

The Euthanasist

A One-Person Show

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CHARCATER

The Euthanasist Anyone of suitable age or gender, who
emanates confidence, intelligence, and
compassion.

SETTING

A room with one chair, present day.

AT RISE:

A euthanasist sits in a chair
and addresses the audience.

From the beginning?

Well, I don't like death. I'll tell you that much. I guess that's the common misconception. It's not about dying. I don't want to bring religion into it, either. I'd really like to leave God out of it, if that's all right with you.

There's no point in writing anything down. Trust me. It's not my story anyone's interested in in the end. Right? This really has nothing to do with me.

My family's normal...as normal as a post-nuclear family can be. My parents are still living. They live in a colonial house with white shutters and awnings, in case you haven't seen awnings in a while, I can assure you they're still alive and well in suburban middle America. I have an older sister and a younger brother, they have normal jobs. My sister's name is Amy. My brother's name is Brian. Amy used to be a sales rep for Microsoft, but quit when she had her third baby to be a stay-at-home mom. My brother manages a Wal-mart. Amy lives about a mile from my parents. Brian still parties a lot. They're all happy, I guess. My mother keeps house, my father sells insurance. Car, home. No, not life. My mother was that mother who called every other day to check in. Not smothering. Not like that. Just...consistent. She did a good job, I think.

Nationality wasn't important to us. Not like some other places, where people...would honor their ancestry. We never knew what we were. Except that we were Americans. Born and bred. And proud.

When I was little, I wanted to join the circus. We all did, I know, but for me...I just wanted to devote my life to something...happy. I wanted a life that made things better for people, any time they wanted it, contribute something to the human species.

I suppose that's when I decided to go into politics. Yeah, I know. I went the usual route: political science major, top of my class, internship in DC. I went to work for...well, you know all this already. An "honorable"

representative. I guess it was six years. A little more, maybe. My job was to accompany him to conferences. Eventually I graduated to keeping his calendar. Wiping his ass. I know I'm not supposed to talk about it, but he was the one...we were all afraid to say...I can say it now, though, right? He made a move on anything with a relatively thin coat of fur. What didn't people know? He smelled. Breath that would burn your eyebrows off. He didn't like to eat "soft" foods. Soggy vegetables. Pasta. Oatmeal. And a kink freak. You know all that though, don't you? The biggest secret of all? He was completely afraid of being a bad person. He used to turn to me and say, "I'm not a bad person, you know" just after he'd screwed the new interns in the bathroom, two at a time. He wasn't a bad person by any stretch. He was just a politician.

So, while I gleamed with pride over the twenty-two thousand dollars a year for ninety-hours a week, I decided to go to nursing school. At first everyone was surprised. "A nurse? You? It's dangerous these days with the needles and all the problems with the AIDS." But I was into it. Needles never bothered me. Not even back then.

(Long pause.)

I started...by accident. No, not *accident*. That makes it sound...accidental.

I knew...Sarah from the hospital. Her mother, Frida, was my patient. When Frida first came she already had uterine cancer for, I don't know, seven years or so. Unusual, right? She'd had surgery a couple times...radiation...been in and out. She was one of the first women accepted to Penn, full scholarship, and decided to study the Classics...mythology.

I asked her, "Didn't your parents think it was a waste of an education?" And she said, her head high, "No, no...my parents didn't think a woman could be educated. They didn't think a woman could do *anything*." And that seemed to give her carte blanche to travel the world. Marry young. Divorce young. Marry young again. All in the name of perpetuating...a myth. The myth that no matter what she did with her life, it didn't matter, because there was no one to disapprove of her. She was a disappointment the minute she was born. And so she took advantage of it. She

lived her life without obligation to anyone. Until Sarah was born, of course. Sarah "came into this world as the gods made her" Frida would say. And that meant that she was forever a child in all ways, except for the way she played the piano. She could play like Beethoven, only better. But she could barely tie her shoelaces and couldn't eat Cheerios without a bib, even by the time Frida got sick and Sarah was nearing fifty. Frida said she was "perfect the way she was" which left Sarah a very happy girl of a woman. Until her mother got sick. Sick meant nothing to Sarah. It meant nothing to Frida. For a while.

