

Scene 6:

YAM sitting on bench,  
holding up his umbrella,  
which is opened. Near trash  
can, newspapers are spread  
out on the platform.

YAM

Conerico! Conerico! . . .If Conerico was here to stay, where is he?

(Pause.)

What do I remember? She said it was dark out and I was surprised.

. . .I must have come down when it was light then.

(Pause.)

Free association. Me--alone. Girl--attack. . . .There is something lewd about a girl  
playing a cello. . . .--Subway--piss. Hat--trapped.

Umbrella--fallout. . . .Is that why my umbrella's up?

(Pause.)

No. What would I do with my hands otherwise?

(YAM brings the still-open umbrella  
down in front of him and slowly  
closes it and leans it against the bench;  
leans out and calls--slightly more  
frenzied.)

Conerico! Conerico!

(Stands. Looks right and left.)

Where is he!? The tunnel! WITH THE RATS?!

(YAM JUMPS BACK.)

Back to the game! --Me--Coward--NOT TRUE!!!

(YAM stumbles back onto bench.)

That's a difficult game if you play it right.

(He looks at his briefcase.)

Maybe there's something to read in my briefcase.

(Inches toward it. Touches it)

No!

(He picks up a part of the scattered  
newspaper he did not use to cover his vomit.)

Coward, huh?

YAM

(Continued. Reads.)

“Church Bombed. Four Negro Children Killed.” --See? I can read this without flinching.

(Reads.)

“Collusion charged Between Business, Union and Mobsters.”

“Athlete Guilty in Bribe Scandal.”

“Life Too Hard: Boy Ends It At 13.” This! . . .--I can even read this.

(Reads.)

“On their way home from the parish school, Bobby Leonce complained to his brother Howard that ‘life was too hard.’ Howard tried to cheer him up. But when they got to their empty house, Bobby suddenly seized a kitchen knife and Howard knocked it from his brother’s hand. Bobby ran upstairs and locked himself in their parent’s room. There was a shot. In the room, Howard found’ . . .--’his brother’s body, the father’s revolver’ . . .’and a note: ‘You know I’ve been thinking of doing it for a long time, Howard. Now I can go to a better world.’ “

(YAM stops reading.)

Oh, my God. Thirteen years old. “Go to a better world.” I must stop him.

(Parental figure voice.)

“Now, look here Bobby. . .” No. Howard must stop him.

(Talks to Howard as a teen-age Bobby)

“What is it, Bobby? You haven’t cracked a smile all day. . . .Hey, slow up . . .--It’s not me, is it? You don’t think I told Mother or Dad on you. Hell, Bobby, I do it, too. Can’t help it. It’s nice. And, anyway, I don’t believe it’ll fall off, like they say. . . . ‘Cause it hasn’t.

(Stops.)

Well, sure. . .you can go to hell for doing it.

(Pause.)

Huh? . . . ‘Hell either way?’

(Walks.)

There you go talking so’s I can’t understand you. And can’t you ever say anything with a smile? Always serious. Hell, nothing’s that bad. . . ‘IT IS?’

What is? . . . ‘Cancer?’ ‘Heart Trouble?’ ‘Muscular dystrophy?’ God, Bobby, I don’t see how you can have all those? ‘And at the same time?’ Oh; ‘Can get.’ Hell-- sure. Maybe. Planes drop down on you from the sky, too. All kinds of things can happen. So what? You gotta die someday.

(Whipped around as if someone had taken hold of his shoulders and turned him.)

“THAT’S JUST IT!”

(Runs after Bobby.)

Hey, Bobby--don’t run away. . .Wait! Wait!

(Stops.)

Bobby! Stop! Put that knife down!

(Grabs at an imaginary upraised arm.

Struggles. Imaginary knife falls:

YAM kicks it away.

YAM falls to the floor and covers

YAM

(Continued.)

the imaginary knife with his body.)

Oh . . . Oh . . . God . . . He wants to kill himself so bad!

(Bobby runs away. YAM rises.

Throws imaginary knife down.)

Bobby!

(Amplified; door slamming.)

(Amplified; key turning in lock.)

Bobby! He's talked about killing himself before. 'Why?' I'd ask. And he'd always answer with that damned, 'Why not?'

(Listens at imaginary door.)

Bobby? Are you lying in the spotlight again?

(Pause.)

I came on him like that once. . . lying on their bed. . . looking at the ceiling . . . no lights on. . . except for my father's lamp--the goose-neck one--shinning right down on him. . . and a box of my father's condoms spilled out all over his chest. Then, after a long time, he says . . . "This is how it always is. Me in a spotlight and everyone else outside it in the dark--blurred!"

(Realization! Becomes YAM.)

Hey. Hey, that's it! Conerico! Conerico! There's one thing we never thought of. If we turn on all the lights, there'll be no more blur.

(Becomes the teen-age Howard again.

Runs to the imaginary door. Pounds.

Bobby! Bobby ! --I've got the answer--

(A loud SHOT. Himself again.)

I tried. You saw. I tried to save him.

**(Blackout)**