

THE HERD

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JAZ: black, believes in forever.
MOSES: black, believes in cycles

The Herd.

*A basement. Jaz is a zombie chained to a post by her ankle.
MOSES enters the basement with a chessboard and a rug in his hands.
He stands out of JAZ's reach.*

MOSES

I thought we could play.

JAZ

I can't hear you.

MOSES

I thought we could play a round together.

JAZ

Come closer.

MOSES

I can't do that.

JAZ

Why not?

MOSES

You're scary.

JAZ

I'm scary at either distance.

MOSES

I'm alive here.

JAZ

I'll make you feel the most alive you've ever been. Set the board.

MOSES lays down the old rug.

MOSES

Move back.

JAZ

I haven't seen that in years.

MOSES

I never throw anything out.

JAZ

I know. I remember thrifting for it.

MOSES

For our apartment.

JAZ

The first one. In Pilsen.

MOSES

The rent was cheap.

JAZ

We didn't have a refrigerator.

MOSES

Yes we did.

JAZ

Placing the milk outside at night does not count.

MOSES

It kept the dairy from going bad.

JAZ

Wish I could go outside.

MOSES

No you don't.

JAZ

Are you going to set up your side?

MOSES places the rug and begins to set the board

MOSES

Do you want to be white or black?

JAZ

I despise the white devil.

MOSES

Don't bring politics into chess.

JAZ

Who do you think made that chessboard?

MOSES

Hasbro?

JAZ

Probably children. Working everyday like drones. Until they die. Until they rot. I mean everything dies. But sometimes you get to come back and play chess while tied up in your own basement.

MOSES

You tried to eat me.

JAZ

Dead things only love dead things.

MOSES

So you don't love me no mo? *I'm alive.*

JAZ

Come closer. I'll tell you.

MOSES

Please, Jaz. Let's do this right. I'll let you be black.

JAZ

There's only one way this can end. And you don't "let me" do anything.

They play chess for a while in deep concentration.

JAZ

How's the outside?

still playing

MOSES

The reinforcements came the other day.

JAZ

Yeah?

MOSES

The last of the Herd are being destroyed.

JAZ

So you say.

MOSES

We can focus on a cure for the infected.

JAZ

Then we could be together?

MOSES

After the cure.

JAZ

I'm not sick. We could be together now.

MOSES

We are.

JAZ

I'm a hostage.

MOSES

You're not.

JAZ

Then let me go.

MOSES

I can't.

JAZ

You're holding me against my will.

MOSES

No, i'm--

JAZ

Let me go.

MOSES

JAZ.

JAZ

I think you know how fucked up this is.

MOSES

You're trying to eat me. That's fucked up!

JAZ

You think this is my fault?

MOSES

I didn't say that.

JAZ

Cause this isn't my fault.

MOSES

It's not...

JAZ

It's yours.

MOSES

No one asked for this.

JAZ

We both know the Herd is coming for me.

MOSES

I didn't ask for this.

JAZ

For you too.

MOSES

Reinforcements came!

JAZ

And they were destroyed! The Herd is winning! And I can feel them coming. I can feel everything that can be felt! Moses, please. Let me

share the pleasure of connection with you. You know, we do everything together. You were my first. I just want to connect with you again.

MOSES

It's your turn.

JAZ

They're going to kill you when they find you. But not gently like me.

MOSES

If you move your rook I could counter with my bishop.

JAZ

Let me eat you, Moses.

MOSES

But then your pawn...

JAZ

Let me save you.

MOSES

...would get the bishop.

JAZ

It won't hurt.

MOSES

It always hurts.

JAZ

Shit makes the flowers grow.

MOSES

But it's still shit. How can you say that's love?

JAZ

Dead things love dead things. But dead things make other things grow. Like a rotting blue jay under a blooming cherry blossom. How can you **not** say that's love?

They move in to kiss slowly

There's no pain in love. Real love like ours never dies.

MOSES

I missed you so much.

JAZ

Welcome to the Herd, baby.

LIGHTS down.

MOSES screams

FIN.