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Product Code: A0885-SP

QUESTIONS

A 10-Minute Comedy by

Philip Vassallo

Dedication

for Dimitrios Panagotis Kernizan, who always shines his light on me

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QUESTIONS

by Philip Vassallo

CHARACTERS

2 / Any sex, race or age

ANGEL
ALI

SETTING

The Present: Angel's and Ali's home.

SYNOPSIS

Two people in a relationship engage in a rapid-fire, circuitous conversation of unanswered questions leading to a questionable conclusion.

PROPERTIES

ANGEL: *Broom*
ALI: *Book*

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The actors should speak at a generally rapid-fire pace, but the slower rates and complete pauses are at their discretion.

QUESTIONS

by Philip Vassallo

AT RISE: *ANGEL's and ALI's home. ANGEL is sweeping the floor, and ALI is seated reading a book.*

ANGEL
What would you like to do today?

ALI
What would you like?

ANGEL
Shouldn't you decide?

ALI
Why?

ANGEL
Isn't it your turn?

ALI
Don't you think it's silly to take turns?

ANGEL
Why would you say a thing like that?

ALI
Aren't we two grownup people?

ANGEL
Need you ask?

ALI
If I asked, wouldn't you think I'm asking for your confirmation?

ANGEL
Don't you think I know we're grownups?

ALI
Then don't you think mature adults don't need to take turns?

ANGEL
Who said anything about *mature* adults?

ALI

Aren't grownups and mature adults the same thing?

ANGEL

Are you sure of that?

ALI

Aren't you?

ANGEL

Wouldn't you think that people could be physically grown up and be immature adults?

ALI

Aren't you using an alternative meaning of grownups?

ANGEL

Or that people who aren't physically grownup can be mature adults?

ALI

What's your point?

ANGEL

Aren't we just trying to understand each other here?

ALI

Whose turn is it?

ANGEL

Isn't it yours?

ALI

If I conceded my turn to you, what would you want to do today?

ANGEL

Why would you want to make such a concession?

ALI

Can you answer that hypothetical question?

ANGEL

And why would you call it a concession?

ALI

Why not?

ANGEL

Doesn't *concession* have such a pejorative sense to it?

ALI

Don't you mean *meaning* instead of *sense*?

ANGEL

Don't you sense the subtle difference between *meaning* and *sense*?

ALI

Do you think I wouldn't?

ANGEL

Then?

ALI

If I conceded – gave – my turn to you, would you decide to stay home and do nothing?

ANGEL

Don't you see I asked you because I want to go out?

ALI

Didn't you ask what I would want to do today?

ANGEL

Are you splitting hairs between what you would want to do and where you would want to go?

ALI

You call that splitting hairs?

ANGEL

Do you think I want to clean the house all day when you are at your leisure?

ALI

Didn't I tell you my boss wants me to read this book?

ANGEL

What difference does that make?

ALI

Wouldn't you call what I'm doing work as much as what you would call what you're doing?

ANGEL

So you would say that labor of the body and of the mind are the same kind of labor?

ALI

Wouldn't you if people get paid for both types of labor?

ANGEL

When was the last time I got paid for cleaning our house?

ALI

Are we going to make this a political argument?

ANGEL

Isn't everything political?

ALI

Haven't you noticed you've said everything is political for years and I've never agreed with you?

ANGEL

Is that what your nonresponse has indicated?

ALI

What do you think?

ANGEL

Can you name me anything that is not political?

ALI

Daffodils?

ANGEL

Now aren't you being ridiculous?

ALI

Do you think?

ANGEL

May I define what I mean by *everything*?

ALI

Am I stopping you?

ANGEL

Limiting *everything* to human interactions and transactions, do you agree everything is political?

ALI

Can I find that meaning in the dictionary?

ANGEL

Can't you stretch your mind?

ALI

What do you think I've been doing for the past five minutes?

So would you agree on that point? ANGEL

What point? ALI

Do you want me to ask the question again? ANGEL

Don't you want my opinion? ALI

Human interactions and transactions being political? ANGEL

Aren't those two words redundant? ALI

What two words? ANGEL

Aren't interaction and transaction the same thing? ALI

How could you say that? ANGEL

Well, aren't they? ALI

Don't you know that *interaction* is more like a dialogue to reach understanding and *transaction* is more like an exchange to get things done? ANGEL

Which one are we having? ALI

Does it matter? ANGEL

Doesn't it if we want to go out? ALI

What difference does it make in those two words not meaning the same thing? ANGEL

Who cares? ALI

Don't you? ANGEL

Why do you say that? ALI

Didn't you ask the question? ANGEL

How on earth could all human interactions and transactions be everything? ALI

Did I say that? ANGEL

Didn't you? ALI

Did I say *all* interactions and transactions are everything? ANGEL

What did you say? ALI

Didn't I say that all human interactions and transactions are political? ANGEL

And that everything is political? ALI

What? ANGEL

Then aren't all human interactions and transactions everything? ALI

Am I imagining this conversation? ANGEL

Isn't that like a syllogism? ALI

How could it be a syllogism? ANGEL

ALI

Like if A equals B, and B equals C, then A equals C?

ANGEL

Don't you think I know what a syllogism is?

ALI

Then why did you ask?

ANGEL

Didn't you hear my question?

ALI

What question?

ANGEL

You don't see the difference between a syllogism and the words *everything*, *political*, *interactions*, and *transactions*?

ALI

Do you?

ANGEL

Aren't you the one who's confused?

ALI

Am I?

ANGEL

You don't even know that?

ALI

And what about the daffodils?

ANGEL

What about them?

ALI

Can you give me a moment to think about this?

ANGEL

Why would I when this is going absolutely nowhere?

ALI

Did you know it's my birthday today?

ANGEL

Why do you think I asked what you want to do today?

Why? ALI

Didn't I just say? ANGEL

What? ALI

What what? ANGEL

Did you say "Happy Birthday"? ALI

Don't you remember I said it when you woke up this morning? ANGEL

How could you expect me to remember when I'm just leaving my sleep world? ALI

Well, do you remember the kisses that preceded and followed it? ANGEL

Followed my sleep world? ALI

Didn't I kiss you before and after I said, "Happy Birthday?" ANGEL

If you say you did, why would I doubt you? ALI

Then why were you challenging me? ANGEL

Was I? ALI

Can we start all over again? ANGEL

Wouldn't that take too long? ALI

Are you going to read all day? ANGEL

Does that seem like such a bad thing?

ALI

Would you just answer my question?

ANGEL

How would I know?

ALI

If you don't know, who would?

ANGEL

Why are you asking?

ALI

Why do you answer everything I ask with a question?

ANGEL

Do I?

ALI

Don't you hear yourself?

ANGEL

Do you?

ALI

Who knows?

ANGEL

Then how should I know?

ALI

Will anything in this world happen today between us two human beings?

ANGEL

*They fire the next lines quickly until a beat
before the last line.*

This is Not the End of the Play
Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes