

Here is a section from the play 'My Kentucky Hellhound.' Please contact me if you are interested in reading more, collaborating, or producing the script.

-Karina

SCENE

MARIGOLD in the yard. She looks like she could be pretty, but right now she is tired, disheveled, and nervous.

MARIGOLD

You out there? You old lost mutt. You deranged house dog.

She whistles.

Where did you come from? What happened to make you the way you are? Did you eat too many coffee filters, drink too much dirty river water, sleep in too many parking lots? Did you get separated from your pack, wander through Kentucky, roll on a thousand dead things? Have you forgotten what love feels like?

The sound of barking. MARIGOLD cowers.

Maybe that's all you need. A lap to sit on and a pat on the head. A bone every morning no matter if you're good or bad. An end of a bed to curl up on when the day is done.

The sound of a growl. MARIGOLD backs away.

Or maybe you were formed by the devil itself. Refinery tar and plastic turned to hair and bone. Are you real, Hellhound, or a nightmare only I can see? Whatever you are, real or imaginary, please leave me alone. I'm begging you. Quit haunting me. My own Kentucky Hellhound.

MARIGOLD runs inside. The silhouette of a large dog walks across the stage. Distant sounds of barking.

SCENE

Enter into a rusty old room. The room contains a beat-up couch, a mini-fridge, a small oven, and a set of drawers with a sink. Behind the couch sits a large pile of trash, mostly plastic spoons and yogurt containers. It should look like it smells or actually smell.

MARIGOLD pulls a candle out of a drawer and lights it. She stares at it for a moment, then thoughtfully takes the candle and presses the flame against her leg.

MARIGOLD

Ouch!

She sets the candle back down, breathing heavily. She holds her head in her hands for a moment then takes a deep breath, blows the candle out, and puts it back in the drawer. She yells toward upstage.

Dad! I'm having breakfast! You want any?

She removes a single-serving yogurt from the mini-fridge. She struggles to open it on her own and uses a large kitchen knife to break the foil. She opens a drawer which contains individually wrapped plastic spoons and unwraps one. She sits on the couch and begins calmly eating the yogurt out of the container with slow licks.

There is a rumble like the sound of pots and pans moving from offstage. She stops and looks up, then continues to eat. The rumble begins again, this time lasting for a full ten seconds. It sounds like a lifetime supply of pans are being dumped out of a high window.

MARIGOLD

Dad, I know you're in there!

A moment of silence. MARIGOLD continues eating her yogurt but becomes increasingly frustrated and fidgety. After a few fast bites, she throws her items behind the couch to join the others, runs up to the door on the opposite side of the room and opens it. A heavy man in a jumpsuit falls out of the door and onto the floor along with a pile of scrap metal. This is WINNIE. All of WINNIE's movements are a struggle.

Ohhhhhhhhhh! WHY? Why? Why?

MARIGOLD leans on the counter and takes a few deep breathes, covering her face with her hand. WINNIE crawls around on his stomach, grabs a comfortable looking piece of metal, makes a pillow out of it, and curls up into a ball. MARIGOLD drags WINNIE over to the couch but is unable to

lift him onto it, so he continues laying on the floor, hugging the scrap metal. She gets giant gloves out of the drawer, puts them on, and starts picking up the metal still on the floor, setting each piece carefully in a pile. She touches each one like it is covered in disease.

WINNIE

Marigold!

MARIGOLD

What?

WINNIE

I can clean it up.

MARIGOLD

No, you can't.

WINNIE

Okay.

WINNIE starts laughing.

You look like a fool.

MARIGOLD

And how do you think you look, Dad?

WINNIE

A man's got a right to work, don't he? You can't take away my work.

MARIGOLD

Stop talking. Just rest.

WINNIE

But a man's got a right to talk. At the very least I have the right to talk.

MARIGOLD

There's no life there in the garage. Just junk. Just death.

WINNIE

I'll work till' I fall over.

MARIGOLD

You do fall over. You fall over every time!

WINNIE

I'll work till' I fall over dead.

MARIGOLD

You're too sick to work. We've been through this.

