

Joey & Sebastian

SEBASTIAN. Joey, put those things down.

JOEY, at first, is inclined to disobey. SEBASTIAN takes them from him.

Anyway I'm eating from this one.

JOEY. I'm very sorry. If I'd known I wouldn't have touched it.

SEBASTIAN. You've a perfect right to be as rude to me as you like, and to call me every name you can think of. Tonight

I behaved to you as badly as any father has ever behaved to his son. If my father had done that to me when I was your age I'd have walked straight out of his house and never talked to him again.

JOEY. You did, didn't you?

SEBASTIAN. No. I was turned out. I may have told you I walked out, because it sounds better. In fact I was booted. A little trouble with one of the maids. I can only say, Joey, that tonight I behaved like a thoughtless bastard - that's the word your Mum used. To Mark I said 'shit' - 'an uncaring shit' and meant it. I am that, sometimes, and I behave like that sometimes. If you like you can say usually. Or even always. It may be true. But tonight was the worst thing I've ever done to anyone, anywhere. I may do some bad things to you, Joey, in the future - if we're still seeing each other - but one thing you must know - I can't ever do anything quite as bad as I did tonight. Not even I can break the world record twice -

JOEY. I don't believe you forgot. I believe you did it deliberately.

SEBASTIAN. I can see you'd rather think that. So would I. It's less damaging to the ego. The plain, sordid fact is that I forgot.

JOEY. How could you, Dad?

SEBASTIAN. I did. And I have no excuse at all. Now listen. What I intend to do is this. I shall get our television man to ask to have it re-run -

JOEY. Oh Dad - this is all talk.

SEBASTIAN. At Television Centre, for me, for him - not for my Editor who's in Tangier - and for anyone else who wants to see it. You, of course, too. And our television critic will review it. I don't know what he'll say, and it'll have to be next week, but he'll mention it in his column, I promise.

JOEY. Is this on the level, or will you forget again?

SEBASTIAN. I said you could insult me, but there's no need to kick me in the crutch. Now if I do that for you will you do something for me?

JOEY (*suspiciously*). What?

SEBASTIAN. Sit in that chair.

He forces him into one and then brings over the chess table.

And show me for once how you can justify all that hissing that goes on behind my chair.

JOEY. Dad, it's late.

SEBASTIAN. Only for Liberals. Not for men. Go on You be white. Fifty pence on it?

JOEY. I'll want a two pawns' handicap.

SEBASTIAN. One.

JOEY. Done.

SEBASTIAN takes one of his pawns off. JOEY moves. SEBASTIAN moves. JOEY moves.

SEBASTIAN. That's not in my 'Twelve Easy Openings for Beginners'.

SEBASTIAN moves. JOEY thinks. LYDIA, who has plainly had her ear glued to the keyhole, slips out of the work-room. She watches them for a second. JOEY moves. SEBASTIAN moves.

JOEY (*rising*). Right. My game.

SEBASTIAN. What do you mean your game?

JOEY. You moved your King three squares.

SEBASTIAN. I beg your pardon, my Queen.

Horrified.

My King? Oh blast and bugger that Mark Walters! These pieces are going, straight back to Hong-Kong. I told him a hundred times -

He is putting the pieces back on the board again. JOEY has stood up.

JOEY. Fifty pence, please.

SEBASTIAN. Are you mad, boy?