

I wrote Discarding the Blues in a writing class held at valley state Prison. If you liked it or if you didn't I would love to hear some feed back. I love to write but I doubt my skills at times and also could use any advice you might have on how to write good stories. Thank you so much for your time and I hope to hear from you the reader because without you its all just wasted ink on dead trees.

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Discarding the Blues
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DISCARDING THE BLUES

(Screenplay written by: R. F. Stoecker Jr.)

Discarding the Blues

Fade in:

Int: Car

Non descript older model.

A car parked in a restaurant parking lot, early afternoon, and beautiful sun shining, people walking to and from the restaurant, cacophony of typical sounds in a parking lot.

A man in his middle 40's sits in the passenger seat of the car, wearing brand new black pants and a starchy button up white dress shirt. He lifts up a cell phone from his lap and stares at it for a few seconds, shakes his head no and lets out a sigh as the phone drops back into his lap. His head swivels back and forth as he watches people walking to and from their cars amazed that they don't hurt themselves by walking into each other or the walls, because they never look up from their cell phones. He dreads making the calls that are long over due. He picks up the cell phone looking at it with confusion as he spins and flips it around looking for the on/off switch.

Cut to

Int: Car

< Camera view facing out front car window, from back seat >

(Action)

(A woman's right hand enters the scene.)

Woman:

(Says softly)

Give it here moody.

Moody:

(Ashamed)

Hands the phone to the woman with out looking at her.

Woman:

Relax honey, its ok. It's on.

Moody:
(Says softly)
Alicia thank you.
(Takes the phone from her hand.)

In Moody's hand is a worn and creased piece of paper, he begins to push on the screen too hard but finally figures out how to place a call.

The cell Phone is in Moody's left hand as he pushes send with a shaking right index finger. A deep inhalation of breath brings the view of the cell phone into sharp focus and when the phone starts to ring he deeply exhales, now the view of the camera expands to show the interior of the car facing out the front window of the car

V/O
Woman's voice through phone:
Hello, hello who is this?

Moody:
Hello, can I please speak to Courtney? It's me ...Moody.

Cut to
Int: Home - Kitchen
We see a young woman in her late twenties answers the phone
Kids screaming in back ground

Courtney:
(Friendly)
Hi Moody, this is Courtney.
(Angry)
Why are you calling me? I never gave you my number!

Moody:
Please let me explain. I don't know where to start. I know I wasn't a good father and I would li...

(Moody is Cut off)

Cut to

Int: Kitchen

Courtney:

(Interrupts Moody)

I don't have a father. The father I had went to prison; and he was never in my life to be considered a father in the first place. I have a dad and he's in the front yard watering the lawn.

Cut to

Moody:

Courtney, I paroled today. I've wanted to talk to you for so long.

Cut to

Int: Kitchen

Courtney:

We have nothing to talk about. I had a lot of things I wanted to say to you but I no longer care to. I still can't believe you chose to leave the family you had to start another family, and then you abandoned them as well!

Cut to

Int: Car

Moody:

(Pleading)

I know you're angry and I'm so sorry, please don't hate me.

Cut to

Int: Kitchen

Courtney:

I don't hate you. As a matter of fact, I don't have any feelings for you at all. I want you to know you didn't ruin my life when you left, I'm thankful you were gone before I was old enough to know you!

(Baby Crying in the background)

I've got to go Mr. Stone. I have my own family to take care of. Don't call me again!

(Hangs up without saying goodbye)

Cut to

Int: Car

Moody:

(Tears streaming down his face)
He sighs deeply as he dials another number.

Phone rings a couple times

Voice Mail:

Hi, this is Casey. I'm not available to answer the phone right now, but if you leave your name and number, I'll call you back when I get the chance.

(beep)

Moody:

Hi, Casey...this is your father. I paroled this morning and I was hoping we could talk. I know your upset with me and you have every right to be. There's one way to get a stranger to open his door and that's by knocking. Casey, this phone call is me –knocking on the door to your life. Please think about giving me another chance. For what it's worth, I love you and not a day went by that I didn't think of you and your sisters. My phone number is 555-536-5109...I love you.

(A few seconds lapses)

Bye.

Int: Car

(Action)

Moody reaches over with his left hand and grabs ahold of his wife's right hand of 22years.

Moody:

I love you. For the first time in over two decades, I'm free; physically...but I'm still a prisoner to my past. I have dreamed of this day for years. I paid society 20 years of my life for the crimes I committed; shouldn't that be enough?

Alicia:

It may be enough for society, but it's not enough for your children, me and your family. Society didn't want you Moody, but we did.

Moody

(Choked up with emotions, tears in his eyes)

(Sadly)

I'm sorry for the pain I caused you and our daughters honey.

Where are they? should I call Noel or Harmony?

Alicia:

They're busy living their lives. What about me Moody You left me out here just like you left them. We have things to talk about also! Come on lets go get something to eat.

