

The Circles Under Our Eyes

by

Joseph Arnone

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Cast of Characters

MIVVIE:

47

BORDY:

20's

Place
Diner

Time
Early afternoon

2.

Setting: The play takes place inside a diner at a booth. It's an old fashioned diner that hasn't been updated for the last forty years.

At Rise: The play opens up with both Mivvie sitting in the diner booth alone, when her son Bordy enters.

Bordy joins Mivvie at her booth.

MIVVIE: Where have you been?

BORDY: Hey, Ma.

MIVVIE: You look like death.

BORDY: You got a cigarette?

MIVVIE: (referring to a pack of cigs resting on the table) Take it out of the pack.

BORDY: Where's your-

Mivvie slides the lighter to Bordy.

MIVVIE: What do you want?

BORDY: I wanted to see my mother. What? I can't see my mother?

MIVVIE: You want coffee? How about an omelette? You look like you need to put on some weight.

BORDY: Come on ma, you say the same shit. I've been the same weight for twenty years already.

MIVVIE: You look pale and I don't like those circles under your eyes.

BORDY: You have them too.

MIVVIE: I'm allowed to have them.

BORDY: Leave me alone with that-

Waitress enters.

WAITRESS: Can I get you something sweetheart?

BORDY: Uh, yeah, I'll have a, a grilled cheese with ah-

MIVVIE: Get him one of those breakfasts with the bacon, egg and french toast with the-

BORDY: Oh yeah. The rooty tooty fresh and fruity.

WAITRESS: We stopped making that but for you I'll make an exception.

BORDY: Thanks.

WAITRESS: So stupid that they stopped serving it. Lazy ass cooks we got now. They get confused whenever there's more than two items in a single plate.

MIVVIE: Thanks, dear.

WAITRESS: More coffee?

MIVVIE: That, too. Thanks.

(pause.)

BORDY: So how are things?

MIVVIE: Cut the shit. How much you need?

BORDY: Why you gotta be like that? Can't you answer my question?

MIVVIE: How do you think I'm doing?

BORDY: Alright, alright...God.

Mivvie looks out the window.

MIVVIE: And who's that in your car? What is that thing?

BORDY: Henrietta.

MIVVIE: New girlfriend?

BORDY: Just something.

MIVVIE: And you leave her in the car like that?

BORDY: She's tired.

MIVVIE: Too tired to meet your mother?

BORDY: She's a rude bitch and doesn't give a damn about meeting you.

MIVVIE: I like her already.

BORDY: Yeah, well, you asked.

MIVVIE: How much?

BORDY: (sighs) I need two grand, ma.

MIVVIE: You're gonna be the death of me.

BORDY: It's just for now to help cover some bills...I don't wanna fall behind but it's just a loan, I can pay you back.

BORDY (cont'd): I'll make monthly payments so it's not like you're giving it to me this time, just a loan so, I'll borrow the money and pay back like a hundred or two each month.

MIVVIE: Where am I getting two grand?

BORDY: If you don't have it, it's fine but you're the only person I can ask.

MIVVIE: What's going on with your paintings?

BORDY: It's going.

MIVVIE: I haven't heard anything. Nothing new in that department?

BORDY: Ma, I'm killing myself. You know how this industry is.

MIVVIE: No, I don't know. Someone as talented as you, I don't know. You need to get out there more, you need to do things, meet people, network...they say it's who you know...well, who do you know?

BORDY: I can't be bothered with that shit.

MIVVIE: Why not? If it's gonna help you have a career, then why not?

BORDY: I can't deal with the phoniness of it all.

MIVVIE: You can't live life in a box, Bordy. You need to get your ass out there.

BORDY: I do! I do everything that I'm supposed to do. People don't like my art. Nobody cares.

MIVVIE: Make them care.

BORDY: You can't make people care...they either like my work or they don't. I don't have the power to make anyone give a damn...

MIVVIE: ...Let me see what I can do. I need a couple days.

BORDY: Only if it's not putting you out.

MIVVIE: Oh stop the shit. All of a sudden you become a great actor. Don't bullshit me.

