



Episode 66- A Conversation with Steve Way, Part 1: Inside Hulu's *Furious*

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Mindy Henderson: Welcome to the Quest Podcast, proudly presented by the Muscular Dystrophy Association as part of the Quest family of content. I'm your host, Mindy Henderson. Together, we are here to bring thoughtful conversation to the neuromuscular disease community and beyond about issues affecting those with neuromuscular disease and other disabilities, and those who love them. We are here for you to educate and inform, to demystify, to inspire, and to entertain. We are here shining a light on all that makes you, you. Whether you are one of us, love someone who is, or are on another journey altogether, thanks for joining. Now let's get started.

Today's guest is actor, comedian, and disability advocate, Steve Way, whose work you may know from the hit series, *Ramy*, who is currently stealing scenes as Alden in Hulu's hit thriller, *Furious*. Steve has built a career out of being very funny, very candid, and completely uninterested in anyone's assumptions about what disability should look like. Today, we are talking about all the things, and this is a conversation I have really been looking forward to. Steve, I'm so excited you're here.

Steve Way: Thank you, Mindy. It's so great to talk to you again.

Mindy Henderson: So good to talk to you. We were just talking a little bit before we got started, and the success of this show is crazy and you've been everywhere. You've been on Good Morning America and in magazines and it's garnering a lot of attention.

The role is so good. The last time you were here, we were talking about the movie Good Bad Things, which had just a massive impact on me personally, and now I am a little bit obsessed. I'm trying to not be scary, but I'm a little obsessed with this new show on Hulu called Furious. For anyone who's been living under a rock and hasn't discovered the show just yet, would you tell us about Furious and the world it drops us into and who you play?

Steve Way: Yeah, I think it's probably the first show in this post-Epstein world where it's about the Epstein class for sex trafficking, but it's all from the perspective of a survivor.

Mindy Henderson: Yeah.

Steve Way: And I think this show is really going to set the bar, because obviously we're going to get more shows like this, but Furious just comes so hard right out of the gate. I play Alden, spoiler alert. I am the person that the serial killer takes care of.

Mindy Henderson: I've been telling my caregivers about this show and the response has been so entertaining. One of them was angry that she didn't get to read for the role of caregiver and serial killer. It's actually not that big a spoiler. You find out pretty quickly that this is the relationship. So I just want to throw that out there. But the rest of them, it's created a lot of really interesting conversation about, "Does this make you scared for yourself?" or, "What if this happened?" It's a really interesting show. How did this particular role of you playing Alden come about?

Steve Way: I met Liz Meriwether, the creator, on a panel last year, and funny enough, it was about caregiving in media. And I told the panel that I'm unemployed so I really wanted to work, and she wrote this character for me.

Mindy Henderson: Amazing. Absolutely amazing. And such a good, well-thought-out character depth and there's so much to you. What do you love about playing Alden? There are things that I love about this character. So what do you really love about playing him?

Steve Way: It gives me an opportunity to show what a disabled relationship is like. We got to showcase disabled love. We never see that, especially in a way where the disabled character is in control and they're already in the middle of it. Yeah, it's beautiful, and I'm so lucky that I get to be that guy.

Mindy Henderson: Yeah, I love that. I heard that you were given a fair amount of freedom to improvise on Furious. I feel like I know you a little bit at this point, and watching I definitely see some elements of Steve Way in the character. How much is Alden and how much is Steve Way?

Steve Way: I think it's all Steve Way.

Mindy Henderson: Yeah?

Steve Way: I really channeled a part of myself that I've never shown on screen before, and that's the isolated, fearful side. But I think it's a side that we all have. I have it a lot. I channeled a lot of fear I felt about losing people that I love, and I brought myself to some dark places. But it feels so good that I could feel. It feels so good that I've been through things like that and I can channel that into this part.

Mindy Henderson: Yeah, you do it beautifully. I'm curious, was there anything that you did, that you improvised where you thought to yourself, "There's no way that they're keeping that?"

Steve Way: Oh, wow.

Mindy Henderson: Maybe not. They may have kept it all.