Cut to

Ext: Restaurant

Controlled chaos, aroma of delicious foods, bright colors and sounds of a typical restaurant washes over moody and he hesitates at the door as if a force field is holding him back.

(Action)

Alicia places her right hand on Moody's lower back and gently nudges him through the door.

Alicia:

It's okay honey

Moody:

(Smiles)

Okay

Cut to

Int: Restaurant

Alicia and Moody sitting side by side in a booth. Moody stares at the menu overwhelmed with so many choices of things to order.

Moody

(Turns to Alicia)

I cant believe I'm sitting here with you and I'm thinking about what I would be doing right now if I was still in prison. I had to leave family behind this morning when I left and my heartbreaks knowing they would do anything to have this moment.

Cut to

Waitress:

woman in her early twenties all smiles and perfect white teeth, bubbly personality
(Walks up to booth)

Good morning. My name is Lisa and I will be your server this morning. Can I get you some coffee or juice while you decide what you would like to order?

Moody:

(Looks at Alicia)

I would like some coffee.

Alicia:

(Smiling)

Don't tell me Moody, tell Lisa what you want.

Moody:

(Unsure and nervous)

I would like some coffee please.

Lisa:

Ok!

(Looking at Alicia)

What about you? Would you like some coffee or juice?

Alicia:

Make it two coffees please. But we still need some time to decide.

(Smiles at Moody)

Lisa:

Ok, Be right back with your coffee.

Alicia:

(Looks over at Moody)

Who is looking around the restaurant with a tinge of fear and wonder.

(Softly)

Hey, hey...are you okay? Should we leave?

Moody:

No, I'm okay, just a little overwhelmed. God, I've missed you so much.

I'm sorry I took you for granted before I went to prison. I used to toss and turn in my bed at night thinking about how I should have treated you better; said 'I love you' more. Did you ever doubt my love for you?

Alicia:

(Crying)

I've missed you too. You don't know how many nights I listened to another man snoring, wishing he was you. My heart was broken when you left and I blamed myself for so many years, thinking it was my fault that I couldn't save you from yourself. The life I had to live for 20 years wasn't the one I wanted to live either Moody. Lets leave the past where it belongs, hope for tomorrow, and focus on what we have right now, that's what's important.... I want you to make peace with the shattered pieces of your life, it wont happen over night I'll help you put it back together honey, but I can't do it all by myself. No, I never doubted your love.

Moody:

(Moody's face betrays him by showing how much pain he is because of what Alicia just said)
Thank you for being honest.

Lisa:

(Suddenly appears)

Here's your coffee. Do you guys know what you would like to order?

Moody:

Startled/ wipes his eyes and mutters about having allergies to mask his tears
(Turns to Alicia)
Do you know what you want?
I know what I want.

Alicia:

(Talking to Lisa)

I would like your biscuits and gravy.

Moody:

Lisa, I want the biggest pile of hash browns, bacon, sausage and a big piece of steak you have ever served: rare and juicy. Thank you!

Lisa:

Sounds good! Be back soon with your food. More coffee?

V/O

Alicia and Moody:

Yes please. Sure!

Alicia:

Picks up her cell phone. Texting, looking at responses.

Moody:

Who are you texting, Noel or Harmony?

Alicia:

(Laughing softly)

No, I'm checking in on Aidan and Serenity. They can't wait to see you. They remember you and ask about you all the time.

Moody:

I've missed them. I hope you know that I love them as if they are my own flesh and blood. There were moments when you went back to him that I hated myself because I missed the children you had with another man just as much as I missed my own children.

Alicia and Moody:

(They sit in pregnant silence, lost in their own thoughts.
Alicia reaches over and holds Moody's hand)

Lisa:

(Brings the food to the table, interrupting Alicia and Moody's thoughts)

Here's your food. If there's anything else I can bring you, just give me a wave. Enjoy your meal!

(Action)

Two young women in their early twenties walking up to the table where Alicia and Moody sit eating.
They watch Moody trying to cut his food with a spoon.

Woman:

Hey dad, try using a knife; that's what they were invented for.

Moody:

(Looks up startled and then breaks into a big smile, jumping up to hug his daughters: Noel and Harmony.
First one and then the other, repeatedly.)

Alicia:

Honey they're not going anywhere. Let them sit down. Girls, are you hungry?

Noel and Harmony:
No, we're not hungry.

Moody:
Moody stares at his daughters like he would a beautiful sunset or a shooting star.
(Crying softly, he turns to Alicia and silently mouths 'Thank you')
Talking to Noel and Harmony
I'm so happy to see you. I love you both so much. Thank you for being here.

Noel:
Yeah dad...we're here; and I love you too...but just because your out, doesn't mean you're in. The fact that we decided to come here means we're putting more faith in you than you deserve. Paroling from prison doesn't earn my trust; you'll have to earn that.

Harmony and Alicia:
Shaking their heads in agreement, to what Noel has just said.

