

King
a screenplay by
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1 INT. APARTMENT BATHROOM - NIGHT 1

GIRL stands in front of a mirror in a crowded bathroom. A red silk scarf holds her hair back. She uses red floss on her teeth, and throws it away. She rinses her mouth, spits. She then rips off a shorter string of floss, and sets it gingerly on the closed toilet seat, where a gleaming, plastic toy crab sits. We will call him King from now on.

OPENING CREDITS.

2 INT. APARTMENT BEDROOM - DAY 2

The bedroom is filled with sunlight and warmth. Girl is standing, her back turned, in front of a standing clothes rack, which is filled with predominantly red clothes, of varying shades and dimensions, respectfully.

OVER BLACK.

SUPER: *"These you may eat, of all that are in the waters. Everything in the waters that has fins and scales, whether in the seas or in the rivers, you may eat. But anything in the seas or the rivers that has not fins and scales, of the swarming creatures in the waters and of the living creatures that are in the waters, is detestable to you. You shall regard them as detestable; you shall not eat any of their flesh, and you shall detest their carcasses. Everything in the waters that has not fins and scales is detestable to you." Leviticus 11:9*

3 INT. APARTMENT KITCHEN - NIGHT 3

No internal audio.

The kitchen is cramped. King is perched atop a mug on the counter. Girl has her phone tucked between her ear and her shoulder as she opens a can of soup, pours it into a mug, and reaches to place it in the microwave. She returns to the counter, and leans against it as she talks on the phone. She speaks infrequently, lost in thought as she gazes at King. She is startled by the microwave. She returns her phone to the original shoulder positioning, takes the dish rag from the stove, and gingerly removes the hot soup from the microwave. She awkwardly half-steps to see the table space is consumed by the wood cutting board with King and the mug atop it. Girl returns the bowl to the microwave. She puts King on the floor, returns to the microwave for the soup. As she pulls away, she steps on King with an audible crunch and a return of audio. She gasps and jumps, causing the soup and phone to fall. The mug and phone both shatter. We see the

kitchen floor; there lies the shattered mug, King, who is covered in soup, and the shattered phone.

4 INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT 4

The shattered phone is sealed in a Ziplock bag in the trash bin.

5 INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT 5

King is cleaned up, wrapped in a white hand towel on a shag carpet. Girl's arm lies inches away from him. She wears a minimalistic, thin golden crucifix bracelet.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

6 EXT. CITY STREET - DAY 6

The New York street is filled with light. Against a brick building Girl and FRIEND lean, passing a joint back and forth. Improv conversation leading into:

FRIEND

Hey, hey. How're you doing? Really? I mean, I mean -- I feel like we never do this anymore, I miss you.

GIRL

Yeah. Yeah, no, I-- yeah. I'm good, I'm doing really good. Things are -- things are good.

FRIEND

That's good.

GIRL

(awkwardly)
Good.

FRIEND

That's good.

They smoke in contemplative silence for a few beats.

FRIEND

Hey, I like this sweater situation you've got, you've got goin' on here. Very on theme with you.

GIRL

Yeah, I thought so.

FRIEND

Am a little confused though -- will admit -- not sure if you've checked in with this, but that says "The Boil."

GIRL

Yeah, it's -- it's because of the ... crabs. On the sweater.

FRIEND

No, I get the reasoning, y'know, behind the ... stylistic choice, but. Do you eat crabs?

GIRL

(embarrassed)

Jesus Chr-- No. Christ. Wh-- of course not. Why would I--

FRIEND

I know, I know! But that there... you -- I mean, that's conflicting, to say the least.

Girl strips off the sweater hastily, in a dramatic huff, and Friend laughs at this commotion.

GIRL

(flustered)

God.

FRIEND

I know. I hear you.

GIRL

I mean, it w-- it was a *thrift*.

FRIEND

Naturally. I get it. Been there. Weird shit. It happens-- hey, how the hell is Big K doing?

GIRL

Ahh...

FRIEND

Little filthy cunt, I hate him. You know this, I hate him, I'm not ashamed or -- or -- apologetic. I do hate him.

GIRL
 (lovingly)
 I know you do.

FRIEND
 He is... I mean, I'm sorry, he is --
 he has a... musk. Like a distinct, you
 know, he has an odor. I don't know. He
 is disgusting.

They laugh together.

(:END FLASHBACK)

7 INT. APARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT

7

The bedroom is dark, aglow with a dull blue light. Girl lies on her side under the covers. She wears a red strapped tank top. King lies tucked into the comforter on the pillow. Girl stares, tight-jawed at the toy. After a long beat, she sniffs, and leans closer to King. She presses her nose and lips against him.

