

A pause. Bickham crosses the thresh-old and steps into the room. Think of a bull entering the arena, but with one difference. Ail of the fear, anger, ferocity and frustration of his charge is contained, but ready to explode. Though he gives WERNER only a glance as he passes him, it might just as well have been a bullet. Dr. Werner picks up a file-folder and studies it. Then he glances up.)

WERNER *(Werner goes back to the folder. Bickham walks slowly and sullenly to the desk. angrily, Bickham measures 'Werner. 'Werner watches this action, then goes back to the folder. 'Without raising his bead, he says:)* Sit down I'll be with you in a minute., *(Bickham smirks again, hesitates for a second , and then sprawls arrogantly in the chair in front of Werner's desk. As Werner continues to read the folder, 'Werner glances up and views this act with cool detachment,)* So, you're back with us. I see *(Bickham doesn't answer, He merely smiles coldly at Werner. Brazenly.)* What happened? *(No answer from Bickham after a pause, Werner cocks his head, and with an ironic smile says:)* We're going to have into talk sooner or later. You know that as well as I do. *(With devastating coldness, Bickham remains silent and continues to stare. 'I can't make you talk, of course, but if you don't. I can't help you, can I (Bickham snorts disgustedly, All right. Come hack Monday at 10. I have other patients who need this time. (Bickham is out of the chair like a shot. He goes to the door, grabs it and closes it. Werner returns to his desk. Bickham follows quickly ... almost hissing after Werner,)*

BICKHAM. *(Laughs and spins away.)* You're a sick doctor, and you're feeding on me!

WERNER. How am I feeding on you?

BICKHAM. *(Wheels and faces him.)* You gobble me to stay alive! Without me, you're dead! *"Werner picks up his pen and begins to write in Bickham's folder)*

WERNER, O.K. Suit yourself. I'm recommending that you be sent to City General for observation. *(Reaches for phone.)*

BICKHAM. *(Seizes phone and throws it on the floor.)* You wanna use the phone? *(Grabs 'Werner by the coat and pulls him out of his chair.)* It's time for you to wake up, baby! *(Werner tries to pull away.)* Oooooooh! You're disgusted, huh? You don't like the dirty, little junkies to get too close. Fraid they'll pull you down, huh? *(Werner pushes and breaks away. He tries to move around the desk toward the door, but Bickham cuts him off. 'Werner retreats. They face each other from opposite sides of the desk.)* Oh? You wanna go home? Not just yet, Doctor Jesus! You're back in the stew. You're in with the real scum.

WERNER. Now, Bickham, I'm telling you, take it easy. We don't want to start trouble, do we?

BICKHAM. Who's in trouble, doctor? You or me?

WERNER. You're not a baby! You're a man, and you'll have to face it!

BICKHAM. (*Facing him across the desk.*) How would you know? Are you a man? Not in my book. Look at you hidin' behind that desk. For the first time in your slimy life you got a chance to prove you're a man! (*motions for Werner to come around.*) Come on! Step out ... see what hap-pens! (*Laughs.*)

WERNER. (*Pause. 'Werner sits down at his desk and tries to compose himself.'*) I'm not here to fight you. On your level, you may be right. But, tell me. What would you do in my position?

BICKHAM. I'd face it. You ain't the great doctor you think you are!

WERNER. I never claimed to be. But, evidently, you think I am. I've disappointed you.

BICKHAM. (*Laughs deprecatingly.*) I let you think you was crawlin' in my head, and all the time I was laughin' at you.

WERNER. All right! I'll admit my failure. But haven't you failed, too? Haven't you trembled a little today? Are you going to do it the rest of your life, or are you, for once, going to say to yourself, "This is it! For what it is, this is it! It may be rotten, but here it is, and I'm going to face it!" Have you got the guts to do that? Have you, Bickham?

BICKHAM. (*Interrupts him.*) When I was 16, I was shootin' twenty-five bucks a day and supportin' it. Where were you when you were 16? (*Pause*) You've heard this story before. (*Bickham rises and moves toward door.*)

WERNER. Where are you going?

