

DEATH OF A SALESMAN - BIFF & HAPPY

HAPPY

Funny, Biff, y'know? Us sleeping in here again?
The old beds.
All the talk that went across those two beds, huh?
Our whole lives.

BIFF

Yeah...lotta dreams and plans.

HAPPY

About five hundred women would like to know
what was said in this room!

BIFF

Remember that big Betsy something... what the
hell was her name, over on Bushwick Avenue?

HAPPY

With the collie dog!

BIFF

That's the one.
I got you in there, remember?

HAPPY

Yeah, that was my first time... I think.
Boy, there was a pig! You taught me everything I
know about women.
Don't forget that.

BIFF

I bet you forgot how bashful you used to be.
Especially with girls.

HAPPY

Oh, I still am, Biff...

BIFF

Oh, go on!

HAPPY

I just control it, that's all.
I think I got less bashful and you got more so.
What happened, Biff? Where's the old humor, the
old confidence?

(beat)

What's the matter?

BIFF

Why does Dad mock me all the time?

HAPPY

He's not mocking you, he...

BIFF

Everything I say there's a twist of mockery on his
face.

I can't get near him.

HAPPY

He just wants you to make good, that's all.
I wanted to talk to you about Dad for a long time,
Biff.

Something's happening to him.
He... talks to himself.

BIFF

I noticed that this morning.
But he always mumbled.

HAPPY

But not so noticeable.
It got so embarrassing.
I sent him to Florida.
And you know something? Most of the time he's
talking to you.

BIFF

What's he say about me?

HAPPY

I can't make it out.

BIFF

What's he say about me?

HAPPY

I think the fact that you're not settled, that you're
still kind of up in the air...

BIFF

There's one or two other things depressing him,
Happy.

HAPPY

What do you mean?

BIFF

Never mind.

Just don't lay it all on me.

HAPPY

But I think if you just got started...I mean...is there any future for you out there?

BIFF

I tell ya, Hap...I don't know what the future is; I don't know... what I'm supposed to want.

HAPPY

What do you mean?

BIFF

Well, I spent six or seven years after high school trying to work myself up.

Shipping clerk, salesman, business of one kind or another... and it's a measly manner of existence.

To get on that subway on the hot mornings in summer; to devote your whole life to keeping stock, or making phone calls, or selling or buying... to suffer fifty weeks of the year for the sake of a two-week vacation, when all you really desire is to be outdoors, with your shirt off. And always to have to get ahead of the next fella... and still...that's how you build a future.

HAPPY

Well, you really enjoy it on a farm? Are you content out there?

BIFF

Hap, I've had twenty or thirty different kinds of jobs since I left home before the war, and it always turns out the same.

I just realized it lately.

In Nebraska when I herded cattle, and the Dakotas, and Arizona, and now in Texas.

It's why I came home now, I guess, because I realized it... this farm I work on, it's spring there now, see.

And they've got about fifteen new colts.

There's nothing more inspiring or...beautiful, than the sight of a mare and a new colt.

And it's cool there now, see? Texas is cool now,
and it's spring.

And whenever spring comes to where I am, I
suddenly get the feeling... my God, I'm not getting'
anywhere! What the hell am I doing, playing
around with horses, twenty-eight dollars a week!
I'm thirty-four years old, I oughta be makin' my
future.

That's when I come running home.
And now... I get here, and I don't know what to do
with myself.

I've always made a point of not wasting my life,
and every time I come back here I know that all
I've done is to waste my life.

HAPPY

You're a poet, you know that Biff? You're a...you're
an idealist!

BIFF

No, I'm mixed up very bad.
Maybe I oughta get married.
Maybe I oughta get stuck into something.
Maybe that's my trouble.
I'm like a boy...I'm not married, I'm not in business,
I just...I'm like a boy.
Are you content, Hap? You're a success, aren't
you? Are you content?

HAPPY

Hell, no!

BIFF

Why? You're making money, aren't you?

HAPPY

All I can do now is wait for the merchandise
manager to die... and suppose I get to be
merchandise manager? He's a good friend of
mine, and he just built a terrific estate on Long
Island.
And he lived there about two months and sold it,
and now he's building another one.
He can't enjoy it once it's finished.
And I know that's just what I would do.
I don't know what the hell I'm workin' for.
Sometimes I sit in my apartment...all alone.
And I think of the rent I'm paying.
And it's crazy.

But then...it's what I always wanted.
My own apartment, a car, and plenty of women.
And still, goddammit, I'm lonely.

BIFF

Listen, why don't you come out West with me?

HAPPY

You and I, huh?

BIFF

Sure, maybe we could buy a ranch.
Raise cattle, use our muscles.
Men built like we are should be working out in the
open.

HAPPY

The Loman Brothers, heh?

BIFF

Sure, we'd be known all over the counties!

HAPPY

That's what I dream about, Biff.
Sometimes I just want to rip my clothes off in the
middle of the store and outbox that goddamn
merchandise manager.
I mean I can outbox, outrun, anybody in that store,
and I have to take orders from those common,
petty sons of bitches till I can't stand it any more.

BIFF

Hap, the trouble is we weren't brought up to grub
for money.
I don't know how to do it...

HAPPY

Neither can I!

BIFF

Then let's go!

HAPPY

The only thing is...what can you make out there?

BIFF

But look at your friend.
Builds an estate and then hasn't the peace of mind
to live in it...

HAPPY

Yeah, but when he walks into the store the waves
part in front of him.

That's fifty-two thousand dollars a year coming
right through the revolving door, and I got more in
my pinky than he's got in his head.

BIFF

Yeah but...you just said...

HAPPY

I gotta show some of those pompous, self-
important executives over there that Hap Loman
can make the grade.

I want to walk into the store the way he walks in.

Then I'll go with you, Biff.

We'll be together yet, I swear.

But take those two creatures we had tonight.

Now weren't they gorgeous?

BIFF

Yeah, yeah, most gorgeous I've had in years.