

Mary's Eddie

A play by Y York, inspired by the talents of Mary Louise Burke.

Characters: Mary and Eddie. They are in their sixties.

Set: A living room.

(A living room. Mary is alone. Eddie enters. He wears half glasses. He half enters.)

EDDIE

Do you know where the checkbook is?

MARY

I think it's still in my bag.

EDDIE

Which is where?

MARY

On the counter.

EDDIE

You should put it back when you're done with it.

(Eddie starts to leave.)

MARY

I'm never done with it.

EDDIE

(half returns) You're not using it now.

MARY

But I'll have to go out again, won't I? I'll have to go out for beer or potato chips or charcoal. Checkbook items.

EDDIE

If you put it back, I wouldn't have to bother you.

MARY

You're not bothering me, Eddie. I like these little intimate moments we have... "where's the checkbook? Have you seen my car keys? Bring me a roll of toilet paper."

(He stares at her a moment.)

MARY

Where does it go? The checkbook.

EDDIE

You know where it goes because that's where you find it because that's where I put it when I'm done with it.

MARY

What are you going to buy?

EDDIE

Nothing.

MARY

Then why do you need the checkbook?

EDDIE

Quickbooks.

MARY

Can't it wait? Aren't you sick of that? Aren't you sick of looking at numbers all day long?

EDDIE

I don't like it to mount up.

MARY

It's in my bag.

(He exits.)

(A longish pause. Then Mary has a conversation.)

MARY

*Is that seat taken, Miss?*

No, but I'm waiting for someone.

*Is he late?*

...As a matter of fact he is a little late.

*I can't imagine being late to meet someone as sweet and lovely as you.*

What?

*I said—*

I heard what you said, I just can't believe it.

EDDIE

(Off) Mary?

(Eddie enters.)

MARY

What? I didn't say anything.

EDDIE

(He holds up a jaunty purse.) Is this new?

MARY

Yes. Do you like it?

EDDIE

I have no idea if I like it.

MARY

I hoped you'd like it. It's "saucy." (takes it) I can sling it over my shoulder and it just hits my hip when I walk, drawing attention to my sexy walk-- that's what the sales girl said. It makes me look saucy. Do you think I look saucy?

EDDIE

...How much did it cost?

MARY

It's a knockoff.

EDDIE

What does that mean?

MARY

That means thirty-five dollars.

EDDIE

That much?

MARY

Thirty-five as opposed to three hundred and ninety-five.

(Eddie exits shaking his head. Brief pause, then Mary continues.)

MARY

*Did you know that man, Miss?*

Not at all. He must have mistaken us for other people.

*Does that happen often here?*

Yes, it does, almost every day.

*Maybe we should leave.*

Oh. Oh, no. I can't leave.

*Then, may I sit down until your friend comes?*

Oh, no.

*But what if that deranged man returns?*

Oh.

*I'll leave as soon as someone comes who can protect you.*

(She looks nervously toward the other room. Brief pause.)

*I'm not usually this forward, Miss. It's your eyes. That's what made me come over in this bold fashion. I am not a bold man. But your eyes, and how they sit in your face, there's this softness, this cushion in your eyes that says a person might place something fragile in them, a fragile something, a piece of fragile knowledge, and all your softness might envelope it so that it doesn't break.*

(slight pause) Do you mean I'm fat?

*Oh, no, no. You're beautiful. Why would you say you're fat?*

No, I—I just didn't know what you meant about my cushion.

*I meant you look like you can be trusted. With precious knowledge.*

(Eddie enters, looking fiercely at the checkbook.)

Oh, no, I never tell a secret, but I don't like them. I hate the burden they place on my heart.

(Eddie looks around to see who she is talking to.)

*It's not a secret, I didn't mean a secret. They do hurt. I meant, your eyes. You seem like a person who might let another person be himself. Your eyes are so relaxed and kind.*

...Are you an optometrist?

No. *I'm an accountant.*

(Eddie's jaw drops. He looks briefly at the checkbook in his hand.)

You seem sort of romantic for an accountant.

*Would you...would you like to dance?*

I would. I would really like that. No one ever asks me.

(Mary dances. Eddie looks on, softly.)

When I was a girl in school, the nuns told us that boys would try to feel us up if we danced with them so we should only dance with boys who we planned to marry.

*When I was young, if a girl let me dance with her, I felt like I was holding her soul. I must tread so carefully. She was precious and I must have great care. One hand is allowed to touch yours, so firm and dry, while my other hand holds you firmly so that we might move together as one. I know so much about you already. Your eyes, how light you are on your feet, the feel of your waist against my hand. It's a forever moment. I would like to kiss you.*

Oh! No. You can't kiss me. I don't even know your name.

EDDIE

Eddie! (A pause Mary freezes.) ...My name is Eddie.

(Mary looks in front of her. Eddie looks at Mary. End.)