

Play the Man

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INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Five young men sit around a poker table. Beers are planted to the right of each man's position on the table.

SAMUEL, an overconfident male, SPLASHES the pot. He smiles at TREVOR: an anxious, studious looking male with glasses.

SAMUEL

What are you going to do?

Trevor peers over the cards that are lined across the middle of the table. He peeks back at his own cards.

A beat.

LARRY, a large man, with a backwards hat, shakes his head.

LARRY

C'mon either you call him or you don't.

TREVOR

Give me a minute.

SAMUEL

(mocking)

Give me a minute. What are you gonna do? Fold already.

JESSIE, a skinny male, with styled hair, checks the next card under his hand.

SAMUEL

(to Jessie)

Stop man.

JESSE

Sorry...I'm bored.

Trevor glances back at his cards once more.

SAMUEL

(to Trevor)

Any day now...

TREVOR

I call.

Samuel smiles while Jesse reveals the next card.

SAMUEL
I'm all in.

LARRY
Oooo.
(to Samuel)
Let me-

Samuel shakes his head.

Trevor fidgets his hands. He stares at Samuel and back at the cards.

SAMUEL
Jesus... who wants to bet me he folds? This'll be like that time in high school when you put all that work in with, what's her name?

Larry laughs.

LARRY
Caroline.

SAMUEL
Oh yeah, sweet Caroline...you put all that time and effort and got nothing out of it. I had to swoop in...

Everyone laughs.

LARRY
Some things haven't changed.

EVERETT, a tall muscular male, with a backwards hat, nudges Larry.

EVERETT
Shut up Larry.

TREVOR
What? What's he talking about?

EVERETT
Uh, nothing... Just finish this hand.

Trevor glances back at his cards. He seems to be deep in thought.

TREVOR

Hmm.

Samuel takes a sip of his beer.

TREVOR

I... I fold.

Samuel laughs and gathers all the chips.

LARRY

What did you have?

Samuel flips over his cards and reveals a SEVEN and TWO off suit.

EVERETT

Shit.

Larry reaches for Trevor's cards but Trevor resists.

LARRY

Let me see em.

He rips cards from Trevor.

LARRY

You fuckin' idiot.

SAMUEL

What'd he have?

LARRY

Trips.

Samuel laughs.

SAMUEL

Play the man, not the cards, right
Trev?

TREVOR

Shut up.

Samuel laughs while Everett starts collecting the cards. He begins to shuffle them.

Larry nudges Samuel.

LARRY

(to Samuel)

You ever hear him curse?

SAMUEL

Nah, what is it with you and not cursing? Religious bullshit or-

TREVOR

Plenty of words to use without cursing.

JESSIE

Like?

Everett starts dealing.

SAMUEL

What? Are you saying that there's plenty of other words or that it's religiously frowned upon?

TREVOR

I don't know, both. Definitely won't say the lord's name in vain though.

SAMUEL

Jesus, man. This straight edge--

Everett slides the second card under each player's hand. They check their cards.

SAMUEL

(to Everett)

I fold.

(to group)

I'll tell you what though, I think people have started cursing too much.

LARRY

How come?

(to Everett)

I fold.

The flop is played and only Jessie, Trevor, and Everett have cards.

SAMUEL

Cursing used to mean something. Now I could tell you to shut the fuck up and you'd probably just shrug it off.

JESSIE
It's all about delivery.

LARRY
Yeah, if you're yelling that at me,
I'd get it.

SAMUEL
Shouldn't have to yell, the words
should mean something.

The river card is drawn. Trevor and Everett are the only two playing.

Larry gestures at an ant near Trevor on the table.

LARRY
(to Trevor)
Kill it.

TREVOR
What?

EVERETT
I'll raise... Make it 4 bucks.

LARRY
The ant...it's crawling everywhere.

Trevor ignores him and stares over his hand and the community cards. Larry takes his beer and stomps down on the table.

SAMUEL
Take motherfucker for example. You
could call me motherfucker and I'd
have no problem with it.

Larry and Jessie laugh.

LARRY
You are a motherfucker-

SAMUEL
I'm serious, motherfucker is like a
fucking compliment to me. Think
about it, you only use it when
you're jealous or kinda envious of
that person. That motherfucker or
this motherfucker. Motherfucker is
a term of spiteful respectful.

Jessie laughs.

JESSIE
Shut the fuck up.

SAMUEL
I'm serious...
(to Trevor)
Hey.

Trevor lifts his head from his cards to glance at Samuel.

SAMUEL
Make today a day you remember,
break one of your fuckin' rules.

TREVOR
It's a- It's a matter of principle.

LARRY
I thought you were worried about
hurting people's feelings? He's
saying it doesn't bother him.

Everett flips over the river card.

EVERETT
Leave him be. It's probably in the
bible or something.

Trevor nods and smiles.

TREVOR
Let no corrupt word pass through
your mouth...

They laugh.

EVERETT
Alright bud, what you got?

They both reveal their hands and Everett shakes his head.

Trevor grabs his winnings from the center of the table. A
broad smile crosses his face.

JESSIE
(to Trevor)
Nice.

TREVOR
Yeah, thanks.

Everett checks his watch.

EVERETT
Let's wrap it up, it's late.

SAMUEL
One more hand, gotta take some of
that money off Trevor.

Trevor frowns.

EVERETT
What do you guys think?

Larry nods in agreement.

JESSIE
Sure.

TREVOR
I don't know-

SAMUEL
Just fold if you don't want to
play.

