

As Is

by

William M. Hoffman

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INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Rich's brother come in wearing a surgical mask, gown, and gloves carrying a small shopping bag.

SAUL

Oh, my God. I think it's your brother.

BROTHER

I'll come back later

SAUL

No, I was just going.

BROTHER

It's all right, really. I'm interrupting.

RICH

(To his brother)

Unless you're planning to come into intimate contact with me or my body fluids, none of that shit you have on is necessary.

BROTHER

The sign says...

RICH

But please restrain your brotherly affection for my sake; who knows what diseases you might have brought in with you?

His brother removes the mask, gown, and gloves.

BROTHER

I owe you an apology...I was very frightened...I'm afraid I panicked...Please forgive me.

RICH

Nothing to forgive.

BROTHER

Betty sends her love. Se sent along a tin of butter crunch.
(Rich ignores it)
You're not on any special diet?

(MORE)

BROTHER (CONT'D)

I told Betty I thought maybe you'd be on one of those macrobiotic diets. I read in the papers that it's helped some people with...

RICH

AIDS.

BROTHER

Yes. I kept a file of clippings on all the latest medical developments. Looks like they're going to have a vaccine soon. The French...

RICH

That's to *prevent* AIDS. I already *have* AIDS.

BROTHER

They have this new drug, AZT.

RICH

I'm on it.

BROTHER

Right...So how are you doing?

RICH

I have Kaposi's sarcoma, a hitherto rare form of skin cancer. It's spreading. I have just begun chemotherapy. It nauseates me. I expect my hair will fall out. I also have a fungal infection of the throat called candidiasis, or thrush. My life expectancy is...I have a greater chance of winning the lottery. Otherwise I'm fine. How are you?

BROTHER

I'm sorry...Mary Pat sends her love. She won her school swimming competition and I registered her for the South Jersey championship. Oh, I forgot, she made this for you...

RICH

Say, have you heard about the miracle of AIDS?

BROTHER

What?

RICH

It can turn a fruit into a vegetable. What's the worst thing about getting AIDS?

BROTHER

Stop it!

RICH

Trying to convince your parents that you're Hatian. Get it?

BROTHER

I came here to see if I could help you.

RICH

Skip it. So what do you want?

BROTHER

I don't want anything.

RICH

Except for the stuff Mom left us. I told Saul that it's to go to you. Except for the Barcelona chair...

BROTHER

I don't care about...

RICH

I'm leaving Saul the copyright to my book...

BROTHER

Why are you doing this to me?

RICH

So you don't want my worldly possessions, such as they are; you want me to relieve your guilt?

BROTHER

Stop it.

RICH

(Making the sign of the cross over his brother...)

(MORE)

RICH (CONT'D)

I hereby exonerate you of the sin
of being ashamed of your queer
brother and being a coward in the
face of...

BROTHER

Stop! Don't!

RICH

No!

BROTHER

(Attempting to hug Rich)
Richard, don't! I don't care...I
don't
care...Rich!...Richie...Richie...
(Rich relents. They hug.)

RICH

I'm so...

BROTHER

Forgive me. Forgive me.

RICH

I don't want to...

BROTHER

It's all right. I'm here...I'm
here.

(Beat)

I've got to be going now.

RICH

I'm glad you came by.

BROTHER

I'll be back tomorrow with Mary
Pat. She's been dying - wanting to
come by. She's been writing poetry
and...

RICH

I'd love to see her. And tell
Betty thanks for the...?

BROTHER

Butter crunch.

His brother leaves.