

Scene 2: The same.

YAM at the poster.

YAM

“Conerico Was Here To Stay.” . . . That one keeps attracting me like a beauty mark. . . My God, what assurance! Large letters. Looks like it was written with a magic marker and— . . . Now, there. . . I know what a magic marker is. . . And see! The letters were written—how? . . . Ah! As one writes a message on a tree—with a knife!

(Using the pointed end of the umbrella, he slowly traces out the gauging.)

C-O-N-E-R-I-C-O W-A-S H-E-R-E T-O S-T-A-Y. . .

(Steps back.)

That took time. Yes, Conerico was not afraid to stand here and gouge his message out. . . sloooooowly. . . viiiiiiciously—yes! viciously! —Conerico was daring someone to stop him. My God, there’s a dare in every letter and— Hm. . . That’s strange. The first three words are in one style: “Conerico Was Here.” Then the last two words —”to stay?” —are different. Clear, but more slanted. Different. . . something . . . —AH!!! yes, by god! —See what Conerico did? —He wrote those last two words *WITH HIS LEFT HAND!* Yes! I’m sure of it! God, what audacity! WHAT CAJONES, CONERICO!

(A tapping is heard. YAM, frightened, sits down on the bench and doesn’t move. A BLIND MAN enters, tapping the cane as he inches along.)

BLIND MAN

I’m gettin’ near that spot, goddamnit! The point of no return. Now I gotta go through the crazies. Steady, big boy! You counted the steps and you know where you are. . . So why are you beginning to shake? —Because you know the crazies are coming on, you stupid bastard! So just concentrate on gettin’ to the other side. There’s no one to help you.

(Listens.)

Is there?

(Pause.)

BLIND MAN

(Continued)

Goddamned antennae aren’t working.

(YAM sits very rigid.
BLIND MAN feels around as he talks—
and heads for YAM.)

BLIND MAN

(Continued)

That crap about the other senses taking over is CRAP! My hearing's lousy. Can't smell for mustard greens! Touch didn't improve! But I'll tell you one thing *HE* sharpened—the big braille bastard in the sky: Pain! PAIN, GODDAMNIT!

(He is almost touching YAM
who slides down to the other end
of the bench and knocks over
the umbrella)

There's someone there! Good.

(Gropes in the air toward YAM.
During the next, it becomes a dance
with the BLIND MAN groping and YAM
eluding him)

Now, look. I'm blind. You got that?

(Lifts dark glasses; shows whites
of his eyes)

And I want you to grab me by the arm

(Offers his arm to the air)

and lead me out of here. . . ***WILL YOU STAND STILL, GODDAMNIT!*** . . . Now, look . . . I'm always okay up to this point. Then the crazies begin. So help out a guy, will you? . . . —***FREEZE, FREEZE, YOU DOUBLE-JOINTED TRANSVESTITE!*** . . . Look! The whole goddamned city's changed. They keep rippin' it up. So it's noise. NOISE! And it's done somethin' to my ears. I'm not hearin' right. Right? Not any more. And then, every so often, it goes crazy. I call it "the crazies." It's like my head becomes a balloon and there's bees inside and there's a fingernail scrapin' on a blackboard and then a thousan' Johns start flushin' an' then *HE* mixes in an avalanche of rocks, an' people start gargling an' throwin' up and Maria Callas hits a high C and —***I'LL PLUCK OUT YOUR EYES IF I EVER LAY MY GRUBBY HANDS ON YOU!*** . . . List, list, O list; I come down here to get to the other side of the street. I can't cross up there any more. There's all them cars. ***THE THIRTY NINE TRILLIONS OF 'EM!*** . . . And, anyway, all the old chums are gone, because they ripped everything up and everyone out. So now, ***NOBODY WANTS TO HELP ME CROSS UP THERE!*** . . .

(Pause)

Okay, you pimple pecker punk! I'm goin' myself!

(He pulls himself together and, cautiously at first, walks. He walks in the right direction for a few steps.)

BLIND MAN

(Continued)

Ah HA! I SHALL CONQUER IT!

(Suddenly he holds his head. We hear all the noises he described: Bees, fingernails scratching across the blackboard; Johns flushing, ETC.

The BLIND MAN panics. He loses all sense of direction. He heads for the edge of the platform. YAM cringes against one of the signs, and covers his eyes.

The BLIND MAN almost steps over the edge of the platform, but stops in time, turns, finds his balance—loses it; just avoids falling off again, walks to the ledge, etc. He resembles a tightrope walker, executing difficult stunts on the wire.

In fact, the cacophony fades a bit and we hear the roll of the circus drum, accenting the BLIND MAN's turns.

The BLIND MAN falls to the platform.

All noise stops. Pause)

You wait. . . . You just wait. . . . If there's ever a God again, he'll punish you.

(BLACKOUT)