WINNIE

But I can still talk.

MARIGOLD

Yes, you can talk fine.

WINNIE

At the very least a man can talk!

MARIGOLD

I guess that is something to be grateful for.

WINNIE

I'm keeping a log of how much every piece is worth in my brain. We're up to seventy thousand dollars. Just let me sit in there and look around, please.

MARIGOLD

No.

WINNIE

I just want to look.

MARIGOLD

You say that, but when you go in the garage you inevitably stand up and start lifting things and moving things and falling over.

WINNIE

The world doesn't care about the sick.

MARIGOLD

Sure they do.

WINNIE

The world is made for the living and the dead, not the people in between.

MARIGOLD throws down a piece of scrap metal she is holding with a loud thud.

MARIGOLD

Well, at least you're a man!

WINNIE

That's true. I am a man.

WINNIE smiles at this thought. MARIGOLD finishes piling up the metal, takes off her gloves, and sits on the couch with WINNIE at her feet. There is a knock at the door. Enter BEEP BEEP. She is hunched, but still walks with confidence.

MARIGOLD

Beep Beep. Thank God you're here.

BEEP BEEP

What's he doing on the floor? Why you letting him lay flat on the floor?

MARIGOLD

I couldn't lift him.

BEEP BEEP

This is bullshit.

WINNIE

I like it down here.

MARIGOLD

He likes it!

BEEP BEEP

A put-together piece-of-work such as yourself letting her father lay flat on the floor. Why, I never!

WINNIE

I don't wanna move.

MARIGOLD

He doesn't want to move.

BEEP BEEP

Did you feed him today? Take him to the bathroom? Keep him out of trouble.

MARIGOLD

Yes. Yes. Mostly yes.

BEEP BEEP

Good. Now did you light a candle this morning? Say a little prayer? Tell me you did?

MARIGOLD

...I forgot.

BEEP BEEP

Marigold! Please remember to do the things I tell you to. I can't be here day and night.

MARIGOLD

Okay. I'll try.

BEEP BEEP

It's time to do his tests. Marigold, you keep the records. Winnie, you keep laying there on the ground like a slug. You got a few minutes down there but I'm moving you before I go.

WINNIE

That's what you think.

BEEP BEEP

Like a slug, Winnie. Like a slug. Now Marigold, take this.

BEEP BEEP hands MARIGOLD a clipboard with paper and a pen from out of her bag. BEEP BEEP moves over to WINNIE and grabs his left arm.

BEEP BEEP

Left arm, shake.

BEEP BEEP shakes his left arm, then drops it to the ground.

Seems alright. What'd you think?

MARIGOLD

I don't know.

BEEP BEEP

Give it a check mark.

MARIGOLD writes on the clipboard. BEEP BEEP moves to WINNIE's right arm.

Uh-oh.

MARIGOLD

What?

BEEP BEEP

Not moving.

MARIGOLD

Oh no. What do we do?

BEEP BEEP

Let's give that a minus sign.

MARIGOLD

Okay.

MARIGOLD writes on the clipboard. BEEP BEEP moves to WINNIE's right leg.

WINNIE

Get off me, woman! Get off my leg area.

BEEP BEEP

Don't get fussy like that, Winnie! You're a sick man. I only come here outta the goodness of my shiny pure soul to help you. That and Marigold gives me all the free scrap metal I want. But still I come here and bless you with my training. Now give me that big leg of yours.

BEEP BEEP grabs WINNIE's right leg and shakes it. It moves freely.

BEEP BEEP

That one's moving okay.

MARIGOLD

So, check mark?

BEEP BEEP

Yeah. Give him a check plus since he was being a good boy.

MARIGOLD

Okay.

MARIGOLD writes on the clipboard. BEEP BEEP moves to WINNIE's left leg and shakes it.

BEEP BEEP

That ones moving too. All good here.

MARIGOLD

Are you sure this is necessary?

BEEP BEEP

What?

MARIGOLD

All the shaking. Are you sure it works?

WINNIE

It's horrible!

BEEP BEEP

You shut it.

