

Willy (says to Linda): ... **Work a lifetime to pay off a house. You finally own it, and there's nobody to live in it.**

Willy (says to Linda): Biff Loman is lost. In the greatest country in the world a young man with such— personal attractiveness, gets lost. And such a hard worker. There's one thing about Biff—he's not lazy.

Biff (says to Happy): Well, I spent 6 or 7 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 50 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.

Willy: Bernard is not well liked, is he?

Biff: He's liked, but he's not well liked.

Happy: That's right, Pop.

Willy: That's just what I mean, Bernard can get the best marks in school, y'understand, but when he gets out on the business world, y'understand, you are going to be five times ahead of him. That's why I thank Almighty God you're both built like Adonises. Because the man who makes an appearance in the business world, the man who creates personal interest, is the man who gets ahead. Be liked and you will never want."

**Willy: I got nothin' to give him,
Charley. I'm clean, I'm clean.**

Charley: He won't starve. None a them
starve. Forget about him.

**Willy: Then what have I got to
remember?**

Charley: You take it too hard. To hell
with it. When a deposit bottle is
broken, you don't get your nickel back.

Linda: Is this Ben?

Ben: **How do you do, my dear.**

Linda: Where have you been all these years? Willy's always wondered why you—

Willy: Where is Dad? Didn't you follow him? How did you get started?

Ben: **Well, I don't know how much you remember.**

Willy: Well, I was just a baby, of course, only three or four years—

Ben: **Three years and eleven months.**

Willy: What a memory, Ben!

Ben: **I have many enterprises, William, and I have never kept books.**

Willy: I remember I was sitting under the wagon in—was it Nebraska?

Ben: **It was South Dakota, and I gave you a bunch of wildflowers.**

Willy: I remember you walking away down some open road.

Ben: **I was going to find father in Alaska.**

Willy: Where is he?

Ben: **At that age I had a very faulty view of geography, William. I discovered after a few days that I was heading due south, so instead of Alaska, I ended up in Africa.**

Willy: No, Ben! Please tell about Dad. I want my boys to hear. I want them to know the kind of stock they spring from. All I remember is a man with a big beard, and I was in Mamma's lap, sitting around a fire, and some kind of high music.

Willy: That's just the way I'm bringing them up, Ben—rugged, well liked, all-around.

Ben: Never fight fair with a stranger, boy. You'll never get out of the jungle that way.

Willy: Can't you stay for a few days? You're just what I need, Ben, because I—I have a fine position here, but I—well, Dad left when I was such a baby and I never had a chance to talk to him and I still feel—kind of temporary about myself.

Linda: Oh, my dear, you should do a lot of things, but there's nothing to do, so go to sleep.

Linda: Then make Charley your father, Biff. You can't do that, can you? I don't say he's a great man. Willy Loman never made a lot of money. His name was never in the paper. He's not the finest character that ever lived. But he's a human being, and a terrible thing is happening to him. So attention must be paid. He's not to be allowed to fall into his grave like an old dog. Attention, attention must finally be paid to such a person.

Linda: I'm—I'm ashamed to. How can I mention it to him? Every day I go down and take away that little rubber pipe. But, when he comes home, I put it back where it was. How can I insult him that way? I don't know what to do. I live from day to day, boys. I tell you, I know every thought in his mind. It sounds so old-fashioned and silly, but I tell you he put his whole life into you and you've turned your backs on him. Biff, I swear to God! Biff, his life is in your hands!

Willy: Don't be so modest. You always started too low. Walk in with a big laugh. Don't look worried. Start off with a couple of your good stories to lighten things up. It's not what you say, it's how you say it—because personality always wins the day.

Willy: Because you got a greatness in you, Biff, remember that. You got all kinds a greatness.

Linda: Sleep well, darling!

Happy: I'm gonna get married, Mom. I wanted to tell you.

Linda: Go to sleep, dear.

Happy: I just wanted to tell you.

Willy: Keep up the good work. (*Happy exits*). God...remember that Ebbets Field game? The championship of the city?...when that team came out—he was the tallest, remember?

Linda: Oh yes. And in gold.

Willy: Like a young god. Hercules—something like that. And the sun, the sun all around him. Remember how he waved to me? Right up from the field with the representatives of three colleges standing by? And the buyers I brought and the cheers when he came out—Loman, Loman, Loman! God Almighty, he'll be great yet. A star like that, magnificent, can never really fade away!