I met Frida during chemo. "I'm not leaving my girl," she said. I believed her. How couldn't anyone believe her? She held her head so high. "I'm not leaving my girl." She lost her hair and got sicker before she got better. Not better, really. Remission. I saw her again two years later. "We're not ready yet," she told me. And I believed her. She said that she was teaching Sarah to go to the store for herself. And to use the stove, alone. And that it was "little by little every day, but we'll get there." This treatment was more difficult than the last, longer, too. The cancer had spread by then to her liver. But she said she wasn't ready. If Frida wasn't ready, she wasn't ready.

But when she came back, six years after the first time I saw her, she was ready. Not happy about it, but finished fighting. Cancer had completely taken over. She was bed ridden. And not comfortably, either. Her body was covered with sores. Her teeth had fallen out. And she was losing her sight, which seemed to annoy her most of all because it meant she couldn't read. When I heard she was back...for good...I walked by her room and there was Sarah, book to her face, reading painfully, word by torturous word, "And he flew...upward...towards the sun...where so many had warned...his wings could not withstand the heat." Her mother lay in her bed, as proud as she was constructive. "Elongate your vowels, Sarah. WIIIIIngs. TOOOWards. SUUUUUn." I took one step into the room and she stopped and said with a smile, "What took you so long?" And that's when she asked Sarah to leave us alone.

What happened next...some of the details...I know you want to know, but...I'm telling you the truth. I don't remember. I was surprised at her proposal. But not shocked. Frida had impeccable instincts and somehow over

the years she must have gathered that I wouldn't turn her in. Or turn her down. She didn't say much. Just, "I need you to help me." No one had asked me for that kind of help before. She knew more about it than I did. She told me what to get. Yes, steal. She told me how she should take the injection. How I would come. How I would go. What we would do to prepare. She said she'd already started the process by requesting another nurse, saying that she didn't feel I was *competent* enough. When I asked her how she knew I would take her up on it, she said, "This isn't a job interview, my dear." And I laughed. She laughed, too. In spite of all her pain, and her need to die, she laughed.

She offered me money, of course. But that was actually far after the fact. In retrospect I think I understand how careful Frida really was. And how, by "hiring" me, she'd be able to carry out the rest of her agenda. She was smart enough not to lure me with money, which surprisingly, hadn't even occurred to me until she mentioned it. By then we'd already picked the date, a random Tuesday in March, nowhere near a holiday, and not too rainy. That Monday night I had everything lined up, just like she said. She'd been starving herself for the past three days to make it easier for the both of us. I was to come over at 2:30, when Sarah was at her afternoon painting class, and any neighbors would be out at work. Frida didn't have insurance and no real money to speak of, so she was pretty sure no one would bother with an autopsy, but just in case she left an empty pill bottle by her bed.

And, Sarah.... "I wouldn't ask you," Frida said. But the truth was Sarah had recently found an aid that she was completely mad over, an older woman who actually reminded Frida of herself. Had that woman not come into the picture, then I'm sure Frida would have...would have wanted to further employ me to make certain that her Sarah didn't end up in a home. But, this woman stepped in, and Sarah was happy. Frida'd been saving for her care. Sarah would be taken care of, the way Frida wanted.

But I knew the truth. Frida was planning to ask me to take care of Sarah, too. She didn't want her in a home and the checks from the state had stopped coming and she didn't know what to do. Luckily, it all worked out in the end. But that was just sheer luck. Had some paperwork not made it to the top of some office worker's pile, I know Frida would have tried to make Sarah part of the deal.

In the end, she asked me to leave the television on. She thought it would look more natural that way.

The apartment was clean. And the cabinets were stocked with Cherrios.

"You can turn back, you know."
"Turn back to what," she said.
"Are you sure you want to end your life?"
"What life?" she asked.
"Do you want to say goodbye to anyone?"
"I don't have anyone."
"Are you scared?"
"I'm off on new adventures," she said.

And so, that was Frida. For all her planning, she'd left me with no instructions on how to live my life in the weeks that followed. But...I suppose I'd adjusted perfectly well. Strangely well, to most people. The street didn't look different as I walked to work. My senses didn't alter. I wasn't sleepless. In fact, I felt somewhat satisfied. Some of that was who Frida was. How resolute she'd been. How easy she made things for me. And no, I had no plans to pursue this as a career. No one waitlisted. I had to go on, business as usual. I couldn't even switch hospitals, Frida said.

