

BLOOD AT THE BOTTOM OF THE LAKE

By Jerry Rabushka

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A Ten Minute Dramatic Monologue

By Jerry Rabushka

SYNOPSIS: Jarod's friend Boyce was the guy he could count on no matter what. He could count on Boyce to get him in trouble, too. But what he didn't count on was that when he fell into a dangerous lake, Boyce would film him struggling for help and post it on social media. How does Jarod react to being humiliated in his most desperate moment? With no sympathy from parents, friends, or authorities, Jarod has to dive deep back into himself to find forgiveness and strength. But he's never had to before, and he doesn't know how.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(1 male)

JAROD (m)..... High school aged.

JAROD: I'm Jarod Carrant, and you're watching "My Life in Monologues," Episode Two, where I almost drown in Lake Brownfield.

I guess when you get older, if that ever happens, you look back on some stuff and you think "why did I ever do that?" Like why did I call so and so that name, why did I blow off studying for that test, why did I skip a class and post my face on the internet, why did I try to shoot a duck with a BB gun. All that glopitty-glop that I assume I won't be proud of in 30 years.

But there was a time, they say, when you could do all that without it being recorded and saved for posterity, so that those 30 years later you won't lose a job, a marriage, or an opportunity over something you did at 16.

I am not that person.

I had a best friend Boyce. He was that guy. You know, the one you knew you'd be spending the weekend with, hanging out after school with, studying for the test with, going to that new movie with, and then you had to hang out with him because he decided to start smoking and his girlfriend dumped him so he didn't have anything else to do. We went to tasteless movies aimed at teenage boys, because we were pretty much tasteless teenage boys. And I was the follower.

(As Boyce.) Jarod, hey let's go up to that pier on Lake Brownfield.

It's closed.

(As Boyce.) So is your mind.

There's a big sign on it saying it's off limits.

(As Boyce.) You're always (*Mockingly.*) it's closed, we can't do that, we can't do this. You're like Macy's on Sunday morning. Closed.

One time I said we shouldn't do something and he never let me forget it. It turned into "you're always like that" every time I had a doubt. I didn't want to be always like that, so we went past the no trespassing signs and onto the pier over the lake.

It was fun. The sun was shining, the wind was mellow, beautiful day, smell of the water. I walked out on the pier and the view was awesome, and we snapped a few photos of us fooling around on what I was pretty sure was private property. Then Boyce had this, really, very mundane idea.

(As Boyce.) Jump up and I'll snap your picture.

I jumped and he took a picture of me in midair. Cool photo! Then he did it, I snapped, and then we jumped higher.

(As Boyce.) Grab that post and jump up!

So I did. And as he snapped the photo I fell against the post, hit the pier, cut my knee, my stomach and my lip, and went into the lake without knowing what hit me. And I panicked. The water was moving faster than I thought. I went under and couldn't figure out what to do. I popped up, went back, popped up, and finally realized that it wasn't as deep as all that and got out, still shaking and perhaps more scared than I needed to be. Boyce, who already had his phone on photo, had turned it to video.

(As Boyce.) Man, Jarod. You were a mess!

"You didn't help me!" Life was still tenuous.

(As Boyce.) Man, what was I gonna do, jump in and then we both go under?

“Maybe not laughing might have helped,” I told him. Right then, he was that best friend I never wanted to see again. So I walked away. Boyce posted the video of me looking like a real fool: ripped clothes, ripped skin, ripped brain, ripped and grasping and gasping. It was a justified look of fear everyone saw, and they took it and ran, as if they would have been different. I went from reasonably cool kid to laughingstock overnight.

I got in trouble for going to the lake. There was a sign saying keep out, which Boyce had snapped a picture of as well. I don't know where his brain went that day, and maybe it's one of those things he feels like, looking back, was a bad idea. I don't know because we don't talk.

Next thing I know I'm counting blood cells and looking at a friendly officer.

(As a Policeman.) “Young man, you do realize that you could have lost a lot more than your pride. Your life was at stake as well. Plus, you've broken the law by entering a place where access was forbidden. I assume you read the signs that said ‘keep out’, ‘private property’ and ‘dangerous water’, yet here you are in plain daylight not keeping out. Maybe there's a reason people didn't want you there.”

Then my dad got into the act, which made the policeman seem nice.

(As Dad.) “Jarod Carrant.” That was already a bad start. “I would like to say I failed you as a parent, but in this case, you've failed me as a protégé. You've learned nothing from the days when we used to say ‘if Boyce said to jump off a roof would you do it,’ and the answer was supposed to be no, but yet, that very same Boyce said to jump off the roof, and jump you did. He said to go to the lake and you did even though you knew better. So, it's not that I didn't teach you, it's that you didn't care to apply this knowledge at the most appropriate time in your life, when in fact that life could have been lost.”

And my mom...

(As Mom.) "I don't want you hanging around with that Boyce Roberson anymore. I always knew he was bad for you."

(Responds, angry and sarcastic.) "How did you always know? How come you always know stuff but never tell me until after it's too late? That's kind of selfish, seeing as how the continuance of my life became suspect, that you kept that bit of crucial information to yourself."

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