

Eyes of My Daughter

by

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Cast of Characters

MUGSY:

50's

DOUGLAS:

50's

PAUL:

40's

Place

Bar

Time

Night

Setting: Bar.

At Rise: The bar is empty except for bartender Paulie and a couple of late night customers who happen to be Mugsy and Douglas.

Bringing over a bottle of whiskey, pouring.

PAUL: This one's on me fellas.

DOUGLAS: Thanks, Paulie.

MUGSY: Thank you there, Paulie. Cheers.

PAUL: Cheers.

Paul walks back behind the bar.

DOUGLAS: You're the strong and silent type tonight, Mugs.

MUGSY: Am I?

DOUGLAS: Makes me uneasy.

MUGSY: Not trying to make you uneasy, Doug.

DOUGLAS: I know you're not, I know.

(pause.)

Almost took Charlie's head off the other day.

MUGSY: What for?

DOUGLAS: Eh, he's telling me I got done with the route too fast. I was back by noon, noon is usually a good enough time to show up after a route. Nobody complains.

MUGSY: But Charlie did.

DOUGLAS: Course he did that bastard. Can't stomach the sight of 'em. Always got something to say to me any chance he gets.

MUGSY: Told you to steer clear of him.

DOUGLAS: Yeah, I know but it's not always so simple as that.

MUGSY: Yeah.

DOUGLAS: He's nice to everybody but me. He chose me.

MUGSY: Fuck 'em, who cares?

DOUGLAS: Just sayin', been on the job for seventeen years before he came on and he's gonna make the last few years miserable for me.

MUGSY: He's a prick.

DOUGLAS: It's a common story, get some new manager doesn't understand the guys out in the field, thinks he knows what it's like to get his hands dirty hiding behind his desk all day making calls and pushing pencils. Prick. Thinks he can bark orders at me about policy and parking, the times I punch in or clock out...he's even a bastard about giving me my check. How many times I gotta go in the office and ask for my envelope cause it's not in my box? All on account of him trapping me to give me a reprimanding...I mean, I'm old enough to be his father. I'd like to smack him one for the disrespect given. Can't stand the guy, always clean shaven with his crispy white shirt and tie, always has his hair gelled perfectly to the side, with his rub on tan cream or whatever that shit is that he uses. What is that, anyway? He's a total disaster.

MUGSY: You describe him pretty good.

DOUGLAS: He never bothers you none?

MUGSY: No, never. He invited me to go fishing.

DOUGLAS: You're joking?

MUGSY: Nah, no he asked me just last week.

DOUGLAS: What did he say?

MUGSY: He said, "Would you like to go fishing on my boat?"

DOUGLAS: And what did you say?

MUGSY: I said, "Maybe next time."

DOUGLAS: That bastard. What a real bastard. You and Sam were the only guys left.

MUGSY: Left for what?

DOUGLAS: That he didn't ask to go on his stupid boat, the prick.

MUGSY: Out of all the guys in the outfit?

DOUGLAS: YEAH, now it's just Sam and me.

MUGSY: Actually, Sam was asked months ago.

DOUGLAS: No way.

MUGSY: He was, he told me he was.

DOUGLAS: I'm the only one then.

MUGSY: Looks that way, Doug.

DOUGLAS: Hate this guy, I swear I hate 'em.

MUGSY: It's just some stupid little boat.

DOUGLAS: I don't care about the boat, it's the principle. Don't you see? He's asked every single person in the company, from the field to the office and left me high and dry to spite me cause he hates me.

MUGSY: Why would you want to go on the guys boat if you mutually hate one another?

DOUGLAS: Like I said, it's the principle.

MUGSY: What would you say if he asks you?

DOUGLAS: I'd tell him to go fuck himself.

MUGSY: There you go, so don't worry about it.

DOUGLAS: Why'd you say no?

MUGSY: To the boat?

DOUGLAS: Yeah.

MUGSY: My hands are full, can't go now.

DOUGLAS: Oh, I thought maybe you told him no as loyalty to me.

MUGSY: Why? You would really be upset if I went fishing?

DOUGLAS: Eh.

MUGSY: You would hold it against me?

DOUGLAS: I wouldn't hold it against you but I wouldn't be thrilled over it.

MUGSY: You really hate this guy, huh?

DOUGLAS: With a passion.