It was about two months after Frida died that I got a call from...a man. He said that he'd been diagnosed with Huntington's and...wanted my help. "How did you get my number?" But I already knew: Frida. They were friends. He had such a peaceful, soft voice over the phone. "Are you suffering?" I asked. "I just can't dance like I used to," he said. But the disease ran in his family and he'd seen what it did to people. "I love my life," he said. "I'd like to end it before I don't love it anymore." His wife was lovely, and supportive, and asked if she could invite his favorite cousin and her niece. I said, "Sure." They were appropriately sad, but peaceful. Happy sounds ridiculous. They were at peace. All of them.

I can't tell you their names. That's part of the deal. There was a physicist. A banker. A caterer, a writer, construction worker. A teacher. Many mothers, just as many fathers. All of them someone's son or daughter.

They all took the initiative, of course. Clear headed, as much as they could be. No one under duress, I promise. All of them found me themselves. Yes, I was contacted by families of coma patients and I couldn't--wouldn't--handle those. I couldn't handle it. With all of my training, I believed they might wake up, ready to live their lives and I didn't want to be the one to rob them of that.

I told you, it wasn't about death. I didn't like death and certainly didn't want to be responsible for making it too easy. Everyone I helped loved their lives and made a choice not to compromise. No one enjoyed the process. It wasn't celebratory. But I can honestly say that it was well thought-out. All I did was support them.

I had no idea how much it was affecting me. It wasn't the act itself, I believed in that, and still obviously do. It was the loneliness. The solitude. Going home to a dark house. To Moe. Moe was my tiger cat. He was dark grey with black stripes and a smudge of black and white on his nose. I'd found Moe by the side of the road when he was just a runt, and twelve years later he was...he was like a dog. I swear he listened to everything I said. And understood it, too. He ate what I ate, and that made him obscenely fat, so much so that his belly dragged on the ground a little when he walked. He's ruined my grandmother's antique chair by using it as a scratch post but it never made me want to get him de-clawed. I'd just reupholster the chair some day.

I suspected something was wrong when Moe stopped eating. All of a sudden he growled when I scratched his back, and that wasn't like him. His leukemia was pretty far along, the vet said, and when he suggested putting Moe down, I thought I'd just about punch him in the jaw. The man wanted to kill my cat! "He's in a lot of pain," the doctor said. I told him I'd consider it, and put Moe back in his kitty caddy and took him home. I was going to make him well. I was going to heal him.

But instead Moe just got thinner and thinner. Sicker and sicker. I fed him tuna puree through an eye dropper, but he was having trouble keeping anything down. I managed to hook up a little IV, and that kept him going, but he didn't like it. He still had spirit. I could see that. And he knew the situation was beneath him. He stopped taking food and water and eventually starved to death.

(Long pause.)

I'd had no children. No requests to help any children, I mean. Until one day I got a call from a mother. At first, weirdly chipper, and then, eventually, of course, in tears. The girl was born with a brain tumor. Surgeries since four months old. The conversation was brief. I didn't welcome long conversations over the phone, one of Frida's early rules that stuck with me. "I can't help you," I told her, straight off, because I knew my limits. But she begged me, saying that her daughter was in horrific pain now beyond medication, surgeries were no longer an option, and still I turned her down. She called again. And again and again. And finally I said I'd see the girl, at the very least to make sure she wasn't in the hands of lunatic parents.

I only went to see her, just to see her. She was sleeping at the time, a hospital bed was set up in the living room, where it had been since she was three. Now, at eight years old, she was tiny for her age and her head was...

And her hands were...a bit...blue. All of her was very cold, not like a child. As a nurse I had seen a lot of things, but had managed to stay away from the children as much as I could. Not consciously, but because I couldn't handle it. I sat by her bedside and she woke up for a moment, turned her head to me and smiled. She had the face of a china doll, strikingly beautiful. She looked me right in the eye and her bravery dwarfed me. This little girl was a giant. I could never measure up to her. Children deserve better. I know how that must sound after...but they were adults and...in choosing death they, we, believe that they chose life. They were not all elderly. But they were compromised and they needed help. I gave them help. It was a choice they made on their own.

But children deserve more. They deserve to make the choice. How could that little girl make that choice for herself? How could she not have choices? What kind of universe was created where that wasn't possible? That little girl deserved more than I ever could have given her by helping her die.

She fell back asleep and I went to her mother and told her "no."