Steve Way: Oh, no, yes, yes. When I'm trying to be fingerprinted and then I left the room [inaudible 00:07:44] end and I followed him out, that wasn't in a script.

Mindy Henderson: Really?

Steve Way: Yeah, I can't believe they kept that.

Mindy Henderson: Interesting.

Steve Way: Yeah. Really.

Mindy Henderson: Interesting. I heard something about ... And I've read so much. There have been lots of interviews with you about the part and some television spots where I watched the interviews. And I can't remember where I saw it, but did I hear you say somewhere that you asked them to give you one take every time that you could just sort of put your stamp on?

Steve Way: Yeah. I said, "Give me one take. I'm going to throw the script out the window-

Mindy Henderson: Yeah?

Steve Way: ... and just trust me. Now let's have fun. Let's try it." And I've been doing this long enough where I felt good about it. Sometimes it didn't work, but that's okay. We try.

Mindy Henderson: Yeah. So you're getting a lot of attention right now for this role. As a disabled actor who has also spent years advocating for greater representation and access, how are you thinking about the opportunity or viewing the opportunity and the platform that comes with it?

Steve Way: It's wild, but it can't end with me.

Mindy Henderson: Yeah.

Steve Way: We have to keep it going, and it has to set the bar for what disabled roles and actors deserve. It's not just me. You would add to the list 50 other people who deserve work too, because they're just as good, if not better. So let's set eyes on that. Don't get me wrong, I love the spotlight, but I want to share it. I have to. I have to.

Mindy Henderson: That's amazing, and what I see happening is doors being opened for other people, exactly as you're saying. I'm surprised every time I talk to you and hear more and more about you and get to know Steve Way a little bit more. You surprise me every time, and I think that you're such a good person to be in this spot and really showcasing what people with disabilities can do. Disability or no, just the talent that exists. And so I think it makes all the sense in the world that it's you here and now doing this. Did you know that this show was going to be as big as it is when you were filming it?

Steve Way: We knew it was special. We knew the acting was off the charts, but we're not the viewers, we're the artists. We don't know what the perception's going to be like. We filmed this late last year.

Mindy Henderson: Okay.

Steve Way: The show came out seven months after we wrapped filming.

Mindy Henderson: Oh, wow.

Steve Way: Yeah, the world is constantly changing. There's so many factors that are outside of our control, so it was out of our hands. But we knew we had something special.

Mindy Henderson: Was it just agony waiting for it to hit Hulu and-

Steve Way: Oh my God, just every day.

Mindy Henderson: ... waiting for people to see it?

Steve Way: Every day.

Mindy Henderson: Yeah.

Steve Way: When's the trailer?

Mindy Henderson: Yes.

Steve Way: When's the trailer coming out? And then what are they going to think?

Mindy Henderson: Yeah.

Steve Way: Are they going to like how the episodes drop?

Mindy Henderson: Yeah.

Steve Way: You know?

Mindy Henderson: Yes.

Steve Way: But they love it.

Mindy Henderson: So good. It's so good. When you look at disability representation in Hollywood today, where do you think that we've made real progress and where do you see that we still have the most work to do?

Steve Way: Well, I think the fact that I was on Good Morning America and in Esquire shows that we can get the recognition that we deserve.

Mindy Henderson: Yeah.

Steve Way: And yet, one of the year's most popular movies, The Drama, has a character in a wheelchair played by a non-disabled actor.

Mindy Henderson: Yeah.

Steve Way: And it's like, I love A24. They got me my start, I wouldn't be where I am today without them.

Mindy Henderson: Yeah.

Steve Way: They are very true to me. And A24, you can't do that. You can't do that in 2026.

Mindy Henderson: Yeah.

Steve Way: I'm right here. I can give you the names of 17 wheelchair users who could have played that character.

Mindy Henderson: Yeah.

Steve Way: What are we doing?

Mindy Henderson: I know. So what do you think the answer is? Or I'm probably way oversimplifying, but what needs to happen?

Steve Way: Just keep calling it out, and I'm not afraid to call them out.

Mindy Henderson: Yeah.

Steve Way: I understand why people might be, but I've earned it. I've worked hard to get to this point where I can call people out without fear of consequences.