8 INT. APARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT

8

Girl pads away from the bedroom, and we follow her into the bathroom.

9 INT. APARTMENT BATHROOM - NIGHT

9

Girl turns the bathroom light on, she winces at the light. As she gently pushes the door away from her, she observes the red towels, the red hand soap, the red bath mat. She blinks, and for just a moment, her colors invert. She approaches the mirror over the sink, and places her hand on the porcelain. She looks on at herself.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

10 EXT. CITY PARK - DAY

10

There is a clearing in the park, a quieter stillness in a bubble. Girl and Friend wear workout apparel. Only Girl's leggings are red. They work out together, in spurts of moments, light, blissful. They do crab kicks at each other (sneaky, hey?), burpees, jumping jacks, they laugh manically. They do cartwheels across the grass, Godfather impersonations, Rocky impersonations. They laugh, attempting to do stage fights. Friend accidentally clocks Girl, they both collapse to the ground scream-laughing. Girl and Friend lie with stomachs on the grass, breathing heavy.

GIRL
 (excitedly)
 Guess what.

FRIEND
 What? Is it -- *what*, do I want to
 know?

GIRL
 I'm gonna get that crab.

FRIEND
 (appalled)
 No...

GIRL
 (nodding excitedly)
 I'm getting...

FRIEND
 (louder)
 No...

GIRL
 ...that fucking crab.

Friend screams out dramatically into the park, Girl is overjoyed at this presentation of enthusiasm, and laughs gleefully. Friend returns to sanity, checking back into the moment.

FRIEND
 Ah. Hey. You know I don't give a fuck,
 as long as you are *happy*, okay? *Okay?*

Girl smiles contently.

GIRL
 Do you wanna come with to get him?

FRIEND
 Uhhckk. Yes. God, this sucks. Do you
 have a -- a like, a tank and
 everything?

Girl nods. They stand, stretch out, and sorely start walking towards the street.

FRIEND
 I mean, you understand. You remember.
 What I told you, you remember--

GIRL
 (sternly, coldly as she hastes
 ahead)

Yes.

(:END FLASHBACK)

11 INT. APARTMENT BATHROOM - NIGHT

11

Girl back in the red bathroom. The lighting is warmer, her skin draws focus. She removes her top, tossing it on the toilet seat. She turns to her right, and forces her shoulder blades back, her elbows slowly raising behind her. She finally forms her hands in a gentle claw, just testing it out timidly, as if she's scared. She moves her gaze from her arm to the mirror reflection. Seeing herself in full, she drops the form, dryly laughing, shaking her head, amusingly shocked; then there is a change. She returns her hands to the sink, hangs her head and cries for a few moments. She then lifts her head up, to her reflection for a beat. Girl turns towards the door, and sees King, illuminated by the strip of bathroom light. She gently and quietly shuts the door.

12 INT. APARTMENT - DAY

12

We see Friend in full, standing in the doorway of Girl's apartment. The door is ajar.

FRIEND
 Uh, what the fuck?

Girl emerges from below two comforters, one white and one red. Respectably. She remains topless, her hair disheveled, groggy. She does not speak, only stares, dazed. Friend enters the apartment fully, pacing directly for the bed. She rips off the comforters, exposing a very much real and very much dead crab, crusted to the sheets, stains skirting around the carcass like tree rings. Friend moans to herself angrily. She kneels down to meet Girl's eye level.

FRIEND
 Are you *fucking* kidding me? This is
disgusting.

Girl remains unphased, blank. Friend huffs, and stands hastily, ripping the pillow from behind Girl's head. Girl sits up quickly, drawing her knees to her chest. Friend pulls the case off the pillow, and uses it to pick up King. She walks towards the trash, into the shadow of the kitchen. There is only silence for a moment. Girl anxiously brushes her hair away from her face, pulling fast against the borders

of her face. Friend returns from the shadows, still holding the crab in the pillow case. She stands just outside the kitchen. We see a view of King, with a small and clear, decaying bite mark in the body.

FRIEND

You didn't.

(she shakes her head in disbelief -
she looks away, and then nods
her head)

FRIEND

(quickly throwing King to the
floor with force)

This is a cancer.

Friend holds one final gaze with Girl. She storms out, leaving the door ajar. Girl presses her fingers, in prayer formation, to her lips over her knees, vacant. She release her arms and legs. A familiar position becomes apparent.

FIN.