"Please," she said, "can't you help us?"
 "No," I said. "I'm sorry." That's when she broke down. A deluge of pain and sorrow and eight long years of carrying the suffering for her little girl. "Please help us," she said. "Can't you help us?" I turned to leave and she stopped me at the door. "Please! I'm begging you! Can't you help us? Please help us! Please. You're all we have left, can't you help? Why won't you help us? Can't you do anything to help? Anything? Please, please help. Please help. We'll give you anything that you want. Please help us. You saw my daughter, she needs you. We need you. Can't you help? Please help. Please help. Please, please. I'll give you anything if you'll just help. We've suffered long enough. Please."

I realized, when I left, that she was begging for herself, not her daughter. At least, that's the way I justified my decision, and went home to my empty house, and made the mistake of watching the news.

I read in the paper that the little girl died about three weeks later. The paper said "natural causes due to a brain tumor" and I chose to believe that.

Throughout the years I never had any regrets. Until I met that child. That's when the sleeplessness started. And the moods. And the hauntings, as I like to put it. I could close my eyes and see hers, as deep as they were knowing. And I would feel so small and helpless all over again. Not a day went by when I didn't see that little girl's face, or hear her mother begging for my help to end her daughter's life. The regret was never in not doing it, the regret was that I ever met the little girl and had been humbled to the extent of wondering what my life was worth.

You won't believe this, but I was having trouble finding a job. I really wanted to go back a hospital and be a nurse, a regular nurse. I applied to ten hospitals. They all told me they were already overstaffed. I spoke to a friend I knew at City Hospital after I found out they'd let a dozen nurses go. I had to ask her: "How do you do your job?" If I didn't know her she probably would have handed me some pat answer like "we're doing the best that we can" or "we find a way to prioritize." But instead she just shrugged her shoulders and said, "How do we do our job? We don't."

I was home. Alone. For a normal person job-searching's bad enough, but...I really needed some sort of a fresh start. I really wanted to work with the babies.

But I would have done anything. Change bed pans, mop floors. For free. They said they had a long list of volunteers. I think my begging sort of put them off. I made them promise to keep me on the list and took it as a sign. I'd try my hand at something else.

I went to the library, but they didn't want me. Even for free. Museums looked at me like I was crazy. I even went to a pre-school, thought I could do something for the kids. They seemed a little scared of me, too. Everyone said they would call, but no one did.

Eventually, my mother called. "Where have you been? I've been worried about you? How's work? How's life? You sound a little down..." Only when your mother asks if you're feeling a little down does it make you five-years-old again. And that's when she said, "How's the cat?" And...I just lost it. I started with that babyish gibberish no one's proud of, "He got sick and needed an IV and I fed him tuna juice until he just...died." And she was sooooo sympathetic. And that made me feel worse. "Maybe it's time you got yourself a new kitten," Mom said.

"A new kitten?" I was horrified. As if Moe could be replaced!

"Yes," she said, "A new kitten. Wouldn't it be nice to have a new kitten in the house? You could name him Larry...or Curly."

Can you believe she said that to me? Larry or Curly? As if I was looking for any Three Stooges references at that time in my life. It seemed so inappropriate. And, my poor mother, she just happened to be within firing range. "The Three Stooges? *Three Stooges*? Are you really that out of it, Mom? Do you not know what I've been going through over the past couple of months? Past couple of years?"

"Well, I'm sorry, I've tried to call--"

"Not good enough. Not good enough. You have three kids, and the one who doesn't live within a two mile radius still has a life, you know."

"Well, I'm sorry, honey," she said. And the sympathy and caring in her voice made me feel as though fire was coming up through my stomach. There was nothing I could do to

control myself and that was even before she said, "Seems like you need to take a vacation."

Vacation? Vacation?! "Where do you want me to go, Mom? Farther away from the perfect lives you think you've created for your family? Do you have an idea what's going on? Do you?"

And that's when...first there was silence. And then she started to cry. I made my mother cry. You don't know how low you can go until you've taken someone who genuinely loves you, and made them regret it, even for a second. To top things off, I hung up on her. She tried calling back, but I wouldn't pick up. She even left a message apologizing. I never called her back.

I had enough nerve to bring several dozen people to their deaths. But my mother, the little girl, and my cat...

The world is actually easy to avoid from your own house, provided you don't seek it out. You're not forced to watch the news. And even when you try to, there's usually very little news in the news. I, of course, found myself seeking as much news as I could find. Digging for news in the non-news. Things were bad. Things were real bad. And they're even worse when you consider what's *not there*. What we're not being told. What are we being protected from? The things we're not allowed to see.

After a few weeks I got a Fed Ex in the mail. From my mother. A plane ticket to Jamaica with a note that said, "Get yourself some R&R, on us. Love, Mom & Dad." I'd never been to Jamaica before. Never wanted to go. But it was free and I needed a change of pace.

I had a terrible flight. "Unusual winds" they called it. We landed okay, but I couldn't get to my resort that night. I couldn't even go home. No planes were going out for a while. They left us to our own devices, and so I hooked up with some random cabby and told him to take me to a local place. "No tourists," I told him. "No tourists." He just smiled, and we went for a drive.

I guess you'd call it a motel. Was it safe? I don't know. I don't think so.

But the way they lived. Tin shacks. One room. It made me embarrassed about everything I had. Ashamed to be there.

I was humiliated by their obligation to be kind to me. I was humbled, I guess.

At first I was happy to come home to everything familiar. But everything familiar was...the news beneath the news, the little girl's eyes when I closed my eyes. No where to go. No one calling. My grandmother's chair still shredded. I started to not want to leave the house.

"Please help. We'll give you anything that you want. Please help us. I'm begging you! Can't you help us? Please help us! Please. You're all we have left, can't you help? Why won't you help us?"

(Beat.)

Mrs. Hark lived upstairs. She was ninety-three and legally blind. I'd passed her in the stairwell a hundred times. Held the door. Said hello. Loudly. But I never spoke to her.

I was home, of course, that day I heard the television. Game shows. Wheel of Fortune. It was loud. Real loud. I wanted to check it out, make sure everything was okay. Door was open. Her apartment was so small. One room, basically. There she was, sitting in a chair, watching her television. Door wide open. "Mrs. Hark," I said, "Would you like me to close the door?" I could barely hear myself over the sound of coined audience applause and the chime of random word letters. "Mrs. Hark?" So I stepped inside, and she turned to me, eyes large, and filmed, gray almost, trying to focus.

"From 3A?" she asked.

"Yes," I said, "I'm your neighbor! I live downstairs."

"It's Mutiny on the Bounty," she said. I just passed it off as crazy talk.

"Of course it is," I said. "Would you like your door—"

"Mutiny on the Bounty!"

With foggy eyesight and only slightly better hearing, she got every single title, profession, Wheel of Fortune word riddle there was in five letters or less. I came up every day at 4:00 and we'd watch Wheel of Fortune and Jeopardy back to back together. And then I'd make her tea and we'd sit there. We didn't talk much. She never asked my name, I didn't really care.

Then, one day, I woke up from my mid-afternoon nap at 4:15. Ran up the stairs; but Mrs. Hark's door was locked. It was never locked. I put my ear to the door. I listened. No Pat Sajack. I knocked. No answer. I went home.

Five days later I heard them carry her body down the stairs. A woman was there, fifties, mink from head to toe. She turned to me and asked, "Are you the neighbor?" Of course I was the neighbor. "You used to visit her. Thank you." She was so...tight and cold even slathered in fur. Yes, I'm the neighbor. "I'm her daughter," she said. I didn't know Mrs. Hark had a daughter, but clearly there was something prodigal at play, far beyond me and my short history with her. How did she die? "Wrong meds, they say," she said it with a sigh, as though tired of the whole meds issue. "You never came to visit," I told her, not knowing it was true, but suspecting. That's when her face turned sour, an improvement from before. "I took care of her," she said, and turned so fast the heavy trail of her coat thunked against the wall. I'd seen Mrs. Hark's cabinets. And her medications. Neither were that extravagant.

Four o'clock was suddenly the loneliest time of my day.

I guess you could say it didn't bother me that I was being evicted. After all, I hadn't paid my rent in months, so I had little to complain about. If I really wanted to live there, yeah I could've called my parents.

So, when the hospital finally called and asked if I wanted to work, of course I said yes.

I knew about your unit long before I was assigned, but I'd never worked here before.

You have to know that my intentions were so...innocent when I came. I sincerely just wanted to help in any way I could. I've said it before, but...I'm sorry for the conditions. It's hard for two nurses to have so many patients. We really do our best.

I know it sounds crazy, but...I really did look forward to coming in here every day. Maggie still has her sense of humor, in spite of her pain. And when George is awake, I get to pretend I'm his son. "Is that you, Jimmy?" I always say "yes".

At first, I guess I suspected something had leaked because of the way the other nurses would look at me. At first I thought I was just paranoid, but then I'd see them clustered, whispering, their eyes would dart towards me as they straightened their backs and tried to relax. Suspicion is a face that's tough to ignore. Everyone seemed to wear suspicion around me. I couldn't go to the cafeteria. I couldn't even hang outside with the smokers. I heard them whispering. Everywhere I went. They were whispering. Even when no one was around I felt them talking about me.

And then I went home. And, eventually, I tried to go to sleep.

Please help us.

Can't you help us?

Can't you help us?

Please help us!

You're all we have left, can't you help?

Why won't you help us?

Can't you do anything to help?

We'll give you anything that you want.

Please help us.

We've suffered long enough.

I called her. The mother. "It's me," I said, when she picked up the phone. She knew who I was. I wanted to meet in person, but she said "no". "I'm sorry," I told her. She was not happy to hear from me. "How did it happen?" I asked. "Quietly," she said. And she hung up.

You hear all the time about people who change careers mid-stream. Accountants who want to be actors. Actors who want to be lawyers. Lawyers who want to do absolutely anything else. Usually you can see the correlation somewhere, even if you go way back. The accountant who

liked to tell loud stories at parties. The actor who liked to debate things that weren't debatable. And the lawyer who realized the second out of law school the real deal was nothing like Law & Order. I don't regret my career, I told you that. I believe I did--do--something that's good. *I believe that.* I stand by that no matter what.

But it's a strange life to leave behind. Try to leave behind. I don't put the old life in a box in the attic. There's no nostalgic photo to pull out and laugh at. As far as we're all concerned I wasn't even there. But I was there, floating through their lives to help them achieve death. The banker. The caterer, the writer, the construction worker. The teacher. The mothers, the fathers, the sons and daughters.

No, I don't regret it. Please don't think that.

The little girl is what changed things. She deserved a chance. "Quietly," means they had help. It's one of the two words I use. Quietly and peacefully. The little girl deserved more. Mrs. Hark deserved more, too. You all...you deserve more. You know you do, don't you?

Part of the reason I'd decided to...take part in the first place was specifically because of the word "terminal." It's an odd word. Terminal means "final." "Last stop."

I like reading to Jean and Sophia. I know the other nurses say they can't hear me, but I think they can. *"And he flew...upward...towards the sun...where so many had warned...his wings could not withstand the heat."*

(Long pause.)

They were talking about me. I'm sure they're talking about me right now. Suspicious faces. I knew it was just a matter of time. I'm not the only one. I know I'm not the only one. There's supposed to be a code among us. I suppose somehow I'd grown weak enough for them to prey on me. I know I look...I don't look the same. I know.

Today's my last day. Isn't that funny? Yesterday Carolyn told me I had to leave. I told her there was no one else who knew about Maggie's pills, and George's special diet and that I'd have to write it all down. "Just go," she said. But I insisted. "Do you want to put these patients

in danger? And with Melissa about to go on maternity leave, how would that make you look, Carolyn?"

I'd never seen a bomb before, except in bad movies and in the occasional cartoon. When I was in Jamaica I saw the news. The world news, not the American news. You see what it's like for people to get blown up, for real. Of course I didn't know how to make one. Still don't. They were supposed to have detectors in the hospitals, employee searches and all that, but they just ran out of money. Looks like I got here just in time.

I read the descriptions on-line and I promise you I don't fit any of them. No one put me up to this. No one's giving my family money. I told you, I don't know the meaning of politics, it's a hollow word. More about words than actions, if you ask me. But this, this will change things, I just know it. It'll make daughters like Mrs. Hark's think twice. The little girl's mother will stop crying for herself. And maybe everyone that follows all of you, maybe they'll have better...everything.

You can buy dynamite anywhere. And the ward is perfectly constructed on a wing. Anything that happens to the floor won't hurt too many people. The one who'll be hurt most is me.

I've taped it to my back. It's running along my spine.

You know, last night...I had a good night's sleep. Quietly. Peacefully. For the first time.

I think what I'm going to miss most is...all of you. I've enjoyed coming here. I really have.

"And he flew...upward...towards the sun...where so many had warned...his wings could not withstand the heat."

But the truth is, none of this has anything to do with me. It's all about you.

Are you ready? Here we go.

(The euthanasist lights a match. Blackout.)

END OF PLAY