Willy: Whoever heard of a Hastings refrigerator? Once in my life, I would like to own something outright before it's broken! I'm always in a race with the junkyard! I just finished paying for the car and it's on its last legs. The refrigerator consumes belts like a goddamn maniac. They time those things. They time them so when you finally paid for them, they're used up.

Willy: That is a wonderful machine. Can we—

Howard: **I tell you, Willy, I'm gonna take my camera, and my bandsaw, and all my hobbies, and out they go. This is the most fascinating relaxation I ever found.**

Willy: I think I'll get one myself.

Howard: **Sure, they're only a hundred and a half. You can't do without it. Supposing you wanna hear Jack Benny, see? But you can't be at home at that hour. So you tell the maid to turn the radio on when Jack Benny comes on, and this automatically goes on with the radio...**

Willy: Howard, all I need to set my table is fifty dollars a week.

Howard: **But where am I going to put you, kid?**

Willy: Look, it isn't a question of whether I can sell merchandise, is it?

Howard: **No, but it's a business, kid, and everybody's gotta pull his weight.**

Willy: Just let me tell you a story, Howard—

Howard: **'Cause you gotta admit, business is business.**

Willy: Oh, yeah, my father lived many years in Alaska. He was an adventurous man. We've got quite a little streak of self-reliance in our family. I thought I'd go out with my older brother and try to locate him, and maybe settle in the North with the old man. And I was almost decided to go, when I met a salesman in the Parker House. His name was Dave Singleman. And he was eighty-four years old, and he'd drummed merchandise in thirty-one states. And old Dave, he'd go up to his room, y'understand, put on his green velvet slippers—I'll never forget—and pick up his phone and call the buyers, and without ever leaving his room, at the age of eighty-four, he made his living. And when I saw that, I realized that selling was the greatest career a man could want. 'Cause what could be more satisfying than to be able to go, at the age of eighty-four, into twenty or thirty different cities, and pick up a phone, and be remembered and loved and helped by so many different people? Do you know? When he died—and by the way he died the death of a salesman, in his green velvet slippers in the smoker of the New York, New Haven, and Hartford, going into Boston—when he died, hundreds of salesmen and buyers were at his funeral. Things were sad on a lotta trains for months after that. In those days there was personality in it, Howard. There was respect, and comradeship, and gratitude in it. Today it's all cut and dried, and there's no chance for bringing friendship to bear—or personality. You see what I mean? They don't know me anymore.

Linda: **Oh, you're back?**

Ben: I haven't much time.

Willy: No, wait! Linda, he's got a proposition for me in Alaska.

Linda: **But you've got—He's got a beautiful job here.**

Willy: But in Alaska, kid, I could—

Linda: **You're doing well enough, Willy!**

Ben: Enough for what, my dear?

Linda: **Don't say those things to him! Enough to be happy right here, right now. Why must everybody conquer the world? You're well liked, and the boys love you, and someday—why, old man Wagner told him just the other day that if he keeps it up he'll be a member of the firm, didn't he, Willy?**

Willy: Sure, sure. I am building something with this firm, Ben, and if a man is building something he must be on the right track, musn't he?

Ben: What are you building? Lay your hand on it. Where is it?

Willy: That's true, Linda. There's nothing.

Linda: **Why? There's a man, eighty four years old—**

Willy: Why? Why! Bernard, that question has been trailing me like a ghost for the last fifteen years. He flunked the subject, and laid down and died like a hammer hit him!

Bernard: Take it easy, kid.

Willy: Let me talk to you—I got nobody to talk to. Bernard, Bernard, was it my fault? Y'see? It keeps going around in my mind, maybe I did something to him. I got nothing to give him.

Charley: Hey, you're going to miss that train.

Bernard: **Yeah, I'm going. Thanks, Pop. Good-bye, Willy, and don't worry about it. You know, "If at first you don't succeed..."**

Willy: Yes, I believe in that.

Bernard: **But sometimes, Willy, it's better for a man just to walk away.**

Willy: Walk away?

Bernard: **That's right.**

Willy: But if you can't walk away?

Bernard: **I guess that's when it's tough. Good-bye, Willy.**

Charley: How do you like this kid? Gonna argue a case in front of the Supreme Court.

Willy: No! The Supreme Court!

Charley: Knock 'em dead, Bernard!

Willy: The Supreme Court! And he didn't even mention it!

Charley: He don't have to—he's gonna do it.

Willy: Charley, I'm strapped. I'm strapped. I don't know what to do. I was just fired.

Charley: Howard fired you?

Willy: That snotnose. Imagine that? I named him. I named him Howard.

Charley: **Willy, when're you gonna realize that them things don't mean anything? You named him Howard, but you can't sell that. The only thing you got in this world is what you can sell. And the funny thing is that you're a salesman, and you don't know that.**

Willy: I've always tried to think otherwise, I guess. I always felt that if a man was impressive, and well liked, that nothing—

Charley: **Why must everybody like you? Who liked J.P. Morgan? Was he impressive? But with his pockets on, he was very well liked.**

Charley: ...I know you don't like me, and nobody can say I'm in love with you, but I'll give you a job because—just for the hell of it, put it that way. Now what do you say?

Willy: **I—I just can't work for you, Charley.**

Charley: What're you, jealous of me?

Willy: **I can't work for you, that's all, don't ask me why.**

Charley: You been jealous of me all your life, you damned fool! Here, pay your insurance.

(...)

Willy: **Funny, y'know? After all the highways, and the trains, and the appointments, and the years, you end up worth more dead than alive.**

Charley: **Willy, nobody's worth nothin' dead. Did you hear what I said?**

Willy: **Apologize to Bernard for me when you see him. I didn't mean to argue with him. He's a fine boy. They're all fine boys, and they'll end up big—all of them. Someday they'll all play tennis together. Wish me luck, Charley. He saw Bill Oliver today.**

Charley: Good luck.

Willy: **Charley, you're the only friend I've got. Isn't that a remarkable thing?**

Biff: ...And a lot of—instances—facts, Pop, facts about my life came back to me. Who was it, Pop? Who ever said I was a salesman with Oliver?

Willy: **Well, you were.**

Biff: No, Dad. I was a shipping clerk.

Willy: **But you were practically—**

Biff: Dad, I don't know who said it first, but I was never a salesman for Bill Oliver.

Willy: **What're you talking about?**

Biff: Let's hold on to the facts tonight, Pop. We're not going to get anywhere bullin' around. I was a shipping clerk.

Willy: **All right, now listen to me—**

Biff: Why don't you let me finish?

Willy: **I'm not interested in stories about the past or any crap of that kind because the woods are burning, boys, you understand? There's a big blaze going on all around. I was fired today.**

Biff: How could you be?

Willy: **I was fired, and I'm looking for a little good news to tell your mother, because the woman has waited and the woman has suffered. The gist of it is that I haven't got a story left in my head, Biff. So don't give me a lecture about facts and aspects. I am not interested. Now what've you got to say to me?**

Willy: Then you...got it?

Happy: He's gonna be terrific, Pop!

Willy: Then you got it, haven't you? You got it! You got it!

Biff: No, no. Look, Pop. I'm supposed to have lunch with them tomorrow. I'm just telling you this so you'll know that I can still make an impression, Pop. And I'll make good somewhere, but I can't go tomorrow, see?

Biff: Miss Forsythe, you've just seen a prince walk by. A fine, troubled prince. A hard-working, unappreciated prince. A pal, you understand? A good companion. Always for his boys.

Happy: No, that's not my father. He's just a guy. Come on, we'll catch Biff, and honey, we're going to paint this town! Stanley, where's the check? Hey, Stanley!

Stanley: Can you make it?

Willy: I'll—sure, I can make it. Do I—do I look all right?

Stanley: Sure, you look all right.

Willy: Here—Here's a dollar.

Stanley: Oh, your son paid me. It's all right.

Willy: No, take it. You're a good boy...here, here's some more. I don't need it any more. Tell me—is there a seed store in the neighborhood?

Stanley: Seeds? You mean like to plant? Well, there's hardware stores on Sixth Avenue, but it may be too late now.

Willy: Oh, I'd better hurry. I've got to get some seeds. I've got to get some seeds, right away. Nothing's planted. I don't have a thing in the ground.

