An argument between the two on the way one should understand suffering(pp.94-95)

"And what about you?" I asked-I couldn't help it. "What about you? Do you want to?"

He stood up and walked to the window and I remained silent for a long time. Then he sighed. "Me," he said. Then: "While I was downstairs before, on my way here, listening to that woman sing, it struck me all of a sudden how much suffering she must have had to go through-to sing like that. It's repulsive to think you have to suffer that much."

I said: "But there's no way not to suffer-is there. Sonny?"

"I believe not," he said and smiled, "but that's never stopped anyone from trying." He looked at me. "Has it?" I realized, with this mocking look, that there stood between us, forever, beyond the power of time or forgiveness, the fact that I had held silence-so long!-when he had needed human speech to help him. He turned back to the window. "No, there's no way not to suffer. But you try all kinds of ways to keep from drowning in it, to keep on top of it, and to make it seem-well, like you. Like you did something, all right, and now you're suffering for it. You know?" I said nothing. "Well you know," he said, impatiently, "why do people suffer? Maybe it's better to do something to give it a reason, any reason."

"But we just agreed," I said, "that there's no way not to suffer. Isn't it better, then, just to-take it?"

"But nobody just takes it," Sonny cried, "that's what I'm telling you! Everybody tries not to. You're just hung up on the way some people try-it's not your way!"

The hair on my face began to itch, my face felt wet. "That's not true," I said, "that's not true. I don't give a damn what other people do, I don't even care how they suffer. I just care how you suffer." And he looked at me. "Please believe me," I said, "I don't want to see you-die trying not to suffer."

"I won't," he said flatly, "die trying not to suffer. At least, not any faster than anybody else."

"But there's no need," I said, trying to laugh, "is there? in killing yourself."

-Talking about what to do with inescapable suffering in human life.

-A kind of dramatic irony: the narrator is talking about Sonny’s “suffering” and his possible dependence on heroin while Sonny is talking about the narrator’s suffering from Grace’s death advising him to articulate and face the suffering itself with his own positive attempts not to be overwhelmed by it.