

To Which He Replied

by

Joseph Arnone

Copyright © 2022

www.MonologueBlogger.com

All rights reserved. No part of this ePlay may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or any other storage and retrieval system, without the written permission of the author or publisher.

Cast of Characters

<u>MERV</u> :	40's
<u>AUDRA</u> :	20's
<u>RYAN</u> :	60's

Place
Merv's backyard

Time
Day

Setting: The play takes place outside in the backyard of Merv's New Jersey home. It's a large grassy backyard with an outdoor fireplace, glass table with chairs and a tent overhead. The landscaping is top-notch with elaborate flowers and carved bushes.

At Rise: The play opens with Merv cleaning a barbecue when Audra enters the yard.

MERV: What Ryan say, that prick?

AUDRA: Said he doesn't know.

MERV: Still?

AUDRA: Still.

MERV: Been two months.

AUDRA: Let it go.

MERV: You let it go!

AUDRA: All I've been hearing! When you gonna give it a rest already?

MERV: When I get an answer.

AUDRA: He doesn't want to sell it to you, Merv.

MERV: He said something?

AUDRA: No -

MERV: You keepin' it from me?

AUDRA: Merv, relax, he didn't say nothin'.

MERV: So, why you sayin' he don't wanna sell?

AUDRA: Because he woulda sold it to you by now, right?

MERV: I gave him a good offer.

AUDRA: Don't matter. If he's not sellin', he ain't sellin', right?

MERV: Prick.

AUDRA: Go buy a brand new one ya cheap bastard.

MERV: I'm not spending an extra fifteen grand for somethin' I can get for half off.

AUDRA: Not if he ain't sellin'.

MERV: He said to me, clear as day, he said in his own words, he said, "I have this go-kart and I never use it, don't even know why I bought it. I'd like to get rid of it, actually. If you know any takers, let me know." And I told him that I'll be the taker. That I would buy it. So, we agreed for me to go and take a look and buy it for half the price. Why would he change his mind?

AUDRA: Some people change their minds. What do you want me to say?

MERV: Makes no sense...he made me feel like I could have driven it out of his driveway that day. I should have; he's been playin' games ever since. (*Beat.*) You know what? I'm gonna buy the most expensive go-kart I can get and do doughnuts all over his property. See if he likes that.

AUDRA: Don't start ego wars.

MERV: He started it!

AUDRA: You're gonna buy somethin' ya can't afford.

MERV: Who says I can't afford it?

AUDRA: So, you're just a cheapo then?

MERV: I could buy it AND I am cheap. I'm not ashamed to admit it. If I can get a deal, why not get the deal?

AUDRA: Cause half the summer is gone already and all you've been talkin' 'bout is Ryan's go-kart. If you woulda bought your own you coulda enjoyed it with your kids all summer long.

MERV: Well, I've still more money in my pocket.

AUDRA: Whatever, I don't care, I tried talkin' to him for you cause I'm a good niece but don't bother me about this anymore.

MERV: Did he or did he not say he wishes to sell me the go-kart? You aren't being clear.

AUDRA: I asked him pointblank, "Do you want to sell your go-kart to Merv?"

MERV: And?

AUDRA: He said, "Which one?"

MERV: Alright.

AUDRA: And I said, "Whichever one you both already spoke about?" To which he replied, "I don't remember."

MERV: That's what he said?

AUDRA: That's what he said.

MERV: That he doesn't remember?

AUDRA: Yep.

MERV: The lyin' mut. You sure?

AUDRA: Yeah!

MERV: How can he forget?

AUDRA: I don't know, maybe somethin's wrong with him.

MERV: Nothin's wrong with him.

AUDRA: Maybe he honestly doesn't remember the conversation. You know, what means so much to you doesn't necessarily mean it means much to somebody else. We hold on to things that we think about but somebody else could completely forget, so--

MERV: I'm goin' there later today. I'll catch him at dinner. I see him eatin' in his kitchen when I walk along the beach in the afternoon...I'll get him then.

AUDRA: You're gonna bother the guy at dinner?

MERV: He doesn't ever return my calls and never answers his front door, which is why I sent you...and he magically opened it!

Enter Ryan.

RYAN: Hey!

MERV: Oh! Hey! Haha. Where the hell'd you come from?

RYAN: The gate was open.

MERV: Yeah?

RYAN: I hope you don't mind.

MERV: No, we were just talkin' about you, not YOU but your go-kart.

RYAN: Yes, that's what I've come to discuss with you, Merv.

MERV: Okay.

RYAN: I can't sell it to you.

MERV: Why not?

RYAN: Because I don't want you to have the most expensive go-kart in this town. I don't want you to be better than me.

MERV: Really?

RYAN: No! (*Ryan bursts out laughing.*)

RYAN (*cont'd*): You really think I give a damn about things like that?

MERV: Oh.

