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By
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CHARACTERS
(in order of appearance)

John- there's nothing special to John besides his unwillingness to calculate everything in life and his refusal to explain to others what he thinks about due to his personal fears

Jane- optimistic young lady but mature when challenged, not to be messed with when unhappy

TIME
Irrelevant and unknown

PLACE
Typical living room with minimal decoration and furniture

SCENE.

LIGHTS UP.

[Two teenagers sit in a living room in an awkward silence. We hear the TV playing in the background. JOHN sits in an armchair on his phone. JANE sits on the couch, looking impatient.]

JOHN: Wanna play a board game?

JANE: Sure.

(JOHN gets up and rummages through a drawer)

JOHN: Chess or chutes and ladders?

JANE: Chess.

(He takes the chess board out of the drawer and they set it up on the coffee table. This is a meticulous process and takes quite a bit of time. Once the board is set up, we see JOHN considering his first move. He moves to different spots around the board and looks at the board from different angles. Maybe he touches a piece and puts it back. We should see at least 1-2 minutes of him observing the board. He finally goes to touch a piece)

JOHN: No. *(moves his hand from the board)*

JANE: When are you going to move?

JOHN: Whenever I'm ready. Shut up.

(JOHN continues to calmly yet sternly stare at the board)

JANE: It's not that hard. Just move a piece.

(JOHN hums continuing to deeply stare at the board plotting his first move.)

JANE: (sighs) Forget this, I'm going upstairs.

JOHN: I always knew I was smarter than you anyways.

JANE: Ok smart one. Since you're moving slower than a parapalegic snail, I'll go first.

(JANE proceeds to move a piece, JOHN has an epiphany but its halted by a second thoughts, he resumes hard thinking, JANE smirks because she has trumped him)

JOHN: Don't get cocky. Once I figure out what you're doing, it's over.

JANE: Make a move man-child!

JOHN: When have you *ever* called somebody a man-child?

JANE: Now.

JOHN: Mmm-Hmm.

(JOHN continues to consider his first move. This exchange of nothingness yet meaningful thought goes on for what seems like decades. JANE gets up and moves around the room, she falls asleep, she leaves and comes back, reads a book etc. All things to indicate a long passage of time.

(Meanwhile, JOHN is still considering his first move. This goes on forever until:)

JANE: Just move a piece, come on! You've spent *(looks at her phone)* It's 12:36 in the morning! Just move a piece!

JOHN: Fine!

(He gives in and moves a piece. The move and piece both being insignificant.)

JANE: *(exasperated)* Finally!

JOHN: Move a piece Jane!

JANE: Ugh.. fine.

(JANE moves another piece. There is a pause.)

JANE: Move another piece, come on!

JOHN: I'm thinking.

JANE: Oh my gosh, you've wasted my whole day!

(JANE goes to exit.)

(The lights shift and they are very bright. She walks as if in slow motion. Instead of walking to the door we see her walk towards a white background. As she exits, she looks over her shoulder at JOHN and as he is watching her, she becomes part of this white abyss.)

(JOHN registers it, then continues to try and move a piece.)

(We hear a VOICE from above. This voice sounds like JOHN, but with a noted difference)

VOICE: Just move a piece John.

JOHN: But I don't know what to do!

VOICE: You know EXACTLY what to do John, but you choose to second guess every...little...decision in your life. "Should I put my arm around her? What shirt should I wear to the store? Are my pants too tight? What does she truly think of me?" It doesn't matter John, and you know that but you still choose to second guess.

(As the VOICE says this, JANE walks on stage and stands behind JOHN, unseen by him. She is still JANE, but in an ethereal way)

JOHN: But what if I mess u-

VOICE: SO WHAT IF YOU MESS UP? What does it matter? The shirt you wear to the corner store won't matter by the next day.

(beat)

JOHN: Fine.....I'll move a piece.

VOICE: This isn't about the board game John.

JOHN: THEN WHAT IS IT ABOUT? TELL ME! *(he starts to tear up and his voice shakes)*

(As the voice begins to speak the lights get darker and focused on JOHN making the entire room appear to be emptying out)

VOICE: It's about the games you play in that head of yours. A game that if you continue to play your social life, thought process, and every other aspect of your life will look like this very....space.

(The pool of light gets even smaller until all we can see is JOHN and nothing. JOHN finally realizes that he is alone and everything is gone.)

(JOHN begins to break down, he lays in a fetal position and sobs. Suddenly we hear the sound of an old-time projector. On the wall a movie starts playing. We see:

1. *A recording of JOHN being unable to pick a piece on the chess board like we saw in person.*

CUT TO

2. *We see him consider putting his arm around JANE, and then second guessing himself.*

CUT TO

3. *We see him trying on different shirts, being unable to make the decision.*

CUT TO

4. *He is trying on pants trying to decide if they are too tight.*

(All of this footage plays again and again getting faster and faster until we hear JOHN scream and everything goes to black.)

(Lights up to the exact scene we saw at the top of the play)

JOHN: Huh?

JANE: I said "When are you going to move?"

(Pause)

JOHN: Now. Right now.

(JOHN moves a piece and the two begin to play the game . Lights fade. Blackout.)

END OF PLAY