

Say Good Night by Gary Young

SETTING: Park
across from a
hospital.

SON

(Age 25-40, dressed for work, tie is loose. Jacket can be removed during the play) I'M NOT HYPERVENTILATING. IM NOT EVEN VENTILATING. I'M YELLING! All right. I'll take my time. I'll try to listen harder. No promises. But I'll try. I'M TRYING! BUT PLEASE, TAKE YOUR TIME SPEAKING!
(pause, attempting to collect himself)

FATHER walks with a brain tumor-induced shuffle, dragging one leg. HE is in his 70's, wearing pajamas and robe. His mind is still active.

FATHER

(Gives son a dirty look, angry sounding but unable to form the word) Truth.

FATHER clears his throat.

SON

You want to sit on this bench? It's a nice park, Pop. Really nice. I can see your hospital room from here. Mom's at the window.

FATHER reacts negatively.

SON (cont'd.)

Whadaya wanna talk about, Pop? Food. The metaphor for life. And your obsession. I hate food, except ice cream. And Girl Scout cookies. And

a Mai Tai served pool side or at the beach, especially Kapalua. *(a little sarcastic)* And I remember my Bar Mitzvah cake. It was in the shape of a torah. I ate Leviticus. I hear that Deuteronomy was good too. *(pause)*

A mime goes by and tries to interrupt. MIME does "the wall," walking against the wind," and makes a little fun of the FATHER during the next few speeches.

FATHER

(unintelligibly) Truth.

SON

You said, "Truth." Right? That means that you're going to give me the true skinny here, right? Okay. Truth. I have to be straight with you too. I can't understand a word you're saying. Which is nothing new for us huh? Okay, most words, then. The cussing somehow comes out as cussing.

FATHER

(barely intelligibly) Cigar. *(trying to find cigar in coat pocket)* Cigar. *(mimes cigar, points to coat pocket. Tries to wave the MIME away. Says brief gibberish, with an intelligible "fuck" included.*

SON

(To mime) I think he said go fuck yourself. Stop it. Get a job!

MIME exits, sadly, picking his nose.

FATHER

Cigar.

SON

Cigar? Are you sure you should smoke?

*FATHER makes an
ironic gesture.*

SON (cont'd)

Yeah, you're right. *(Gets CIGAR out of his coat)*
Want me to light it for you?

*FATHER points
vaguely.*

*FATHER grabs CIGAR,
puts in mouth,
straightens up, now
able to speak
coherently.*

FATHER

I never light them.

Pay attention.

My doctor says I should give up sex at my age.
Then my doctor died. And I'm still having sex.
But not at the moment.

That's amazing, isn't it? That I should find my
voice as a borsht belt comedian. *(Shrugs.)* Me, I
can't even understand most of the time now. I
never liked borsht, but now I have a craving.
Even though it's called Borsht. I don't know who
makes these things up.

You're looking at me in the cigar and the way I'm
talking. I discovered this process while a cute
nurse was giving me a sponge bath. I was holding
my toothbrush and suddenly started talking like
this. It's amazing what you can discover during a
sponge bath. By the way, don't put a toothbrush
in your mouth when you take a bath. You can poke
an eye out with that.