

"Check or Checkmate?"

by

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A man gets more than he bargained for as he sits down to play a game of chess and gets visions of his future with each move.

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FADE IN:

EXT. PARK - WORK OUT EQUIPMENT - DAY

The PARK is small with workout equipment, picnic benches, and a playground.

There are kids on the playground and a few adults working out on the equipment.

At one of the picnic tables, GREG, late 60s, very calm, plays a game of chess by himself.

KALEB, mid 30s, wearing gym shorts and a sweaty T-shirt, is drinking water by the workout equipment. He looks around the park and focuses on Greg.

EXT. PARK - PICNIC BENCHES - DAY

Greg focuses on his game of chess as Kaleb walks up to him.

KALEB
Can I join?

GREG
(looks up at Kaleb)
I suppose.

KALEB
(sitting down opposite Greg)
Shall I reset the game?

GREG
No need.

KALEB
(confused)
Alright.

GREG
(moves the bishop forward)
Your move.

Kaleb moves his knight forward to capture Greg's bishop, then throws his head back forcefully, having a vision.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. TECHNICAL BUILDING - KALEB'S OFFICE - NIGHT - VISION

Kaleb, wearing a suit, stands in a small office with a basic

desk, chair, cabinet, and paperwork everywhere.

BOSS, person in their late 30s, wearing a nice suit. Boss walks into Kaleb's Office.

BOSS

(knocks twice on the door)
Hey Kaleb, great job with the Garland account. Come into my office tomorrow and we'll discuss that raise you applied for.

Boss winks at Kaleb and then walks away. Kaleb looks happy and surprised.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. PARK - PICNIC BENCHES - DAY

Nothing has changed. Kaleb looks startled.

GREG

(moves his pawn forward)
Your move.

KALEB

Did you see that?

Greg doesn't look up from the board. Kaleb shakes his head and moves his Queen to take a pawn. Greg takes his queen with a knight.

Kaleb's head goes back having a vision.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. KALEB'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - VISION

The bedroom is modern, nothing special.

Moaning sounds are heard as Kaleb opens up his bedroom door seeing NORA, late 20s intertwined with MAN, late 20s.

KALEB

(angry)
What the fuck do you think you're doing Nora!? In my fucking apartment!

Nora reaches out toward Kaleb as he slams the door shut.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. PARK - PICNIC BENCHES - DAY

Nothing has changed.

Kaleb jumps up and pushes away from the table.

KALEB

What the hell is going on?

GREG

(sighing)

We're playing a game of chess Kaleb.

KALEB

(confused and angry)

I never told you my name...

Both men stay completely still other than Kaleb's heavy breathing for a moment.

GREG

It's your move Kaleb. Don't you want to know what happens next?

KALEB

No, nonono.

GREG

Yes you do. Everyone does. But in the end, it is your choice.

Greg gestures for Kaleb to sit.

Kaleb slowly sits down.

KALEB

Who are you?

GREG

I am simply your opponent in this game. But you may see me however you like.

Greg gestures to the board again.

KALEB

(moving his hand towards a piece, then stops)

But, what if I choose wrong?

GREG

At least it's still your choice.

Kaleb stares at the board for a moment then moves his pawn forward. He gasps, throwing his head back for a moment, then back down.

KALEB

(confused)

I don't gamble...?

A ringtone goes off. Kaleb pulls his phone out of his pocket and stares at it.

KALEB

Shit. I gotta go.

Kaleb gets up, knocking the table slightly.

Greg stares, unblinking at the chessboard.

KALEB (CONT'D)

Will you be here tomorrow?

Greg slowly looks up at Kaleb, staring.

KALEB

(walking towards the workout
equipment)

I'll take that as a yes.

INT. GAS STATION

The store has isles of food and supplies, coolers and a cashier station.

A MAN, late 40s, dressed in a hoodie and jeans, stands by the coolers looking at beers and a cashier behind the bulletproof glass.

Kaleb approaches the cashier holding a bottle of Gatorade and a protein bar.

CASHIER

(handing Kaleb his bag)

Anything else?

Kaleb looks behind the cashier at the lotto tickets.

KALEB

I'll take a lotto ticket.

The Cashier hands Kaleb a ticket.

He scratches it off as he walks out the door. He pauses to look at the ticket and jumps around whooping with excitement, rushing off.

The Man, now at the register, and Cashier watch him through the window.

EXT. PARK - PICNIC BENCHES - DAY

Kaleb walks towards the picnic bench, carrying the gas station bag.

The chessboard is still there, untouched from the day before, but not really seen. The rest of the park seems deserted.

He stops at the seat where Greg was and looks down. Extreme fear appears on his face and drops his bag.

EXT. PARK - PICNIC BENCHES - DAY - FLASHBACK

The world seems to move in slow motion. Kaleb gets up and bumps into the table.

Greg stares at the board intently. All the chess pieces shake and Kaleb's king falls over. Kaleb walks away.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. PARK - PICNIC BENCHES - DAY

Kaleb is running away.

The chess board is set up the exact same as yesterday, including Kaleb's king knocked over.

EXT. STREET - DAY

The world is shaking and unbalanced as Kaleb walks down the street, hyper aware of people passing by him.

A pair of hands grab him and pull him into a tight alley.

The Man beats up Kaleb and searches his body. Then grabs the lotto ticket and leaves Kaleb lying there.

Police sirens go off in the distance.

FADE TO BLACK: