

Death Of A Salesman

Willy

Oh, Yeah. my father lived many years in Alaska. He was an adventurous man. We've got quite a little streak of self-reliance in our family. I thought I'd go out with my older-brother and try to locate him, and maybe settle in the North with the old man. And I was almost decided to go, when I met a salesman in the Parker House. His name was Dave Singleman. And he was eighty-four years old, and he'd drummed merchandise in thirty-one states. And old Dave, he'd go up to his room, y'understand, put on his green velvet slippers--I'll never forget--and pick up his phone and call the buyers, and without ever leaving his room, at the age of eighty-four, he made his living. And when I saw that, I realized that selling was the greatest career a man could want. 'Cause what could be more satisfying than to be able to go, at the age of eighty-four, into twenty or thirty different cities, and pick up a phone, and be remembered and loved and helped by so many different people? Do you know? When he died--and by the way he died the death of a salesman, in his green velvet slippers in the smoker of the New York, New Haven and Hartford, going into Boston--when he died, hundreds of salesmen and buyers were at his funeral. Things were sad on a lotta trains for months after that. In those days there was personality in it, Howard. There was respect, and comradeship, and

gratitude in it. Today, it's all cut and dried, and there's no chance for bringing friendship to bear--or personality. You see what I mean? They don't know me any more.