WINNIE

Kill her, Marigold! Kill her! Get her in the gut.

BEEP BEEP

Shut your trap! Trust me Marigold. He's got nerve problems.

BEEP BEEP shakes his leg as she says this.

The shaking helps wake the nerves up.

BEEP BEEP takes the clipboard from MARIGOLD.

MARIGOLD

I guess that makes sense.

BEEP BEEP

I'll be back first thing tomorrow morning. Keep him hydrated. A little water. A little Powerade. A little whiskey at night. No more than two shots! Rub a little Vicks on his chest if he gets coughing. All the way up to the neck. Light a candle in the morning. Every morning. Say a prayer to Saint James. If he gets a headache put a cold cloth on the head, back and front. Make him eat orange colored foods: orange pepper, orange juice, Tang, carrots, melon. If he gets a stomachache heat up a cloth in the microwave and have him hold it right on the button till' it goes away. And you can't forget to splash his face with water three times a day. Cold water. Very important. Gets that blood flowing. Makes a man feel alive. If he gets too fussy you make him eat a chunk of raw garlic. He'll be acting good from then on. But don't let him get to smelly. Put him in the bath tub. Put a red stone in the bathwater first. Cleans the water up. Gets those bad demons out. You have a red stone, don't you?

MARIGOLD

I don't know.

BEEP BEEP

Oh Lordy.

BEEP BEEP hands MARIGOLD a rock from out of her bag.

Add a little Mr. Bubble to the bathwater. Saves all the scrubbing. It'll clean those hard to reach parts. Poor Winnie. When he was younger he smelled so good. He used to smell like cotton candy everyday. Now he just smells like an old house.

WINNIE

What's wrong with an old house?

BEEP BEEP

Remember to use that stone, Marigold! And be sure to put a knife under the bed, then God cuts the pain in half. But I guess you must know that by now.

MARIGOLD turns on the oven and sits down on the floor next to it.

BEEP BEEP

Now what are you doin' sitting on the floor?

MARIGOLD

I'm waiting for the oven to pre-heat.

BEEP BEEP

Why? You baking something?

MARIGOLD

No. I'm going to sit here and wait for it to pre-heat. Then I'm going to kill myself.

BEEP BEEP

My goodness! I want you to take a good long look at yourself in the mirror and examine your choices in life.

WINNIE

Marigold, stop trying to kill yourself and kill Beep Beep!

BEEP BEEP

Look at this family. Both of you sitting on the floor. One of em' dying, the other wanting to be dead. I have never seen such a sad display. Now get up!

BEEP BEEP pulls MARIGOLD to standing.

MARIGOLD

I wasn't really going to kill myself. I was just going to stick my head in the oven and see what happened.

BEEP BEEP leans down to the ground and picks up some dust off the floor.

BEEP BEEP

You have too much to do today to die. Look at this!

MARIGOLD

What?

BEEP BEEP

This place is a mess.

MARIGOLD

It's fine.

WINNIE

She sweeps up that yogurt pile every couple days.

BEEP BEEP

Look at your hair. Marigold! It's all over the house.

WINNIE

Our family sheds.

BEEP BEEP

You're too young for your hair to be falling out. You should have sexy vivacious hair! When I was your age I could have been in a shampoo commercial my hair looked so good.

MARIGOLD

It doesn't matter. I give up. I've forgotten how to breathe.

WINNIE

She says she's forgotten how to breathe! How can a person forget how to breathe?

BEEP BEEP

Alright honey, I've got a long day. I'll see you in the morning. I doubt you have any problem that a good flossing and a healthy diet can't cure.

MARIGOLD

All I eat is yogurt.

BEEP BEEP exits.

WINNIE

Why didn't you kill her?

MARIGOLD

Oh, stop it Dad. We can't kill everyone that helps you.

WINNIE

When I was a kid my father said to me, "Winnie, be fearless. The world is yours. You can do anything you want."

MARIGOLD

And what did you say to me? When I was a kid?

WINNIE

I don't know.

MARIGOLD

You said, "People will try to hurt you."

WINNIE laughs.