

WHOSE LIFE IS IT ANYWAY? 4 - 1

SHE

I've come to see if I can help you.

HE

Really?

SHE

There is a rumour going around that you don't want any more treatment.

HE

Good.

SHE

Why good?

HE

Because I didn't think anyone around here heard me.

SHE

I heard you and that is why I want to know why you don't want any more treatment.

HE

Because I don't want to go on living like this.

SHE

Why not? I mean it's a lousy break but you'll be surprised at all the things you'll be able to do with training and a little patience.

HE

Such as?

SHE

You're going to be able to operate a reading machine and an adapted typewriter, even a calculator.

HE

Gee and wow, the three R's. It doesn't exactly make for an abundant life does it?

WHOSE LIFE IS IT ANYWAY 4 - 2

SHE

Do you realize that Monet was almost blind when he painted "The Water Lillies" and that Renoir's hands were so crippled they had to tie brushes for him to paint and that...

HE

No, no don't go on, please. Please don't go on.

SHE

You're an artist, sculpting isn't the only art. Have you ever thought of dictating into a tape recorder? You could write a book about sculpture. A novel, poetry...

HE

Wait a minute, do you think you switch your art like you switch your major in college? I'm a sculptor! My whole being, my entire imagination speaks to me from... God! spoke to me through my fingers. I was a sculptor and that was what my life was all about. Now you people seem to think that it's about survival, no matter what. Now if I wanted to write a Goddamn novel I would have done it. If I had wanted to dictate poetry I would have done that.

SHE

How do you know you won't want to do that unless you try?

HE

Because trying isn't important. The work is important. The work, and not the credit and not the reward and it is the work that I will never do again.

SHE

How do you know you won't find new work. Just give it a chance. I'm going to bring the reading machine tomorrow. Just give it one try, you might surprise yourself.

HE

Are there many books for that machine?

WHOSE LIFE IS IT ANYWAY? 4 - 3

SHE

Yeah, quite a few.

HE

Do you think I could make a request for the first one?

SHE

Anything.

HE

What about "Sculpting With No Hands, Self-Taught"?

SHE

Okay. You win. I can see that you are not ready for this discussion, so I will just come back when you are.

HE

You know, you are amazing. All you Goddamned people are the same! Every time I say something that's just a little bit awkward you just pretend I haven't said anything at all. It's amazing. Why can't you try to relate to your patients like human beings?

SHE

You know what's happening? You're getting very angry. I can understand your anger but I...

HE

Oh Jesus, you're doing it again. Just listen to yourself. I just said something offensive about you and you have turned your professional cheek. If you were a human being, or if you were treating me like a human being, you would have told me to screw off. Now can you understand that is why I don't want to go on living and I am more convinced of that now after your visit than I was before? How do you like them apples? The very exercise of your so-called professionalism makes me want to die!