your grandmother angry?

Gram? Gram is just old-lady angry. Shut-in angry. Watching the Stories angry. Yes. Some. Angry that she does not have long hair like the ladies in the Stories. Angry that her body is all bent up. Angry about all the men.

What men?

All the men. Gram’s angry is about all the men. The big of men and the strong of men. How they yell. Ma’s men, mostly. Television men also.

Was your grandmother often angry at your mother for the men she chose?

Gram has her Lord. She says that the Lord is the only man she will let in.

What kind of anger did your stepfather have?

Dr. Goodwin, you know I don’t like to talk about Him.

I know you don’t, Marjorie, but that’s why you come here, isn’t it? To talk about the things that are difficult?

I come just to talk. Just to say Hello to you and talk about the day.

But you also come here because you have some problems you need help with. You have painful things that are difficult to deal with alone.

And don’t say father. Even with a step in front.

What do you prefer I call him, Marjorie?


I think we have to talk about him, Marjorie. What kind of anger did he have?

All of it, Dr. Goodwin.

Can you explain what you mean by all of it?

All of it. How to say? The angry-dog angry the little-boy angry the shark-eating-fish angry the boiling-water angry the spitting angry the television angry the hissing-cat angry, even, even old-lady angry, man angry, Ma angry, even.

That’s a lot of anger for one person. Where do you think all that anger came from, Marjorie?

Came from. It is just there.
I think anger usually comes from things that have happened to us in our past. Do you know what I mean?
From what People remember.
Yes, from what we hold on to. What has happened to us. Do you think your stepfather had some things happen to him that made him angry?
I don’t know, Dr. Goodwin. I don’t care.
I’m just trying to ask questions that might help us understand him better, Marjorie.
Nothing there to understand. Just Him, sitting in Gram’s chair. Chewing. Angry.
If he were sitting here in this room with us right now, how would I look at him and know he was so angry?
Oh you would know. Because of the curled-up skin lines on His forehead. You can watch those. How they are deep and they wave and get deeper. The black hairs on His chin and cheeks and chest. And His hands. Always moving, even a little, even just to rub His hands together or make a basket out of his fingers like this. His hands have that angry like Steve’s hands but Steve’s hands are always clean and pink and His hands are dirty and white. Lime everywhere and He leaves ghosts of His hands on all the things. Him always touching and touching and He touches a thing and it has Him on it, his ghost, the dust of Him. And chewing. The angry in the chewing. Watch His mouth move. Teeth and tongue sucking paper from dry to wet to not there. Chewing and chewing at His paper all day. A whole full mouth and when there is no paper there are dirty words. Bad words. And when there is paper He opens up and His mouth is wide and chewing and sucking and He makes all the paper disappear. And starts again. Or spits it out. Says the bad words He has to say. Spits out His wet paper ball and says it and always angry things, mean things, and around Apartment #2 there are all these white places He touches and touched and is touching and bits of paper He’s spit out and stuck around and they stick to the walls and the windows and under the bed.
I can see that you are very upset, Marjorie.
Not upset. Fine.
You’re shaking. I know these are hard things to think about.
I said I do not want to talk about Him, Dr. Goodwin.
I know, Marjorie. What are you thinking right now?
I am thinking about what you made me think about. Him in the chair. The color of Him. Up close.
What color is he?

Breathe, Marjorie.
Let's just sit here a minute.
Breathe.
Take your time.
Are you angry right now, Marjorie?
Not angry, Dr. Goodwin. Fine.
Your face is very red.
I already said. Red is not angry. Not always angry. Many things.
Here's some water.
Breathe.
I can see that you are suffering, Marjorie.
Take deep breaths.
We can breathe together.
Follow me, Marjorie.
Breathe.
Breathe.
Breathe.
I can breathe, Dr. Goodwin.
I can breathe by my self.

37. MARGIE

Gram, down, a down-day, did not want LD to touch her and Margie did not know why.

We might have guessed. The short hair spiked stiff with gel. The chapped lips, the hard flat jaw and the way LD swung her arms when she walked. Her arms, alone. Those thick muscles curving out against her tan skin. We saw all the effort LD put into looking strong. We saw her men’s jeans hanging low and her big black t-shirts and how she hid whatever she had beneath. We saw her eyes, her eyelashes, the far reach of them, curling out, betraying the parts of her she tried so hard to pack away. We saw how she looked long and sad and wanting at Lucy’s ma. We could not know for sure, but we knew.

But Margie. Margie had witnessed it. Margie carried their secret inside. But Margie, slow, world-less Margie, did not even know there was something to know.