BICKHAM. Back to the stew!

WERNER. Aren't you going to tell me about your father? Just for the record, is he dead?

BICKHAM. (*Turns around.*) Beggin' for it, huh, you lousy pervert. I'll put you through your tricks. I found my old man. I found him all right.

WERNER. How?

BICKHAM. Barber shop, He ... he was a barber.

WERNER. And that's where you found him ? In a barber shop?

BICKHAM. Yeah, that's right. I got my hair cut. It was as simple

BICKHAM. I walk in the door. He's the only barber in the joint. He's just finishin' up some creep, Finally, it's my turn. I sit down in the chair, and we don't say much at first . . . a little sports and the rest of that barber crap. Finally I says to him, real cool-like, "Your

name, Bickham?" He says, how'd ya know?" That lousy sonofabitch! I dreamed for years of how him and me would get together some day. (*Laughs, almost hysterically.*)

(*Pauses,*) He told me stories ... dirty little barber stories. 'finally, out of a clear blue sky, he says, "You wanna see a picture of my wife and kid?" I think, maybe he's recognized me, for Chrissakes. He pulls out this picture, see? You know what it was? A picture of some whorey lookin' blonde and a baby sittin' on her lap. A baby boy, only it's a trick shot, see, like you'd buy on 42nd Street, the photographer . . . has dubbed in a a yango about that long! I don't know what's happenin! I think it's gonna be a picture of me or somethin! (*hysterically,*) I hit him. I hit him hard. He goes flat on his ass. I get down on top of him, and I hit him! (*Beats the desk.*) I hit him and I hit him! (*Softly.*) Then, everything's quiet all of a sudden. I look down at him. I look down at this barber who's my father. I look down at him . . . and I know just what I been waitin' for all my life. (*Then, slowly, Bickham raises his head, and his eyes meet Werner's.*) Whaddya looking at, Doctor? (*Bickham rises.*) You got what you wanted. You cured me, Doctor, and now I belong to you.

WERNER. Now you belong to yourself.

BICKHAM. What are you going to give me to take the place of my father?

WERNER, (*Rises.*) I give you yourself, Now you belong to your-self.

BICKHAM. (*Moves slightly down toward 'Werner. Frantically, he holds his arms apart.*) Come over and kiss me, Daddy. Love me! Love me, you bastard! You're my home! Can't you love me??

WERNER. (*Shouting.*) Love yourself, first!

BICKHAM. I DON'T KNOW HOW. NOBODY TAUGHT ME!!

WERNER. Then learn! Try the world! Or try your father!

BICKHAM. (*With a choking scream, he makes a sudden lunge around the desk and catches Werner in his arms.*) All right, I will! Kiss me! Kiss me! If you love me, father, kiss me!

WERNER. (*In an intense, raging whisper*) You dare to lay a hand on me? Do you realize I can have you committed. A year in City General? 'A dark crawling room in City General? Would you like that? Tell me, Bickham, would you like that?

BICKHAM. Do it!! I don't care! Go ahead and do it!!!

WERNER. (*Leaning over him.*) Wake up, Bickham! Your father's not going to appear on a prancing charger! He's not what you dreamed he'd be. He's what you saw . . . Just what you saw! If you can face that, you can face yourself! He doesn't know you. He doesn't

love you. He probably wouldn't want you, if he found you. That's the truth, Bickham . . . the brutal truth . . . but it's the truth!!

BICKHAM. (*Waving toward him with deadly purpose.*) I'm going to kill you.

WERNER. (*Backing off.*) You saw him! He left you! He's the man in the barber shop . . . the little barber with his jokes and his dirty pictures

BICKHAM. (*With a primordial scream, he grabs Werner by the throat.*) Ayieeeeeeeel!
GOD! GOD! (*He pins Werner to the wall. With a quick thrust, Werner breaks Bickham's grip. Bickham, sobbing wildly, collapses against Werner. Werner removes Bickham's hands, and he slides helplessly to the floor.*)