

Laguna Beach, August 1959

They're laying on Laguna Beach, and Wanda Brown's saying, "Oh, Marjorie, you're such a prude."

Marjorie says, "I'm no prude.

Wanda Brown says, "Do you even look at yourself in the mirror when you step out of the bath?"

"I don't bathe, I shower," says Marjorie, glancing at her grandson as he lugs a bucket of wet sand up from the water. It's a wonder, thinks his grandmother, that his pipestem arms don't stretch like warm taffy, that bucket is so heavy.

The grandson drops the bucket a few feet from Marjorie and Wanda. He plunges his plastic shovel into the muck and drops a load before shaping it into a castle's turret, using the shovel like a spatula.

"Al and Henrietta are divorcing," says Wanda, shaking a Chesterfield out of the sequin-covered pack. She dangles the cigarette from her lower lip, her bird beak nose pointed downward as she cups the match from the ocean breeze.

"The man's a philanderer," says Marjorie. "They had a knockdown-drag-out one night at bridge."

"I remember that spectacle," says Wanda, blowing smoke out her nose as she checks her turquoise talon fingernails. "The gals at Trixie's wouldn't shut up about it. Al never could keep his wick in one candle."

Marjorie pushes her sunglasses down her nose. "Wanda Brown! You, too?"

Wanda Brown says, "I'm a proper lady. I never kiss-and-tell."

"I'll take that as a yes," says Marjorie.

The grandson shapes another castle turret as Wanda says, "Johnny's in the doghouse again."

"What'd your husband do now?"

"The bastard took a photo of me topless, when we were dressing for that company dinner party."

"What drug store would ever print such a thing?"

"Johnny's got his own dark room. Didn't I tell you?"

"Oh yes...yes."

"That man can't get enough of my boobs."

The grandson, on his knees, finishes the two conical sand sculptures.

"Wanda," he says, "Can I see your tits?"