

KING OF HEARTS

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EXT. PARK - DAY

NICK (12) is at busy park with his JONES (35) his father. The boy is running across a grassy field in attempt to catch a flying BALL.

He's about to catch it as he lands on a patch of WET grass and slips. Jones comes running and lends Nick a hand. Jones suddenly burst into a hearty laugh leaving Nick annoyed.

FATHER  
Close one kiddo!

BOY  
It's been a week Dad. I suck at this. I'm never making the team.

FATHER  
Practice makes perfect. It's okay, you've gotten a lot better than yesterday!

Nick pouts and looks down in disappointment.

FATHER (CONT'D)  
Tell you what. Let's take a break, go get some ice cream and play some cards. You worked really hard today.

Nick looks back up at Jones with a beaming expression. He grabs Jones's hand and they both make a dash towards the ice cream truck.

Nick and Jones play a game of cards at a nearby table. The boy places down the KING OF HEARTS CARD and wins the game.

BOY  
Gotcha Dad! I win this time!

FATHER  
Good job bud! Gosh, you're a natural at this. I don't know if I can keep up.

BOY  
That was really fun! Can we play again?

FATHER  
Of course buddy! But remember, at the end of the day, it isn't about winning or losing. It's about having fun.

BOY  
Having fun?

FATHER  
Yeah! Games bring people together.  
If you leave with a smile on your  
face, that's the biggest win you  
can get. Don't forget that.

Jones smiles cheerfully at Nick and plays another round.  
Behind the Jones's back are three copies of the KING OF  
HEARTS.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A man walks into the dining hall of brightly lit restaurant.  
N (23) is a slim and classy man. He's wearing a black trench  
coat, a tuxedo, and a WHITE MASK with a frowning expression.  
A host comes out to greet N.

HOST  
Welcome to Delanies. Do you have a  
reservation?

N  
Yeah. For N.

HOST  
Sorry sir, I'm afraid I don't see  
your name here.

N  
What the hell? I made a reservation  
two days ago. Check again.

HOST  
I'm afraid your name isn't on the  
list sir. You must be mistaken.

N turns around and prepares to walk out of the restaurant  
until the Host speaks up with an offer.

HOST (CONT'D)  
We could accommodate you by  
allowing you to sit with a lady at  
the bar. She has an empty spot.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The guests at the restaurant are all wearing MASKS. There are  
occasional sounds of laughter but it sounds very awkward,  
mechanical, and creepy.

Q (24) is wearing an eloquent looking dress with a shiny amethyst necklace. Her face is covered with a WHITE MASK with a smiling expression and is sitting at the bar.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

N

I'm N.

Q

I'm Q. Nice to meet you.

N and Q look awkwardly at their feet.

N

Date didn't show?

Q

Yeah, I was looking forward to it too. I guess he got cold feet. It happens.

N looks around for a bit and then opens the menu and pushes it to Q to break the silence.

N

Dinner and drinks on me for tonight. Take your pick.

Q

No I possibly couldn't, I mean we just --

N

Just pick something already. I insist.

Q looks down and scans the menu.

Q

What are you getting?

N

Nothing.

Q

You're telling me you came to a restaurant to not get any food or drinks?

N

Yeah, I just don't feel like it, do I need a reason to come here?

N and Q look awkwardly around and are silent for a moment until N spoke up.

N (CONT'D)  
This was my Dad's favorite place.  
He'd come here every year Sunday  
for a steak and wine.

Q  
Was?

N hesitates and the Q's words. He takes a breathe and speaks but with a sadder tone.

N  
He died. Drove drunk and crashed.

Q  
I'm so sorry.

N  
It's fine, I just.. I don't know. I  
miss him I guess.

N and Q both sit silently as they take sips of their drinks. N taps his fingers against the table nervously.

Q  
My father was a heavy smoker. He  
died of cancer.

N looks up startled. And he looks back down at his cup and starts to stir it.

N  
Was he a good man?

Q  
The best. He always had a smile on  
his face and lived his life to the  
fullest.

Q turns to N and tries to put her arms around him for a hug. But she hesitates. She looks around and sees a man at the nearby table handing a ROSE to his partner.

Suddenly, a cheerful WAITER (19) comes by the bar with a smile on his face. He pulls out an notebook and a pen.

WAITER  
Hi there lovebirds! Would we like  
something to start the night off?

N  
No we're not --

Q  
Yes for sure! He's a little tired  
so I think some nachos would kick  
his mood back up. For me I'll have  
some Fish Tacos please!

N rubs his head and chuckles.

N  
Guess I am eating tonight.

Q  
Why would you not on our date  
silly?

N looks shocked. He tilts his head a bit in confusion.

N  
Date?

Q  
We're here already. And I think  
I've personally spent enough time  
suffering in the past. Our dads  
wouldn't want this would they?

N  
They wouldn't.

Q reaches her hand out to N. He looks up at her. She takes  
off her MASK and smiles at him.

QUEENIE

The name is Queenie. Doctor Queenie  
PHD. I'm a psychologist at Medina  
Hospital. I work with the locos.  
What about you?

NICK  
I'm Nick. I work as a detective  
with the VPD.

Nick dwindles his fingers for a bit awkwardly. He nervously  
moves in his seat.

NICK (CONT'D)  
Sorry, I haven't done ... this in a  
while.

QUEENIE

Well, what do you do for fun?

NICK

Um. I'm not sure. I haven't had time for anything. Work you know?

QUEENIE

Anything yknow that makes you happy?

Nick reaches into his pockets and pulls out a KING OF HEARTS CARD and hands it to Queenie.

NICK

Cards. Cards make me happy.

Queenie pulls out a deck of cards and smiles at Nick and extends her hand to him

QUEENIE

Whattya say? You up for a game of blackjack? Loser buys dessert tonight?

Nick takes off his mask to reveal a beaming smile. He takes Queenie's hand and pulls her close.

NICK

I'd like that. It sounds fun.

QUEENIE

So it's a date then?

NICK

It's a date indeed.

**END.**

