



1. Guru's Situation

(Afternoon; scene opens in front of a metal Quonset hut, which is located in a metal scrapyard; rumble of thunder in the distance; BABA [scrapyard owner, Guru's father, 45 years old, a weathered man older than his years] is clearing a plot of land next to his Quonset hut home. TOOLEE [80 years old, tool peddler] enters, pulling a large wagon.)

BABA

(shouting out)

Toolee! I'm happy to see you! With all these rain clouds, I wasn't sure you'd be out today.

TOOLEE

(resigned)

Oh, a drowning man isn't much bothered by rain.

BABA

(chuckles)

Do you still have that pickaxe?

TOOLEE

(curious)

Pickaxe? Why would a scrap-man need a pickaxe?

BABA

I'm thinking of digging us a garden.

TOOLEE
(with disbelief)
A garden? Where?

BABA
Right here! I cleared-off this whole area.

TOOLEE
(after silently examining the cleared area)
It's all clay, Baba!

BABA
That's why I need your pickaxe, Toolee – to open it up – to dig-in some compost – to bring the soil back to life. I'd be happy to trade you something for it.

TOOLEE
Trade? I'm not sure you have anything I could use.

BABA
Then I'll pay cash.

TOOLEE
Cash? That's not like you, Baba.

BABA
Well, things are starting to change, Toolee. Guru finally graduated and got his teaching license. He's a real teacher now!

TOOLEE
He's been *my* real teacher since he was in diapers.

BABA
(chuckling)
Yeah. He's always wanted to be a teacher. Today's his first day. He's over in Jeeno at the elementary school. Yes, I'm finally starting to see a little sunshine peek through the clouds.

TOOLEE
(resigned)
A blind man isn't much excited by sunshine.

(Toolee slowly pokes around in his wagon until he finds the pickaxe. He pulls it out and hands it to Baba.)

BABA

Oh, this'll be perfect! Thank you, Toolee!

(As Toolee begins to leave with his wagon, he stops and looks again at the cleared area.)

TOOLEE

Baba, I see a great garden growing here. Berries and Beans, Melons and Greens, Sweet Tangerines. I see a great garden growing here with lots of sunshine.

(As Toolee turns and leaves the stage with his wagon, Baba calls out to him)

BABA

(shouting)

Thank you for that vision, Toolee! I'll tell Guru when he gets back!

(repeats to himself while looking dreamily at the garden area)

Berries and Beans, Melons and Greens, Sweet Tangerines...

(music begins; Baba sings as he swings his pickaxe against the ground – in tempo with the underlined words when appropriate)

OUT OF THIS MUD, OUT OF THIS CRUD
OUT OF THIS SCUM, BEAUTY WILL COME.
FLOWERS WILL BLOOM, ROSES WILL BUD
CLOVER WILL SPROUT OUT OF THIS MUD

BERRIES AND BEANS, MELONS AND GREENS, SWEET TANGERINES
THIS MUDDY WASTE WILL BE REPLACED
FALLOW NO MO.....RE, LET THE MUD RO.....AR
APPLES WILL FALL, GRAIN WILL GROW TALL
FEEDING US ALL

(stops swinging pickaxe)

I COME FROM EARTH TO TAKE MY TURN
AND TO THE EARTH I WILL RETURN
I COME FROM EARTH TO TAKE MY TURN
AND TO THE EARTH I WILL RETURN, I WILL RETURN
BUT FEEL IT MY DUTY TO DO SO WITH BEAUTY

(resumes swinging pickaxe)

OUT OF THIS MUD, OUT OF THIS CRUD
OUT OF THIS SCUM, BEAUTY WILL COME
STILL AT THE GATE, STUCK IN THE MIRE
SPINNING MY TIRE, NOW I AM LATE

(stops swinging pickaxe)

BUT THIS I KNOW, I CAN STILL CHANGE, I CAN STILL GROW

(resumes swinging pickaxe)

THIS MUDDY WASTE WILL BE REPLACED

FALLOW NO MO.....RE, LET THE MUD RO.....AR

OUT OF THIS MUD, OUT OF THIS CRUD

OUT OF THIS BODY AND OUT OF THIS BLOOD

OUT OF THIS SCUM, BEFORE I'M DONE...

(Baba stops singing as he sees his son Guru [20, paralyzed below waist] struggling to get home in his crude homemade wheelchair over the rough terrain. Baba waves the new pickaxe excitedly and calls to his son)



BABA

(shouting)

Guru! Look! We got a pickaxe! And Toolee sees a great garden growing here! With lots of sunshine!

(Guru puts his head down and does not respond. Baba drops his pickaxe and runs over to Guru.)

What's wrong, son?

GURU

They rejected me.

BABA

They rejected you? Who rejected you? What do you mean?

GURU

The parents do not want me teaching their children.

BABA

(consolingly)

Oh, we're used to that, Guru. But once they get to know you, once they can see what you can do...

GURU

No, they want nothing to do with me. The classroom was nearly empty today. The students who did come were afraid of me. They held garlic in front of their faces.

BABA

Oh, the ignorance...

GURU

Later the poor principal had to tell me what I already knew. It's over.

BABA

What do you mean "It's over"?

GURU

(trying not to cry)

They don't want me there. None of the schools want me! I'm sorry, Father, but it's over – it's truly over.

(Guru turns his head, trying to hide his tears. Baba puts his hand on his crying son and forces a chuckle)

BABA

(with a frequent chuckle)

Look, Guru. We've gone through many things together – many things much, much harder than this. This is nothing. This is like popcorn. Remember that time when Auntie brought us that huge bag of popcorn? This is like popcorn. And we do love popcorn, don't we?

(Guru does not answer; his head is still buried in his hands; Baba gently persists)

Don't we?

GURU

Yes.

BABA

So you go inside, you get a pencil and paper, and you design yourself a school – not just any school – but the perfect school. Think it out carefully. Draw lots of pictures so I can get the idea. Make it just the way you want it – functional and efficient. Meanwhile, I'll be out here digging the foundation.

GURU

(raises head, laughing and crying at same time)
It doesn't work that way, Father! It's not that simple!

BABA

(assuredly)
Oh yes, it is that simple – it really is that simple. You've already done the hard part, Guru. You've already done the years of reading, the years of studying, the years of preparing. Nobody can take that away from you. All that's left now is the simple part – the building part – the popcorn part. And even I can do that!

GURU

(says nothing; wheels himself through the doorway into the house)

BABA

(shouting after him, with a proclamatory voice)
You are a teacher, Guru! You're my teacher! And my teacher will have a school!

(Baba returns to the garden area, lifts his pickaxe and "shout-sings" these six words as if vowing to the world)

"THIS MUDDY WASTE WILL BE REPLACED..."

(Baba then continues the song, but now as he sings most powerfully, he hurls the pickaxe with all his strength against the ground in rhythm to his singing. He has begun digging the foundation of Garden School.)

FALLOW NO MO.....RE,
LET THE MUD RO.....AR,
OUT OF THIS MUD, OUT OF THIS CRUD
OUT OF THIS BODY AND OUT OF THIS BLOOD
OUT OF THIS SCUM, BEFORE I'M DONE

(stops swinging pickaxe, proclaims with desperate conviction)

BEAUTY WILL COME.

END OF SEGMENT 1