

THE GAME

(*The Game* premiered at the North Park Playwright Festival in San Diego, California.)

CHARACTERS

CAROL: A woman

TOMMY: A man

POLICE OFFICER: A man or woman in uniform

Setting: A Park

Time: The present

Synopsis: A man and woman learn a frightening lesson when it comes to improving their sexual relationship.

It is late and the park is deserted, except for a young woman named CAROL, early thirties, who is sitting on a park bench reading a Stephen King novel. Sitting beside her on the bench are a few college textbooks.

A young man, TOMMY, also in his thirties, is in the background, watching CAROL as he slowly makes his way to where she's sitting.

TOMMY

(approaching CAROL)

Hello.

CAROL

Oh! Hello.

TOMMY
Would you mind if I...

(gestures to the bench)

CAROL
Well, I--

TOMMY
I promise I won't bite. Please?

CAROL

(amused)
Okay. Go ahead.

CAROL makes room for TOMMY and he sits down. She goes back to her reading. TOMMY notices the title and author.

TOMMY
Stephen King?

CAROL
Uh huh.

TOMMY
Did you read Pet Sematary?

CAROL
I started to but it was too scary for me. That thing in the woods near the graveyard was too much for me.

TOMMY
Yeah, kind of like a giant Boogeyman.

CAROL
Yes.

TOMMY
Sometimes it's fun to be scared.

CAROL
Sometimes.

TOMMY
Do you like to be scared?

CAROL
That's a weird question.

TOMMY

Why is it so weird?

CAROL

I don't know. Nobody ever asked me that before.

TOMMY

(notices textbooks)

You go to college?

CAROL

Yes, I go to Pearl, just over the hill. I come here every Tuesday and Thursday after class.

TOMMY

Probably a nice break.

CAROL

It is. Sometimes I don't know what I'd do without this park. Do you attend Pearl?

TOMMY

Nah, I couldn't afford it.

(beat)

You live around here?

CAROL

Well...

TOMMY

Don't worry about it. You don't have to tell me. Funny, I bet if I was a college guy you'd tell me.

CAROL

That's not true. I don't care if you attend college or not.

TOMMY

It's nice to know you're not an elitist, Carol.

CAROL

I'm not.

(beat)

What did you just say?

TOMMY

I said I was glad that you aren't an elitist.

CAROL
You said my name. Did I tell you my name?

TOMMY
Of course. How else could I know it?

CAROL
Did you tell me yours?

TOMMY
Yeah, Tommy. My name's Tommy.

CAROL glances around and notices that there aren't any people around and that it's getting dark.

CAROL
Well, it's getting late and I need to go.

CAROL starts to pick up her books and TOMMY grabs her arm rather forcefully.

TOMMY
(calmly)
You can't go yet. We're not done talking. I've a lot to tell you.

CAROL
Please let me go.

TOMMY
Shh, calm down. Now relax, I want us to get more acquainted with one another.

CAROL
I'll scream.

TOMMY
Really? What do you think I'll do then?

TOMMY pulls her closer to him and forces her down on the bench. CAROL looks around for help.

TOMMY
There's no one here, CAROL. You stayed out too late.

CAROL
What do you want?

TOMMY

Company. How about I tell you a little about yourself. Let's see, you live in the Carson apartments on 23rd street. You're in apartment 3B. Am I right?

CAROL's expression gives him the answer.

TOMMY

(looking at CAROL)

I guess I am. Your phone number is 381-7757, unlisted of course. Pretty good, huh.

CAROL

How?

TOMMY

Facebook. How else? I bet you've got like a zillion friends, huh? You know you really should be more careful when taking pictures to be sure there aren't any landmarks in the background. You'd be surprised how easy it is to find someone when using a little patience and a small bit of cash. Have you ever been to a gun and knife show?

CAROL

What?

TOMMY

A gun and knife show. That's where a bunch of red necks get together and buy and sell guns and other implements of destruction. Would you believe that they also sell book there? Not Tom Sawyer or something like that, but things like 101 Ways to Murder Someone, or my favorite, How to Dispose of a Dead Body. Ain't literature great? There's nothing like the First Amendment.

CAROL

Please let me go.

TOMMY

Don't worry, I will. After all, we have all the time in the world. We're going to be quite an item. You can even introduce me to your girlfriends.

CAROL tries to pull away from TOMMY, but he sticks a knife next to her ribs.

Realizing the danger, she settles down and sits quietly beside him.

A POLICEMAN in uniform appears in the background and starts walking in their general direction.

CAROL notices him and periodically glances in his direction.

TOMMY sees this and looks up toward the POLICEMAN, who has yet to pay much attention to them.

TOMMY

I know what you're thinking. But the game has just started and I don't want it to end yet. So let's play on and see what happens. Shall we?

TOMMY hides the knife from view, but still keeps it next to CAROL.

TOMMY

Kiss me.

CAROL

What?

TOMMY

Don't make me repeat myself. I don't want him to hear.

CAROL kisses TOMMY just as the POLICEMAN gets close to them.

The POLICEMAN checks them out and appears as if he's about to say something to them then stops and goes on his way.

TOMMY has been watching the POLICEMAN from the corner of his eye and he stops kissing CAROL after he's gone.

TOMMY

That was nice.

CAROL wipes her mouth.

TOMMY

Don't do that.

CAROL

What?