

IN THE MALL

Scene: *a bench in a shopping mall.*

Characters: A, *a sixty-year-old man.* B, *a thirteen-year-old boy.*

B: I bet I know where you got that ice cream cone.

A: Where?

B: Down the mall.

A: That's right.

B: What did you pay for it?

A: Eighty-five cents.

B: Eighty-five cents...

A: That's right.

B: Is that with the tax?

A: No.

B: What is it with the tax?

A: Eighty-nine.

B: Eighty-nine. That's right. I bought one there. (*Pause.*) I bought one there yesterday. What kind is it?

A: What kind is it?

B: Yes.

A: Butternut.

B: Butternut. I had one. (*Pause.*) They made it up. They made it up I went down there the guys in there, you know, down the mall, I don't know, they want everything just like they like it, you know what I mean? I went in there my shirt off, this guy he says, "Get out." (*Pause.*) I had to go. He was bigger than me—I would of wanted to smash his face in. Lots of people in there. They got a sign: "No Shoes, No Shirt, No Service," all they care, who they *like*. Somebody they *like* goes in there they give 'em anything he

wants. I bought these crackers in a store they were crushed I took 'em back the guy said, "You ate some of 'em." I said I opened the box and I had a couple. "Eat the rest," he said. I knew a fella had a dog he fed it scraps. Whatever he didn't want to eat. When he had his dinner. They got that same hat down there. Where did you get that hat? (*Pause.*) Where did you get that hat? Down there?

A: No.

B: Where did you get it?

A: I bought it on a trip.

B: They've got the same one down there. I like to know that. I saw a picture of this guy in there he looked like somebody I know. (*Pause.*) You think it's cold here?

A: No.

B: You don't?

A: No. (*Long pause.*)

B: Do you think it's warm? (*Pause.*)

A: No.

B: Well, if you don't think it's cold and it's not warm what is it? (*Pause.*) What is it?

A: What is it here?

B: *Yeah. Huh???* I don't think it's cold. I don't *care* if it's cold. *Anyway.* I like to do things, you know, that people say that they can't do. I climbed this fence once that everyone said you can't get over. It had barb wire at the top. They make this stuff it's razors. It's a razor-ribbon you can't climb it. I went up. You hold on to the barb wire you go right over I came down on the other side. *They* didn't care. They said that it was stupid. I bought a pair of socks once they had stripes on top I folded 'em down. I thought, "Maybe this is to show us where to fold."

(A gets up.)

Where are you going?

A: Home.

B: Why?

A: Why?

B: Yeah.

A: Because I'm finished here.

B: You're finished doing what?

A: Sitting here.

B: You are?

A: Yes.

B: Do you have any money? (*Pause.*) I need some cause I've got to do things.

A: No. I don't have any.

B: You don't.

A: No.

B: Mm. Mm. Mm. Mm. (*Pause.*) Do you throw that thing away when you're done?

A: Yes.

B: Mm. Where?

A: In the wastebasket.

B: Mm. (*Pause.*) Mm. (A exits.) (*Pause.*) I had one one time...