Samuel deals the cards and they come around the table quickly. Trevor checks his cards. Two Kings. Trevor stares at Samuel.

SAMUEL
Watch out, Trevor's got something.

Everyone laughs. Larry puts in his blind and so does Trevor. Both Everett and Jessie call.

LARRY
Family pot.

The Flop comes and it reads: "King, Ten, Seven."

LARRY
I check.

JESSIE
Check.

TREVOR
Raise, 4 dollars.

Samuel laughs.

EVERETT
I fold.

SAMUEL

I call.

Both Larry and Jessie push their cards towards Samuel.

SAMUEL

You ready?

Trevor nods. The next cards is a Queen.

He stares at Samuel who continues to smile. Trevor pushes several chips into the center.

TREVOR

Ten dollars.

SAMUEL

Raise another ten.

Samuel SPLASHES the pot.

TREVOR

Hmm...

Trevor fidgets his hands.

SAMUEL

Why don't you all save us some time
and fold already...

Trevor ignores him and glances at the community cards.
Samuel's phone VIBRATES.

SAMUEL

Damn, she won't leave me alone.
(to Trevor)

Don't ever bring a stranger back
home, this girl Vanessa won't stop
texting me.

Larry chuckles and Everett sends Samuel a glare.

TREVOR

Vanessa?

SAMUEL

Yeah, Vanessa. Met her at the bar,
took her back-

TREVOR

What bar?

SAMUEL

Are you calling or not?

Trevor stares at his pocket Kings and MUTTERS. He puts his chips into the middle. He flips over the next card to reveal an ace.

Samuel smiles and his phone VIBRATES again. He takes his phone out of his pocket.

SAMUEL

She needs to fucking chill, don't know why I agreed to bring her back... or even go to O'Shea's.

TREVOR

Wait? What was that? You met her at O'Sheas?

EVERETT

Sam.

TREVOR

No, no, no, no. What are you saying?

Larry grins slightly and Jessie looks away.

SAMUEL

It's on you.

Trevor is flustered.

TREVOR

No. What did you say?
(to group)
What's he saying?

SAMUEL

You really want to know?

TREVOR

What the heck is going on?

EVERETT

You should- just tell him.

SAMUEL

The other night...First of all, I had no idea she was your girlfriend...she didn't even say she had a boyfriend.

Trevor glances around at his friends who will not make full eye contact with him. His breathing becomes accelerated.

TREVOR

You had-

SAMUEL

Yeah, listen, I'm all in...You're not mad I told you?

TREVOR

Your phone.

Samuel passes his phone to Trevor who dials a number. His eyes dart around the room and his breathing becomes even more accelerated.

TREVOR

(on phone)

Vanessa?

A beat.

VANESSA (O.S)

Sam?

Trevor drops the phone.

SAMUEL

Better I told you now before you fell in love with her or something. She's a slut...so what are you doing? You're folding right?

Trevor is in a daze. He stares at Samuel with a surprising intensity. He pushes his chips into the center. Trevor's fists are clenched.

LARRY

Flip.

Trevor flips his cards revealing trip Kings. Samuel smiles and flips his cards. He has trip Aces hit on the last card.

JESSIE

Fuck, that sucks.

Samuel laughs and collects his chips.

TREVOR

(to Samuel, in a whisper)

You had sex with her?

SAMUEL
I didn't know...maybe if you
introduced me-

TREVOR
You told me this in front of
everyone.

Samuel shrugs while an enraged Trevor storms away from the table. On his way towards the door, Trevor trips and falls.

Samuel LAUGHS as Trevor exits the house and slams the door shut.

EVERETT
(to Samuel)
You're an asshole.

Jessie laughs.

JESSIE
He's definitely a motherfucker.

Everett and Jessie walk into the kitchen.

SAMUEL
He'll get over it...

Samuel and Larry collect the chips and put them back in the poker case.

LARRY
Thought for a second there he was
going to let you have it.

SAMUEL
Who Trevor? The guy that folds trip
Kings...not a-

Trevor storms back inside. His eyes are red. Everett sees the crowbar dangling from his right hand.

EVERETT
Trevor? What do you... take, take a
deep breath, c'mon, this isn't you.

Samuel and Larry remain sitting at the table. Jessie stands behind Everett in the kitchen.

TREVOR
(frantic)
Shut up!

Samuel and Larry peer over at Trevor and notice the crowbar.

Trevor points the crowbar at Samuel.

TREVOR
Apologize!

Samuel chuckles.

SAMUEL
What? I told you I didn't know who she was. She called again and I used it against you. It is what it is.

A beat.

TREVOR
Apologize to me.

Samuel chuckles and glances around at the group.

SAMUEL
Who the fuck do you think you are? How long have I known you? What five? Six years? You're gonna come back into my house with a crowbar? To do what? You see some household repairs or some boxes that need opening? Because I fuckin' know you're not using it on anybody.

TREVOR
You don't know what-

Samuel's phone RINGS.

EVERETT
(to Samuel)
Don't answer that.

Samuel winks at Trevor and takes out his phone. He puts it towards the middle of the table. He presses SPEAKER PHONE button.

SAMUEL
Hey Vanes-

Trevor rushes to the poker table and flips it over on Samuel. He strikes him with the crowbar again, and again, until he is wrestled off him by Everett.

A bloodied Samuel lies motionless on the floor while a deranged Trevor SCREAMS out.

TREVOR
I fucking loved her! Ahh God... I
fucking loved her!

Trevor's wallet lies on the floor and beside it a wedding ring glistens in the light.