

Chess Game

I moved the knight to the white square. I looked up at the man facing me. His brow was furrowed in concentration. I was several steps ahead. No matter what piece he moved where, there were only three likely options, and I had a counter move for each. He reached forward and picked up the bishop. Looks like it was plan two, he captured my pawn but clearly hadn't noticed my knight was in the perfect position. I took his bishop and moved another pawn to bait him. The man looked up at me and clicked his tongue.

"You're good at this. This game is a lot more confusing than the rules make it out to be," The man looked at me, I didn't respond. He was my opponent. The man took his move and rested his head on his chin. The man let his hair droop over his eyes.

"No answer? I guess you're not very talkative, that's alright, I can talk enough for both of us." He was trying hard to be friendly. I wasn't interested in that. I moved a bishop diagonally a few spaces.

"Check." I said expertly. Usually, when I'm about to beat someone they look more frustrated. There was an innate satisfaction in seeing a pained expression on their faces. The man didn't look upset, he had a smile. His eyes were unfocused. He was going to lose to me, like so many others. Why wasn't he upset?

"I remember my mother playing chess against you, she never got tired of it. What about you? Wouldn't you rather play a new game like Checkers?" The man lifted his eyes to look directly at me. What a ridiculous question, I moved a piece backwards to counter his last move.

"Check." I looked back at the man. I would never get tired of Chess. He wasn't going to be able to escape checkmate for long. The man scowled slightly. There it was.

"Don't you say anything else other than, Check?" The man moved his king over a space, I nodded. The action surprised him, and myself as well. My neck was stiff, it felt like I hadn't moved in years. I moved my queen down the board.

"Checkmate." I stuttered slightly on the harsh syllables, it was a little embarrassing. At least I'm sure it would have been if I didn't win. The man laughed, he wasn't upset at all.

"Guess you proved me wrong. More than Check. I wish I could keep you here longer." The man stood up from his chair and moved it against the wall. The game was over. He pushed the board over and it folded up. He carefully put all the pieces in a box and set it on the board, putting the whole set in my lap.

"You're getting up there in age, you aren't fooling anybody. I'll make sure you don't lose your skill." The man put a hand on my smooth shoulder. I knew what came next, he put me in the cardboard box and folded the edges down until no light leaked through the cracks. The world was moving on, they didn't need chess robots. I was sure that was my last match, I had slowed slightly on Checkmate and the man had noticed too. I just sat helplessly in the box and closed my eyes. The darkness enveloped me as my mind faded.