Moody:
I don't deserve to have any of you sitting here with me this morning. As far as trust goes, I learned a valuable lesson in prison. Never trust someone who is asking you to trust them. I will strive everyday of my life, proving to you that you didn't make a mistake by giving me this chance.

Harmony:
Dad, I've loved and hated all within the same breath. Growing all I wanted was you in my life so bad; instead, I had a shell of a man who almost destroyed my ability to love and laugh.

Alicia:
(Talking to moody)
We love you...please don't feel like we're attacking you or trying to hurt you; but our pain runs really deep. The wounds you created by leaving us could only be healed by you...does that make sense?

Moody:
(A slight frown on Moody's face.)
He shakes his head 'yes' because he's afraid of breaking into uncontrollable and ugly tears.

Noel:
Are you done eating? Lets get out of here. We have the rest of our lives to talk. What are you going to do next dad?

Moody:
I want to go see my parents. Would that be ok Alicia?

Alicia:

Yes that's fine. Is everybody ready?

Noel, Harmony and Moody:

(Same time)

Yeah, let's go!

(Leaves restaurant)

Cut to:

Ext: Restaurant parking lot, late afternoon

(Family standing next to a car)

Harmony:

I've waited so long to say this..

Noel and I will see you at home dad.

Moody

(Action)

Hugging Noel and Harmony

Moody:

I love you both so much. Please drive safe. Your mom and I will be home soon.

(Watches his daughters drive off)

Cut to:

Int: Car

(Liquor store parking lot)

Alicia watches Moody walking towards the car, carrying a bouquet of flowers in one hand and a small paper bag in the other.

Alicia looks over as moody opens the door and sits down.

Alicia:

How did it go? Did you find what you wanted?

(Action)

Moody hands Alicia the flowers, leans over and kisses her. His right hand cups the back of her head; his fingers entwined in her hair; looking into her eyes as he pulls away.

Moody:

(Passionately and tearfully)

I love you. Thank you for loving me. I will spend the rest of my life, our lives making sure you know how much I love and cherish you. Honey, I don't care where you have been, all I care about is where we go from here.

Alicia:

I love you too. God I've missed you. Moody, when you were sent to prison, I was also given a prison sentence; but my only crime was loving you.

Moody:

I can't say anything to take away the pain I caused you, our children...our family. Everyday I was in prison was a cruel reminder of how much I let everyone down that I loved.

(Smiles)

I love you.

(Pats the bag)

I bought some stuff for mom and dad. Let's go see them.

Alicia:

Ok, lets go.

(Starts up the car and backs up as Moody looks forward)

Cut to

Int: Car

Through the windshield, we see a sign that reads Beach memorial cemetery as the car makes a left turn.

Cut to

Ext: Cemetery

Outside the car, dusk, long shadows washes over the headstones casting everything in muted sunshine. Moody waits for Alicia to join him on his side of the car. Softly grabs her hand as they stand side by side. Moody looks around and takes a deep breath.

Moody:

Honey, will you please take me to my parents? I don't know where they are.

(Alicia leads a crying Moody to his parent's final resting place. Moody stares at his parents' gravestone. He sinks to his knees crying uncontrollably. He wipes away the leaves on the gravestone.)

Moody:

Hi Mom ...DAD I don't know where to start. I'm sorry, I'm so fucking sorry for not being a better son. I know you were disappointed with me when you passed away. I hope the man I am today you can be proud of. I love you mom...dad.

Moody:

(Action)

Moody opens the brown paper bag.

Moody:

Dad, I got you a pack of hard-pack Marlboro reds; and mom, I bought you a bottle of peach Schnapps.

(Softly)

Dad I hope its ok with you, but I really need to bum a smoke.

(Lights the cigarette and begins to cough.)

Yeah, dad, it's been a while. Mom, I can't take a drink of the Schnapps for two reasons. The stuff tastes like shit.

(laughing)

Plus, I'm sober now. It's been over six years since I've done any drugs or taken a drink. God, I would do anything just to spend an hour with you. We have so much to talk about, but that can wait until it's my time to join you. I'm afraid that I won't be able to repair some of the damage I've done to our family.

Hey, your granddaughter Courtney had a baby girl, her name is Aubrey, she's beautiful so I'm a grandpa now. Maybe with a little help from you, she might let me into their lives.

Moody:

Stares at the ground that houses his parents. Gingerly he kisses their headstone whispering so only his parents can hear him.

Alicia:

walking up and grabbing ahold of Moody's hand. They stand in silence for a few moments longer

Moody:

We've got to go now Mom, Dad. I've only been out of prison for a couple of hours and I already feel like I'm falling behind on the things I need to do.

I love you and I'll be back soon.

Alicia:

Where to next honey?

Moody:

I want to go home, I want to hang out with our kids and I want to eat a home cooked meal... just not by you I hope!

(smiles)

Most of all, I want to fall asleep and wake up next to you tomorrow.

Alicia and Moody hand-in-hand walking back to their car and their futures together.

Fade out