(beat)

How are things anyway?

MUGSY: Good, things are good.

DOUGLAS: Maybe we should plan our own fishing trip.

MUGSY: Not right now.

DOUGLAS: You know Mugs, it's been a long time since we've even done this, grabbing a few and you're not yourself and I get it but maybe it wouldn't be such a bad idea to take a break for a weekend or something.

MUGSY: At some point.

DOUGLAS: How's Melinda?

MUGSY: She's good.

DOUGLAS: Ruthie keeps asking for her.

MUGSY: I know. They should get together.

DOUGLAS: Ruthie tries but you know...

MUGSY: I know...it's rough, you know.

DOUGLAS: ...Any improvements?

MUGSY: Uh, improvements, improvements, no, not really...day to day.

DOUGLAS: Ruthie and I are looking to buy a small house, I mean a really small house but beautiful up in Saratoga Springs...get this, it's actually an abandoned church that we want to convert into a tiny getaway home and we've been granted permission by the town, so...maybe this summer, bring Melinda and your daughter for a week or two, maybe the change of environment, the air, nature, could be a good thing, no?

MUGSY: We'll see.

DOUGLAS: Think about it.

MUGSY: We'll see.

DOUGLAS: ...How's your daughter doing Mugs?

MUGSY: How do you think she's doing?

DOUGLAS: Just asking, I'm your friend.

MUGSY: I know who my friends are, don't need you to point that out. I'm not crazy. Known eachother for forty plus years, right?

DOUGLAS: Of course.

MUGSY: (sighs) Listen, I'm gonna get going.

DOUGLAS: I'm sorry, Mugs.

MUGSY: What you sorry for?

DOUGLAS: Everything.

MUGSY: Are you God?

DOUGLAS: No---

MUGSY: Then you have no reason to apologize to me.

DOUGLAS: What's God got to do with it?

MUGSY: What's God got to do with it? Maybe nothing, maybe everything. Maybe I'm paying for my own sins through the eyes of my daughter. I don't know what to think anymore.

DOUGLAS: It has nothing to do with you.

MUGSY: It has everything to do with me! I'm her father. She's alive cause a me and Melinda. We gave her life and her life isn't right cause of us.

DOUGLAS: You guys are excellent parents.

MUGSY: We could be the best parents all day long, don't mean our DNA combination was all that great. We spawned a bad chemical reaction.

DOUGLAS: It's not your fault.

MUGSY: If you say that again I'm gonna come at you. (beat) I'm the father! If it's not my fault, who's fault is it, Doug? I can blame everybody else, including the man upstairs but that don't make things better.

I keep looking for the lessons in it, I keep thinking, I figure something out, like a piece to some mystery puzzle and as soon as I have a minute to breathe, something comes along and throws it back across the room. Can't make sense of it anymore. I don't even know what I'm trying to piece together.

I didn't come here for any of this. I just want my drink, I want my quiet and I don't want to be asked questions. Just stop asking me questions! Don't even talk anymore cause your getting' on my nerves talking about Charlie and your house.

Who gives a damn? Do I look like a man who actually gives a damn? If you don't like Charlie so much than confront the son of a bitch about it already. Grab him by the face and tell him what you think!

That's the problem nowadays with everybody, nobody wants to stand up for what they think or believe, everyone is afraid to speak out for fear of getting clobbered over the head from the other side...it's just noisy opinions and more opinions and we're all drowning one another out from opinions and nobody is doing anything about it!

We're all forgetting how to live, how to love, how to trust, how to feel...I don't...I can't...

DOUGLAS: Just calm down Mugs, you're getting' yourself all worked up. It's good to say things outloud but don't overdo it, don't overwhelm yourself.

MUGSY: I'm fine, I'm fine. (beat) ...I'm going...

Mugsy heads out of the bar. Paul comes around and pours Douglas another shot of whiskey.

PAUL: Let him be.

DOUGLAS: He can't go on like that forever. Gonna be in a early grave that is.

PAUL: He blames himself.

DOUGLAS: I know he does.

PAUL: He'll come around.

Douglas shrugs.

DOUGLAS: He won't come around until his daughter comes around.

PAUL: Let's drink to her well being, yeah?

Paul clicks the whiskey bottle against Douglas' glass and both men drink.

Paul goes back behind the bar.