Willy: What a proposition. Terrific, terrific. 'Cause she's suffered, Ben, the woman has suffered. You understand me? A man can't go out the way he came in, Ben, a man has got to add up to something. You can't, you can't—you gotta consider now. Don't answer so quick. Remember, it's a guaranteed \$20,000 proposition. Now look, Ben, I want you to go through the ins and outs of this thing with me. I've got nobody to talk to, Ben, and the woman has suffered, you hear me?

Ben: You don't want to make a fool of yourself. They might not honor the policy.

Willy: How can they dare refuse? Didn't I work like a slave to meet every premium on the nose? And now they don't pay off? Impossible!

Ben: It's called a cowardly thing, William.

Willy: Why? Does it take more guts to stand here the rest of my life ringing up a zero?

Ben: That's a point, William. And \$20,000...that *is* something one can feel with the hand, it is there.

Willy: Oh, Ben, that's the whole beauty of it! I see it like a diamond, shining in the dark, hard and rough, that I can pick up and touch in my hand. Not like—like an appointment! This would not be another damned-fool appointment, Ben, and it changes all the aspects. Because he thinks I'm nothing, see, and so he spites me. But the funeral—Ben, that funeral will be massive! They'll come from Maine, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire! All the old-timers with the strange license plates—that boy will be thunderstruck, Ben, because he never realized—I am known! Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey—I am known, Ben, and he'll see it with his eyes once and for all. He'll see what I am, Ben! He's in for a shock, that boy!

Ben: He'll call you a coward.

Willy: No, that would be terrible.

Ben: Yes, and a damned fool.

Willy: No, no, he musn't, I won't have that!

Ben: He'll hate you, William.

Willy: Oh, Ben, how do we get back to all the great times? Used to be so full of light, and comradeship, the sleigh-riding in winter, and the ruddiness on his cheeks. And always some kind of good news coming up, always something nice coming up ahead. And never even let me carry the valises in the house, and simonizing, simonizing that little red car! Why, why can't I give him something and not have him hate me?

Ben: Let me think about it. I still have a little time.

Remarkable proposition, but you've got to be sure you're not making a fool of yourself.

Biff: I ran down eleven flights with a pen in my hand today. And suddenly I stopped, you hear me? And in the middle of that office building, do you hear this? I stopped in the middle of that building and I saw—the sky. I saw the things that I love in this world. The work and the food and time to sit and smoke. And I looked at the pen and said to myself, what the hell am I grabbing this for? Why am I trying to become what I don't want to be? What am I doing in an office, making a contemptuous, begging fool of myself, when all I want is out there, waiting for me the minute I say I know who I am! Why can't I say that Willy?

Willy: The door of your life is wide open!

Biff: Pop! I'm a dime a dozen and so are you!

Willy: I am not a dime a dozen! I am Willy Loman and you are Biff Loman!

Biff: I am not a leader of men, Willy, and neither are you.^{2:03}

Biff: He had the wrong dreams. All, all wrong.

Happy: Don't say that!

Biff: He never knew who he was.

Charley: Nobody dares blame this man. You don't understand: Willy was a salesman. And for a salesman, there is no rock bottom to the life. He don't put a bolt to a nut, he don't tell you the law or give you medicine. He's a man out there in the blue, riding on a smile and a shoeshine. And when they start not smiling back—that's an earthquake. And then you get yourself a couple of spots on your hat, and you're finished. Nobody dares blame this man. A salesman is got to dream, boy. It comes with the territory.

Happy: I'm not licked that easily. I'm staying right in this city, and I'm gonna beat this racket! The Loman Brothers!

Biff: I know who I am, kid.

Happy: All right, boy. I'm gonna show you and every body else that Willy Loman did not die in vain. He had a good dream. It's the only dream you can have—to come out number-one man. He fought it out here, and this is where I'm gonna win it for him.

Linda: Forgive me, dear. I can't cry. I don't know what it is, but I can't cry. I don't understand it. Why did you ever do that? Help me, Willy. I can't cry. It seems to me that you're just on another trip. I keep expecting you. Willy, dear, I can't cry. Why did you do it? I search and search and I search, and I can't understand it, Willy. I made the last payment on the house today. Today, dear. And there'll be nobody home. We're free and clear. We're free...we're free...