

KING ME
Madelyn Marks

CHARACTERS

DARRYL.....man, 20's

JUSTIN.....man, 20's

TIME: Evening--Present day

SETTING: A room in a house with a table and two chairs, in front of it is a bin full of games.

(DARRYL walks in and takes a seat at the table. He begins setting up a game of checkers. JUSTIN joins him at the table but doesn't help, just waits.)

DARRYL

Don't touch the pieces.

JUSTIN

I know

DARRYL

I don't want you to mess it up. I'm almost done.

JUSTIN

I'm aware of your obsessive need to set the board up every time.

DARRYL

Not obsessive, you just have a tendency to mess it up and I don't feel like going through all the fixing just so we can start playing.

JUSTIN

I don't mess it up, you're just really particular and it's ridiculous that every time you-

DARRYL

Stop talking. I finished setting up the board.

JUSTIN

Amazing

Here
DARRYL
(pulls out dice and hands them to JUSTIN)

9
JUSTIN
(rolls dice)

Shit 6
DARRYL
(rolls dice)

Well well well, where should I start?
JUSTIN
(puts the dice away)

The first move barely matters. Just pick a piece and move it.
DARRYL

You know you only say that when I have the first move.
JUSTIN
(moves piece)

Not true
DARRYL
(moves piece)

Whatever
JUSTIN
(moves piece)

You sound like an angsty teenager.
DARRYL
(moves piece)

What?
JUSTIN

Teenagers say “whatever”, not adults.
DARRYL

Wow. Ok excuse me for using the English language.
JUSTIN

DARRYL
Just take your turn.

JUSTIN
Relax, I'm thinking.
(pause)

DARRYL
Justin, take your turn already.

JUSTIN
(mockingly)
Darryl, stop talking.
(moves piece)

DARRYL
I just want you to focus on the game.
(moves piece)

JUSTIN
No you don't.
(moves piece)
You want to hurry up and win. Be honest

DARRYL
Are you admitting you think you're gonna lose?
(moves piece)

JUSTIN
What? No, I'm just saying that the only reason you play is to win.
(moves piece)

DARRYL
What other reason is there to play?
(moves piece)

JUSTIN
For fun you sociopath.
(moves piece)

DARRYL
Is that why you're playing right now?
(moves piece)

JUSTIN

I mean not entirely. I also want to win.
(moves piece)

DARRYL

(moves piece, jumps)
That's adorable.

JUSTIN

Dammit. / Don't patronize me.
(moves piece)

DARRYL

Playing for fun is your biggest weakness.
(moves piece)

JUSTIN

Caring so much is your's.
(moves piece)

DARRYL

No it's not. Caring about winning is what helps me stay focused and make smart moves that lead me to a win.
(moves piece)

JUSTIN

I didn't mean in the game.
(moves piece, jumps)

DARRYL

Shit. / Wait what do you mean not in the game?

JUSTIN

Nothing. Just take your turn.

DARRYL

(moves piece)
What did you mean?

JUSTIN

Nothing.
(moves piece)

DARRYL

Just tell me what you meant.

(moves piece)

JUSTIN

Nothing. It was a Freudian slip. Forget it.

(moves piece, jumps)

DARRYL

SHIT. Tell me what you meant and I'll drop it.

(moves piece)

JUSTIN

But you won't.

(moves piece)

You'll just keep bothering me about it so just drop it now and we can skip that part.

DARRYL

I don't understand why you can't just tell me what you meant. I'm a fully grown adult. I can take it. Just tell me.

(moves piece)

JUSTIN

Ok Darryl, I meant that caring so much about meaningless stuff like winning a stupid game of checkers is your biggest weakness. Not in the game but like in general.

(moves piece)

DARRYL

In general?

(moves piece)

JUSTIN

Yes, in general. It's one of your unlikable traits that we all just put up with.

(moves piece)

DARRYL

I guess I just don't see how caring about winning is such an evil trait.

(moves piece)

JUSTIN

Oh my god. Now you're just being dramatic.

(moves piece)

DARRYL

I'm not being dramatic. I just don't see how me caring about winning a game is so-

JUSTIN

This is why I told you to drop it. Just take your turn.

DARRYL

Kind of hard to drop it when you clearly have something to say to me.

(moves piece)

JUSTIN

Jesus-I didn't have anything to say to you. I just slipped up and said what I was thinking out loud.

(moves piece)

DARRYL

I still don't understand what you meant by it.

(moves piece)

JUSTIN

For the love of god, just drop it.

(moves piece)

DARRYL

You know if caring about winning makes me such a bad person, why do you always agree to play checkers with me.

(moves piece, jumps)

JUSTIN

I don't know.

(they continue the game in silence for a moment)

DARRYL

Just tell me what you meant by it.

(moves piece)

JUSTIN

OH MY GOD.

DARRYL

How is me caring about winning such a bad thing?

JUSTIN

(moves piece)

King me and I'll tell you.

DARRYL

Fine. Here

(kings JUSTIN'S piece)

JUSTIN

It's not just that you care so much about winning and suck all the fun out of literally any game. It's that it is the only thing you care about regardless of whether or not there's a game. You're so obsessed with winning everything. I swear having a conversation with you is such a chore because it is exhausting feeling like I have to lose to you all the time.

(pause)

It's your turn.

DARRYL

What do you mean lose to me all the time? What are you losing?

JUSTIN

My youth Darryl. It's your turn.

DARRYL

You can't just lecture me about how awful I am to be around and then move on.

JUSTIN

I don't know what you expected. You practically begged me to explain my comment. I did that now take your turn so this game can be closer to being over.

DARRYL

No

JUSTIN

What

DARRYL

I think you owe me an apology first.

JUSTIN

AN APOLOGY FOR WHAT?

DARRYL

FOR INSULTING ME.

JUSTIN

But you- you just- oh my god I'm gonna murder you.

DARRYL

Why murder me? You've already stabbed me in the back.

JUSTIN

You're a maggot.

DARRYL

How am I the maggot? You're the one who just went off on me for nothing.

JUSTIN

Sometimes I think you belong in an institution.

DARRYL

AN INSTITUTION???

JUSTIN

YES for your obvious narcissism

DARRYL

I'm not a narcissist.

(moves piece)

JUSTIN

That is exactly what a narcissist would say.

(moves piece)

DARRYL

You're just fragile.

(moves piece, jumps)

JUSTIN

Fragile? What? I'm not fragile. You're just irritating.

(moves piece, jumps)

DARRYL

Shit I thought that was a good move.

JUSTIN

You can't just have easy jumps every time. Sometimes you have to sacrifice a piece of your own to take one out from the other side.

DARRYL

I know how the game works.

(moves piece)

JUSTIN

Jesus sorry

(they continue the game in silence for a moment)

DARRYL

We should play chess sometime.

(moves piece)

JUSTIN

I don't know how to play chess.

(moves piece)

DARRYL

(moves piece)

King me and I'll teach you how later.

JUSTIN

Fine. Here.

(JUSTIN kings DARRYL's piece. Lights fade to black)

END OF PLAY