

## Scene 2

*One month later. The shop space looks very different; the tarpaulins have gone to reveal a plinth, an armchair and tattooing equipment. The windows have been opened up and a sign in the window reads "Phil's Tattoo Joynt". The walls are covered with tattoo designs and drawings of almost naked men with tattoos. A curtain cordons off part of the room, running upstage to downstage. Behind this curtain PHIL has set up his small office area. It is furnished with a writing desk and chair, a typewriter is centrally placed on the desk surrounded by papers and drafts of documents, as well as a telephone and a desk lamp. The writing desk has drawers beneath it. A bookcase to the rear of the office area holds various classics (specifically Gertrude Stein and Oscar Wilde) as well as tattoo related tomes and a radio.*

*PHIL is sitting at his desk, typing and listening to the radio, which is playing music of the day and a news broadcast featuring Sen. Joseph McCarthy. The bell over the shop door rings, indicating a customer. Enter YOUNG MAN.*

**PHIL:**

I'll be right out!

*PHIL enters the main parlour, stopping to admire the YOUNG MAN, who is perusing the tattoo designs on the walls.*

**PHIL:**

Can I help you?

**YOUNG MAN:**

(turning around and holding out a flyer)

Is this the place?

**PHIL:**

(taking the flyer and reading it)

Where'd you get this?

**YOUNG MAN:**

I found it up at the Great Lakes.

**PHIL:**

The naval base?

(hands the flyer back to the young man)

**YOUNG MAN:**

Yep. Heard you were new in town and that you got a good talent.

**PHIL:**

(smiling)

You sailors are fast becoming my main costumers.

(pointing to the tattoo designs)

So, you got something in mind?

**YOUNG MAN:**

(looking around at the designs)

I dunno. Maybe my girl's name. "Bertha".

**PHIL:**

(sarcastically)

How romantic.

**YOUNG MAN:**

(looking frightened)

Does it hurt?

**PHIL:**

Ha! Not for a big guy like you.

*PHIL reaches out and briskly squeezes the YOUNG MAN's bicep. YOUNG MAN moves away and continues to look at the designs.*

*Beat.*

**YOUNG MAN:**

You know some of the guys at the base say you're... different.

**PHIL:**

Yeah?

**YOUNG MAN:**

Yeah. That you're not like the other tattoo guys in town.

**PHIL:**

Well, I guess I'm not. What else do they say?

**YOUNG MAN:**

(shrugging his shoulders)

That you're some kinda professor or doctor or something.

**PHIL:**

Ha! Would somebody like that work in a dive like this?

**YOUNG MAN:**

(laughing)

I guess not!

**PHIL:**

Or have these?

(opens his shirt to reveal the tattoos on his chest)

**YOUNG MAN:**

Neat!

(Moves closer to PHIL to look)

*As the YOUNG MAN is looking at PHIL's tattoos another young man bursts through the door of the parlour. Enter PEPPY, who is wearing his navy cadet uniform. PEPPY is clearly agitated.*

**PHIL:**

(smiling)

Peppy!

*PEPPY looks from the YOUNG MAN to PHIL. PHIL realises that something is wrong.*

**PHIL:**

Peppy! What is it?

*PEPPY again looks at the YOUNG MAN, who is looking back at the scene unfolding between PEPPY and PHIL.*

**YOUNG MAN:**

You don't serve them in here, do you? I've seen that sissy nigger at the base. I can't believe they let them into the navy and now they're here, too.

**PHIL:**

(grabbing the YOUNG MAN by his collar and escorting him to the door)

Get the hell out! It's your kind we don't need around here!

**YOUNG MAN:**

(scrunching up the flyer he has been holding and throwing it onto the floor)

Queers! That shop is full a queers!

(Exits and spits on the ground outside before leaving)

**PHIL:**

(turning his attention back to PEPPY)

What's wrong?

**PEPPY:**

It's Kenny.

**PHIL:**

What about him? What's he done now?

**PEPPY:**

He was caught screwing with Johnny Felloni at the Naval Base! The serg' brung him in for questioning and the little shit told him everything!

**PHIL:**

What do you mean everything?

**PEPPY:**

Everything! You, me, the fucking, this place!

**PHIL:**

This place?

**PEPPY:**

Yeah! Told 'em everything! Even said you'd take sex 'stead of money from some of the sailors. Now the serg' says we can't come here no more and Kenny's been discharged!

**PHIL:**

What do you mean you can't come here anymore?

**PEPPY:**

Serg' says it's off limits for all cadets.

**PHIL:**

Damn! Can he do that?

**PEPPY:**

He can do whatever he wants. I don't think any of us are gonna risk a discharge just for a new tattoo and a quick fuck.

**PHIL:**

That'll be a lot of trade gone! I'm only here two months. Does he want me closed down?

**PEPPY:**

If he had his way, probably.

**PHIL:**

What about the sailors?

**PEPPY:**

I dunno. All I know is what he said to us cadets.

**PHIL:**

Will you leave some more flyers up at the base for me?

**PEPPY:**

Are you crazy? I'm sorry Phil, but I can't risk it.

**PHIL:**

It's okay. I'll drop some up next week.

**PEPPY:**

Look, I gotta go. If I'm caught here I'll be in big trouble. I just wanted you to know that it wasn't me what told them.

**PHIL:**

Thanks Peppy. I appreciate it.

*PEPPY gives PHIL a kiss on the cheek before exiting. PHIL strokes his moustache, concern evident on his face. He picks up the scrunched up flyer from the ground and unfurls it, reading it to himself before scrunching it up again with one hand.*