RYAN: I overheard you two talking. It's amazing where the mind goes...ha, ha. But, all kidding aside..I can't imagine ever selling the go-kart because it recently caught my grandson's eye and I sort of promised him he could have it when he comes over.

MERV: But you said you'd sell it to me.

RYAN: To be honest, I was sort of yessing you that day as I wanted to end the conversation, in order to watch the game. No offense.

MERV: Like swatting a fly.

RYAN: You could say that. A bit of truth shouldn't hurt.

MERV: Sometimes it's good to lie.

RYAN: What's that?

MERV: To lie..in order to not hurt someone's feelings.

RYAN: Did I really hurt your feelings?

MERV: Am I not important?

RYAN: Important??

MERV: As a neighbor?

RYAN: I mean, we're friendly neighbors, aren't we?

MERV: Friendly doesn't equal important?

RYAN: I've never considered the notion -

MERV: I'm a man of my word. I don't just go around bullshitting people, tellin' them things to get rid of them. I have the money. I planned on buying it from you.

RYAN: It's just a go-kart, Merv.

MERV: That you said I could buy from you at HALF, HALF the price. I've been waiting ever since.

RYAN: If this is about the money, surely -

MERV: No, no, no, I have the money, it's not about the money so much as it is about the principle.

RYAN: It's only a go-kart for goodness sake.

MERV: Doesn't matter what it is.

RYAN: Are you puttin me on?

MERV: No, I'm not.

RYAN: I didn't intend on upsetting you.

MERV: Are you sure about that?

RYAN: ...I'll tell you what -

MERV (like a question): Yeah.

RYAN: Obviously, I could see this is bothering you a great deal. Why don't I give you the go-kart for whatever price we originally agreed on?

MERV (like a question): Yeah.

RYAN: I'll buy my grandson a brand new one, is all.

MERV: Wait, so, wait a second, it's like you're givin' me sloppy seconds, after the fact.

RYAN: Well, obviously it's used, Merv.

MERV: But here you are making me feel like I'm not good enough for a brand new one or somethin'.

AUDRA: Merv, you're takin' everything out of context.

RYAN: Is he medicated? Sounds like he needs medication.

MERV: No, I don't need medication!

RYAN: Are you sure?

MERV: Yes, I'm sure! You insult me one more time and I'll kick you right the hell off my property.

RYAN: There's no need to speak to me in such a manner. I'm going to leave. You can forget the deal.

MERV: Go ahead and walk off you prick! Selfish people like you are what ruins our world!

Ryan exits.

AUDRA: Whoa. That was intense.

MERV: I really want to kick that guy's ass.

AUDRA: No way, you are way out of line.

MERV: No, I'm not, he was spitting right in my face.

AUDRA: I think you're overreacting.

MERV: He planned this, I'm tellin' you. He wanted this to happen, to make me blow up like this, so he can spread the rumor in this neighborhood. You know why? Cause I'm not like *him*. I don't come from the pedigree he was born from and he knows it. But you know what bothers him? I have a house here on the water, right next to his. I'm tellin' you, that shiny red go-kart is a symbol of his pride, it represents who the king of the block is and he meant what he said about that, he wasn't jokin', I could see it in his eyes, he was dead serious just tryna to laugh it off like, but he meant it, he meant it. (*Beat.*) Blowin' me off, like he's above me, like the game was so much more important than me. Invite me over then, right? I'm a fan of the same team. He knows that. But I'm not good enough to be in his home, am I? All 'cause of where I come from? Where I come from, he knows nothin' 'bout! My education is from, from the...ah, I better stop, I better...I'm annoyin' myself, damn it he made me angry...it's not just about a go-kart, alright? It's about him sayin' that I'm not equal to *him*. And wantin' to give me the go-kart after I pleaded enough for it, waited enough for it, begged him for it...so he could make me feel small. That's right, you're lookin' at me like I'm crazy, but what you don't see, what you don't see is the truth of how vile a man can be.

AUDRA: Just buy your own damn go-kart...

MERV: I will. I'll go tomorrow, I'll have that damned go-kart, nice and sparklin' on show, out front.

AUDRA: Let it go Merv, it's not worth it..

MERV: Yeah.

AUDRA: ...You alright?

MERV: ..What? No, I'm fine. He just left me feelin'...what can you do, right?

AUDRA: Let it be...

MERV: Things won't ever change 'round here.

AUDRA: Maybe some things ain't even worth changin'.

MERV: ...I should apologize.

AUDRA: What? Why? Why say sorry?

MERV: Because I don't like the way I feel now.

AUDRA: Forget it.

MERV: I can't.

Merv motions to leave.

AUDRA: Last thing you wanna do is go fightin' with the guy, he'll call the cops!

MERV: No, I'm not gonna cause any more confrontation, I just want to tell him I'm sorry, even if I know what he was up to. I don't want to allow anyone to make me feel low about who I know I am inside is all...and I shouldn't behave that way in front of my niece, either. I'm sorry to you, too...

Merv leaves.

END OF PLAY