

I'll Be Right Back

A Short Memorial Play

by

Jay Dover

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Jay Dover
gerald@dover41.com
310.918.9822

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CAST: NYPD SARGEANT ED THOMPSON
NYPD LIEUTENANT WILLIAM RAMIREZ (BILL)
TONY, dog handler
ARTURO, dog handler

TIME: One week after 9.11.2001

PLACE: NYPD Manhattan Police K-9 Unit

A fence with a door. Chorus of dogs barking. ED enters with keys and proceeds to the door, begins to unlock, looks back to where he just come from.

ED

Lieutenant? You sure you wanna do this?

LIEUTENANT WILLIAM RAMIREZ (BILL) appears near the entrance. Pauses.

ED

It's okay we do it another time.

BILL takes a few steps in. Listens to the dog barking for a few moments.

ED

Lieutenant?

BILL approaches the door.

ED

We can always come back later.

BILL

Not all the time.

A moment.

ED

Well...sure. Whatever you wanna do is okay by me.

BILL

I can do it.

ED

You sure?

BILL

Yeah. Just gimme a couple minutes.

ED

You got it.

ED begins to leave.

SARGEANT

You want the keys?

BILL

No. I'm good. Five minutes.

ED

Okay.

ED exits.

For several moments, BILL listens to the sounds of the barking dogs, as if he is trying to listen to wait they are saying. At one point, he grips the fence with his hands, draws his ear into the fence as if to listen closer. The dog barking reduces dramatically until only the nearly audible sound of dog breathing with it's tongue out is heard. Suddenly, the dog barks are again heard loudly, BILL is startled. From the other end of the kennel (back of the theatre), TONY, a police dog handler, enters with a fifty pound sack of dog food on his shoulder.

TONY

Alright guys, I hear ya, I hear ya.

(seeing BILL)

Oh, hey, Lieutenant Ramirez. Whaddya know?

BILL

Hi, Tony.

TONY

Looking for a new partner?

BILL

Yeah, something like that.

TONY

Good. Got a lot of screamers down here.

BILL

Sounds like they're hungry.

TONY

They're always hungry.

BILL

Yeah, yeah.

TONY

Can't eat enough, this bunch. Smart as all hell, though. Right boys!

Loud barking.

TONY

Regular Broadway Show down here, I'll tell ya. They should dump that "Cats" and put up "Dogs" instead, eh Lieutenant? Got the cast right here.

Loud barking.

TONY

Alright boys, food's coming.

TONY drops the dog food bag down near the gate of the fence.

TONY

Hey, I gotta couple more bags to bring in but I can get 'em later if you need to, you know, work down here.

BILL

No, no. Go ahead. I'm good.

TONY

Nah, nah. I got plenty of time. You go on. Tough to lose your partner like that. A shame.

BILL

Yeah.

TONY

Line of duty, but still. A shame. Well, lot of great partners down here. If you don't mind a loud mouth!

A brief moment of levity.

TONY

Want my advice?

Sure. BILL

Max. TONY

Yeah? BILL

Yeah, second to last on the left. With the dark patch on his head? TONY

Max, huh? BILL

Yeah, sharp as a tack. Got a nose that can smell a rose bush all the way in California. Trained, loyal, knows who's boss. Heckuva runner and strong. When he jumps up on you, I swear, it's like getting hit by Strahan or something. Wrestle you right to the ground. TONY

Did you say rose bush? BILL

Yeah, roses. He loves 'em. Pick 'em out like there's no tomorrow. Damndest thing I seen. TONY

Duke was sensitive to flowers, too. BILL

Yeah? TONY

At JFK, he'd be jumping on everybody with flowers, you know? All these folks just off the airplane with flowers. One time, he got loose and ran into the flower shop they got there and... it was a helluva site, I tell ya. BILL

I'll bet. TONY

Never got over he could smell flowers like that. Like he wanted to grow 'em himself almost. Funny how some dogs go after one thing or another over something else. BILL

Yeah, ain't that something? TONY

Wonder what happens next?

For a copy of the full script, email me at:

gerald@dover41.com

Thanks!