Mindy Henderson: Yeah. Yeah. Good answer. What would you tell any other young people listening, maybe from within the neuromuscular community or just the broader disability community who have ambitions toward acting or entertainment about the journey and what they're going to have to be prepared to do or not do? What would your advice be to them?

Steve Way: It's going to suck, but just do it.

Mindy Henderson: Yeah.

Steve Way: Life is short.

Mindy Henderson: Yeah.

Steve Way: Do what makes you happy. And don't let some executive make you feel bad about yourself. It's not worth it. It's not worth it at all. You know your worth, and just because they don't, doesn't mean you're not worth it. People ask me how I fuel my motivation. It's a lot of espresso, vodka, and self-loathing. That I don't recommend, but I've been doing this a long time, so don't start changing like I have. But I also would not trade this for anything in the world.

Mindy Henderson: Which Furious character, not the actor, but the character, would you most want to hang out with in real life, and which one would you absolutely avoid?

Steve Way: I'd want to hang out with Nora.

Mindy Henderson: Okay.

Steve Way: Because I would love to grab a drink and do karaoke.

Mindy Henderson: Yeah?

Steve Way: And I'd want to avoid Mr. Marshall, which is hilarious because Jake Lacy is so nice.

Mindy Henderson: Yeah.

Steve Way: He's such a nice guy.

Mindy Henderson: Yeah, he's not a nice character.

Steve Way: Yeah. Jake, I love you. Do a role where you play a nice guy.

Mindy Henderson: Yeah. Amazing. We need to write him a nice guy character. Who is your dream actor or comedian that ... Or director. I mean, it could be anybody. Who's your dream person that you haven't worked with yet, but you would love to share a professional life with?

Steve Way: It was David Lynch.

Mindy Henderson: Oh.

Steve Way: David Lynch has been my biggest inspiration.

Mindy Henderson: Nice.

Steve Way: May God rest his soul.

Mindy Henderson: Yeah.

Steve Way: Right now, Christopher Nolan.

Mindy Henderson: Yeah?

Steve Way: I would love to film for an IMAX camera.

Mindy Henderson: Yeah.

Steve Way: I mean, comedians. I'm so grateful I've had the opportunity to share the stage with so many wonderful people.

Mindy Henderson: Yeah.

Steve Way: Yeah. My inspiration was George Carlin.

Mindy Henderson: Ooh, good one.

Steve Way: Yeah.

Mindy Henderson: Yeah.

Steve Way: Rodney Dangerfield.

Mindy Henderson: Yes.

Steve Way: I don't know if I can answer that.

Mindy Henderson: Yeah, no, you absolutely did.

Steve Way: Oh man, that's so tough.

Mindy Henderson: First of all-

Steve Way: That's so tough.

Mindy Henderson: ... you're making them proud-

Steve Way: Thank you.

Mindy Henderson: ... George Carlin and Rodney Dangerfield. And Christopher, you heard it here first, I think you need to call Steve. We're asking people across the neuromuscular community what strength means to them as part of #MDAstrong. What does strength mean to you, Steve?

Steve Way: Wow. I've been doing a lot of interviews recently. That might be the best question I've had yet.

Mindy Henderson: Go me.

Steve Way: I think strength is not giving up when you want to.

Mindy Henderson: Steve, you are incredible. I can't thank you enough for being here, and I am super excited because you are going to come back for a second conversation where we are going to dig in a little bit to some equally important work that you do around disability inclusion and advocacy. But in the meantime, I'm going to encourage everyone to stop what you're doing right now and go watch Furious on Hulu if you haven't already. For real, right now. Go watch it. It's that good. Thank you so much for being here, Steve, and I can't wait to continue the conversation.

Thank you for listening. For more information about the guests you heard from today, go check them out at mda.org/podcast. And to learn more about the Muscular Dystrophy Association, the services we provide, how you can get involved, and to subscribe to Quest Magazine or to Quest Newsletter, please go to mda.org/quest. If you enjoyed this episode, we'd be grateful if you'd leave a review. Go ahead and hit that subscribe button so we can keep bringing you great content, and maybe share it with a friend or two. Thanks everyone. Until next time, go be the light we all need in this world.