BORDY: I'm telling you the truth.

MIVVIE: Your ass.

BORDY: Whatever, ma.

MIVVIE: You wanna bullshit other people, then bullshit other people. I'm your mother. Don't think I don't know.

BORDY: Don't know what?

Mivvie suddenly gets choked up with emotion.

Ma, please...I didn't want to come here to make you upset.

MIVVIE: You couldn't even shave for me, do your hair, look halfway decent. I want to see my handsome son. What is this look you bring?

BORDY: I've been stressed out.

MIVVIE: I'm stressed out to. Between you and your moron of a father, I don't know where to go. I'm gonna disappear. Far away on an island somewhere away from all of you.

BORDY: Come on ma, stop.

MIVVIE: Watch. Watch! I'm gonna vanish and then we'll see.

BORDY: See what?

MIVVIE: See you get your shit together! I want to see you good. I want you to make it already.

Bordy puts his head down.

WAITRESS: Here we go. Quick enough for ya?

MIVVIE: Thank you, sweetheart. Thanks.

Bordy keeps his head down.

BORDY: Thanks.

Waitress leaves.

MIVVIE: Come on now. Eat your food while it's nice and hot. Looks good.

BORDY: Yeah...

MIVVIE: Have some coffee, too.

Mivvie stares at her son. Bordy stares at his food.

Thursday. Maybe by Thursday I can send it to you. I gotta see. Maybe two payments. Half on Thursday and then half next week.

BORDY: Only if you can.

MIVVIE: Eat before it gets cold. What about that girl out there? She hungry?

BORDY: She's alright.

MIVVIE: Is she?

BORDY: Eh, she's alright. We'll see.

MIVVIE: Maybe she wants some food.

BORDY: She's fine ma, don't worry about her.

MIVVIE: Okay, okay.

Mivvie pulls out two hundred dollars.

Here's two hundred. Take this off the top. This way you have something and we'll work on the rest.

BORDY: You have money on you?

MIVVIE: When meeting you, I have to come prepared, don't I?

BORDY: Stop ma, you think it's easy.

MIVVIE: I never said it was easy. I just want to see you take steps.

BORDY: I'm taking steps. Everyday with this shit. I paint my ass off. I'm constantly walking up and down all these blocks looking for canvas and anything I can use to create. You know, you look at me like am a lost cause but you don't know what I go through. You don't understand that this world isn't built to support people like me. You know? If I, I, I wanted to be a doctor or a lawyer or something there's a job waiting for me, you know? Doing what I do, what I enjoy doing doesn't pay the bills like I wish it did.

MIVVIE: You gotta do something, I can't keep dishing out money like this for you.

BORDY: I can't even get a coffee job somewhere serving coffee. Nobody wants to hire me-

MIVVIE: Not when you look like that! I wouldn't hire you, either.

BORDY: I don't go for interviews like this. I always look nice. Nobody's hiring these days.

MIVVIE: Take anything. You gotta do whatever you need to do in this life to get ahead.

BORDY: I am. I am.

MIVVIE: Anything. Doesn't matter. When I was your age, I cleaned toilets. Did you know that?

BORDY: No.

MIVVIE: That's right. I cleaned toilets and scrubbed till my fingers bled. All while raising you kids.

BORDY: I know.

MIVVIE: I wasn't going to let anything stop me from taking care of my children.

BORDY: I know.

MIVVIE: That's what you have to do. You need to have that fire in you. If you're anything like me, then that's what you do. Whatever it takes! I don't want to hear excuses. I want to see you go out there and do it. You can do it.

BORDY: I know, I know.

MIVVIE: There is no can't. If you want it bad enough, you will figure out a way. You understand? You take after me, not your father.

BORDY: Come on, don't say that. Don't start talking shit about dad now.

MIVVIE: Well, it's true. Your father did shit with his life and now I'm taking care of him when he should be taking care of me. I don't want to see you end up like that.

BORDY: Don't compare me to him, please.

MIVVIE: Understand what I'm saying here?

BORDY: Yes, yes, I do. I'm nothing like him when it comes to all that stuff.

MIVVIE: I hope not. Time is ticking kid. I'm not gonna be around forever. I want to see you with a house, kids of your own, married-

BORDY: Oh stop with that shit PLEASE. I am not getting married with twelve kids-

MIVVIE: Just one. Give me one grandchild so I can die in peace.

BORDY: I can't have kids. I can't even take care of myself.

MIVVIE: A son or a daughter will be good for you. Maybe that's the wake up call you need.

BORDY: Are you done?

MIVVIE: I'm done.

BORDY: You drive me crazy.

MIVVIE: Don't start.

BORDY: I'm sorry I'm not like Baxter or Lenora. We're all different.

MIVVIE: All my kids are different. But you, you make me nuts. You're the one with all the talent. You. You have the brains. You're sharp but you're lazy no matter what you say to me. You get in the way of yourself and you need to break that and be who you are meant to be on this earth. That's it now. I'm not gonna preach all day.

BORDY: There's an art gallery that sent me an email and told me that they would like to see more of my work, so-

MIVVIE: Really? Where?

BORDY: Recently. I've been putting my stuff out there more and--

MIVVIE: You see? That's what I want to hear.

BORDY: I'll let you know what happens. Maybe they will take me for once.

MIVVIE: That's how things start. Little by little. That's how you have to think.

BORDY: I know. Relax. Nobody died.

MIVVIE: But Bordy you have to live your life like it's life or death.

(beat)

BORDY: You're right. I will. I'll do better.

MIVVIE: I know you will. When I'm gone, who is gonna look after everybody? I'm depending on you.

BORDY: Don't worry, Ma. Everything's gonna work out. You're not going anywhere anytime soon so-

MIVVIE: I don't know about that.

BORDY: What now?

MIVVIE: They found a lump.

BORDY: What? What are you talking about?

MIVVIE: The doctors. Shit I've had for years got worse now so I have to go in for further testing. It's larger. I'm sure it's nothing...I hope it's nothing...

BORDY: When did you plan on telling me?

MIVVIE: I'm telling you now?

BORDY: Jesus.

MIVVIE: Yeah.

BORDY: When you going back to the doctor?

MIVVIE: Tomorrow?

BORDY: Tomorrow?

MIVVIE: Yeah, we'll see. I've been feeling discomfort lately, something seems off so, we'll see.

BORDY: Where do you feel discomfort? Is it pain?

MIVVIE: No, no, it's not pain...just, I feel pressure. Some pressure on my side, right here, under my rib cage.

BORDY: And it doesn't hurt?

MIVVIE: No, just feels like an inconvenience.

BORDY: Want me to go to the doctor with you tomorrow?

MIVVIE: No, no, no, no, I'll go alone. I want to go alone cause-it's better I go alone.

BORDY: Can you call me as soon as you leave there then?

MIVVIE: Yeah, yeah. I'll call you.

(pause.)

BORDY: Ma listen...you know I love you. More than anything in the world.

MIVVIE: I know...

BORDY: I would die without you. (beat) You are the only person that's ever been there for me in my entire life. The only one that's had my back. If it wasn't for you, I don't know. I don't know what I would have become. I fight for my dreams because I want to make you proud and I want to do what makes me happy in my life...I don't want to be looked at as a loser in this family...it's not right...I'm different, I get it but nobody ever seems to care about who I am and what I do. Nobody ever gives time to understand and that's alright. I love everyone. It's fine. But being looked at a certain way without knowing anything about me, sucks. You know?

BORDY (cont'd): But listen, good things will come, I love what I do and what is meant to be will be...I have no regrets and whatever success comes my way, I want you to be here for it, so make sure tomorrow when you go to this doctor that you leave there knowing you're okay. You hear me? Alright?

MIVVIE: I'm fine. Don't worry. God isn't taking me yet.

BORDY: He better not cause I'll have a serious talk with him.

MIVVIE: Honey, I'm fine.

BORDY: I love you ma.

MIVVIE: I love you, too.

END OF PLAY